

Cost leadership in focus

THIS YEAR, MORE THAN ONE MILLION BAKING TRAYS WILL LEAVE THE PRODUCTION LINE OF THE KEMPF GMBH COMPANY, ROHRBACH, GERMANY. IN THIS INTERVIEW, MANAGING DIRECTOR GUIDO KEMPF EXPLAINS MORE ABOUT THE MARKET AND THE COMPANY'S FUTURE



++ figure 1
Managing Director Guido Kempf (30) joined the family business in 2003



++ figure 2
The company constantly invests in new plant, such as the coating line shown here. The new production line also started operation in November

+ bbi: Mr. Kempf, you joined the business as Managing Director in 2003 and you assisted your father. How have the baking industry and its clientele changed since then?

+ Kempf: After my MBA graduation, I focused my attention mainly on acquiring new customers and new export markets. Today we see a strong demand for baguette and process line trays in Eastern Europe, and also in the Benelux countries. However, in addition to the internationalisation, we are also currently profiting through a strong demand in this country.

+ bbi: And who exactly is buying the pans, tin-sets and trays?

+ Kempf: We generate our main sales, around 60%, in Germany. In this respect our focus is quite clearly on industrial clients in the baking industry. However, we also supply directly to the food retailer and to oven and plant manufacturers.

+ bbi: In 2009 the company generated sales of EUR 7.35m. What do the target figures for this year look like?

+ Kempf: Our target for 2010 is a turnover of EUR 8.5 to 9m. We have grown strongly in recent years, and more than one million baking trays should leave the production plant this year.

+ bbi: How do you explain the strong demand?

+ Kempf: In the first place hard discounters are investing in in-store ovens and need the corresponding baking trays. However, many baked goods manufacturers are also building new production plants. At the same time our customers are also taking care to ensure that the price-performance ratio is correct. My aim is absolute quality and cost leadership in the area of baking trays, pans and non-stick coatings. We have achieved this by automating the production plant. Today, with 30 employees, we process around 1,500 t of alu-

minium and 400 t of stainless steel per year, and we plan to employ two to three more new staff each year.

+ bbi: Can you say which coating types are requested in particular?

+ Kempf: We offer all coating types such as silicone, Teflon and ceramic for our trays and tin sets. Also, because we are not a contract coater and we produce everything in our own works, I can say that there is currently a demand for silicone-coated trays for frozen and par-baked goods. The dough pieces do not slide around on the trays during transport. Teflon coatings are more suitable when the tin-sets are highly mechanically stressed. At present, however, I must say that the works has reached their capacity limit. That's why we have just built a new bending centre and we are investing around EUR 2.5m in a new production hall. This means that from November 2010 onwards our total available production area will be 5,500 m².

+ bbi: You attempt to optimise your lines continuously. Is there any other recipe for success?

+ Kempf: The good service includes a high degree of flexibility for specific customer wishes and special sizes, the best quality at fair prices, and prompt completion of contracts and orders. Another strength is individual customer support and advice on questions about baking processes, different coatings and their advantages.

+ bbi: Together with the Bremen Fraunhofer Institute, you developed a plasma coating in 2004. How is that collaboration progressing today?

+ Kempf: The exclusive research with the Fraunhofer Institute is ongoing, and so is the in-house development. Generally



++ figure 3
 Patent application already filed: The baking tray is fixed to a metal frame by rails. This also enables a quick inlet change on the spot

speaking, it is important that the trays and pans are coated uniformly. This is why we coat trays several times and process them using various methods. The combination of different materials such as Teflon and ceramic also gives the products non-stick and wear-resistant properties.

+ bbi: Has the company developed any other innovations?
+ Kempf: Our latest invention, for which a patent application has also been filed, is our method for changing inlets. This involves mounting the coated plant trays or inlets on a stainless steel frame on rails. The customer gains several benefits simultaneously. Firstly we do not need any fixing rivets on the baking surface, which reduces the danger due to metal objects in the production. Secondly the trays can be exchanged

Kempf GmbH

The Kempf GmbH Company in Rohrbach, Germany, is a family business that has manufactured bakery and confectioner's equipments for 30 years. When Josef Kempf took over the factory from Karl Frotscher in 1974 it was set up to manufacture baking pans, cake rings and custom-made products, and the sales region was limited to Bavaria. Nowadays, the company manufactures individual custom-made products for clients throughout the world – including small production runs – and series production of standard formats. Guido Kempf (30), who joined the family business in 2003 as an additional General Manager, shares the credit for this successful expansion. After graduating in Business Studies, the main focus of his attention has been the acquisition of new customers and new export markets. +++

or renewed more quickly as a result of the rail mounting. For example, an 'on-the-spot' change at the client's premises under their own control is also possible. The frames are retained, thus additionally protecting the environment, and the resulting costs are lower. The user also has more baking area available since the tray has no rim.

+ bbi: Mr. Kempf, many thanks for the interview. +++

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