

Start your journey

Magazine K 2019 | EN

Röchling



New way of thinking – a fundamental change of strategy

Dear Customers, dear Readers,

Welcome to our stand. A lot has happened since the last K in 2016. Since then, we at Röchling Industrial have carried out a fundamental change in strategy. Our goal is to develop new products and services for you, our customers, that give you a competitive advantage.

Industry Management pools various competencies

Our new strategy comprises the introduction of Industry Management. In doing so, we are placing our customers even closer to the heart of our activities. To date, our business units have marketed their products independently of one other based on materials. The introduction of Industry Management marks a decision to no longer think in terms of materials, but rather in terms of our customer's industry. Our aim is to pool our knowledge and make it available to all our customers. Röchling takes a different position to its competitors. We are probably the only supplier on the market with unique know-how in the use of thermoplastics and composites, which we process using various technologies, from the micro range to large dimensioned components and 3D printing – and we do this across almost all industrial sectors. We asked ourselves how we could make this unique selling proposition usable for our customers. Industry Management pulls our various competencies together. It enables us to offer each customer the best possible product and the best service for their application in their industry.

Corporate R&D for better products

Our innovation strategy is inseparably linked to our industrial focus. In 2018, we created a new research and development department: Corporate R&D. It will be an essential pillar for Röchling Industrial's success. It pools all research and development activities across all locations and business units, and makes existing knowledge available to the entire company on a sustainable basis.

To this end, the ground-breaking ceremony for the new Industrial Center at the Haren site was held in summer 2019; it is set to open in autumn 2020. This new, modern building complex creates the right conditions to enhance our innovativeness. Corporate R&D and others will move into the Industrial Center and develop innovative products with the new possibilities they offer.

Industry Management and Corporate R&D work closely together on development. The essential task of our industry managers is to know today what customers in the respective industry will expect from their suppliers tomorrow. In the future, it will no longer be sufficient to have a certain product available from stock at a certain price, but rather to intensively exchange information with the customer about the application and, if necessary, to be able to offer a new, better product.

Internationalisation with market proximity

Our international presence is also an important factor. Röchling Industrial now has more than 40 sites worldwide. We are local everywhere, giving us a deep insight into the various industries and a broad knowledge of our customers' applications, requirements and processes. At the same time, our companies are close to their local markets but are also part of our global presence. We bring this global expertise together in Corporate R&D and promote cross-location and cross-business unit cooperation.

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We would like to invite you to discuss your ideas and questions with us here and start the journey into the future of close cooperation.

Franz Lübbers,
CEO Röchling Industrial

Digitalisation and personal interactions

To pursue these goals, we take advantage of the possibilities offered by digitalisation. We are working to network our employees even better with digital media, thereby enabling personal exchange across hierarchical levels and national borders. To make the exchange of technical and commercial data between our worldwide locations even more efficient and faster, we are currently working intensively on a uniform technological basis. We are therefore not only networking people, but also our production facilities and systems. We also intend to make even greater use of the opportunities offered by digital communication with our customers. To do this, we are building open platforms and offer interfaces to our customers' systems. However, it's also important to me that we find a healthy direction with regard to what is feasible.

In addition, however, I am firmly convinced that even the best corporate strategy and optimal use of digital media have no value without direct exchange. Personal interaction between people is still the starting point for the development of new ideas and products. That is why we have chosen the motto "Start your journey" for our stand at K 2019. We would like to invite you to discuss your ideas and questions with us here and start the journey into the future of close cooperation. We are looking forward to engaging discussions with you and welcome you to our stand.

Franz Lübbers
CEO Röchling Industrial



Start your journey – Get on board for the joint journey into the future

As with previous K Fairs, we have come up with an unusual concept for the Röchling stand at K 2019. We thought about how we can impressively visualise the developments we are currently working on at Röchling. We had the idea of a station, from which we want to start our journey into the future with you. With the motto “Start your journey”, we would like to begin this journey in close cooperation with you.

