

Press release

Wilkhahn strengthens international marketing focus

With a view to strengthening the company's market presence and expanding market leadership in the field of high-quality conference furniture, Holger Jahnke, Director International Sales, will be taking over responsibility for the management division of International Marketing at office furniture manufacturer Wilkhahn in Lower Saxony, Germany.

Bad Münden. Since 2004, the acclaimed office furniture manufacturer in Lower Saxony has been quite clearly back on the path to growth. A 5% increase in sales to EUR 66 million (consolidated) was posted for 2005. In addition to effective restructuring measures and investment in market presence and product development, this is in particular due to the strategic focus as a specialist for high-quality conference and office furniture, and also to the strength of the international sales organization– a focus which is subject to ongoing expansion at Wilkhahn.

Holger Jahnke, Director International Sales since 1 November 2002, will therefore assume management responsibility for Global Marketing as from 1 February 2006. In the past few years, Jahnke (41, two children) has concentrated on repositioning Sales and gaining new market shares in an environment in the industry that has been marked by a shrinking tendency. In Germany, Wilkhahn has become the market leader in the field of high-quality office chairs and conference furniture with a market share of over 20%. In key international markets such as Switzerland, the Netherlands, UK, France, Asia and Australia, Wilkhahn has also achieved over-average growth rates in the conference furniture segment.



From 1 February 2006, Director Holger Jahnke will be responsible for Global Wilkhahn Marketing in addition to International Sales



Dr. Jochen Hahne, Wilkhahn Managing Director, is delighted about expected growth rates and the positive outlook for 2006.

Holger Jahnke and Dr. Jochen Hahne had already cooperated very closely on the past in marketing issues and product development projects. "Everything is set to enable us to strengthen market development: we have products that provide substantial value added due to their unique position; we have coherently designed product catalogues and a globally motivated and competent staff. Last but not least, the Wilkhahn Customized Manufacturing Centre provides an ideal processing and manufacturing structure for producing customized solutions in the high-quality conference sector, besides serial products."

We are now in a position to carry out extensive investment in international market development once again. After the recent opening of the Wilkhahn base in Dubai, this year will see newly designed showrooms in Vienna, Madrid, London und Sydney. A base is also to be established in Shanghai. "The more complex and global Wilkhahn sales structures are, the more important it is to have a clear positioning of market presence and sales focus. We will therefore strengthen the marketing team, led by Burkhard Remmers, quite considerably to meet these challenges."

Managing Director Dr. Jochen Hahne has every reason to be delighted: "The decision to develop the conference segment into a key, strategic business segment has proved to be exactly right. In the past few years, we have pointed the strategic way ahead, consolidated the positioning of our brand and redefined our market presence and image employing distinct corporate design. Concentrating the responsibility for Marketing and Sales will allow us to make even more efficient use of our brand strength, particular in terms of global sales, and vice versa to optimize the flow of information from the markets to the Marketing Department." Hahne and Jahnke expect new model variations, which Wilkhahn will be presenting this year, to provide further impulses for growth. "We will be out to prove our claim to market leadership at the many international fairs and exhibitions in which we will participate in 2006, including Orgatec, the key trade fair in the industry ..."

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