

Issue 01, July 2016

# theMA

The company magazine of Theben AG



fit for future  
We are living for change

## CONEXA

And why it's so important

## Werner Knies

Questions to the Chairman of the Supervisory Board

## And the winner is ...

German Brand Award 2016 for Theben



# f3

FIT FOR  
FUTURE



IN FOCUS

## f3 – fit for future

We are living for change

**Only those who change can remain true to themselves, and also successful: We're doing both.** In mid February Theben took on six projects which will be critical for the future of our company. In the present and the next issue of theMA we will be discussing how these projects are progressing: what we are planning, what we have already achieved and how we will benefit from it all in the future.

### Our objective:

We want 2016 to be a good year for Theben. To this end, we are putting everything to the test and setting our course for the future. The projects at a glance:

### Project 1: Purchasing

The team led by Thomas Sprauer and Markus Gauss is working towards reducing the materials ratio and will also discuss this plan with our suppliers.

### Project 2: Cost reduction

What do we urgently need? What can we afford? And where can we find emerging potential for savings? Rudi Soballa and Werner Maier shed some light on costs and show us where we could be more efficient.

### Project 3: Growth

What do our customers need? The team headed by Timo Schmidt explores the potential and introduces specific measures for boosting our contribution margin and reducing our manufacturing costs.

### Project 4: Leadership

Who is leading? And how? Leadership is a question of style which is being addressed by the team led by Thomas Sell. The first steps in this regard have already been taken. This includes the expanded leadership team just as much as leading with principles.

### Project 5: The innovation process

The core team led by Lothar Saal and Ludwig Köttig is encouraging collaboration between Sales, Product Management and Development, while also reviewing all of our processes and interfaces.

### Project 6: CONEXA

CONEXA is THE future project of Theben, led by Jürgen Littwin. Read all about it in the feature article of the current issue of theMA (see right-hand page).

IN A WORD

## theMA,

dear colleagues, is our new company magazine. With a large-scale format but featuring clarity in our analysis. And what name could be more suitable than "theMA", standing for "Theben" and the German word for colleague, "MitArbeiter" (engl. „colleagues“) theMA also stands for the themes that we want to put on the agenda – all the good things we have achieved. It also includes things that we could have done better, as well as the things we have planned for the future.

After the events of the past month, it's important to point out where exactly Theben is headed. This is why we are now looking to get a human-resources perspective for the fields of technology and development. We have also launched f3 – fit for future – a programme which will improve our standing in every respect. We will be introducing individual projects in subsequent issues. But in the current issue, we will provide an overview of the overall product range, starting with CONEXA.

Our half-yearly figures have also shown that f3 is already bearing fruit: we are right on schedule and have largely achieved our objectives. But this is not just because of our ability to make sound decisions, but is mainly down to the contributions of our employees who give it their all: we offer our heartfelt gratitude for your commitment. Let's keep up the good work.

Moreover, Theben is and always will be a family-owned business with a clear commitment to the wider area of Haigerloch in Germany and with a keen sense of responsibility which accompanies this family-owned status.

In this spirit, we wish you a pleasant summer season, a restful holiday period and a great start into the second half of the year.

Yours,  
Thomas Sell





# CONEXA

And why it's so important for us

The CONEXA Smart Meter Gateway is the communication unit in an intelligent measurement system. It collects together the measurement values from all connected meters for electricity, gas or water, processes them and sends them directly to the energy provider for billing. It couldn't be easier or smarter – and this is where we're at the top of our game. Why is CONEXA so important for Theben? It is our chance to occupy a new market on a sustainable basis.

Imagine if readings of your overall domestic consumption of electricity or gas are automatically taken, calculated according to your specific tariff and sent by secure connection to your energy provider. You no longer have to worry about anything; domestic maintenance costs to a certain extent sort themselves out. This makes the consumers' lives much easier. Further still, it improves the transparency of consumption and sheds light on where potential energy savings can be achieved.

In addition, the Smart Meter Gateway assumes control over future distributed energy supply on the basis of renewable energies. To good to be true? Not at all. With the Act on the Digitisation of the Energy Turnaround, the topic is high on the agenda promoted by the German Federal Government.

