

STAR COOPERATION®

Your Partners in Excellence

CREATE
OUR
FUTURE

TOMORROW IS TODAY.

How we are already living **tomorrow's future.**





Foreword	06	LOOKING BACK TOGETHER
STAR divisions	08	OFFERING SOLUTIONS TOGETHER
Facts and figures	10	GROWING SOLIDLY TOGETHER
STAR locations	14	OPERATING GLOBALLY TOGETHER
Consulting & Business IT	18	CONSULTING WELL TOGETHER
STAR in the public eye	24	APPEARING OPENLY TOGETHER
Engineering & EE-Solutions	32	GIVING IMPULSES TOGETHER
Human Resources	38	ACHIEVING MORE TOGETHER
Media & Logistics	44	MEETING TARGETS TOGETHER
Sustainability	50	ACTING SUSTAINABLY TOGETHER
Group Specials	54	SUPPLEMENTING OURSELVES TOGETHER
Innovations	58	CREATING NOVELTIES TOGETHER
Future interview	62	LOOKING AHEAD TOGETHER

LOOKING BACK TOGETHER



Two generations lead the STAR COOPERATION: Prof. Dr. Alfred Neher and Sofia Neher have a positive outlook on the future.

In 2015, the STAR COOPERATION Group will come of age. For 18 years, we have been offering new and innovative solutions and services for our customers' projects, ideas and challenges. This is a well-enough occasion to pause for a short review of 2014 – and to venture a glance into the near and distant future of STAR at the same time.

The past twelve months were peppered with big and small events, innovations and changes. For example, we were able to broaden our technical expertise in the area of vehicle connectivity by acquiring Eberspächer Electronics. We have celebrated our success in many existing customer projects and have gained new customers in numerous sectors. We have focused our solutions portfolio and complemented it with more innovative services. Ultimately, we have further strengthened our good reputation as excellent employer by establishing our own in-house day-care center Kids Company.

At this point, special thanks go to our employees because they have contributed to our company's prosperity dynamically, committedly and imaginatively. Even though the STAR Group contains of different subsidiaries, subjects and activities, the past year has proven one thing: Together, we can create the future successfully. We also thank our existing customers and partners for the long years of constructive cooperation as well as our new customers for their trust in our capabilities.

Our motto for the year 2015: CREATE OUR FUTURE. On the following pages, you will learn about all the stories, projects and events which have affected the STAR COOPERATION in 2014 and have set us up for the future. You will also see how our innovative products and services are already the solutions for your coming challenges. We hope you enjoy reading our annual report 2014.

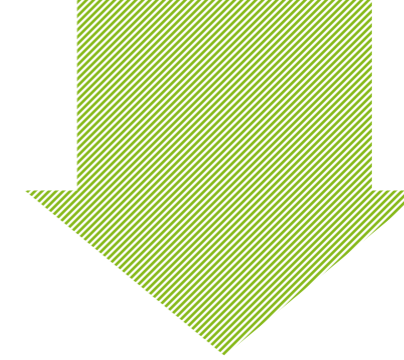
Kind regards Prof. Dr. Alfred Neher and Sofia Neher

A. Neher *S. Neher*

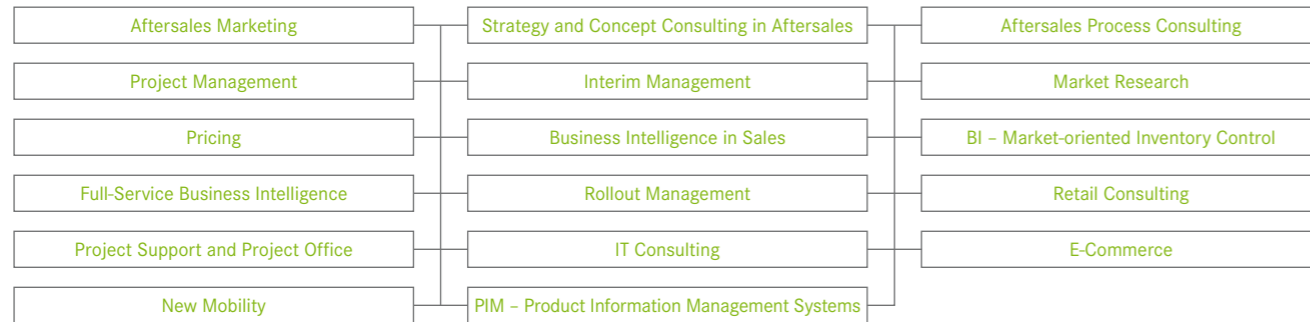


Innovation, intuition, drive, sincerity, competence, commitment, reliability, responsibility and vision – that is what constitutes STAR and will help us reach the next orbit.

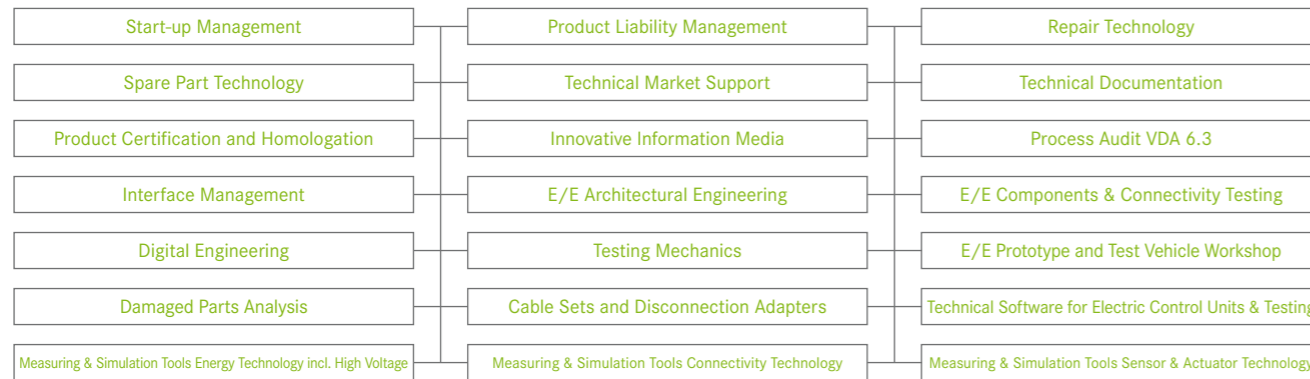
OFFERING SOLUTIONS TOGETHER



STAR COOPERATION® Consulting & Business IT



STAR COOPERATION® Engineering & EE-Solutions



STAR COOPERATION® Media & Logistics



We shape the future with three innovative and highly productive business divisions and the Group Specials as our incubator for special future projects.



