

Edition 2023

The magazine of the Kern Group

best of kern



01. kernMail

Kern 3200 DRV Bund

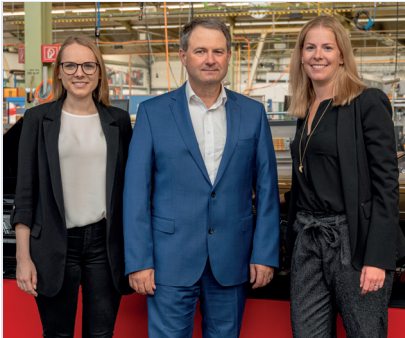
02. kernPack

Best of LogiMAT

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Kern Group Repositions itself

Editorial



From left to right: Caroline Kern (President of the Board of Directors), Stefan Wüthrich (CEO Kern Group), Barbara Kern (Vice President of the Board of Directors).

Dear Readers,

Filled with energy and enthusiasm as well as a great sense of optimism and gratitude - this is how one could describe the current emotions within Kern Group. Gratitude towards Uli Kern, who has played a decisive role in shaping Kern's success story over decades. A spirit of optimism, a thirst for action and enthusiasm for all that we have planned for the future. Despite all the changes, Kern stands firmly by its roots and remains in family hands.

The young third generation has ambitious plans for the future. In particular, a cultural change within the entire organization is to be driven

forward. We are striving to close ranks with all bodies and at all levels, and it is already clear how trusting and constructively the Board of Directors and the Executive Board work together. Appreciation and exchange at eye level are the be-all and end-all for interaction within the Kern Group and with our customers: The Group wants to present itself internationally as a strong and agile unit.

The focus is on customer orientation: The satisfaction of our customers is our top priority, and we see how the forward-looking platform strategy has proven itself in the best possible way in day-to-day business. We are pleased with our order statuses which provides great incentives for the future.

As a prosperous and innovative company, we consider ourselves fortunate to be able to build on our employees. In addition to the continuous development of our Kern product portfolio, we want to successfully continue the long history of our family business by

modernizing our internal structures - adapted to an agile working environment. The basis for this success is our employees as well as our long-standing partners and customers. Together, we have grown over the decades, also and above all thanks to the innovative strength and reliability of our systems, which have always set standards.

To ensure that this remains the case in the future, we are also re-organizing our personnel: Caroline and Barbara Kern together with Stefan Wüthrich form the management trio in the strategic and operative business. The supportive leaders and staff involved are presented on pages 10 - 11.

You can count on one thing: Kern will continue to stand reliably by your side, because we still have a lot of plans. We are tackling the challenges with full force. Let us shape a successful future together.

Your Stefan Wüthrich

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"best of kern" digital version



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Kern 3200 Delivers to the DRV Bund Directly

The first test for the new Kern 3200 followed immediately after the operators had been instructed: at the Berlin headquarters of the German Pension Insurance Association (DRV), things got serious for the freshly installed system; a real cold start, so to speak, which the Kern 3200 mastered with brilliance: "Since we had an unexpectedly high dispatch volume at the time of installation, including additional night shifts, we simply took the machine into production and it ran," reports Markus Burmeister, head of the printing and inserting center.

The latest innovation from Kern is still at operating temperature because it delivers reliably. "The Kern 3200 has all the features we need, partly because we wanted another multi-format backup," says Burmeister. The new system will be used for C6/5, C5 and C4 inserting and replaces the previous Kern 3500. This seamless transition played an important role for those responsible, after all, they are calculating with around 20 million insertions this year. Already in the first few weeks, more

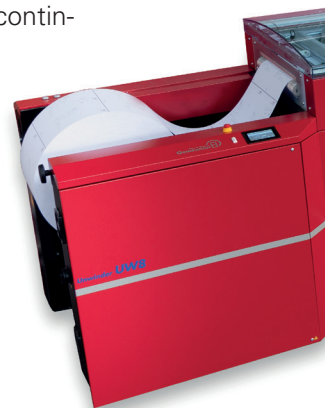


From left to right: Michael Horch (Area Manager Kern GmbH and Head of BU kernPack worldwide), Markus Burmeister (Head of Printing and Inserting Centre DRV Bund), Jens Hartmann (Project Manager Kern GmbH), Rainer Rindfleisch (General Manager Kern GmbH)

than 1.8 million items have been processed on the system.

