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Trust. From the beginning !

March 2021

Information for our customers and business friends

Address

A year of major challenges

The trials and tribulations of the coronavirus pandemic have also rattled the window construction industry. The cancellation of the Fensterbau/Frontale exhibition was just the beginning. However, overall, the previous financial year was a positive one for Urban GmbH & Co. Maschinenbau KG.

"All in all, we came through the crisis year of 2020 quite well and simply made the best of a difficult situation," says Managing Partner Martin Urban. The company profited from a very full order book and the production facilities in Memmingen were well utilised the majority of the time, with only a

short period having to be bridged by reduced working hours.

"Business was good, considering the circumstances, although there were strong regional differences. For example, customers in Great Britain had two battles on their hands: COVID-19 and Brexit. We were very happy with the results in Central Europe," states Urban.

No entry for installers

One problematic case was the USA. "Over a period of several months we were unfortunately unable to send any installers overseas,

as they would have had to have spent several days in quarantine on arrival. That would have made no sense whatsoever. However, we did manage to arrange one or two successful online inspections and approvals with customers in the USA," explains Martin Urban.

Process optimisation

Urban used the slight slowdown to optimise processes, push ahead with machine development and have a complete digital overhaul. "We have invested a great deal in product demonstrations in the form of live sessions and even online

machine inspections and approvals. We started in the summer practically from scratch and have now developed a system that meets professional requirements," says Project Manager Michael Walther.

Martin Urban has a number of initiatives planned for 2021: "We will continue to invest in our digital services and, of course, add more machine technology. We don't yet have a handle on how the incoming orders will develop. However, we anticipate the usual lead time with regard to our customers' investments, because the demand for investment is certainly there," says Martin Urban.

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EDITORIAL

Dear customers,



It is precisely in times of crisis that you are able to rely entirely on your business partners and suppliers. I am proud that we have been able to prove exactly that: even in difficult times, you have always been able to rely on Urban.

Together with you, we have weathered the various lockdowns and their travel and visitor restrictions and managed to carry out system installations and commissioning under the most difficult of conditions. On the following pages, you will find out more about selected projects and the coronavirus obstacles.

We will also give you an insight into the digital Urban world, where we have taken a really big step forward. You can read all about our live sessions and digital inspections and approvals on page 2.

On behalf of our entire team, I would like to thank you for your confidence in us in what has been an extremely challenging year.

Regards, **Martin Urban**
Managing Partner



Much was produced and assembled in Memmingen in 2020, too.

Interview

Welcome to the digital world of Urban

An interview with Michael Walther and Tobias Sontheimer, who are streaming like there's no tomorrow

The digital Urban world came into being in July 2020. It has been an exciting project for **Michael Walther** and **Tobias Sontheimer** who, since then, have tried out and optimised all manner of webinar and streaming options in order to bring the Urban world closer to you digitally. In this interview they draw their initial conclusions.

These days, every child is capable of streaming and zooming. It can't involve that much effort, can it?

Michael Walther: That's what we thought at the beginning, too. We told ourselves, we'll just take a camera, access the rest of the hardware from the office, and we've already got the internet. Let's just start with the first product demonstrations over the internet, or perhaps customers' machine inspections and approvals. But later on, when the actual webcam images were really distorted and you couldn't really tell what anything was, we realised that our first attempt was rather naive.

Tobias Sontheimer: In fact, to start with, we learned the hard way and quickly acknowledged that we wouldn't get very far without professional equipment. We've since made some major purchases – and not only of multiple camcorders, but also a professional mixer. We've also perfected our workflow. One thing is clear, it doesn't matter whether you're live-streaming a product demonstration with customers, or performing a digital machine inspection



And Action! Michael Walther during live streaming.

and approval in a self-contained group, there is always a need for a moderator as well as another person to deal with the production side of things and all the technology. You can't handle it all on your own.

Michael Walther: We're now making thorough use of the benefits of this technology. Our presentation software and hardware now not only allows us to integrate several cameras and to overlay images, for example, we can even also integrate our machine PCs so that our customers can see the control system as well. This is outstanding.