Group Specials





Mutuality is our strength. That is why we work as a team to generate future growth solidly and sustainably.

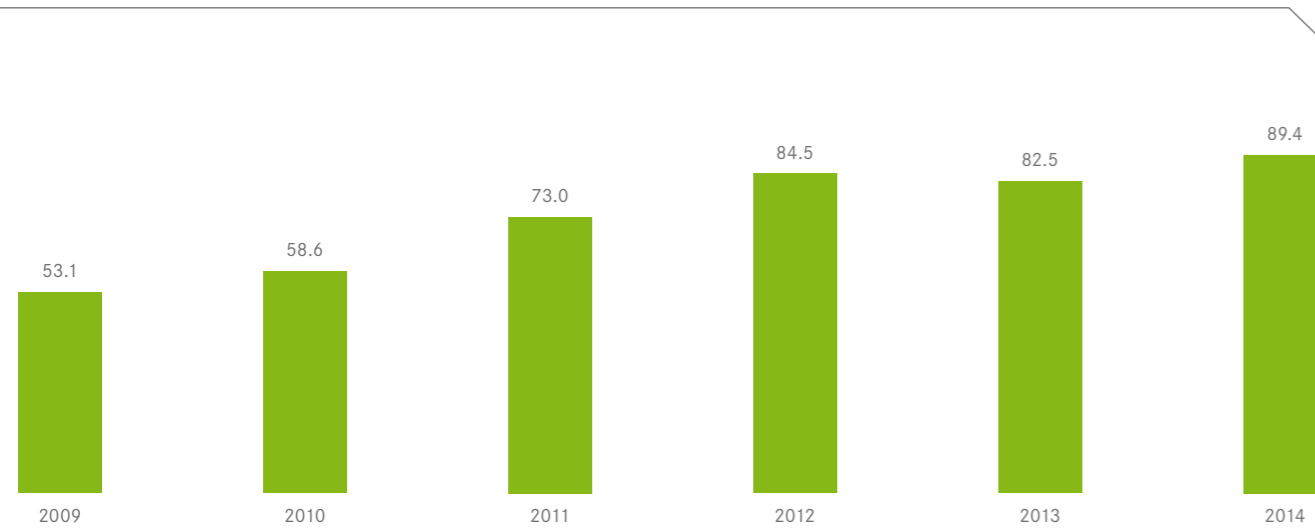
GROWING SOLIDLY TOGETHER

Facts and figures

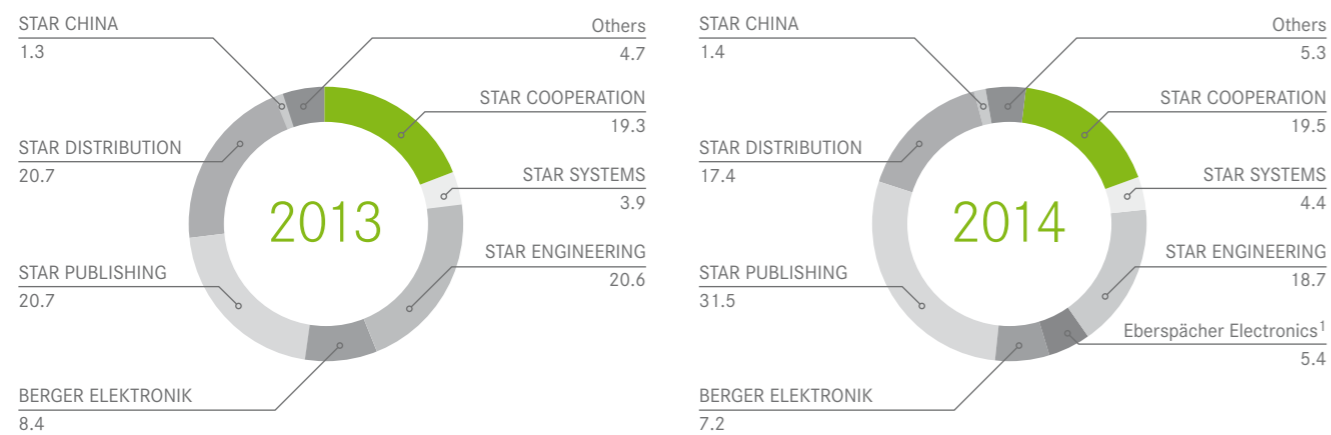
Today's figures are tomorrow's reference values. Within this everlasting system, we succeeded in generating further growth also in 2014. More employees, increasing turnover and contented customers form the pleasing result of our shared commitment in the past year. The companies of the STAR COOPERATION have closed ranks. Were able to unleash synergies in the three divisions. And could open up new vistas for our customers through our comprehensive services. We will proceed on this course in 2015.

