

Press release

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Wilkhahn first-half results: consolidated growth expected in 2008

After record growth rates in 2007, business developed positively for office furniture manufacturer Wilkhahn in Lower Saxony, Germany, in the first half of the year too although international economic unrest retards growth in the office furniture industry generally, which is highly sensitive to business cycle developments. Due to numerous product and marketing innovations to be introduced at Orgatec in Cologne, the most important trade fair, Wilkhahn Management is optimistic about the future and expects the sales record of 2007 to be topped in 2008.

Bad Mnder. Although rising energy and raw material costs, unrest on financial markets and the high value of the Euro have had an effect on domestic and foreign business in the office furniture industry, Wilkhahn was able to expand its excellent results from the previous year even more in the first six months of 2008. A key reason is the strategy of balancing out business cycle risks by means of broad-based, international business: in 2007, sales outside Germany accounted for 72 percent of the total, 50 percent of which was achieved in markets outside Europe. In the first half of 2008, stable developments in Germany, Switzerland, the Benelux countries, Eastern Europe and the Middle East were particularly positive. Wilkhahn Inc., the US sales subsidiary founded at the beginning of this year with its showroom and headquarters in New York, also made a highly positive contribution to this development. This more than offset the difficult market conditions in Great Britain and Spain.



Opened this June: the new showroom of Wilkhahn Inc. in the famous Starrett-Lehigh Building, New York, Manhattan. Photo: Wilkhahn

International market leader for high-quality conference furniture

Wilkhahn Management feels there are excellent reasons as to why the company will develop better than the market for the rest of the industry in 2008 too. "We are investing heavily in existing markets and in new ones. This has enabled us to consolidate and



Sets new standards for anyone interested in conference and communication environments: the "Interactive Planning Guide", which is accessible to the public via the Wilkhahn website, provides key planning guidelines and intelligent solutions. Photo: Wilkhahn



Since early this year, there has been virtually CO2 neutral production at Wilkhahn: the combined heat and power unit is run with renewable raw materials. Photo: Wilkhahn

expand our position as international market leader in the field of high-quality conference furniture", says Holger Jahnke, President International Markets, by way of explaining this positive prognosis. The "Planning guide for conference and communication environments", which was published by Birkhäuser Verlag this spring, as well as the "Interactive Planning Guide", which can be accessed via the company's website, are both great proof of the competence with which Wilkhahn has achieved top ranking throughout the world.

Trustworthy pioneer for sustainability

Moreover, the fact that Wilkhahn is one of the globally recognized pioneering companies in terms of conserving resources is now paying dividends in view of the general increase in environmental awareness. "Whilst the novelty of being green wears off quickly with many companies on closer scrutiny, we have already reduced our CO2 emissions at our main production site by nearly 80 percent. And above all, we have had a trustworthy, ecologically responsible design concept that comprises high quality, repair-friendliness, material coding and labelling and easy disassembly for 20 years now. Bad products remain bad and superfluous even if they have allegedly been produced in an environmental compatible manner", says Wilkhahn President Dr. Jochen Hahne, putting the Wilkhahn approach into a nutshell. An increasing number of customers and architects throughout the world are now coming to realize that environmental compatibility is primarily a question of quality. Wilkhahn is the first office furniture manufacturer to join the "Deutsche Gesellschaft für nachhaltiges Bauen" (DGNB, German Society for Sustainable Building) with a view to incorporating the aspects of quality in use and the service life of the buildings concerned into the environmental label that is planned for Germany to be called "Deutsches Gütesiegel Nachhaltiges Bauen" (German Quality Label for Sustainable Building).

Orgatec 2008 provides growth impetus

Further positive growth impetus is expected from Orgatec 2008, the most important international trade fair in the office furniture industry, which is taking place in Cologne in October. In addition to long-standing design classics and innovative furnishing solutions for conference and communication

Wilkhahn

environments, Wilkhahn will be presenting several newly developed product lines. "Anyone who is familiar with Wilkhahn knows about the high demands that we make on new developments. Really good products need high investment and that is why architects, customers and market partners can look forward even more eagerly to the Wilkhahn Orgatec performance", Holger Jahnke promises.

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