Is there a single platform capable of doing everything?

Michael Walther: No, there isn't. We've actually tried out all the systems and each has its advantages, but also its disadvantages. We use YouTube to live-stream product demonstrations, for example. The image and sound quality is really excellent. However, the users are very passive. They see and hear everything we present to them, but they are only able to interact and ask questions via the chat function. This is why we use other systems such as TeamViewer Meeting, or even Microsoft Teams, for digital machine inspections and approvals. These systems are particularly good for individual queries within a self-contained group of people.

How much effort is involved in a live demonstration?

Tobias Sontheimer: Rather a lot, but there needs to be because the better the preparation, the better the result. We install our equipment four to five hours before the start of a session. This means that we position the cameras and set everything up. Sometimes we also use several GoPros that are connected to the mixer via wireless. For the hand-held camera that Michael usually uses as moderator, we additionally have a gimbal for keeping the image stable..

Michael Walther: We usually plan the sessions so that we do a German-language version at 2 pm and then an English-language version afterwards at 3 pm. This limits



Urban streams live via Youtube.

the amount of effort involved, because we only need to set everything up once.

What sort of response have you had?

Michael Walther: The feedback has been really good. More and more people are participating in the sessions, and there are more and more enquires after the individual demonstrations. This shows that our concept is being well received. It was uncharted territory for everyone, in a way. For us, as well as for our customers.

Tobias Sontheimer: We have had almost one new topic a week up until April, and of course these are based on customer suggestions. After our demonstration of milling aluminium profiles on the AKS 9600 Cut, we were naturally immediately asked when we would be offering a session on milling plastic. The great thing is that we can really cover a lot of topics and demonstrate even the smaller machines and devices, such as our corner-checking device, or even the world of single-head welding machines. We held a great

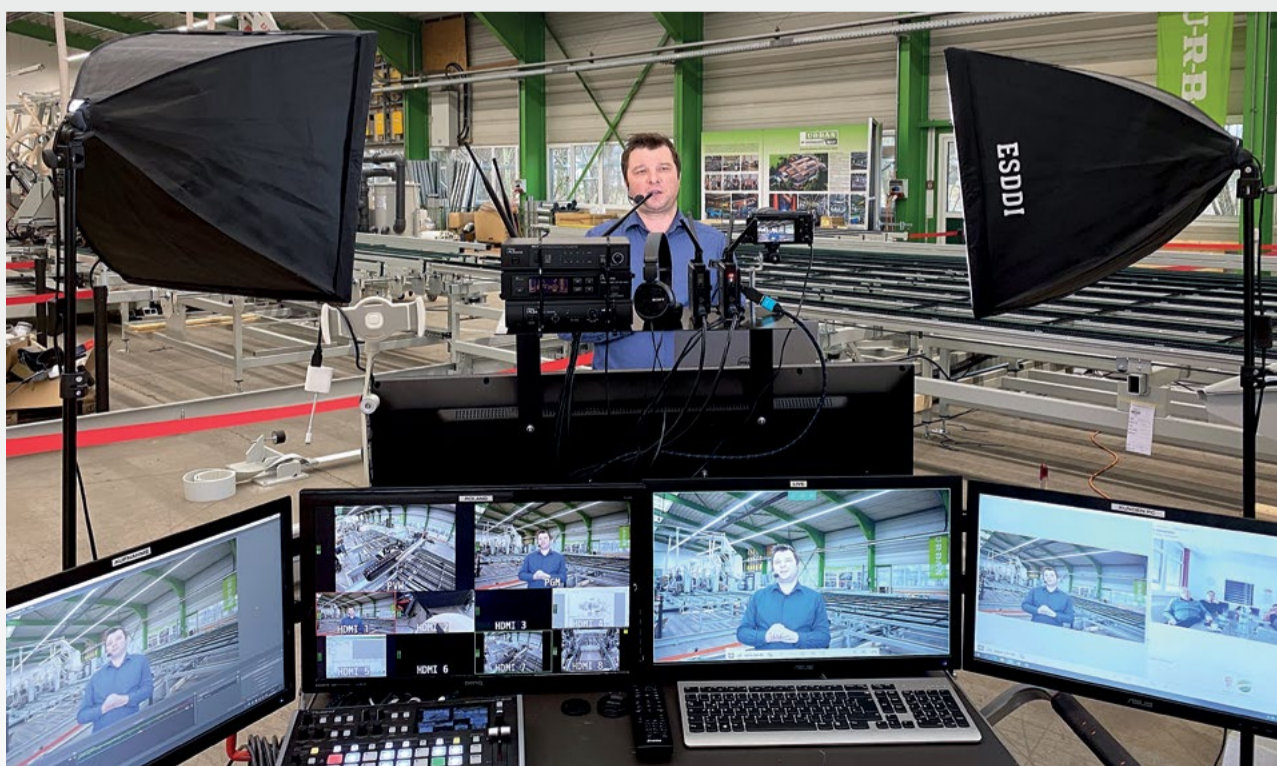
event on this just recently on 11 February.