GROWING SOLIDLY TOGETHER

Turnover development of the STAR COOPERATION Group in EUR million



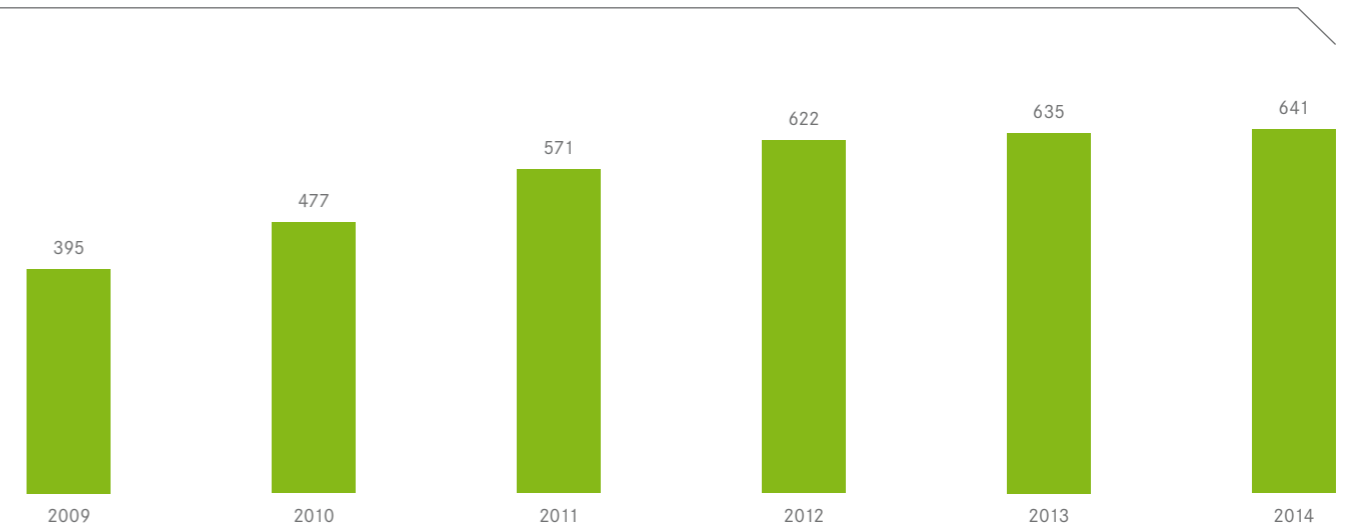
Turnover/subsidiary in EUR million



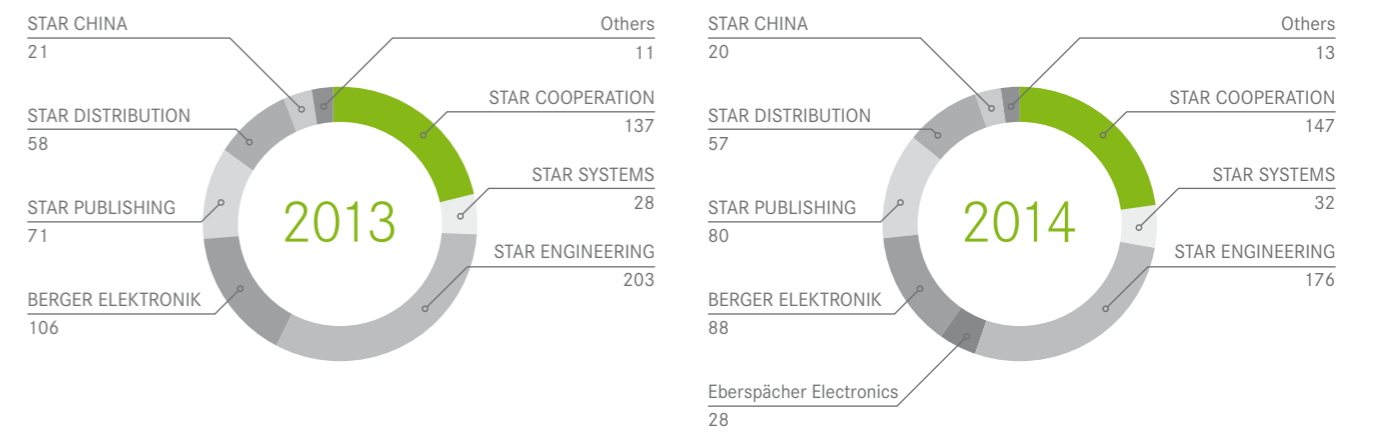
2014 | EUR 89.4 MILLION TURNOVER

Note: 2014 values prior to conclusive confirmation of currently ongoing audit of accounts. In order to present Group turnover, the cumulative value of the individual subsidiaries was adjusted for internal turnover (consolidating entries). Therefore, the reporting deviates from earlier publications' method (previous years' values adjusted in this report). ¹ Total annual turnover, included in Group turnover p.r.t. (from August 2014).

Employees of the STAR COOPERATION Group



Employees/Subsidiary



2014 | 641 EMPLOYEES



16

There are STARS around the whole world. At 16 locations. From Bremerhaven to Munich. From Atlanta to Shanghai.

OPERATING GLOBALLY TOGETHER

STAR locations

Distances are shortened, perspectives broadened, solutions and services made more accurate – if and only if you recognize the signs of the future and participate in its creation like the STAR COOPERATION. Therefore, we equip our locations around the world with exactly the expertise necessary at each respective place. The key to success is mixing central management with consistent processes and decentralized mastery of cultural as well as economic requirements.

OPERATING GLOBALLY TOGETHER

The STAR locations in 2014

Focusing on the customers and their requirements and developing appropriate tailor-made solutions is at the core of STAR's activities in every single project. This includes following the customers to wherever they are and to factor the local conditions and challenges into our work. For, global growth is an important strategic pillar for the STAR COOPERATION's future. The large number of STAR locations around the world at a glance.

Atlanta (US)

As a general contractor, our US base introduced the just in time delivery of additional parts and car manuals directly to the customer's assembly line. The team's straightforward and effective way of managing this project from Atlanta was definitely the highlight in a successful year 2014. In the coming year, we want to consolidate and extend this achievement as well as increase its external visibility.



Barcelona (ES)

With its focus on business advisory and retail consulting, our Barcelona location has adopted a special role within the STAR COOPERATION. The local business environment is not easy, particularly due to the still strained situation in Spain's financial market. Nevertheless, our on-site colleagues were able to accomplish everything they had set out to do. We want to continue on this path also in 2015.

Berlin

Our location in Germany's capital was able to report on a very good year 2014. In the service city of Berlin, word has got round that the STAR COOPERATION is an innovative supplier with service running in the blood. In 2015, we want to accelerate the acquisition of new customers with the help of our new sales concept and increasingly tap into the non-automotive sector.

Bremerhaven

From our Bremerhaven location, which has joined us in 2014, we conduct worldwide truck- and shipload audits for our customers. This positive trend of the past twelve months shall also continue in the future. For instance, we want to offer these services successfully to more and more international customers in 2015.

Fellbach

The year 2014 was the starting point for our location in Fellbach, too. After months of preparation, we moved into our own offices. We can now offer services in media information, media creation and technical documentation close to our customers. The second step for the location will be to focus on recruiting additional employees and on increasing process efficiency.

Frankfurt

Stability characterizes our logistics location in Frankfurt. The customer we mainly attend to there was very content with our services again in 2014. Aside from broadening our cooperation with this customer, we increasingly want to extend our business with new customers in the future, so that the STAR brand gets more established and visible.

Johannesburg (SA)

For our South African subsidiary in Johannesburg, the year 2014 was structurally a fresh start. In addition to staff changes, we have streamlined our general business processes and made them more efficient. Thereby, the team in South Africa has now laid the foundation for introducing the just in time process so successfully implemented in the US also at their customer's.



Munich

The Bavarian capital is a good place for the STAR COOPERATION. Due to securing two large projects in 2014, certainly the biggest challenge for our successful Munich location was enhancing its capacities. Our goal for the year 2015 is to stabilize this growth and to fulfill the customers' expectations created by this increased attention with the highest possible quality.



„Predictive Analytics is a very interesting trend for the future. Day in, day out, each company gathers huge amounts of data. If we analyze this data sensibly and cleverly, we're able to predict the future already today. That's a fascinating thought.”

