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the many maintenance engineers who had to maintain and upgrade Oskar Rüeegg's machine tools during the relocation phase. Owing to flawless preparatory work and just three days into the relocation, the pressure was released: everything worked out as planned.

Naturally, every relocation has unforeseen complications, but the built-in reserves of time allocated never had to be fully utilized.

#### Smooth implementation

Thanks to the tight implementation of the relocation schedule, machine tool maintenance and installation at the

new location, all customer deadlines were kept. The fact that Emil Egger AG employs trained staff and has the necessary equipment for every task facilitated the relocation procedure immensely. Fortunately, no accidents occurred, and neither human beings nor machines were harmed.

A special challenge was represented by the transportation of the largest of the machine tools from Pfäffikon SZ to Jona. A special low-bed truck had to be used for this 60-ton giant. As a result, the bridge across the narrow end of Lake Zurich was closed off to normal traffic, requiring considerable police presence.

#### An impressive performance

Looking back, Eduard Häny says: «We were an outstanding team of people who dedicated ourselves to the relocation for more than a year. Everyone knew that they were going to be confronted with extreme pressure, and that extraordinary flexibility was needed. We all worked together and brought about this exemplary success, completely in the true sense of our corporate philosophy, "faster perfect".

## Linus Thoma: 45 years of prototype building – at the highest level of perfection.

**Prototype building is considered the acid test of punch bending parts: it shows whether a part is properly designed and can be produced as planned – or not! Prototyping is closely connected to engineering and machine-tool production, and it represents the first stage of launch management. Linus Thoma's 45 years of experience flow into the design of the parts.**



A dreamteam: Linus Thoma (front) and Stephan Bebie.

«Prototyping is more than just a job, it's a passion». That is what Linus Thoma thinks of his work in prototype building at Oskar Rüeegg.

Linus Thoma was born in Amden, a mountain village far above Lake Walensee and about 35 kilometers from the place where he would find his life's work. His daily commute to Oskar Rüeegg began 45 years ago. At the beginning he commuted with his father, who was also in prototyping at Oskar Rüeegg, and who was his teacher on the job. When his father died, Linus took over his position at Oskar Rüeegg. He had long ago mastered the skills for this responsible function.

Linus Thoma remembers that «In the beginning, prototyping was rather difficult. We did not have modern technology such as wire-electro discharge machining to produce our prototypes. Everything was made by hand, including wire springs, which were difficult to work with. In order to produce a good prototype, one needed not only dexterity but also a good imagination». Today, Linus starts on every new prototype with a clear instinct and in a quiet

and cool-headed manner. «Once I've seen the drawing, the work steps become clear to me». He adds with a smile: «Stefan's approach is completely different. He looks at a drawing very carefully, and then he methodically consi-

ders how to start. That is absolutely the correct way to do it, and that is how he was taught during his training. But I do it my way». Stefan Bebie is Linus's young and technically well-trained colleague who possesses outstanding manual skills. Linus shares his rich knowledge and experience with him, thereby ensuring his succession. The two are a dream team: 45 years of experience, imagination and intuition on the one side, and modern education, a thirst for knowledge and creativity on the other.

Linus Thoma especially values the diversity of his work and the communication with all of the departments and people connected with the development process. He enjoys the challenges posed by the complex parts needed for the production process. «You have to be creative, for instance, by asking yourself whether a piece should be punched with or against the thread of the metal. Or, by designing parts in such a way that they will not cause a problem when degreasing them. Corrugation arise when producing cost-optimized punch-bending parts that can replace expensive customer versions». His particular pride: «The precision of our prototypes is so high that, upon customer demand, we sometimes develop pre-series of punch-bending parts for inclusion in automobile production».

No doubt, Linus Thoma is a master of his trade, an important pillar in the development phase of an Oskar Rüeegg product. With 45 years of experience.

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Editorial



Our motto is short and sweet:

«Oskar Rüeegg – faster perfect». We take this mission statement very seriously. For instance, in our plant in Bulgaria, which is set up for tool-supported assembly by hand, and was rewarded ISO/TS 16949:2002 certification one year after initial start-up production, the shortest possible time period. Read more on page 3.