The fact that Kern systems are part of the machine package goes back to the beginning of the 1990s. Consequently, the latest invest-

ment is now also a system from Switzerland and continues this successful history: "We were able to upgrade our existing Kern 3500 to the Kern



3200 quite easily,” explains Markus Burmeister, who particularly emphasizes the Kern-typical linear design, the technical reliability as well as the modular construction and the associated expandability of the upgrade. He praises the performance of the Kern systems as a “guaranteed investment protection”. The extremely smooth running and the associated low noise emission were particularly noticeable from the first moment of operation.

For the already experienced Kern operators at DRV Bund, the handling is very easy, as they are familiar with the basic structure of the system. The new technicians were quickly trained: The system was installed in mid-January 2023, the operators were trained in the first three weeks, and pro-

ductive use began at the beginning of February. “The machine’s design is modular, logical and thus user-friendly,” Burmeister sums it up.

In any case, the overall conclusion of those responsible is: “The decision for the Kern 3200 was the right one and we would make it the same way again”.

Deutsche Rentenversicherung Bund is the largest German pension insurance institution with headquarters in Berlin and locations in Brandenburg, Gera, Stralsund and Würzburg.

Almost 25,000 employees look after around 23 million insured persons and almost 10 million pensioners in Germany and abroad.

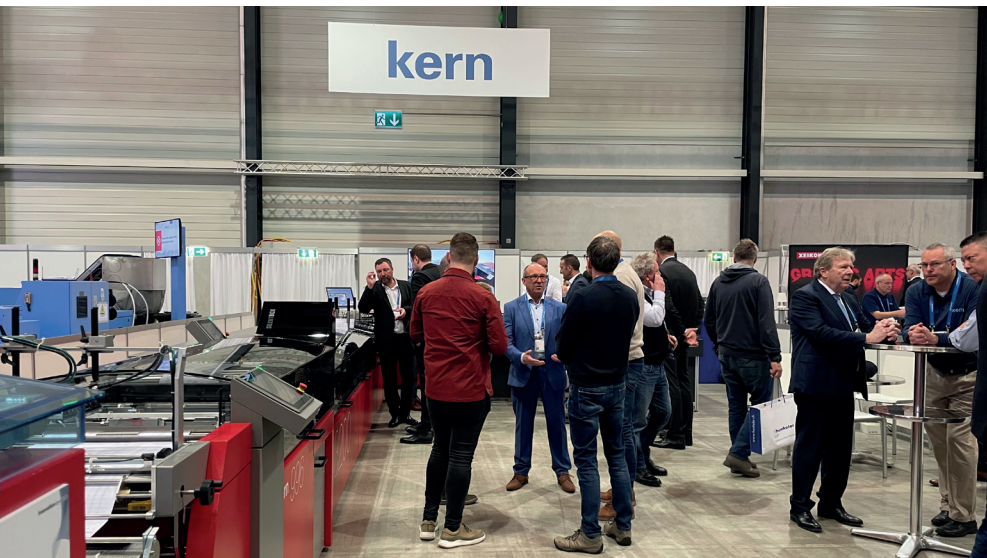
The configuration of the Kern 3200 in detail: the overall system consists of a Hunkeler UW6 unwinder, a Kern 996 cutter, a grouping station, a system channel, 4 inserting stations, an inserting module, a belt stacker for C4 insertions and an HSW mailbox system with Schuma carriage loading. A stitching module will soon be retrofitted. The unwinder, the cutter and the mailbox system with carriage loading were taken over from the previously installed Kern 3500.

drv-bund.de



Hunkeler Innovationdays

A lot of attention for Kern's trade fair appearance



Interview with Daniel Wenger during the Hunkeler Innovationdays about the Kern 3200 *flash*: please scan the QR code.

Kern made a highly regarded appearance at the Hunkeler Innovationdays in Lucerne.

The focus was on the Kern 3200 *flash*, which opens a new dimension in modular multi-format inserting systems. In particular, the new platform concept from Kern met with great interest: "With this we have an excellent basis of three inserting systems systems, with which we are well positioned for the future," says Daniel Wenger, Head of kernMail.