### 2017 will be a decisive year

In fact, numerous political representatives for Theben, along with member of the Bundestag Thomas Bareiß (CDU), the state parliament representative and Minister for Economics for Baden-Württemberg Dr Nicole Hoffmeister-Kraut (CDU), Angela Godawa (SPD) and the Regional Administrator Martin Pauli (CDU), in order to discuss the possibilities and potential for the new Smart Meter Gateways (SMGW). The extensive application of these SMGWs for large-scale consumers using 6000 kWh per year and above is planned to begin in 2017. The use of such systems is optional for small consumers.

### Taking on a new volume business

The decisive factor here is that Theben has the opportunity of becoming a lead player. Over the past five years, we have succeeded in making a name for ourselves in this market. To this end, we have established a new product area, acquired new development technologies such as SCRUM and invested in development at a fundamental level. This is a challenge which has demanded a lot from us and will continue to do so. The fact is that today we are among the top 3 companies in this market – with a claim to market leadership. And because few competitors are represented on the market, our opportunities for growth are high.

### Summary

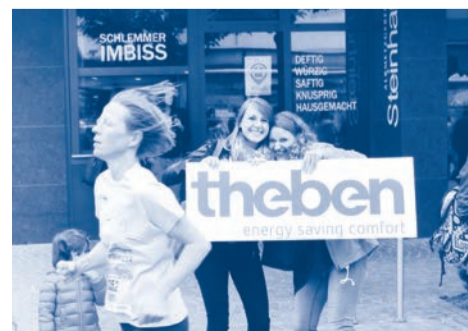
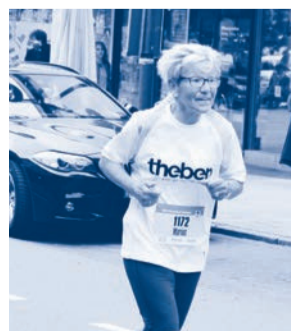
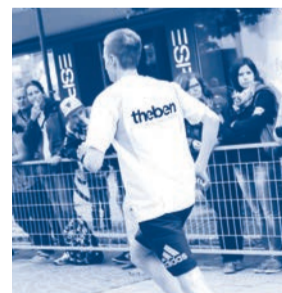
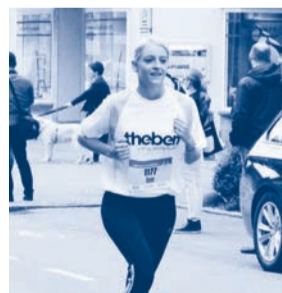
We are investing in a new market. We are taking on a new volume business, and we are at the forefront of this market. In order to achieve our objectives, we need the full commitment of all employees involved in this area. However, when we reach our objectives we safeguard our position, build the foundations for sustainable business growth over the coming years and open up areas for further product innovations. And we think that these objectives are something worth fighting for.



ABOUT US

# On your marks, Theben. Get set. Go!

Our team demonstrates top-class ability in the AOK company run



5.8 km in just 22 minutes – that was all the time our fastest runners needed to reach the finish line at the AOK company run on 2nd June 2016 in the German town of Balingen. Congratulations go to Mats Herl, Matthias Schimminger and all of our colleagues who represented Theben so energetically.

In total, over 1000 runners from Balingen and the surrounding areas took part in the company run organised by insurance provider AOK. 11 of those at the starting line represented Theben:

- Anne Maier
- Ruwen Konzelmann
- Olaf Stepins
- Nikolas Herl
- Jannik Herl
- Mats Herl
- Beate Soltek
- Prica Snjezana
- Matthias Schimminger
- Jana Nagel
- Gertrud Schöntag

**Congratulation! Well done!  
You have done us all proud!**



# With Werner Knies

## Questions to the Chairman of the Supervisory Board of Theben AG

**theMA: Mr Knies, when you look back at how your career has developed, what would you say motivates you?**

**Werner Knies:** If like me you have spent a long time working in corporate finance, you will often be confronted with times where things are not going so well in the company. And then you find that this is often because of management issues. I've personally concluded from this that we have to engage more with the organisation as a whole. This also applies to Theben, where we are faced with overcoming some huge challenges: leadership, culture, performance and the strategic questions regarding where Theben will be in the future.

