

# PRISMA

The WILD Group  
magazine



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# BACK TO THE FUTURE!



**Arthur Primus**  
COO WILD Group

The crises of recent years and the resulting problems for the global supply chains have had a dramatic impact on industry. The so-called "bullwhip" effects can still be felt to this day. Especially in our markets dominated by sensitive high technologies, the motivation to purchase supplies in Asia as cheaply as possible is rapidly waning for many companies. Instead they are now opting for security, stability and sustainability through short supply routes. Though this trend reversal in outsourcing is challenging, it is definitely feasible with technology partners like WILD and PHOTONIC.

This issue of PRISMA describes how our Group is embarking on a journey "back to the future", both structurally and culturally. We are creating space for future projects, making sure to significantly reduce our carbon footprint and encourage close collaboration.

## "Culture eats strategy for breakfast"

I believe this quote by Austrian-born management author Peter Drucker encapsulates the following truth: Sustainable success is based on maintaining and developing the cultural aspects of a company. We recently placed an even greater emphasis on both elements by organising our Family Day and a workshop on values. Read more about it in this issue of PRISMA.

Stay up to date.

Arthur Primus  
COO WILD Group



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# PLENTY MORE SPACE.

**WILD is making room for future projects.  
Whether it's outsourcing or new product ideas: We're prepared.**

A whole series of technologically demanding projects are currently in the pipeline within the WILD Group. To successfully implement growth as planned, the company is now investing heavily in enlargement projects at three different sites. In Trnava, this will mean a doubling of the space currently available, and the company is close to finalising one of the biggest conversion projects at the site in Slovakia. By adding an additional 2,500 m<sup>2</sup> of space, WILD Technologies lays the cornerstone for securing future growth. "Thanks to this enlargement, the Group can significantly increase capacity", explains WILD Technologies Managing Director Tobias Knoop. "We are confident that the new space will also help us double our turnover". Accordingly, the company plans to gradually bring the number of employees up to 150, especially in the area of production.

**Thanks to this enlargement, the Group can significantly increase capacity.**

*Tobias Knoop, Managing Director  
WILD Technologies*

## NEW, BEST-EQUIPPED WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Vienna-based PHOTONIC also recently moved into a new building in the inner city, which offers some 780 square metres of office space and very good public transport connections. PHOTONIC Managing Director Stefan Zotter is happy to provide the staff with a pleasant working environment here, which includes a rooftop terrace and state-of-the-art laboratories. The Group's competence centre for the development of complex light sources is targeting 10 to 15 percent growth in the coming years, both in terms of sales and workforce. "By using 'shared desks', we can employ

additional staff of up to 50 people without having to rent additional space", says Zotter.

## NEW SITE AT THE TECHNOLOGY PARK VILLACH

In Villach, WILD recently purchased a 20,000 m<sup>2</sup> plot in the Technology Park. Based on a site concept that meets all requirements of today's working environment, WILD

plans to employ around 100 people in development and manufacturing here. "Innovation drivers like the Silicon Austria Labs centre of research excellence, the GPS training centre (a Non-Profit Personnel Service in Carinthia) or Carinthia University of Applied Sciences offer an

ideal environment to intensify knowledge transfer and push innovations", says CTO Wolfgang Warum.



# SAFE HAVEN FOR YOUR SENSITIVE MANUFACTURING PROJECTS.

**Shortages in raw materials, patchy global supply chains and a volatile geopolitical situation: In view of these challenges, Europe is regaining ground as a manufacturing location, especially for high-tech companies.**

The semiconductor and pharmaceutical industries are putting huge efforts into cutting back Europe's dependencies on suppliers like Asia or India. For other industries too, however, supply chains running along geopolitical flash points, expensive transport routes, and production in regions far away from the end markets are turning into risk factors. This is not only true for large groups of companies. Many medium-sized enterprises are currently reviewing their strategies. "Supply and energy bottlenecks have made us painfully aware of the risks of dependency. People have experienced how chip shortages can translate into longer delivery times for their new cars. Even large companies have been plagued by supply difficulties, despite their books being awash with orders", pinpoints Jörg Mayer, Managing Director of the German industrial association SPECTARIS. Therefore, an essential element of a possible solution towards greater independence is the repatriation of strategically relevant productions to Europe. It is an approach also increasingly favoured by politicians, as the European Chip Act demonstrates.