Lucerne was the meeting place for the digital printing elite gathered in Lucerne with european and world premieres. In this attractive environment, the Kern 3200, which plays a pioneering role in terms of

modularity, flexibility and reliability is the ideal solution for complex inserting jobs in the medium to high output range.

The Kern 3200 *flash* was thus a welcome guest at the Hunkeler Innovationdays: "All four days were very well attended and we were able to present and demonstrate the new inserting system to many existing customers, but also to many interested parties" says Daniel Wenger and adds: "Thanks to the reliability and efficiency and the low noise level during operation, the system was well received by all trade visitors. We are very optimistic about the future of the system." Daniel Wenger, Head of Business Unit kernMail and member of the Kern AG Execu-

tive Board, sums up: "We are very satisfied with the response at the Hunkeler Innovationdays. There was great interest in the Kern 3200. The other Kern business units were also in great demand, and we were able to present our portfolio to a large audience. This direct contact with customers is very important to us as a family business. We would like to thank Hunkeler for an excellently organized trade fair."

hunkeler.ch

A LogiMAT of records!



LogiMAT 2023 builds on last year's success and continues to grow. Overall, this is the best result in the history of the intralogistics trade fair. With a share of 35 percent among the exhibitors, companies from 39 nations underline the internationality of the trade fair.

LogiMAT 2023 closed its doors in April with a significant increase in visitors compared to the previous year. During the three days of the trade fair, a total of 62,343 trade visitors (+25 %) came to the Stuttgart exhibition center. This means that the current event even surpassed the pre-pandemic result of 2019.

The Kern Group was represented with an information stand at the LogiMAT in Stuttgart. The international trade fair for intralogistics solutions and process management opened its doors from 25 to 27 April 2023. The largest annual intralogistics trade fair was the ideal setting for the group of com-



Michael Horch, Head of Business Unit kernPack and Arnoud Schreutelkamp, Sr. Account Manager Kern Nederland B.V.

panies to present the award-winning multi-format packaging system PackOnTime 2box. Various samples of individual shipping packaging were presented. Extensive information material and a functional model were also available.

The PackOnTime 2box has already won three awards - the German Packaging Award in Gold, the Swiss Packaging Award and the title "LogiMAT BEST PRODUCT 2020" - and has convinced several expert juries.



A demo system has been installed at the German headquarters in Bensheim in southern Hessen and is ready for live presentations.

packontime.ch

COVÉA: Service quality comes first!



Interview with Marion Capdeville - Head of the Saran Publishing Centre - and Olivier Regerat - Head of Printing & Manufacturing.

The Covéa Group is a solid and dynamic financial anchor. It is the largest property and liability insurer in France with its three brands MAAF, MMA and GMF and the tenth largest reinsurer in the world with its PartnerRe brand. The Saran site processes 12.8 million letters and produces 36 million pages per year.

You renewed your machinery in 2022. Why did you do this? What decisions did you make?

M. Capdeville: After the termination of a maintenance contract for one of our machines and due to the heterogeneity of our machine fleet (three different suppliers), we decided to launch a tender to harmonize our machine fleet at the end of 2021. We were look-

ing for an agile inserting solution, especially capable of processing both OMR and OCR codes, and a machine that was ergonomic and automated to process all types of envelopes quickly.

As a final very important point, we were also looking for a high quality of service. We chose two Kern 1600 systems because they met our needs better than competing

solutions to handle the many small batches; they are more ergonomic and quieter. In addition, the service offer met our needs exactly.

O. Regerat: In addition to choosing Swiss technology, it was important to us from a CSR point of view to invest in a solution manufactured in Europe by a family business. The specifications were particularly well elaborated, our needs were perfectly analyzed and understood; the financial offer was also in line with our budget.

M. Capdeville: Today, we have achieved our goals in terms of flexibility and production rate. The operators have become familiar with the machines very easily and quickly. The automatic settings have changed their lives! The MMA workflows consist of many small batches that are now processed easily and quickly. We are very happy with our choice.

What is your relationship with the Kern teams?