If you enter our exhibition stand from the front, you will find yourself in a railway station in a late 19th century style. Plastics hadn't been invented yet. The invention of the steam engine suddenly set industrial production in motion and made it possible for steam locomotives to reach distant destinations faster and to transport heavy loads quickly over land. When you walk past the exhibits on the stand, you are going on a journey through time. A smooth transition takes you into the modern age and to the futuristic Röchling train, in which we would like to travel with you into the future.



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“Start your journey” is an invitation to set off into the future together with Röchling.

Discover new things

“Start your journey” is an invitation to set off into the future together with Röchling. Travel is first and foremost about the curiosity to discover new things. To set a destination that you want to reach and to develop ideas together on how to get there. Röchling Industrial has strategically repositioned itself for this purpose. The topics we would like to talk to you about are our innovative products, our new Industry Management and Corporate R&D as well as the question of how we can meaningfully use digital possibilities for cooperation.

The exhibits on the stand are a cross-section of the most diverse industries. We present you with products from the food industry, vehicle construction, chemical tank and plant construction, the sports and leisure industry, mechanical engineering, conveyor technology and the electrical and electronics industry. Each exhibit is the result of a joint journey that a customer has embarked on with us and today helps to better master the challenges in the respective industry.

Parallel challenges to your own

Allow our experts explain the background to you and find challenges that are parallel to your own. We would like to take you on a journey with us; whether you are already on the train with us as a long-time customer, or you would like to get on board for the first time. “Start your journey” with Röchling.

“Right on the pulse of industry”

How innovative new products can be developed

Since the last K in 2016, Röchling Industrial has undergone a fundamental change in product development: the Corporate R&D department was newly established and Industry Management was introduced. In the following interview, Dr. Axel Höfter, General Manager Corporate R&D, and Peter Eckerstorfer, Head of Industry Management, talk about why both areas play a decisive role in the development of new products, what form cooperation takes and what they would like from customers.

Corporate R&D and Industry Management did not even exist at the last K Fair in 2016. Why are both areas playing a decisive role in product development at Röchling Industrial today?

Dr. Axel Höfter: We would like to completely rethink the entire topic of development and are repositioning ourselves to do so. The objectives of the central Corporate R&D, which was founded in 2018, are to pool and coordinate all development activities at Röchling Industrial and to pursue and work on overriding development focuses. Each site has its own R&D department. This is also strategically intended to preserve the independence and high flexibility of the decentralised units. They know their customers, products and markets best.

Peter Eckerstorfer: Röchling has always had an industrial focus and it already had a research and development department; after all, Röchling is regarded as one of the plastics industry's leaders in innovation. By introducing Industry Management at the beginning of 2018, the focus has now increased even further. We no longer think from the point of view of materials, but from the point

of view of the customer in their respective industry. To date, our business units have marketed their products independently of one other based on materials. Industry Management means that we are now pooling activities to achieve greater customer benefit. We have global contacts for all target industries who ideally come directly from the respective industry and speak their language.

What are the tasks of Industry Management and Corporate R&D?

Dr. Axel Höfter: First and foremost, Corporate R&D is tasked with the structured processing of medium- and long-term developmental focuses. To this end, we leverage synergies, avoid redundancies, record existing knowledge and make it available.

Peter Eckerstorfer: The essential task of our Industry Managers is to know today what customers in the respective industry will expect from their suppliers tomorrow. To this end, our Industry Managers are in intensive dialogue with our customers, discussing their applications and requirements. I see my role in this as being like the number 10 in football: the playmaker. This player coordinates, pulls the strings and gets the players into strong positions.

Why are Corporate R&D and Industry Management interdependent?

Peter Eckerstorfer: Innovation needs both. An idea from an industry may be very interesting, but how do you develop this idea into a finished solution?

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In conversation: Dr. Axel Höfter, General Manager Corporate R&D (left), and Peter Eckerstorfer, Head of Industry Management

Dr. Axel Höfter: In a nutshell, innovation consists of four steps: the generation of ideas, the selection of suitable ideas, the development of products, services or processes and finally the market launch. Development is therefore, if you like, at the centre of the innovation process. Again, Industry Management's task essentially includes generating ideas, as well as the market launch.

Innovation does not come about in the laboratory, but through personal dialogue with the customer, which formulates their requirements and challenges. How can Industry Management and Corporate R&D work together to develop innovative new products?