**theMA: What do you consider your role to be as member of the Supervisory Board?**

**Werner Knies:** It is my intention to work together with the Management Board to give the company the tools to shape the future. And especially with regard to Theben, I accept the need to balance interests between the shareholders, the Supervisory Board, the Management Board and the organisation. I also recognise the necessity of having a dialogue in which everyone understands what others' needs are. What are the objectives of the shareholders? What does the company need? What kind of investment is required? Of course, intervening directly in the operational business is not the right thing to do. This is the responsibility of the Management Board. However, it is also incumbent on the Supervisory Board to offer advice on strategic questions, while occasionally posing unpleasant ones. What values are upheld in the leadership of this company? What kind of culture do we want to have? We are currently working very hard to turn Theben into a community driven by values. And this will keep us busy for several months yet.

**theMA: What potential do you now see in Theben?**

**Werner Knies:** Theben is still too inward-facing. There is a lot of bureaucracy and a distinctive process-oriented way of thinking, but there is room for improvement when it comes to customer focus. In terms of innovations, all too seldom do we ask our customers what they actually need and what they could really benefit from. I can see more potential here to communicate these aspects further and with greater enthusiasm externally. This also includes the potential of our employees, who have a wealth of ideas which we want to tap into more often. This is where I see the most potential. This is certainly also linked to factors such as an appreciative approach, a less hierarchical way of thinking, more teamwork and participation. We are a family-owned business. And as such we meet the highest requirements for achieving these objectives. Increasing our customer focus, strengthening international ties and having a presence in a strong future market with CONEXA – if we achieve these, we will also be successful in the future.

**theMA: What motivates you personally?**

**Werner Knies:** I love to read, and I never stop studying. This conceals a particular

conception of humanity: for me, a person is an entity which is constantly developing itself. Moreover, this process never stops. I also think there's a distinction here between inner and outer development. Outer development relates to career and professional development, but inner development is just as important, in my view. This inner development is defined in philosophical, spiritual and psychological terms. The inspiration for this way of thinking comes not just from Goethe and Schiller, but also thinkers such as Rudolf Steiner, Krishnamurti or intellectual figures like Eckhart Tolle. I think it is also important to take this conception of humanity into account for personal and organisational development.

**theMA: What objectives would you like to have achieved in five years' time?**

**Werner Knies:** To have helped shape the future, assume responsibility, incorporate quality into decision-making processes and to have secured jobs for employees – these are important for me. When my employees say, "Here I am human, and this is where I work", while seeing Theben as a reliable employer and partner, then I'm a happy man.

When my employees say, "Here I am human, and this is where I work", then I'm a happy man.

**Werner Knies (63)** is married and has two grown-up children. After undergoing commercial training, he studied business administration and was employed in controlling for various companies – he has had a passion for mathematics and arithmetic since his early school days. More recently, he was employed at Lapp Group for 20 years, 15 years of which were spent on the Management Board. During this time, initially as CFO, he was also in charge of finance, before he was made responsible for personnel and organisational development as the Chief of Human Resources for the last three years. In early 2016, he was involved in the Supervisory Board of Lapp Holding AG. Since 2012, he has been a member of the Supervisory Board at Theben AG and has acted as its Chairman since 1st January 2016.



## Get involved, stay healthy

Every two years:  
the Theben health days



Should cake be served with cream or rather accompanied by apple and banana? How healthy is my muesli and how much fat do sausages contain? These and many other questions were answered at Theben's health days: here, we measured the food we eat in terms of sugar cubes and knobs of butter to understand what's really inside.

However, the themed days offered much more than just pertinent information regarding fat, sugar and what really makes a healthy diet. Our designated health officer Sabine Wöll has put together an extensive programme with the active support of our hard-working trainees and the local AOK insurance provider.

