

## 50-Year Company Anniversary of Probst

It was in 1961 that Ernst Probst founded a company for the production of grabs and material handling equipment and started work in a small workshop in Erdmannhausen.



*Company founder Ernst Probst and his wife Helene*

From his previous job as the manager of a metalworking shop in a block plant, he recognised at an early stage that there is a need for better solutions in the area of handling concrete building materials.

This was a field where own ideas could be realised and tested at the same time.

The first series product came onto the market in 1964: the „Polyp 64 mechanical grab for tower crane operation“. With many custom-made products and further standard products such as the AKZ block loading grab for truck loading cranes, things continued to improve. The workshop quickly became too small and a larger production hall was acquired in Bahnhofstraße in Erdmannhausen. From here, the business later moved to the industrial park and more and more employees were recruited.

In 1978, after his degree, the son Martin Probst, joined the company as a graduate Mechanical Engineer.

The following insights came up quickly:

A huge rationalisation effect can be achieved on the construction sites in the installation of concrete and natural stone products with what are often smart handtools and mechanical grabs.



*The „Polyp 64“ mechanical grab for tower crane operation in use*

Moreover, even at that time, Probst already put special emphasis on ergonomics to be taken into account in this work and that humanisation of the work could also be achieved alongside rationalisation. However, this met with interest from relatively few bosses. Nonetheless, those who used these devices were already on the winning side.

The other insight: builders in other countries also have to struggle in their everyday work. Aided by the English and French language abilities of founder Ernst Probst, the markets in neighbouring countries then all over Europe, the USA and Africa were served from the outset. It could soon be said that the small business had become an internationally recognised producer of handling and laying technology for construction materials.

The first attendance at the most important international trade fair for the construction industry at that time, BAUMA 1980, clearly demonstrated that Probst was on the right track. Many new contacts were made, new sales partners were found and more and more products were added to the range.

On many construction sites both within Germany and abroad, more and more Probst products were used and further customers gained. The benefit and quality of Probst equipment successfully convinced customers and continue to do so today.



*Launch of the new VM 203 installation machine at GaLaBau 1988 in Nuremberg*

Even since the 70s, experience with mechanical paver installation grabs was gained. The HVZ hydraulic installation clamp for pavements was successfully added to the product range in 1983 and a complete installation machine for pavers and kerb stones, the VM 203, from 1988. The globalisation was driven forward and the company opened an own branch in England in 1984.

For more and more globally operating manufacturers of building material plants for production of concrete pavers, pipes and manholes, Probst has become an important partner for the development and supply of material handling for integration into the production cycle.

Altered material compositions, production processes, appearance and form of the construction materials demand constant application and equipment adjustments. Optimal – Probst has its finger directly on the pulse of what is happening in construction materials.

Future trends come into the installation technology at an early stage, so construction companies can always be served with the right handling and laying equipment.

In 1991, the vacuum installation technology was incorporated into the range, thereby laying an important foundation for further strong growth. This enabled Probst as an international producer to position itself with the world's broadest range of grab and installation technology equipment and machines for construction and construction materials industry.

German reunification triggered an economic boom. As a result, a sales and production branch was established in Könitz, Thuringia. The first welding robot was installed here and others followed. The series products could therefore be produced industrially.

In the following years, the range was constantly expanded with new developments. The existing range was revised and the so-called „Uni“ class created. The aim was to develop universally adjustable equipment types in order to thereby streamline the product portfolio. One „Uni“ device often replaced 2 or 3 previous products. Countless international trade fairs were attended, Probst products were successfully used in over 100 countries. The export rate lay at 60 to 70%. Time and again, expert jury gave numerous awards, such as the GaLaBau innovation medal or the golden spade.

As with all strong exporting manufacturers in the construction sector, the financial crisis of 2008/2009 also resulted in noticeable declines in sales and appropriate cost-cutting measures at Probst.



*Numerous trade visitors show great interest in the exhibits displayed, as here at Bauma 2010 in Munich*

Nonetheless, intensive, counter-cyclical investment continued in two areas.

Firstly, a 1200 m<sup>2</sup> production hall for large machines with an attractive new 400 m<sup>2</sup> showroom and training room were constructed on the Erdmannhausen site.

On the other hand, in the area of development, work was carried out at full speed on various new and further product design, which could then be

launched in time for BAUMA 2010. The results of this Swabian inventiveness work extended well beyond 10 innovative new products including the new flagship, the POWER PLAN PP screeding machine, which far exceeded all ambitious expectations.

As a result of this masterly performance by the entire Probst team and despite the flying bans in Europe due to the volcanic ash cloud, BAUMA 2010 with the company's eleventh attendance was so far the most successful trade fair. As usual, the Probst trade fair stand again enjoyed above-average visitor numbers. Customers from all over the world want to touch and try out the latest products from the Probst forge and to experience the great flair on the stand of the family company.



*POWER PLAN PP screeding machine - Material distribution and laying course in one go*

Probst is proud to claim to have used the crisis and emerged from it positively invigorated and highly motivated.

In all of the ups and downs of these 5 decades, there has been one permanent factor at Probst: long-term partnership based on give and take, both with business partners and with staff. What has now been achieved would not have been possible without the commitment of the staff which nowadays amounts to 130 employees.

A brand grows with its sales partners and customers, so customer-focus has been and continues to be the daily routine for Probst and is not just left to words alone.

Particularly on the attractive trade fair stands, through the praise expressed by the customers for successful, durable products and the many practical ideas. We at Probst feel affirmed and motivated to put even more into our work.

In the now fifty years, the Probst brand has been successfully positioned on the world market in the areas of grab technology and installation systems.

The original products from the inventor stand out for their high quality „made in Germany“ and the durability of the practical construction machinery, construction equipment and tools.

The aim in the coming years is to expand the market presence continuously in order to remain the undisputed world number one in this area. Early investments in new sales markets, such as India, South America or even Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan are promising. The development of innovative and high-performance products such as the new POWERJET PJ vacuum lifting device with a high performance blower for even highly porous elements and a loading capacity up to 1500 kg contribute to the expansion of the success. With the newly developed FLORIS MOBIL FM, a compact vehicle for easy handling of container plants, Probst now also wants to introduce its broad know-how to markets related to the sector, such as in the area of tree nurseries. Here too, work processes can be rationalised and the physical work made easier.

## **Ergonomics and Efficiency Must Not Oppose One Another!**

Probst has committed to this principle over five decades of market presence.

Furthermore, health and safety regulations specifying the manual lifting and positioning of heavy loads getting more and more important in many countries.

As such, up to 10 tonnes of weight are moved per day in kerb stone and slab installation. Without suitable facilities, there are frequently countless risks for the builder. There is also another aspect: the installation work must be compliant with the highest quality demands and standards and high-valued elements must not be damaged. Last but not least: the safety and high quality of the equipment and machinery is a matter of course.

Customers should be sure that all of these conditions are met when they choose an original product from Probst.

Probst promises its customers that they will be amazed at the efficiency increase they achieve with our equipment and machinery! Such an investment often pays off within a short time.

And that's why with good reason Probst claims:

from practice, for practice.

Probst – the better solution.

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