Dr. Axel Höfter: We must consistently embody the idea of customer proximity. This is the key to innovativeness. We will only be successful in the long term if we work in close partnership with our customers. However, it is very important to focus on defined strategic development goals to prevent chasing every idea without any direction.

Peter Eckerstorfer: This only works if we directly take the pulse of the respective industry together. Workshops together with our partners and at the OEMs with local developers usually provide the starting point for innovations. The key objectives of Corporate R&D can be combined with those of our customers, and we are anyway very familiar with the basic needs of the individual industries thanks to our industry focus.

How can customers benefit from the interaction between Industry Management and Corporate R&D?

Peter Eckerstorfer: We want to create competitive advantages for our customers. Application technology is yesterday's news; we now have to be able to understand and improve our customers' processes to make their products more innovative.

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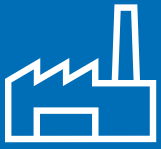
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Dr. Axel Höfter: Our customers benefit from improved penetrability when it comes to making their needs and ideas part of our development activities. By closely integrating Industry Management and Corporate R&D, we combine the necessary customer focus with a fast reaction time.

What do Industry Management and Corporate R&D want from their customers?

Dr. Axel Höfter: Demanding tasks! And the readiness for long-term and partnership-based cooperation.

Peter Eckerstorfer: Challenge! I would like to discuss ideas with our customers that are visionary. And one thing is clear: When you think plastic, think Röchling!



Empowering Industry.

What does our slogan “Röchling Industrial. Empowering Industry.” mean? And what claim do we make for ourselves?

“Röchling Industrial. Empowering Industry.” – this is the slogan of our division – in English, of course, because our markets are international. “Empowering” means “to give strength, power or ability” and “Industry” refers to the industries of our customers, who come from all areas: from general mechanical engineering to the electrical industry, from playground construction to the food industry.

Our customers use our plastics to develop products for all areas that determine our lives. The world’s population is growing. How will people be reliably and safely supplied with energy in the future? Where are our foods produced and processed? How do people get from A to B quickly and safely by public transport? Together with our customers, we see these questions as an opportunity to develop new, innovative products. Our plastics improve industrial applications, increase efficiency or make new developments possible in the first place.

We’re the only company in the world to offer a product range of thermoplastic and composite semi-finished products and machined components with almost any dimensions. We align our actions with the individual industries; our ambition is to find the best solution for our customers’ applications across all materials. “Empowering Industry” means thinking from our customers’ perspective. No other supplier in the world can offer its customers such a broad knowledge of the properties, processing and application possibilities of plastics as us. But “Empowering Industry” also requires us not to lose sight of our claim: to be better than others in what we do and to always become better. “Empowering Industry” is an ongoing, never-ending process that strengthens the competitiveness of our customers in addition to our own.



When is “digitalisation” actually successful?

Röchling Industrial: Benefits of digitalisation for customers and employees

“Digitalisation” – a term that cannot be ignored in any publication. And rightly so. The influence that new digital possibilities have on structures and processes in companies is large. Companies need to analyse and evaluate numerous digital approaches and tools. They must draw the right conclusions for their own business model from the results. As with all factors that can influence a company's processes: Those who do not recognise new opportunities and know how to use them properly will suffer competitive disadvantages in the future.