Aydogan Aydindag | General Manager STAR COOPERATION and Location Manager Munich

Beijing (CN), Shanghai (CN) & Tokyo (JP)

By now, STAR has three stable pillars in East Asia which are developing quite pleasingly. Our colleagues in Beijing, Shanghai and Tokyo were able to secure additional project with existing customers and convince new customers of STAR's services also in 2014. Because of the incremental pollution in the regions' mega metropolises, introducing e-mobility will be the biggest future challenge there.


Wolfsburg

Wolfsburg is an important strategic office for STAR, because it is our gate to the North of Germany. In 2014, the team was able to strengthen its relationships with the existing customers close by and to establish new contacts in other areas. Our on-site colleagues want to exploit these further, as there is a lot of potential for the location there.

Zug (CH)

In Switzerland, we mainly use our office in Zug to promote our retail consulting services. And the year 2014 was a successful one. For example, we successfully renewed the expiring contract with our customer for the long term and at significantly improved conditions. This proves that excellent consulting services with a traceable benefit is worth the customer's while. We want to keep moving in this direction also in 2015.






Boosting service with tailwind – before, during and after the market launch. Our expertise can help.



A future trend taking off: e-commerce. We are aboard and offer comprehensive solutions around web, online shop and search engine marketing.



New mobility is a topic driving us. It consists of mobility concepts, parking space management, e-mobility and much more.

CONSULTING WELL TOGETHER

The Consulting & Business IT division

Drafting a blue print for the future. Foreseeing which IT strategies push competitive advantages. Which B2B and B2C measures induce new turnover. Which technologies in mobility, big data and e-commerce are necessary for each specific company. STAR CONSULTING and STAR SYSTEMS have co-shaped our customers' future in many projects. Along their strategic goals. Suitable for their resources.

CONSULTING WELL TOGETHER

The Consulting & Business IT division

Within the STAR Group, the Consulting & Business IT division is home to the management consultants with a focus on sales and aftersales as well as the experts for digital business. At STAR CONSULTING, the STARS are thinking out of the box and develop accurately fitting solutions in aftersales, project and interim management, market research, pricing, retail consulting as well as new mobility. At STAR SYSTEMS, our IT specialists utilize smart technologies and new trends and place their focus on business intelligence and e-commerce. Starting with the idea to project management, to rollout, to implementation and beyond – that is our Consulting & Business IT division.

In this field, the year 2014 was particularly dominated by one theme: New knowledge, new developments, new innovations. We want to follow this trend also in the future in order to strengthen our good reputation as an excellent consultancy with long years of experience in the most different subjects. For example, with further projects in new mobility. With new ideas and solutions for changing business models. With numerous successfully implemented e-commerce solutions for our customers. And with a stronger focus on the possibilities provided by big data.

Proven scientific expertise

You have to know what you are talking about if you want to consult others. This is based on a good combination of substantiated theoretical and approved practical knowledge. So, it is normal for the consultants of STAR CONSULTING to look regularly into the most different topics on a scientific ground. This also applied for the year 2014, when we published two white papers and studies. Since our roots are in the automotive industry, it is not astonishing that both dealt with buying cars. In August, we introduced a white paper about the psychological effects of pricing in car dealerships. We identified seven different effects that have a psychological influence on the car buyers' behavior and we gave some advice on how to use this knowledge when setting prices in a car dealership. At the end of the year, we had a closer look at the older models and asked the question of whether classic car funds might be an interesting investment alternative for the current low interest levels. Our answer: Yes. However, only the future can tell if the not yet established classic car funds will justify this trust. We have already identified other subjects for 2015, on which we will start our fundamental scientific work.

You can find our current studies here (German only):

www.star-cooperation.com/oldtimerfonds

www.star-cooperation.com/pricing-autohaus

E-commerce on the rise

For STAR SYSTEMS, one of the most important fields of innovation is e-commerce – or Every Commerce, as we STARS like to call it. By this, we mean a holistic approach to face the current market requirements of digital commerce/ business professionally. We plan, realize and operate online shops for our customers on exactly the scale they need, from the front end to the integration of logistics. If desired, we additionally take over the online marketing measures and the ongoing analysis of the shop's performance in order to optimize its visibility in the infinite realm of the World Wide Web. We were able to broaden these activities in 2014 partly because we have expanded our capacities in e-commerce heavily and won over true experts in this field. This shows the significance of the online world within the STAR COOPERATION. Furthermore, we have agreed on cooperating with two large commerce associations, Handelsverband Baden-Württemberg e. V. and Baden-Württemberg: Connected e. V., which will help us to strengthen our presence and further prove our expertise in this area.

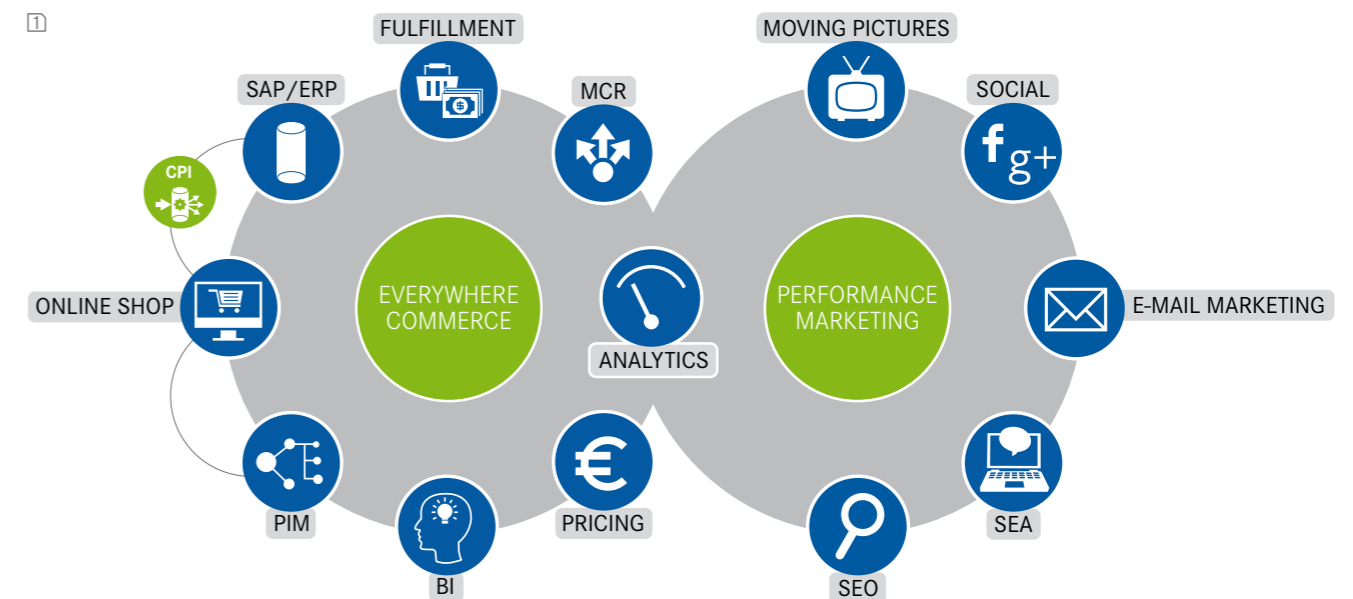
The first projects deriving from these collaborations are already in the making. For these and for other customers, we are developing additional solutions and products, e.g. the Commerce Audit with which we evaluate existing web sites as well as online shops and recommend the right improvement measures.