"The supply chains are and will remain international", believes Franz Aigner, WILD Head of Business Development. "Sourcing everything in Europe is not effective. A reversal of the outsourcing trend makes perfect sense, yet only in the case of sensitive, high-tech special areas such as photonic technologies, medical engineering, or high-end measurement technology". Though this step may seem challenging, it is definitely feasible with a technology partner like WILD at your side. "We have the expertise to manage such production transfers, the processes and, above all, the readiness to take on the task", stresses WILD Group CTO Wolfgang Warum. More specifically, WILD supports firms willing to return to Europe in the following five central areas:

## MANAGING PRODUCTION TRANSFER

Relocating production processes is a highly complex undertaking. "It will not suffice to just transfer material or know-how. It requires a detailed, anticipatory planning of processes, procurement, and quality management", explains Emmerich Kriegl, Head of Quality Management at WILD. Moreover, due

to government requirements, rules, proper documentation, a structured material transfer management and, last but not least, the issue of speed, every production transfer is a project that requires an experienced hand to succeed. WILD

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*Wolfgang Warum, CTO WILD GmbH*

is well-versed in efficiently integrating even complex projects into its operations. In addition to the overarching serial production transfer process, the Production Transfer Management System (PTMS) plays an important role. As a detailed project management

tool, it supports the team in managing the overall process in a structured manner. Furthermore, it features well-proven checklists to ensure no details are forgotten.

Especially in the case of medical technology products, the management of regulatory requirements works in both directions. "Together with the customer, we determine which supporting documents are required for product authorisation within the EU or overseas. Vice versa, we can provide competent assistance to partners outside the EU in creating the technical documentation for placing their products on the market within the European Union", explains Alfred Michalek, Head of Quality Management at WILD Electronics.

## THE RIGHT TEAM FOR EVERY TASK

At a later stage, expert personnel will also be required for manufacturing. Admittedly, this is a sore point for many industrial and technology firms throughout Europe. Yet WILD has a decisive advantage in this respect: "Most of our sites are located on the periphery, where qualified personnel are still much easier to find. For that reason, we are in the privileged position of having access to plenty of qualified specialists", stresses CTO Wolfgang Warum. Moreover, responsibilities are clearly distributed among the different sites within the company group. "As a result, we can put together the right team for each task at hand, from cost-optimised assembly in Trnava/Slovakia to highly specialised professionals in development and manufacturing at our sites in Austria", says Warum. ►





# HIGH IN DEMAND.

## THREE QUESTIONS FOR JÖRG MAYER

Managing Director of the German industrial association SPECTARIS



*How important is the repatriation of high-tech products to Europe with regard to supply security?*

**Mayer:** Supply and energy bottlenecks make us painfully aware of the risks of Europe's dependency and can put the brakes on important key industries. The repatriation of production to Europe is only a partial solution to this problem. We must also minimise risks through a regional diversification of procurement structures and by securing alternative suppliers.

*Some experts believe that development must follow to the site of production. Do you share this opinion?*

Definitely. Especially in medical technology, a close collaboration between suppliers and customers and also between developers and production managers results in product innovations. Moreover, an often underestimated effect of strong high-tech supply chains is the gravitational pull they have on the research landscape, that is, on universities and institutions. This is where many of the skilled specialists who will later work on innovations in the industry are trained.

*What are the hidden stumbling blocks awaiting companies that want to repatriate?*

It's important not just to overcome the obstacles of repatriating production but also to preserve industrial activity in Europe. The general conditions must be right for both objectives and that is currently not yet the case. Therefore, at SPECTARIS we want to see greater commitment from politicians toward facilitating the immigration of international skilled specialists.



## EXPERIENCE & READINESS

He knows he can rely on his staff's high level of expertise, but also on their readiness to work. "Relocation projects only work when each and every individual is fully committed to the task", Warum knows. This also includes the willingness to spend time abroad as part of a production transfer project. WILD Project Manager Alexandra Roth, for instance, was recently at a customer's site in the USA to locally manage the transfer of a medical product to Austria. This specifically involves a product used in dermatology for the visual analysis of cancer cells. Its unique feature: The confocal laser scanner microscope analyses the tissue examined within just a few minutes. As a result, patients can immediately undergo surgery in the case of a positive result. They thus avoid a second intervention and a lot of anxious waiting time.

## EXPERTISE IN MANUFACTURING-FOCUSED ENGINEERING

Jörg Mayer, Managing Director of SPECTARIS, is convinced that a strong domestic market and the close linkage between development and production constitute the basis for the industries' high innovation level. The reason is that "the feedback from customers is more direct." At WILD, too, customers benefit from the manufacturing-focused design of products. "Our understanding of manufacturing tolerances and potential cost drivers entails a series of advantages. The same applies to our combination of diverse skills - from feasibility studies to modern simulation methods and prototyping to serial production", says PHOTONIC Managing Director Manager Stefan Zotter. This is equally beneficial for companies that want to combine a repatriation of production with the modernisation of their products. WILD is the suitable partner because they can contribute their experience in re-engineering and know quite well how to keep a proven product profitable and attractive for the market's requirements.