So the effort appears to be worth it?

Michael Walther: Michael Walther: Definitely. For us, it is the ability to be able to remain in contact with our customers even in difficult times, and we really value this interaction. We've seen this not only in the sessions, but also in the digital inspections and approvals. We're giving the customers the certainty that all of the parameters match when commissioning the machine and that they will be able to set stuck in right from the word go. No-one wants to lose time due to a stoppage, because the order books in the window construction industry are just as full as they ever were.

Full information available at:

<https://www.u-r-b-a-n.com/en/u-r-b-a-n/online-events>



Tobias Sontheimer on all channels: made possible by the mobile studio for the Urban live sessions.



Why window manufacturers rely on the expertise of Urban

An even bigger investment

Sebnitzer Fensterbau also swaps out the welding and cleaning line

Florian Jehle, Managing Director of Sebnitzer Fensterbau GmbH in Sebnitz, Eastern Saxony, actually initially only wanted to optimise the logistics process in his production facilities. But once the planning was complete, Jehle and Fred-Karsten Karl from the Urban sales department decided to go a step further, which resulted in an entirely new high-end production line with an AKS 6910 and SV 530 with speed option.

"That really is how it turned out, and I'm pleased that we tackled the project head on rather than nibbling away at it," said Florian Jehle.

Eliminating a logistical gap

Jehle realised that Urban was the right partner for him very early on when he spoke to Fred-Karsten Karl about the de-stacking for the first time. "My father and I originally only wanted to replace

the roller conveyors in order to close the logistics gap we had with the frames. But luckily, Fred-Karsten Karl talked us out of this and came up with a really perfect design," said Jehle.

The logistics process was revitalised with an automated de-stacking system, including a buffer for the doors and frames. So that the floor-to-ceiling door elements with 140-mm sill could also automatically pass through the welding



process, a U-version of the AKS 6910 was installed.

Florian Jehle is very pleased with the result, especially considering the installation took place during the confusing first wave of the coronavirus. "I really have

to hand it to the Urban installers. They stayed here in Saxony over the weekend because no-one knew whether they would be allowed to return on Monday if they had travelled back to the Allgäu. That would have been fatal for us because, of course, the old line had already been dismantled. In the end, everything went without a hitch. We are completely satisfied. Once again, Urban has proven that you



Sebnitzer Fensterbau is supervised by Fred-Karsten Karl

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can rely on the company one hundred per cent," says Jehle.

Florian Jehle was so pleased, that he ordered another FAS 320 sash assembly station during the installation in order to be able to integrate it into the logistics process. Much to the delight of Fred-Karsten Karl.



Happy about the new logistics: Managing Director Florian Jehle (left) and Kevin Dittrich from the production department of Sebnitzer Fensterbau.