We were also able to move into our new plant in Jona and take it into operation on schedule. All planning, development and production processes at the plant are being optimized through investment in future-oriented layout and modernization. Pages 2 and 3 are dedicated to the new plant.

Never will the best technology replace the manual proficiency of human beings. That is why we carefully cultivate our production methods. For instance, in prototype production, where Linus Thoma has accumulated extensive knowledge and experience over 45 years of service. Read our report on page 4.

As you can see, we have undertaken much so we can meet your requirements at the highest level, today and in the future.

Sincerely,

Roland Schürpf

# insight

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Relocating 60 tons – grand logistic performance.

## Even relocating a production plant can be faster perfect!

**Oskar Rüeegg is faster perfect even when it comes to relocating. Internal and external specialists delivered the proof from the end of June until mid-August of this year. The much expected relocation from Pfäffikon SZ to Jona, on the opposite side of Lake Zurich, went off without a hitch.**

Relocating is never easy. Relocating without a production break is even more difficult. And when the machine tools are to be repaired and maintained at the same time, that's adding insult to injury, and the exercise becomes an enormous challenge.

Eduard Häny, head Project Management Relocation, says: «I am completely satisfied and would like to thank everyone involved in the relocation for

their incredible performance. Imagine, our timing was so good that the relocation could have been completed a few days ahead of schedule, but that would have upset our production schedule».

#### Early planning pays out

About a year ago, in the summer of 2007, a select team of internal and external specialists began to plan the relocation. A St.Gallen-based removals company, Emil Egger AG, acted as general contractors for the removal. The company has impressive experience in industrial relocation, from which Oskar Rüeegg benefited. Not only was the detailed planning executed with great care, but Emil Egger AG also took on the complex coordination of



The new plant in Jona.

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# Oskar Rüegg's new plant in Jona:

## Ideally equipped on the same level.

All procedures are carried out on a single level of 8,000 square meters: incoming goods and warehousing of raw materials, production of punch-bending parts and assembly groups, packaging and shipping. The materials flow is fully aligned to Oskar Rüegg's requirements.



### 1 Incoming goods and warehousing of raw materials

Optimal materials flow is a necessary precondition for time-effective and cost-efficient production. This recognition characterized the design and construction of the new Jona plant. Here, materials flow is designed to meet these requirements.

Materials flow starts with the delivery of raw materials and semi-finished goods at the delivery ramp. Quality checks are carried out in the incoming-goods restricted area, where the amount, weight and relevant specifications are verified. If the result is positive, the goods are forwarded to the raw materials warehouse.

This store is designed to optimize the movement of goods by means of

straightforward and smooth processes. The paths to continued processing are short.

### 2 Forming

Many criteria play a role when planning the organization of a new production plant. At the Jona location, the machine tools were installed in accordance with the needs of high-tech logistics while also assigning free space for later expansion. The air-conditioned measurement room for self-inspection is located in an ideal position within the processing sequence.

### 3 Finishing

All machine tools used in the finishing process are integrated into a special conveyor system, due to which internal

## «Optimal flow of materials is essential to ensure efficient production.»

transportation time is reduced to a minimum. In addition, the new system allows tracing of individual production steps at all times.

### 4 Packaging

The reworked punch-bending parts are packed without unnecessary waiting time and in accordance with customer requirements. The parts are made available for warehousing or dispatch with great flexibility and no quality loss.

### 5 Processed parts warehouse

The parts are stored in a modern and separate high-bay warehouse. Depositing and retrieval is carried out safely and quickly by means of a narrow-corridor fork-lift stacker.

### 6 Goods dispatch

The goods dispatch is located ideally between the warehouse and the ramp. The separation of delivery and dispatch ensures the best possible work procedure while excluding any mix-up of processed parts with semi-finished parts.

### 7 Supporting processes

Supporting processes, such as quality assurance and machine tool maintenance, are directly integrated into the production process. Their location proximity promotes the fast and frequent exchange of ideas.

### 8 Machine tool and prototype production

Due to the fact that prototyping is now located in the same area as machine-tool production and engineering, these processes can be optimally coordinated.

### 9 Administration

The generous and modern office space was designed to meet the requirements of process-oriented operation and administrative functions.