Good nutrition and intraocular pressure measurement

If you have long wanted to know how high your intraocular pressure is, you can have it measured here. The measurement allows conclusions to be drawn regarding the potential for glaucoma. It's no wonder that many employees have taken up the opportunity to undergo a free test that they would otherwise have to pay for.

The information on cardiovascular diseases aroused particular interest. And we were also asked if we might offer artery screening in the future. So there was something there for everyone – even if it was just taking part in the apple quiz organised by AOK.



german  
brand  
award  
'16  
winner

## EVENTS

# And the winner is ...

## German Brand Award 2016 for our brand image

**Attentiveness is our core value. It shapes our corporate identity and shows in our brand image. And this has again garnered recognition: we have received another award; this time it's the German Brand Award 2016, which is something we can be very proud of.**

More modern, more valuable, more in tune with emotion – these were the objectives that we wanted to achieve with our new appearance. Looking back, we can say that today we have succeeded in this endeavour. Not just because we can prove this ourselves, but rather because respected industry circles have once again confirmed this to us.

"This is now already the third prestigious award for our corporate identity and the associated corporate design," explains member of the Management Board, Thomas Sell. "After winning the iF award and the German Brand Award last year, we are now delighted to be accorded another honour: winner of the 'Excellence in Brand Strategy, Management and Creation' category".

### **Awarded by the German Design Council**

The German Design Council initiated the competition. Awards are presented for innovative brands, consistent market leadership and sustainable brand communication, as well as individuals and companies who assume a leading role in the world of brands. Awarding is decided by an independent and expert jury comprising brand

experts from agencies, industry, academia and the media. Those who can prevail against the high-calibre competition in the demanding nomination process have successfully proven to be among the very best.

Our brand image can claim this. The brand strategy makes our brand's core value of attentiveness and our brand promise "Energy saving comfort" come alive by incorporating technology into everyday life. Value, design and the advantages of KNX, timer switches, and presence and motion detectors are key factors in the satisfaction of those who use, apply and operate our products and systems – people like you and me.

The German Brand Award is the accolade awarded for successful market leadership in Germany: Theben is being accorded the title of winner in the "Excellence in Brand Strategy, Management and Creation" category.

**Image:** Pride at the German Brand Award 2016: Thomas Sell, Paul Schwenk and Stephanie van der Velden, as well as Ann Seger, Sebastian Schnell and Jessica Laub from the Schindler Parent brand agency, which was entrusted with the development, design and implementation of corporate identity and corporate design.

All of the prize-winners can be found at [www.german-brand-award.com](http://www.german-brand-award.com)

Theben hosts the health days once every two years. And this year's event is the fifth of its kind so far. At the same time as the health days, which were held over a period of two days at the Hohenbergstraße and Madertal sites, health week was also held in the canteen. Pure, sensible nutrition, all week long. Our heartfelt gratitude goes to the canteen team, who took good care of us so well with smoothies and delicious breads.

### **Occupational health management gets top priority**

Paul Schwenk, member of the Supervisory Board and head of Marketing and Business Development, was impressed by the positive response the event received: "Occupational health management is very important to us," he explains to the Hohenzollerischen Zeitung newspaper, "and it will also be expanded in the future." Here he refers to the comprehensive range of courses that will begin at Theben in the autumn. These courses add to the weekly spinal exercises that have been running for many years now. Anyone who wishes to can still sign up – there are still places left. So why not get involved and stay healthy.

## Already signed up?

You can still register for the taster courses we will be offering as part of Theben health management by 29th July 2016. Take up our offer and stay healthy.

### **Presentations**

- Vitamins, 21st Sept. 2016
- Mindful eating, 10th Nov. 2016

### **Taster courses**

- Qigong, 15th Sept. 2016
- Attentiveness, 27th Sept. 2016
- Yoga, 27th Oct. 2016
- Autogenic training, 17th Nov. 2016
- Progressive muscle relaxation, 8th Dec. 2016

It's free to take part, but does not count towards your working hours (please have this stamped). You can choose more than one session.

Please send your application by internal mail or e-mail to Sabine Wöll ([sabine.woell@theben.de](mailto:sabine.woell@theben.de)).