M. Capdeville: The relationship with Thierry Duval, Philippe James and the entire regional team is excellent. We have full confidence. The support team, especially Sylvère Peccard and Michel Beauvais, were present especially during the installation and then during the training, hats off to them too for the work done! Everything, from dismantling to installation, was very well organized.

What are your future development priorities in desktop publishing for 2023?

O. Regerat: In terms of strategy, efficiency is the number one priority today; so, we continue to focus on postal mass processing. Our goal is to adapt our processing lines so that we are able to submit CI Premium.

Another goal is to maintain the volume of mail processed internally. The disappearance of the Green Card, a document that must be sent to customers at least once a year, has been announced for 2024. This also justifies our decision for more agile machines, because we know that the trend is more and more towards small solutions, towards the “grocery shop” and less and less towards large, continuous flows as in the past.

One last word to conclude?

M. Capdeville: We congratulate ourselves every day on our choice: both in terms of the inserting solutions and the supplier. The quality of the solutions and the professionalism of the staff make Kern a true partner for us.

covea.com



Photos: William Parra

Kern Group Repositions itself for the Future

Board of Directors

Executive Board



Caroline Kern



Stefan Wüthrich



Daniel Wenger



Barbara Kern



Daniel Blau



Daniel Ebener

The Board of Directors (BoD) of Kern AG consists of experienced people. The competent committee combines a wealth of knowledge with an entrepreneurial spirit.

Caroline Kern is the President of the Board of Directors, Barbara Kern the Vice-President. In addition to Caroline and Barbara Kern,

the members of the Board of Directors are Beat Christen, Frank Gurtner and David Rotzetter.

The new Executive Board is made up of competence and experience: Stefan Wüthrich heads the executive committee as CEO. Daniel Wenger (Head of Business Unit *KernMail*), Daniel Blau (CFO),

Daniel Ebener (Head of Business Unit *kernService*), Marcel Stalder (Chief Technology Officer), Markus Hostettler (Head of Supply Chain Management), Markus Burkhard (CFO Kern AG) and Bernhard Lengacher (Head of HR & Transformation Kern Group) complete the Executive Board team.

Marketing Team International



From left to right: Elvira Schäfer-Selinger, Félicien Klein, Solange Tordjman, Rainer Rindfleisch

As Managing Director of Kern GmbH, Rainer Rindfleisch has maintained a strong leadership presence for 30 years. Since February first of this year, he has also held the position of Head of International Marketing for the Kern Group. He is supported by an experienced team: Solange Tordjman, Directive Marketing, Kern France, Félicien Klein, Marketing Kern AG and Elvira Schäfer-Selinger, Head of Marketing Kern GmbH.



New to the team is Kara Cunningham from Kern Inc. USA, who joined the Kern Group in May 2023 as Marketing Communication Specialist.

Stefan Wüthrich, CEO Kern Group: "Mr. Rindfleisch and I have been working together for many years and I appreciate his willingness to take on this role. Together with the marketing team, he will significantly support the strengthening of the Kern brand and the expansion of our market presence both in our classic inserting environment and in the new market for packaging and logistics solutions."



Lucerne is typically Swiss: a clear blue lake, snow-capped mountains and a medieval old town.

Lucerne is the capital of the Swiss canton of the same name. The city has 82,620 inhabitants. Lucerne is the social and cultural center of Central Switzerland.

In the field of education, it is the seat of the University of Lucerne, the Lucerne University of Teacher Education and the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, among others. Events with supra-regional appeal include the Lucerne Carnival and the

Lucerne Festival. Lucerne is an important tourist destination in Switzerland, on the one hand because of its location on Lake Lucerne and its proximity to the Alps, and on the other hand thanks to sights such as the Chapel Bridge and the Swiss Museum of Transportation.

The city of Lucerne lies on the north-western shore of Lake Lucerne at the outflow of the river Reuss. The Reuss divides

the city into the old town and the new town. The Chapel Bridge with the water tower and the Spreuer Bridge connect the old and new town. The exclave Bürgenstock also belongs to Lucerne. The location between the lake and the mountains Pilatus and Rigi is particularly picturesque and favored Lucerne's development as a tourist city and early stronghold of tourism as from 1840.

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