Ground floor plan

## In only one year: ISO/TS 16949:2002 certification for Oskar Rüegg's plant in Bulgaria.

Within the record period of one year, Oskar Rüegg's plant in Bulgaria has been awarded ISO/TS 16949:2002 certification. Insight asked Eduard Häny, CEO of Oskar Rüegg Bulgaria EOOD, and Ralf Reiter, head quality management «How was that possible?».

**E. Häny:** Had I not been a long-standing follower of certified management systems, building up a factory in the middle of nowhere would have very quickly convinced me of the necessity of certification! Well before the first sod was turned over here, we precisely defined and documented all processes. That allowed us to ensure that processes would function smoothly right from the start.

**Insight:** With regard to quality, Eastern Europe does not have the best reputation. What is your personal experience?

assurance, and they are proud to make a contribution toward that quality. In addition, they are very eager to learn and ambitious. As soon as they understand that there is only one path to achieve quality, they will follow it consistently. During an introductory period, our Bulgarian employees learn how to live Oskar Rüegg's values, and intensive training, some of which takes place in Switzerland, further broadens this understanding of quality. And let us not forget: Swiss management staff monitors the results on a daily basis.

**R. Reiter:** We build on the principle of prevention. In other words, quality assurance is deeply entrenched in the production process right from the start. In addition, process audits and internal audits are carried out on a regular basis. And, naturally, there are external inspections, such as customer audits.

**Insight:** Have you experienced such audits in Bulgaria?

**R. Reiter:** In Bulgaria there is little experience connected with the high quality standards required by the automobile industry and, therefore, proven procedures used in Switzerland have been adopted. Naturally, intensive training and regular inspections are necessary. Our Bulgarian employees are very motivated and keen to learn; their uppermost aim is to attain Swiss quality standards.

**Insight:** How did you manage to reach such a high level of quality within only one year?

**R. Reiter:** It was very demanding! Especially since we were assessed and certified by the internationally renowned SQS (Swiss Association for Quality and Management Systems). Our advantage is that many procedures were initiated in Switzerland and guided from there. The fact that all documents had to be translated into Bulgarian was an immense challenge. Luckily, Oskar Rüegg Bulgaria EOOD has an outstanding administrative office with many employees speaking perfect German and Bulgarian. Currently there is only one other company in Bulgaria that has been certified by SQS in accordance with ISO/TS 16949:2002.

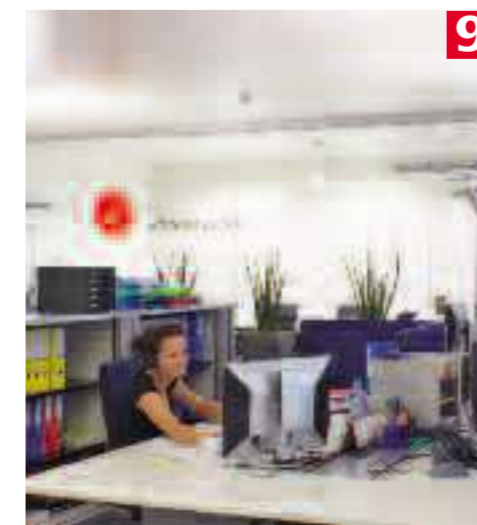
**E. Häny:** In Bulgaria, Switzerland is considered the epitome of quality. The Bulgarians acknowledge Oskar Rüegg's competence with regard to quality

**E. Häny:** Yes, the first customer audit was carried out in November 2007, and the results were very positive. The customer, whose background was in the automobile industry, certified an audit result of no less than 97%. In addition, during the first year, we have had only one customer complaint, and not due to faulty assembly work, but rather as the result of the wrong inscription on a label.

**Insight:** How do you implement Oskar Rüegg's quality principles when starting new projects in Bulgaria?

**R. Reiter:** Tool-supported assembly is so elaborated that it must be carried out flawlessly and with process reliability. All assembly tools are developed in such a way that the wrong assembly of an assembly group is made impossible. In addition, the complete assembly procedure is built, validated and approved in Jona before being transferred to Bulgaria. During this phase, Bulgarian staff is involved and trained, which fully guarantees the transfer of knowledge to Bulgaria.

**Insight:** Gentlemen, thank you very much for your time.



## «Quality assurance runs like a thread through the entire work process.»