Relocation to the motorway with Urban machines

Completely new window and door production facilities for Buis Fenster & Türen

No other supplier in the region has such a wide range on offer as Buis Fenster & Türen in Breitenburg, Schleswig-Holstein, and that makes all the difference. Not only have brothers Burim and Zijadin Ismaili specialised in high-quality PVC windows and doors, they also offer sun protection systems, aluminium doors and aluminium-glass façades.

"With this range of services, we are one of a kind in the region and therefore not only a reliable partner for private clients, but also for property developers who commission us for renovations as well as new builds," says Zijadin Ismaili.

Many orders from Hamburg

In the summer, Buis Fenster & Türen moved from its old site to its new home in the new industrial park



Convinced by Urban: Zijadin (left) and Burim Ismaili.

at Breitenburg with direct access to the A23 motorway. "The motorway access is naturally a real benefit for us, because we use our own teams to carry out all installations. It's great that we can get to Hamburg so quickly, because right at the moment we have so many orders from there," says Ismaili.

However, he and his brother Burim don't really have any limits. "We've already travelled as far as Braunschweig for loft conversions, and even to England for individual orders. We go wherever our partners need us," says Zijadin Ismaili.

Carpenter's workshop takeover

In 2004, his brother Burim had taken over a carpenter's workshop from the previous owner as part of a succession plan.

"There were Urban machines in the production line

here even back then. So we're not familiar with anything else but Urban. However, we found out that you can still get spare parts for machines from the 1980s. That's really great. Not only



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Production and exhibition area

Since the summer, an Urban AKS 6410/4 four-head welding machine and a SV 430/4-C have been at work in Breitenburg, while for the sashes, the Buis team are using a FAS 250 sash assembly station and an ST 32/16-32 tilting table. In addition to the 1,200 m² production space, Buis Fenster & Türen now has a new 220 m² exhibition area available.



that, someone is always available at Urban, and Fred-Karsten Karl is a very professional contact person. It doesn't matter whether it's a large machine or a small one," says Ismaili.

Burim und Zijadin Ismaili used this relocation of the company headquarters and its new opportunities to restructure the production facilities.

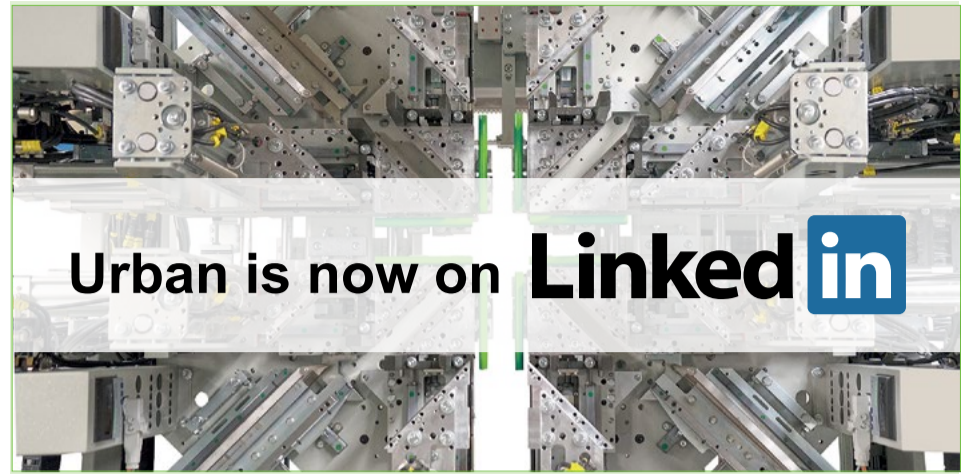
Urban digital

Our new homepage

Keep up to date on www.u-r-b-a-n.com



Our new homepage has been live since summer 2020. In addition to a complete visual makeover, there have been plenty of changes to the content. Our website presents many interesting solutions and application tips. It's worth a look. Try it out!



Follow us!

We have expanded our social media activities and created a company page on LinkedIn. Follow us there to keep up to date with all the latest news.