„For me, the most important trend is society's change towards a completely digitalized world which will outshine even the Industrial Revolution of the 19th century. Through this, totally new business models will emerge, others will vanish, and this will have a lasting effect on all aspects of our future.“

Oliver Messer | Managing Director
STAR SYSTEMS

STAR COOPERATION® Consulting & Business IT



¹ E-commerce@STAR: A holistic approach from the first idea to planning and realizing to operating and optimizing.



1250
2000 125
384 764
648
994 506
75

2014
BEST CONSULTANTS
AWARDED BY BRAND EINS WISSEN & STATISTA

Excellent consultants

Admittedly, STAR CONSULTING is a rather small player in the German market compared to the big management consultancies. The great regularity with which the STAR services are recognized in public shows that neither our solutions nor we have to hide. In May 2014, we received one of those accolades of which we are very proud. For the first time, brand eins Wissen and Statista determined where excellence in consulting can be found. More than 1,400 experienced project managers handed in their assessment and recommendations considering their colleagues of other consultancies. Based on these answers, they asked more than 1,500 decision makers on the customers' side about their experience. The result: Together with 275 other companies, STAR CONSULTING was elected as Best Consultant 2014. We are flattered to be among the chosen ones receiving this award in its inaugural year. At the same time, it spurs us on to earn this merit on a permanent basis through our convincing services

More on the future trends of new mobility and e-commerce at www.new-mobility.com and www.star-cooperation.com/e-commerce

Reprogramming for used cars


For car lease providers, it is a very common challenge to determine the residual value of a vehicle and to integrate this into their own accounting processes. If possible, automatically and with little effort. So far, the respective residual value table had to be consulted manually and arduously. Since 2014, this manual labor is a thing of the past for our customer, the finance branch of a premium automotive manufacturer. For them, STAR SYSTEMS' IT experts have developed an individual solution, which helps them use the current data of the "Schwacke" lists for the determination of residual values. Evidently, this only seems to be a small step, but it was a huge relief on our customer's side.

Retail consulting - what exactly is that?


As pleasing as ever more efficient, safe and durable vehicles are for the consumers, they come with disadvantages for another group, the car repair shops. Nowadays, those businesses can barely survive just by selling new cars. However, the utilization of the important pillar of maintenance, repair and defect correction is drastically decreasing, so that car dealerships' profitability is deteriorating. Three years ago, the retail consultants of STAR CONSULTING came to the aid of a premium car manufacturer's Swiss dealer network and implemented a comprehensive solution for the dealerships' aftersales marketing. The fact that the customer committed himself to us in 2014 for another three years goes to show his conviction of our consulting services' transparent and traceable benefits. Furthermore, we were able to win another customer in the past year for a similar project with an international setup. We will continue to pay full attention to increasing this customer loyalty, for there is still large potential in this area for STAR.

Finances in order because of business intelligence

Finance, controlling, business intelligence (BI). These are very special areas within a company. Combined, however, they can significantly facilitate the work around the annual financial statement. Our colleagues at STAR SYSTEMS have successfully mastered this balancing act in 2014 and have gained a new customer from the asset and real estate management industry for their BI solutions. To be precise, they now use the BI software Cubeware to generate reports for the consolidation of subsidiaries as well as for the departments connected with the financial statements. Such a project is especially complex if there are already various reporting applications (e.g. SAP) installed at the customer's and if this data needs to be harmonized. Additionally, you need good knowledge of the accounting regulations according to HGB and IFRS so that you can allocate and evaluate the data correctly. STAR thereby gains deeper insight into the finance and real estate industries of which we can only profit in the future.



„Cue future trend, I think of workout and health data, communications and entertainment on your wrist. At the start of the year, I've bought my first smart watch and I'm very excited about how these small devices will change our future.“
Thomas Strobel | Consultant E-Commerce
STAR SYSTEMS



„In future, we will share consumer goods more often because ownership loses significance. Car sharing is already proof of the demand in this area. Music is also shared diligently on the internet. I'm curious how the share economy will develop in the coming years.“
Nicolai Stickel | General Manager
STAR COOPERATION

STAR COOPERATION® | Consulting & Business IT

Service portfolio
Consulting services in technology, business and IT issues

STAR SYSTEMS
Core services: tailor-made solutions and consulting for technology and IT issues as well as digital business processes

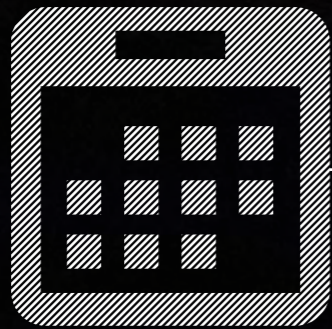
Employees 2013: 28	Employees 2014: 32
Turnover 2013: EUR 3.9 million	Turnover 2014: EUR 4.4 million

STAR CONSULTING
Core services: consulting services in the commercial area, in marketing, sales and aftersales, automotive and non-automotive.

Employees 2013: 90	Employees 2014: 74
Turnover 2013: EUR 8.7 million	Turnover 2014: EUR 9.4 million



You can only leave an impression if you are seen. We make STAR and the STARS visible, in the press, on the web and in social media.



Expert knowledge, product innovations, artistry – the STAR events have much more to offer than just networking. They stimulate ideas for the future. Live and interactive.

APPEARING OPENLY TOGETHER

STAR in the public eye

Never before have precise and factual communications and public relations been as indispensable as in today's media era. At STAR, it is an important concern to give insights and outlooks throughout the whole year. To bring the outside world inside. To carry our insides outwards. To explain innovations in detail. Thereby opening an attractive window into the STAR COOPERATION.