Digitalisation must provide benefits

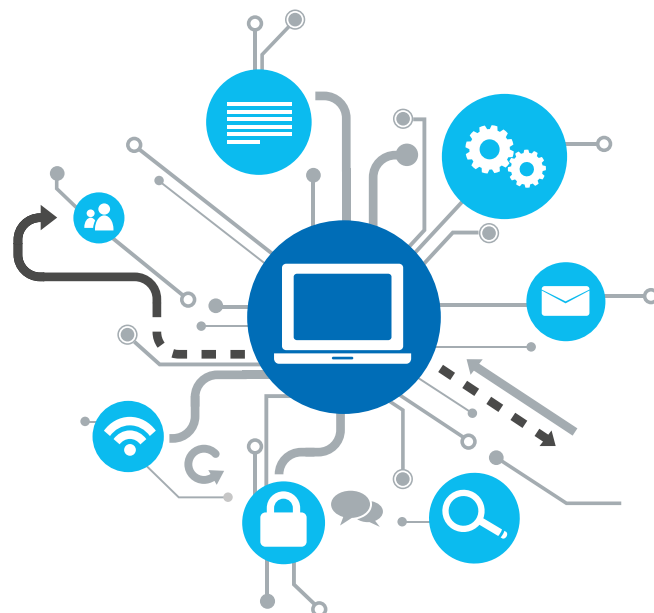
At Röchling Industrial, we have been involved with the possibilities of digitalisation from an early stage. But when is digitalisation successful? We have decided to let ourselves essentially be guided by one key question: How can we offer our customers even better service with new digital possibilities and approaches?

At our stand, we would like to present selected digital projects that improve, simplify or accelerate processes and procedures in cooperation with our customers and place you as our customer at the centre of our activities. We have firmly enshrined the objective “We use the possibilities that digitalisation offers.” in our Company mission statement. But we are also firmly convinced that digitalisation should not be an end in itself. We examine our processes and procedures very carefully and work intensively on the following points, always with a view to what makes sense and what is feasible:

Intensified communication with our customers: We want to use the possibilities of digitalisation to simplify and accelerate communication with our customers. We develop concepts and interfaces for this purpose. Existing processes are digitised, platforms are set up and our customers' systems are connected via interfaces. In spite of all the technology, however, we as humans remain your contact partners.

Networking of our employees: We see the intensive exchange between our more than 3,600 employees worldwide at more than 40 locations as a key factor for our success. Our employees are an enormous reservoir of experience and knowledge that we want to make available to our customers. How will we communicate with each other and exchange knowledge in the future? The email of today will no longer be sufficient in tomorrow's world. We are therefore working intensively to offer our employees digital tools with which they can communicate even better, across hierarchical levels and national borders, in order to master the challenges of our customers.

Improvement of our processes: When it comes to digitalisation, the creation, generation and smart use of data play an elementary role. At Röchling, we are currently creating a uniform basis for this by bringing our sites up to the same technological standard. This makes communication and the exchange of data easier. We are therefore not only networking people, but also our factories, machines and plants. This enables us to achieve better processes, productivity advantages, make better use of existing resources and gain speed.



Sustainability at Röchling Industrial

What are our standards?

As the world's leading processor of plastics, we are committed to a sustainable business policy. Our standard is responsible corporate management characterised by both entrepreneurial action and a commitment to the environment. For us, responsible corporate management is equally comprised of both pursuing corporate goals and the careful use of our resources. That is why we are committed to using energy sparingly, continuously reducing our relative energy consumption and using energy efficiently and economically.

What is our strategy?

Continuous improvement of our processes

We strive for continuous improvement of all operational processes to meet ever-growing market demands, increase customer satisfaction and avoid mistakes. Our business activities and especially our manufacturing processes are linked to the consumption of natural resources. It is our goal to keep this consumption as low as possible. Of crucial importance is the consumption of electricity and other forms of energy. We regularly identify and evaluate our environmental and energy performance and continuously improve it through various measures and management systems. The personal commitment of employees and managers also contributes to this. There are many activities. We analyse the material and energy flows, monitor differentiated waste management and use this to derive potential improvements, which are gradually implemented through action plans. By consistently complying with relevant laws, regulations and internal instructions derived from them, we avoid or reduce ecological burdens.

We develop, plan and optimise our products and processes using state-of-the-art technology. The economic efficiency of all services is the goal of our companies. This includes the obligation to conserve resources of all kinds. We are convinced that forward-looking environmental protection is essential for improving environmental performance.

Certifications

Environmental and energy management are an integral part of our integrated quality management system. Many of our sites are already certified according to the renowned ISO 14001 and ISO 50001 management systems.

Training

An essential element of our sustainable corporate policy is training for our employees. Only in close cooperation can we consistently implement measures to improve our processes at each workplace. In addition, our employees learn to use energy consciously and responsibly at their workplace.