Our profile:

<https://www.linkedin.com/company/urban-gmbh-&-co.-maschinenbau-kg/>



Why window manufacturers rely on the expertise of Urban

Rapid development

Ma-Ku Kunststofftechnik just keeps growing

The development is outstanding. In 2018, Marcin Kuchmecki initially started producing lift-and-slide doors with the help of a used Urban machine. The lowly beginnings with three lift-and-slide doors per week have turned into a bit of a major event.

"We're now producing 200 lift-and-slide doors a month, and just as many PVC windows. I estimate that we will even reach 150 windows a week come the summer. In terms of PVC windows, our target is to increase the production figures further still," says Marcin Kuchmecki, proprietor of Ma-Ku Kunststofftechnik based in Gronau (North Rhine-Westphalia). He is able to profit from two trends. Several regional manufacturers have stop-



ped producing lift-and-slide doors and are now ordering direct from Ma-Ku. At the same time, ever more customers have asked whether Ma-Ku is able to supply the windows along with the lift-and-slide doors.

"That was how we entered window construction. We took the chance and want to continue building on it," says Kuchmecki. In the existing hall he and his team are using the current equipment for the lift-and-slide doors and custom design options, while ultra-modern new Urban machines such as the AKS 6610/4, the SV 530/4-C, the GSL 200/S automatic glazing bead saw with LAEG and a ST32/16-20 AR

tilting table are used to produce the PVC windows and doors. The

project was implemented by Dietmar Borg from Urban partner company Finke Maschinen. In the coming years, Ma-Ku wants to expand its window production to 400 windows a week. Marcin Kuchmecki has also expanded his team: "We have seven new employees and four more will have joined us by April," says the company owner.

Almost 70 per cent of Ma-Ku Kunststofftechnik's turnover is made in the neighbouring Netherlands, with the lion's share of orders being for renovations (80 per cent). Because the wooden frame look (Holz-Fenster-Look: HFL) is currently very popular among clients in the Netherlands, welding and cleaning machines have already been configured for the HFL products.



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Marcin Kuchmecki at the Urban SV 530/4-C.

Playing it safe

Johannes Fensterbau relies on new FAS 320-FBA

It's great when a new solution turns out to be a perfect match. Which is what happened with the new FAS 320-FBA sash assembly station. Urban used the PC components from the concept of the FBA sash assembly machine to extend the FAS 320 to create the ideal solution for Fensterbau Johannes GmbH in Siegen.

"With the Active Pilot Concept from Winkhaus, we've added a new tilt-and-turn fitting to our range and in doing so also wanted to optimise the installation and automate it slightly. We were also looking for a system that employees who have less window construction experience can handle easily. The FAS 320-FBA sash assembly station is ideal in this regard, because the PC-guided menu and the ability to make selections based on article numbers has reduced the error rate. The risk of selecting the wrong assembly has drop-

ped to practically zero," says Junior Manager Raphael Johannes.

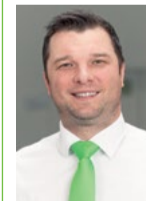
The FAS 320-FBA solution has also brought Fensterbau Johannes several other advantages. The operator is shown every assembly or attachment together with its exact positioning. The sash assembly station provides the exact dimensions of the cut and this is triggered at the press of a button. As soon as all of the parts have been clipped in and cut, the screwing aggregate is used. This uses a laser unit to assist with positioning.

The user-friendliness of the FAS 320-FBA was already obvious from the installation. Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the Fensterbau Johannes team commissioned the new unit themselves because the Urban installers



were prevented from travelling to the north of the country. "Everything worked really well, and afterwards we did the fine-tuning with Tobias Sontheimer via a TeamViewer video call. It all went seamlessly," says Raphael Johannes.

The family-owned company was founded in 1979 by his grandfather Helmut and father Uwe Johannes. The company serves mainly private clients within a 50-km radius, and is a firm favourite in the renovation sector in particular.



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Managing Director Uwe Johannes (left) and Junior Manager Raphael Johannes are very satisfied with the support they received from Urban.