## INTELLIGENT PROCUREMENT SOLUTIONS

Nowadays, anyone who develops a product must focus on an additional factor – the ability to deliver. One of the most important levers is a close interlinkage of procurement and development at the earliest stage possible. This is because today's specifications will have an impact on the ability to deliver three or four years down the road. Moreover, in sensitive areas such as optics components like lenses or prisms, WILD relies on European partners. The primary objective is not only to deliver reliably but also to react to fluctuations in demand without any delays where possible. To ensure this, WILD employs an entire toolbox of retrieval and ordering models. The options range from simple orders with a fixed delivery deadline to rolling orders coupled with a Vendor Managed Inventory.

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# ON TRACK TOWARDS ENERGY AUTONOMY.

The WILD Group is working hard on further reducing its carbon footprint and is focusing its efforts on generating more renewable energy and on continuous optimisation measures.

The objective is clear: We want to help preserve the liveable environment we call home for future generations. In today's everyday business, this means: We radically change our energy balance to meet our own ambitions regarding climate friendliness as soon as possible. "Sustainability is not a project with a set expiry date but rather a permanent process," stresses COO Arthur Primus. At any rate, the first and decisive steps in this direction have already been taken. Specifically, the WILD Group will develop a concept to define how CO<sub>2</sub> emissions can be reduced at all sites. Part of this consists of having a professional external partner determine the Group's carbon footprint to establish the situation as it stands at present. "Based on that, we will develop a 'Roadmap to Sustainability' which will point us towards our vision of an autonomous green electricity supply", says Primus.

An internal energy conservation team consisting of colleagues Mario Oberhauser, Harald Gindl, Mario Girstmair is already working on continuously reducing energy consumption. Efforts so far have already yielded impressive results. The new photovoltaic installation at the Völkermarkt site resulted in slashing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to 13% of the original figures. The company is currently evaluating a further expansion of its PV electricity generation. After all, the positive effects are profound and do not just impact WILD. "Since, like many others, we feed surplus power into the grid, Austria must therefore generate less electricity or import less CO<sub>2</sub>-in-

tensive electricity from other countries, though unfortunately this still remains necessary", Primus explains. In addition, the WILD Group is now becoming increasingly less dependent on purchasing CO<sub>2</sub>-neutral green electricity, which is currently in short supply due to a strong demand that is bound to grow in the coming years.

## AUTONOMOUS ON BALANCE

The site currently in planning at the Technology Park Villach will be a showcase project with regard to electricity autonomy. "We aim to create a climate-neutral company based on the state of the art in building technology", Primus reveals. One of the defined objectives is to store the energy required for electrical supply during the night, thus allowing for maximum self-sufficiency. In Trnava, too, WILD is currently developing a concept together with the landlord for a photovoltaic installation and converting the heating system to "wean ourselves off fossil energy sources".

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# WE ARE FAMILY.

**Our staff and their families and friends are at the heart of WILD Group's success. To say THANK YOU, we organised an exclusive summer party.**

In Völkermarkt, family members and friends recently seized the occasion of our Family Day to take a peek at WILD's assembly halls, clean rooms and development labs. There was one thing they definitely realised: Whether it is devices for precise eye examinations, spectrometers for sorting plastic materials or blood analysers, everything that is manufactured at WILD improves the lives of people in many areas, and the some 500 staff and their families can be rightly proud of that. The management doesn't take their commitment for granted: "With this special summer party,

we wish to say a huge THANK YOU to our entire team and all those who have their backs, who support and motivate them, and also quite rightly ask them to take well-deserved breaks", enthused COO Arthur Primus, CTO Wolfgang Warum and CFO Michael Wratschko, who were very pleased with the strong participation and the palpable solidarity at the event. "This day strengthens our determination to carry on with the many plans we have for the near future. We are on a path of growth and we look forward to being able to tackle new projects full of panache."

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## THE WILD GROUP

The WILD Group is comprised of the WILD brands which are established in Völkermarkt and Wernberg (Austria) and Trnava (Slovakia), as well as Vienna-based PHOTONIC. The technology partner develops and produces optomechatronic systems for medical and industrial applications as well as optical technologies exclusively on behalf of its customers. Approximately 500 staff members are always the first choice whenever precision and reliability are called for and wherever innovation takes place.