Biofilter plant

At the Haren location, Germany, Röchling has been operating a biofilter plant since 2004 for the exhaust air produced in the pultrusion process. When profiles are manufactured from glass-fibre reinforced plastic (pultrusion), the solvent styrene serves as a reactor for the curing process. After the resin system has cured, the styrene escapes as a gas into the exhaust air and is suctioned off directly and fed via a pipe system to what is called a biobed. This consists of a three-meter thick accumulation of filter material made up of root wood and bark humus, which serves as a biocarrier for bacteria and fungi. The surface of the filter material is coated with a moisture film that binds the air-polluting substances. The bacteria and fungi absorb the monostyrene as nutrition, breaking it down chemically into carbon dioxide, oxygen, and water. In order to thrive, the bacteria and fungi need constant conditions with regard to moisture, pH value and temperature. For this reason, these factors are continuously monitored. The filter material is replaced at regular intervals.

Material

During their use, plastic products make a significant contribution to environmental protection and the conservation of resources due to their limited weight, special product properties, long service life and their diverse possibilities for use. Nevertheless, the image of plastics has deteriorated in light of massive global environmental problems. This primarily concerns only part of the plastics market, however: one major problem is the pollution of our oceans with disposable plastic products from the consumer goods industry. According to the United Nations Environment Programme, incomplete waste management is to be blamed if plastic waste is released into the environment, particularly through unsecured landfills near oceans or illegal waste disposal in rivers. Generally, however, plastics can be even more sustainable than other materials due to their properties.

Saving raw materials through reprocessing

As a plastics processor that purchases various raw materials and converts them into plastic products according to special formulations, Röchling has a keen interest in using these raw materials as efficiently as possible. Thermoplastics have the special property that products manufactured from them or production residues can be shredded and recycled. For this purpose, Röchling has a large number of technical facilities that ensure pure separation or even direct recycling back into the process during production. For example, unsaleable quantities of product that are produced for technical reasons during the start-up of extrusion systems are collected by type and processed into reworkable raw material in a regenerate department. For the manufacturing process using presses, the filling quantities for the compression molds are optimised to minimise the loss of material due to spew. During machining by turning or milling, the semi-finished products used are adapted to the dimensions of the machined component prior to machining in order to produce as little material loss as possible. The chips produced during the machining process are suctioned off directly at the milling head and collected by type. The resulting chips are crushed during the regranulate preparation and sent to be reprocessed as semi-finished products. These processes have been optimised at Röchling so that more than 90 percent of chips and leftover pieces produced are sent for reprocessing within the company. Products manufactured from recycled material have virtually identical technical properties as new, pure material. Even sheets produced from chips of different colours can still be used in reasonable applications in which a nonhomogeneous appearance is not important.

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Röchling Industrial – Over 40 sites: Global network with local market proximity



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This is where our customers and plastics experts have their say

Application stories and background reports

Our products made of thermoplastics and composites are used in almost every industry worldwide. Every application is driven by close cooperation with a customer. In our story portal for K 2019, we look at the partnership in numerous stories and background reports, look at the latest developments in our division and pick up on current trends and topics in plastics processing. We let our customers and our Röchling experts have their say – every successful collaboration testifies to our slogan of “Empowering Industry”.

Simply scan the QR code. These and other stories await you:

-  **Chemical Processing Industry**
How does a customer save time with Polystone® CubX® when manufacturing rinsing water tanks for an anodizing plant?
-  **Bulk Material Handling**
How can a concrete manufacturer optimise its production processes with our Matrox® material?
-  **Electrical Industry**
Why is Durostone® EPX-M used in the world's largest HVDC project?
-  **Aquafarming**
Did you know that a Norwegian fish farming company uses Polystone® to farm salmon?
-  **Utility and Special Vehicles**
How does our lightweight material Foamlite® contribute to weight reduction and efficiency of repair and service vehicles?
-  **Playground Construction**
How do Play-Tec® playground elements become weather-resistant and have rich colours even in wind and bad weather?
-  **Oil & Gas**
On the ocean floor, technically demanding insulator caps are required to safely close a wellhead. How does a leading manufacturer increase operational reliability with caps made of SUSTAPVDF?



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