APPEARING OPENLY TOGETHER

STAR in the public eye

Innovative developments, solution-oriented services and highly specialized experts – there are many good ideas at STAR. However, they can only have a successful impact on the future if they are seen. Letting these stars shine, that is the purpose of STAR's public relations. With the help of ongoing external publications as well as many different events in 2014, we have successfully introduced new products and presented the STARS as experts in their respective fields.

For STAR, external contacts will remain an important opportunity to convince existing and potential new customers of our ability to shape the future and our innovative power. Therefore, we have significantly expanded our event calendar for the year 2015. This way, we will continue to give and receive stimuli, convey knowledge and expertise, develop new ideas and trends – thereby shining even more brightly.

STARS around the World – Kick-off 2014

The lift-off event of the year 2014 took the almost 500 employees present on a journey around the world. True to our motto for the year, STARS around the World, many helpers busily turned Böblingen's Kongresshalle into an airport terminal on March 10th – including check-in counters, boarding passes, ground personnel and beverage trolleys. The following two hours focused on the STAR Group's internationalization, but also the review of the successful year 2013 was a big part of the evening. Traditionally, this was taken care of by Dr. Neher in his speech as well as in the Q & A session with employees. Sofia Neher, managing partner and responsible for the STAR COOPERATION Group's foreign locations, gave insights into the company's international strategy. The location managers also had their say and recounted their experiences and projects in faraway countries in great detail. During the concluding unofficial part of the evening, the STARS had plenty of time to network, for rarely do so many STARS from all around the world meet in person.

Our current event calendar (German only):

www.star-cooperation.com/veranstaltungen

Get-together in the workshop hall

For our Engineering and EE-Solutions division, in-house exhibitions are a good opportunity to showcase its broad product and service portfolio in the areas of electric and electronic technology as well as engineering. For this purpose, BERGER ELEKTRONIK opened the door to its workshop hall on October 8th, where vehicles are modified or cable sets are usually assembled. The latest generation of PWM generators were especially popular with many visitors. We were also very glad that almost the entire staff of Eberspächer Electronics, our newest subsidiary in Göppingen, paid us a visit in Sindelfingen to meet their new colleagues and breathe some STAR air for the first time.



New event format stands the test

STAR Insight combines enthralling keynotes with inspiring arts exhibitions. Newly designed in 2014, the format has already proven in its first year to be the right move towards the future of the STAR events.

On April 10th, Dr. Sebastian Wolf, lecturer at St. Gallen Business School, explained in his keynote „Leadership & Health – Achieving High Performance Permanently“, how you can work successfully and stay healthy even under the high pressures of time and liability. Subsequently, the painter Alfredo Pucci as well as the sand artists Lena Tempich and Johanna Landscheidt presented their works during the STAR Insight Vernissage in and around STAR's headquarters in Böblingen.

„Secret Weapons of Communications: Gentle Strategies with Resounding Impact“ – this was the title of Leo Martin's

STAR Insight keynote on November 13th. Interactively, the former secret service officer threw light on the impact our subconscious patterns of thought and behavior have on our everyday experiences. His entertaining lecture was complemented by the paintings of Stuttgart-based artist Sibylle Möndel, who is the first discovery of STAR's new curator Conny Luley.

STARS are experts in their fields

The STAR Expert Days have become a fixture in the STAR event calendar. On these days, we present new trends to our existing and potential customers and share our knowledge with them. These events are different because of their practical relevance – by involving our customers and presenting real projects, the audience can easily identify with the challenges portrayed. The topics of both 2014 Expert Days had one thing in common: They skilfully connected technology with the media world.

On March 20th, the three lectures carefully examined the power of data. Cue: Big data. For, the information treasure that is hidden in the huge amounts of data that are gathered by companies each day contains great value especially in marketing and sales. The presentations of the second Expert Day on October 16th dealt with the rapid trends of the mobile world and how the future's daily routine will be enriched by ever-new mobile applications. At STAR, this future is already taking place because by developing customized sales and service apps we bring our customers' sales to the next level.



„An important development of the past years definitely is cashless payment. Studies state that we won't use coins or notes any more in 15 years' time. Though I personally can't imagine having a chip implanted under my skin for that.“

Daniela Stoll | PR and Marketing Project Manager STAR PUBLISHING

Your contact for everything concerning the STAR events:

Daniela Stoll (+49 (0)7031 6288-523, events@star-cooperation.com)

UPCOMING EVENTS

12/03 STAR INSIGHT 1

26/03 FUTURE DAY

23/04 STAR EXPERT DAY MEDIA & LOGISTICS 1

18/06 STAR EXPERT DAY MEDIA & LOGISTICS 2

25/06 STAR INSIGHT 2

09/07 IN-HOUSE EXHIBITION ENGINEERING & EE-SOLUTIONS 1

24/09 STAR EXPERT DAY MEDIA & LOGISTICS 3

08/10 IN-HOUSE EXHIBITION ENGINEERING & EE-SOLUTIONS 2 + STAR INSIGHT 3

12/11 STAR EXPERT DAY MEDIA & LOGISTICS 4

26/11 STAR INSIGHT 4

2015

IN COLD PRINT

The goal of our press relations is to inform the public on a regular basis about what is going on at STAR. Meanwhile, this far overreaches classic press releases. In times of Facebook, Twitter & Xing, we are present in many channels and with lots of various stories.

Facebook

On our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/starcooperation), we regularly post short insights into our workaday life, from the Sterntaler activities to interesting internships to pictures from our STARter Days.

Facebook fans: 428
Facebook posts in 2014: 56

External news and press releases

In the case of particularly interesting and significant news for our stakeholders, we publish those on our web site (www.star-cooperation.com) and inform the relevant local and specialized press directly.

Number of external news and press releases 2014: 32

Intranet & STAR Connect

At STAR, we also like to keep our colleagues around the world up to date about projects, events and important information. The topics range from new training courses to trade exhibitions to well-managed customer projects.

