

January 2023

## **Company advisory board appoints Dr. Stefan Sommer as Managing Director of GÜNTHER Heisskanaltechnik GmbH**

**Dr. Stefan Sommer was appointed to the managing board of the GÜNTHER Group at the beginning of 2023. He will be in charge of GÜNTHER Heisskanaltechnik GmbH and its subsidiaries together with Siegrid Sommer, who was appointed to the managing board by company founder Herbert Günther in 2004. On 1 April 2024, Siegrid Sommer will leave the management board and move to the company's advisory board. Physicist Dr. Stefan Sommer joined the company in 2018 and has since held several positions, including as assistant to the management and head of research and development for control technology, in addition to being entrusted with administrative tasks. He was appointed as an authorized representative in 2019.**

Herbert Günther, Advisory Board Chairman of the GÜNTHER holding, comments on the flowing transition within the management board: "With her technical understanding, intuition, flair for dealing with people and her assertiveness, Siegrid Sommer has led the company to where it is today." As a doctor of physics, Dr. Stefan Sommer is in turn ideally suited to the role of Managing Director and is the optimal successor to tackle the challenges of the future. Herbert Günther states that Dr. Sommer has been familiar with the company for a long time. As an undergraduate physics student, he wrote his bachelor's thesis on "Layer thermocouples for innovative hot runner nozzles" in the company's research laboratory. In a company address to thank the workforce on his 80th birthday in 2021, Herbert Günther already announced that Dr. Sommer would be joining the management board and would assume control of it in 2024. "During his first years at GÜNTHER, Dr. Sommer gained experience of all departments in order to obtain a comprehensive overview of all procedures and processes. Through direct collaboration across all levels, Dr. Sommer was quickly able to integrate into the key decision-making processes and is optimally prepared for the new challenges that await him," states Herbert Günther. With his appointment as Managing Director at the beginning of 2023, the company embarks upon a smooth transition within the management board. Siegrid Sommer is due to retire from operations as planned in 2024 and will assume an advisory role in the company's advisory board.

### **Dr. Sommer: "Our knowledge helps us to grow"**

"As the GÜNTHER Group, our knowledge will continue to help us grow in the future," affirms Dr. Stefan Sommer. "Just as GÜNTHER has been increasing its mechanical manufacturing expertise, the Group will now also extend and deepen its electronic and digital know-how. In order to keep pace with the constant progress, GÜNTHER will establish new skills in the Group, create new synergies and open up new business areas – based on thick-film technology, for instance. The GÜNTHER Group will also merge electronics and digital technology with mechanics. The acquisition

of the Berlin-based company ESYS GmbH in 2020 already prepared the foundations within the GÜNTHER Group. After all, ESYS offers all of the skills needed for this."

### **The smart hot runner system as a goal**

The aim of the GÜNTHER Group is to make predictive maintenance – in other words, anticipatory machine maintenance – and digital monitoring and process control a reality. "Our vision is that a smart hot runner system will become so intelligent that it can use sensors to autonomously include the hot runner system's maintenance intervals in production planning based on live collected, calculated and analyzed data, and ensure that spare parts will be ordered in good time. If we avoid unforeseen maintenance and repair intervals, downtimes are significantly reduced. However, mechanical components also need constant optimization in order to meet ever-increasing demands. Customers increase output and obtain cost transparency. For this purpose, we unite the virtually perfectly mastered mechanics of the hot runner with digital intelligence in a symbiosis, thus offering our customers increased added value. The new blueMaster pro devices, which were unveiled at the 2022 K trade fair in Düsseldorf, represent the new platform for digital progress," explains Dr. Stefan Sommer.

He states that the GÜNTHER Group is capable of making customer-specific adaptations for their own smart devices in order to offer each customer and their machine manufacturers the ideal interface between hot runner system and machine. The internal digitization of existing processes must not be forgotten either. Together with a large team, Dr. Sommer is already preparing the conversion of the ERP system, which will involve scrutinizing, restructuring and digitizing all business processes.

### **blueMaster compact and pro**

"The blueMaster compact without display makes it possible to remotely monitor compliance with quality parameters in the injection moulding process with a simple user interface on a smartphone or tablet. The intuitive menu navigation even enables inexperienced users to set up a hot runner system. The blueMaster pro is designed for all future technology. It enables communication between all the machines involved in a process, controls the machines in a network and connects the network to a higher level in order to control it based on data exchange with the other level. In the future, one machine in the network will control the other machines," says Dr. Stefan Sommer, explaining the qualitative change. "We are not only talking about forwarding data, but also about networking production. The machines communicate with each other and predictive maintenance becomes reality. This is digitization and industry 4.0."

### **"Investment in BlueFlow® plant is on the agenda"**

He also comments that expanding production of the energy-efficient, patented BlueFlow® heating systems is on the agenda. As a result of high energy prices, energy-saving heating systems and energy-optimized hot runner systems play a crucial role in the future of injection moulding. Compared to conventional heating solutions offered by competitors, BlueFlow® heating enables power savings of up to 50%, making it particularly relevant for customers today. Combined with the smart control technology, he believes it enables optimal cost savings.

### **Siegrid Sommer: "Success is to the merit of all employees"**

Siegrid Sommer is in no doubt that the company's success is the result of the efforts of all employees. "Above all, this is thanks to the people who, through their dedication and wealth of ideas, constantly redefine the limits of what is technically feasible. Swift, flexible action, innovative products, responding to customer wishes, creating new markets, ensuring rational production and maintaining high quality standards continue to be among our top priorities."

### **About GÜNTHER Hot Runner Technology**

As a technological leader in the field of hot and cold runner technology with more than 240 employees, GÜNTHER produces innovative, user-friendly injection systems for the plastics and silicone processing industry. Its international customers include leading companies in the automotive, electronic and electrical engineering, health technology, packaging and consumer goods industries.



Dr. Stefan Sommer (right) was appointed to the GÜNTHER Heisskanaltechnik GmbH management board by company founder at the beginning of 2023. The physicist takes over from Siegrid Sommer, who will be stepping down from the management board in 2024 and moving to the company's advisory board.  
(Image source: GÜNTHER)

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