# Brilliant minds with fresh ideas

A new boost for Sales



**Rainer Uez**  
Sales Manager,  
Commerce in Germany

Rainer Uez has been leading our German sales team and the sales agencies since 1st January 2016. Has worked at Theben for over 20 years, so he knows the business, the products and the German market better than anybody. After completing his masters as a "trade electrician" in 1993, Rainer Uez was employed as a sales representative in the Kling sales agency in Mannheim, Germany. This was how he first came across Theben products – and this connection to Theben became stronger and stronger over the years. In 1997, he sat the examination for the officially recognised qualification in trade business administration, after which he was appointed Technical Sales Manager. In October 2002, he assumed responsibility for sales in Nordbaden/Pfalz as the first in-house sales representative in this region. In January 2006, Rainer Uez became Sales Manager for South Germany, followed by the northern regions of Hamburg, Schleswig-Holstein and Mecklenburg-West Pomerania from 2008 and then Lower Saxony and Bremen in 2015. It is therefore only logical that he is now the Sales Manager for the whole of Germany.



**Arn Eberlein**  
Centre-East Sales Manager

Arn Eberlein, who was appointed to his post as Centre-East Sales Manager on 1st June 2016, is still quite new at Theben. He learned his trade from the bottom up: after acquiring his masters as an electrician, he took on the industrial economist qualification. He was then initially employed as a branch manager in electrical wholesale trade, then as a Sales Manager for the Ruhr region of Germany. It's no wonder that Arn Eberlein has an extensive range of knowledge in the wholesale sector. However, he has also gained many years of experience in manufacturing: as a former customer service technician at Vaillant, he is familiar with the challenges in the field and knows what solutions are required by the market. He also benefited later from this practical knowledge as a Sales Advisor and Key Account Manager in the field of electric heat pumps at Vaillant. Now, we're delighted to say, he is using all of this knowledge for us.



**Günter Schatz**  
South Sales Manager

An experienced salesman, Günter Schatz assumed responsibility for our sales team in South Germany on 1st March 2016. Having already been employed by Theben as a sales representative in South Bavaria since 2006, his sales experience goes back over 20 years starting with his time in the GRAWE sales agency. There he supervised the product-specific training for the electrical trade in the field of KNX. It was during this time that he made his first contacts with Theben AG. His extensive knowledge of technology, projects and markets is based on years of experience he gained in the planning and commissioning of process-technology systems both domestically and abroad. His professional career began classically with training to become a trade electrician and an industrial electrical system installer. This was later followed by his studies in the field of electrical engineering. So these are the best prerequisites for the new scope of duties.



## This is what a winner looks like!

The winners of our  
Theben sweepstake  
Euro 2016

Euro 2016 is over – and Portugal won! Surprising. Unexpected. Lucky. Congratulations. However, we are celebrating in particular for the three European champions from here at our company.

In this year's Theben Euro 2016 sweepstake, Steffen Hornung, Lothar Saal and Julia Bodenmüller came in the top three places. We applaud your unmistakable intuition for successful gameplay.

The Theben sweepstake has been held at all big tournaments since Euro 2008. The score is calculated each day while the tournament is running. The stake for all games is 5 euros. This time, 26 Theben employees took part overall. The winners have to buy a round for everyone taking part. Anyone who wants to be among the lucky ones next time can sign up at: [thema@theben.de](mailto:thema@theben.de)

**The winners of our  
Euros sweepstake:**

**1st place** · Steffen Hornung

**2nd place** · Lothar Saal

**3rd place** · Julia Bodenmüller



**theMA is a product born from passion and dedication. The people behind it:**

**Editorial team** · Paul Schwenk, Carmen Holderied, Stephanie van der Velden  
**Responsible Editor** · Paul Schwenk

theMA explores topics that inspire Theben employees. If you would like to suggest a topic, send us an e-mail at [thema@theben.de](mailto:thema@theben.de). Alternatively, contact us directly.

**Publisher**

Theben AG · Hohenbergstraße 32  
72401 Haigerloch · Germany

Management Board: Thomas Sell  
Chairman of the Supervisory Board  
Werner Knies