Number of internal news 2014: 105



Our expertise in the most diverse areas, our innovative power and our successes are reflected in the STAR COOPERATION's press coverage. An extract:

Digitalization poker
Discussing with other experts in digitalization, Oliver Messer, CIO of the STAR COOPERATION Group, demands more appreciation of IT's importance for business models and processes in an increasingly digitalized world.
Markt- und Mittelstand, 07 November 2014

Small cog in the machinery
Albrecht Heidinger, Manager Consulting at STAR PUBLISHING and expert for marketing resource management, explains how corporate publishing providers can further improve their IT performance with MRM.
Werben & Verkaufen, 20 October 2014

Looking for variety? We have it!
In good company with various other top employers, STAR COOPERATION presents itself as a small but distinguished address for everybody who expects more from a job than always the same projects and routines.
Süddeutsche Zeitung, 18 October 2014

Eberspächer splits from subsidiary
Acquiring Eberspächer Electronics in August reverberated in many different media outlets. The responsible managing directors, Prof. Dr. Neher of STAR and Dirk Walliser of Eberspächer Automotive Controls, agreed: "The transfer has advantages for all parties – for the involved companies as well as the customers, business partners and employees alike."
Esslinger Zeitung, 26 September 2014

Individual printing in large quantities
At the symposium „The Role of Print in the Media Mix“ at Hochschule für Medien in Stuttgart, Marco Ade, Manager Business Development at STAR PUBLISHING, delivered insight into the challenges facing a media service provider in the modern world. Together with other experts, he drew a comprehensive picture of the print industry's future.
Deutscher Drucker, 18 September 2014

Agile is the way to show first results speedily
Benjamin Hillscher, Manager Mobile Communication at STAR PUBLISHING, recounts his experiences with agile project management methods in an interview and how STAR solves even complex challenges quickly, e.g. with the help of SCRUM.
PAGE, 01 September 2014

Kids Company – in-house childcare across companies
A novelty in the childcare market, the in-house and cross-company day-care center of STAR, PLANA Küchenland and MOOG is portrayed in detail.
LOB-Magazin, 03 July 2014

Dialogue in international markets across all media
Marina Pepaj, General Manager at STAR PUBLISHING, explains what marketers need to pay attention to if they want to use their marketing activities for entering into a dialogue with their customers across channel and country boundaries.
ONEtoONE, 31 March 2014

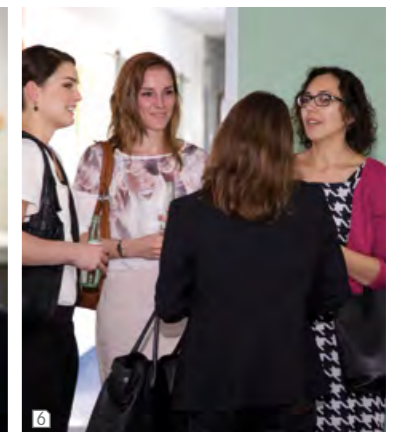


The STAR year 2014 in pictures:

WORKING TOGETHER, CELEBRATING ACHIEVEMENTS TOGETHER



¹ The startools team is happy about the web shop's successful relaunch. ² The year's kick-off event themed "STARS around the World" brought the whole world to Böblingen. ³ Soccer fever at STAR. ⁴ It's easier to run as a team: The STARS at this year's corporate race at Böblingen Flugfeld. ⁵ The new event format STAR Insight offers keynote speeches, inspiring exhibitions and stimulating conversation. ⁶ At the STAR Expert Days, we present our knowledge, our solutions and our ideas. ⁷ Celebrating our accomplishments together is important at STAR. For instance, at our Christmas Party. ⁸ Products and engineers up close at BERGER ELEKTRONIK's in-house exhibition.





Remanufacturing is an important trend for the industrial future when it comes to diversification, customer loyalty and economy of resources. We provide suitable solutions.

Fuel runs in our veins – but increasingly electricity as well. That is why we are already working on e-mobility developments for the future.

Today, diagnostics and testing demand ever more mobility. We support this with sophisticated software and adequate apps.

GIVING IMPULSES TOGETHER

The Engineering & EE-Solutions division

The industry is feeling the pulse of the times. It is all the more important to drive it yourself than being driven. For, the technical field is becoming more and more complex. In engineering, steering, data transmission and testing alike. Collaboratively, the experts of BERGER ELEKTRONIK, Eberspächer Electronics and STAR ENGINEERING advance the focal points of trend-setting mobility.

GIVING IMPULSES TOGETHER

The Engineering & EE-Solutions division

The STAR Group's engineers and technical experts meet under the umbrella of our Engineering & EE-Solutions division. They are true inventors when it comes to electric and electronic technology, technical products and processes. With their know-how in engineering, development and manufacturing, the engineers of STAR ENGINEERING cover all services within the entire product development process – automotive as well as non-automotive. Where there is a need for special prototypes and specific vehicle modifications, the workshop experts of BERGER ELEKTRONIK are available with long years of experience. And the latest addition to the STAR family, Eberspächer Electronics, and their successful solutions in the area of vehicle bus systems like FlexRay and Ethernet complement the broad portfolio of services. All that, encompassed by comprehensive process consulting and efficient project management – that is our Engineering & EE-Solutions division.

We want to continue proving our high performance in the technological area, in future just as we did in 2014. In the automotive industry, where we originate from. And in other areas, where we also feel at home: technologically sophisticated industries for which we can provide valuable input with our expertise and flexible solutions. We spur our innovative power on, e.g. in the area of manufacturing which provides an answer to the increasing demand for sustainable solutions for the future. Or in Digital Engineering en route to Industry 4.0. And by developing mature diagnostics, testing and connectivity products.

Flying Doctors in China

The Flying Doctors are well known in Australia. There, physicians with a pilot's license bridge the outback to ensure health care also in very distant regions. Since 2014, we at STAR have flying doctors, too. However, they do not take care of ailing humans, but of faulty motors. At STAR ENGINEERING, three STARS assist our new customer from the Northeast of China, a premium automotive joint venture, in launching a new motor model. Such a rollout usually requires intensive technical support. So, in the coming three years, our flying doctors will leave their base in Shanghai for more than 400 business trips. They will record and analyze the defects that have occurred at garages and dealerships all over the country. That way, the customer will get a good overview of the challenges inherent in entering a market as big as China and how efficient and solution-oriented processes can be designed for a newly established technical support team.




„I find the new production philosophy shifting from a subtractive to an additive approach very interesting. Cue: 3D printing. This way, you can built components from the center outwards, very flexibly and custom-fitting according to the customer's specifications.“
Tobias Utz | Managing Director
STAR ENGINEERING



New subsidiary enriches the Group

Eberspächer Electronics GmbH & Co. KG has been a part of the STAR COOPERATION Group since August 2014. Originating from the Eberspächer Group, the company has specialized in electronic vehicle connectivity and perfectly complements the division's offerings with its high-end products, complex test bench projects and extensive manufacturing facilities. Expectations were high since the acquisition should enable STAR to offer even more innovative and individual electronic solutions to its customers. These expectations were already met in the second half of the year, when a company in the automotive vicinity ordered 2,400 FlexRay/USB cards. Our colleagues in Göppingen will deliver these in the coming two years. In 2015, this pleasing start will be followed by the company's integration into the STAR Group, which is a complex venture spanning as diverse areas as controlling, IT and marketing. We are confident to master this transition successfully and to be able to captivate with even more development expertise due to the resulting synergies.



