

The customer wish has been the inspiration since the beginning

45 years ago, Dipl.-Ing. Friedrich Brück founded B.E.G. Brück Electronic GmbH. Today, the successful medium-sized company has more than 250 employees worldwide as well as commercial agencies in various countries. The founder himself reports on his way from a garage company to an international group:

LuxoNews: Your family business B.E.G. celebrates its 45th anniversary. How did it come to the foundation in 1975?

Dipl.-Ing. Friedrich Brück: At the beginning of the 70s, I established the German branch for a French battery manufacturer. One day a customer came to me with an emergency light for which he needed a special solution. From the point of view of my employer, the volume was too small, but the customer's request did not let me go. So I offered him to convert the emergency lights myself. At the beginning I produced small quantities in the living room at the end of the working day. When the demand increased, I quit my job, founded my company and rented a house with garage in my hometown Lindlar. Then I developed my own first emergency lights, which were a real innovation at that time. When the garage became too small, I moved into our first company building in the industrial area Klaus. This area is also the location of today's company headquarters, of course much larger than back then.

LN: Today, B.E.G. has over 250 employees worldwide and sells over 2 million products a year. Did you already have an idea back then what your company could become?

FB: I did not have a 20-year business plan. Since the beginning, my starting point has been the customer's wish, "Doesn't exist" and "Doesn't work" are not part of my vocabulary. There is a solution for every problem and the right sensor technology for every room situation. If a customer does not find the perfect solution in our portfolio, we can offer special solutions thanks to our production in Lindlar. Such orders always have a "back-to-the-roots" feeling for me, even though today, of course, a development department takes care of the implementation. But it happens rarely. Most of the requirements are already met by existing products.

LN: The core product range of B.E.G. today are occupancy and motion detectors. When you started to sell motion detectors, this was an almost unknown product on the German market.

FB: That is true. We were the first to develop a motion detector for triggering alarm systems. This gave rise to the idea of switching lights outdoors as well. It was always said before that this was not possible because of the many sources of interference. I was convinced that it was only a question of the right technology. My son Dietmar and I tinkered for a long time and then in 1986 we were able to launch the very first LUXOMAT® on the market. It was able to switch the light depending on movement. Today, this is a standard feature, but back then it was a revolution.



The very first B.E.G. LUXOMAT® product

LN: Your son now takes care of the development and production of the products. How does your family shape the company?

FB: My family has been part of the company from the beginning. My son developed his first product at the age of 16, which we then manufactured and sold. To this day, my two children work in the company and one of my grandchildren and his wife are also part of our success. But also the employees are like a



Dipl.-Ing. Friedrich Brück,
founder and managing director of B.E.G.

family to me. There are employees who have been contributing to the well-being of the company for 30 years. I think it is important to know each of my employees by name, this is appreciation that I feel. This is then also passed on to the customer.

LN: Today, B.E.G.'s customers are exclusively wholesalers. Why don't you also sell directly to end customers?

FB: We have not always followed this path. In the beginning, I delivered the emergency luminaires to resellers, who then equipped projects. At the beginning of the 80s, I started to build up contacts with wholesalers. Little by little, trusting business relationships developed, on the basis of which we have now been committed to the 3-stage distribution channel for over 25 years. We train the employees of the wholesalers through our field service. Our current high-tech products require a trained specialist partner who can advise the customer competently.

LN: When you look back on the company history, what were the biggest obstacles on the way to today's success?

FB: The biggest setback in the company's history was in 1979, when one night our company building including production and residential building burned down. My family and I were able to leave the house at the last moment and we only had what we wore on our backs. It is very difficult to make a new start after such a catastrophe. I was lucky that we were supported by people who believed in our idea and made the reconstruction possible.

LN: Especially in the last 10 years, the company has achieved considerable growth. What is the secret of your success?



The former company building after the fire in 1979.

FB: A groundbreaking step towards today's success was that 20 years ago we started to take sales into our own hands. Until then, I had been working with commercial agencies, which we then gradually replaced with our own teams. The first was in France, where the commercial agency was bought up and we thus dropped out of the range. Therefore we founded our first foreign branch, which is still managed by my first French employee. Today, France is our top-selling market, closely followed by Germany. In the last 10 years, the growing trend towards energy saving and building automation has helped us to grow considerably. Today, there is hardly a new commercial building without automation.

LN: With the success of building automation, more and more competitors are also entering the market. How is B.E.G. holding its own against the big players?

FB: In contrast to the large companies, we have specialised in occupancy and motion detectors. We don't just have a few standard detectors that cover the standard requirements, but we look for the perfect solution for every application, which is then implemented in a product. This is how we have become experts over the years, which is also reflected in our large sales teams. All field staff are from electrical engineering and support the customers from the first idea to the implementation on site. This makes us special in the market and inspires our customers.

LN: B.E.G. has grown up with inventive talent and quality. What is the outlook for the future?

FB: We have prepared ourselves for the future: Since 2014, we have been focusing on networked systems. Today's customers no longer want to just control the light, they want to implement their entire home automation system via one system and control it via mobile phone. That's why we are increasingly focusing on the KNX and DALI standards, and we also have our own systems such as B.E.G. DALISYS and B.E.G. DALI LINK in our portfolio. With this orientation we have also added new services to our portfolio. The customer can no longer only buy the products from us, but also the system planning, commissioning and maintenance. This means we offer an all-round carefree package that is well received on the market.

Today's B.E.G. administrative headquarters with attached central warehouse in Lindlar.