„I'm very impressed by how normal it is for today's youth to combine the digital world of social media with their real lives. I hope, digital migrants like me will master this challenge equally well in the future.“
Thorsten Piel | Managing Director
STAR ENGINEERING

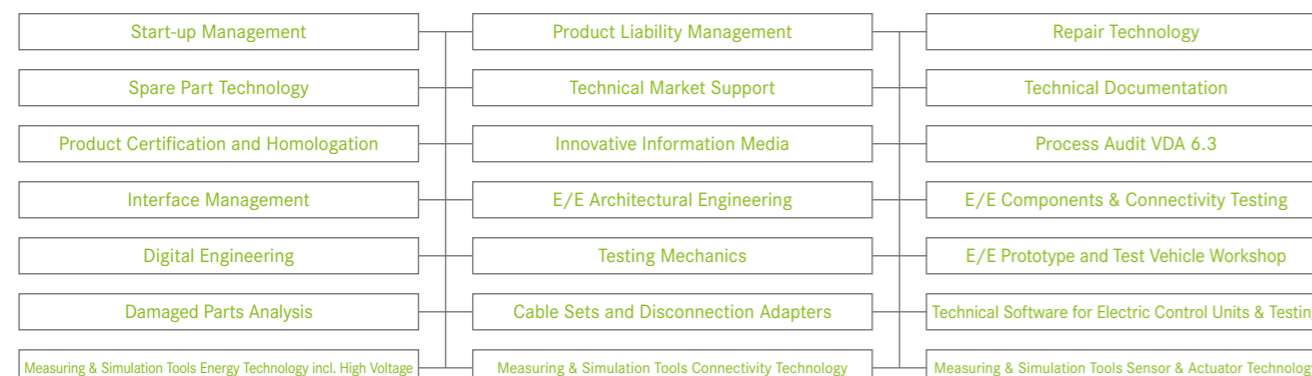
Collaborative testing for better results

One of the most important foundations of STAR's hitherto successful 18 years is good teamwork. For, only then we can provide exceptional services. Therefore, we are happy about project examples like the following, in which the diagnostics experts of BERGER ELEKTRONIK connived with our Wolfsburg team. They managed to convince the aftersales



department of the local automotive customer that the STAR Group was the right partner for vehicle diagnostics and functional tests. To be precise, they prepared, carried out and documented the functional tests specific for ODIS engineering as well as the basic tests in real vehicles. Overall, this is a very intricate project, since the customer needs a lot of detailed information for its diagnostics strategy and implementation. However, this exact groundwork is worthwhile because it helps incorporating the findings into the customer's diagnostics software ideally. The positive feedback we received from the customer confirms that the team rendered outstanding work and that chances are good for a continuation of this trusting cooperation.

STAR COOPERATION® Engineering & EE-Solutions





Close observance can help prevent defects

Our test engineer's work often resembles that of Sherlock Holmes. They have to look closely, check, ponder every possibility in order to find the right solution for the task given. Ten of these STAR ENGINEERING detectives are at work for our premium automotive customer at our Munich location. On a daily basis, they have been gathering around a table full of defect components since October 2014, examining faulty brakes, motors, gear boxes and many other parts that have been sent in from all over the world and from all kinds of vehicle models. Exactly diagnosing these failures



„For us at Eberspächer Electronics, the future is obviously particularly exciting because the year 2015 will definitely bring a lot of alterations. We are looking forward to it because we are convinced that we can accomplish more as a part of the STAR Group.”

Christa Holzenkamp | General Manager
Eberspächer Electronics

is the first step of preventing them in the future – through improved processes, production procedures, materials and component development. Here, the STARS gain knowledge that is essential for our customer, especially when it comes to parts crucial for the safety on the streets. We are proud of this and of the fact that this long-term project will run until 2017.



„Industry 4.0 – that's a trend that will turn the manufacturing industry inside out. When the information age reaches production halls and connects machines and devices, the Smart Factory is only one step away. For us as industrial partner, this provides opportunities and challenges at the same time.”

Henning Lange | Managing Director
BERGER ELEKTRONIK

STAR demonstrates its services at leading trade show

We are certain that we offer exceptional solutions in test bench and testing development. However, presenting ourselves at the most important trade shows is indispensable for the engineers of STAR ENGINEERING, to make the market and the customers equally aware of that fact. For example in summer 2014 at Automotive Testing Expo Europe 2014 (ATE) at Stuttgart's exhibition center, one of the leading international trade shows for measuring and testing technology as well as other technologies relevant for safety and quality. Together with our partner tectos, the STAR technology experts presented various test bench components on all three days. They also informed the numerous visitors at the booth about our comprehensive service and consulting competences. The contacts newly established or revived there provide us with important stimuli and quite often lead to specific project inquiries and mandates for the future.

Smart and young ideas for the future

Engineering & EE-Solutions is a very dynamic division that can and will profit from the suggestions and ideas of qualified and motivated juniors. Therefore, we offer students of various disciplines the opportunity to convert their theoretical knowledge into practical use. For example Victoria Hoffmann, who is studying information technology at Hochschule Reutlingen and who spent some time at BERGER ELEKTRONIK in Sindelfingen as part of her specialization project in 2014. Information technology and a car workshop, is that a good fit? Indeed, since many processes and functions in modern vehicles are based on computer programs. In this case, Ms Hoffmann wanted to know: Is there a simple and quick way to transfer the data gathered by vehicle electronics during driving into an electronic driver's log? That is actually possible with the help of an app developed especially for this purpose. She was working on optimizing this app during her project and sorted, classified and analyzed a huge amount of data. In test conditions, the app already has proved its worth in a Mercedes Benz A-class model and is therefore a promising step towards the mobile future of vehicle diagnostics.

Good project work can score again

One of STAR ENGINEERING's expertise areas focusses on technical project management. It makes sure that an idea is brought into the real world as efficiently, punctually and with as little problems as possible. And when a project is concluded successfully, customer and service provider part ways again. It is all the more commendable when such a well-rehearsed team can reunite. For instance in 2014, when our former customer from the automotive supply industry asked out engineering experts to take over a two-tier manufacturing project. To be precise, the customer wants to build and assemble an electromagnet for a proportional valve single-handedly and thereby increase the in-house production depth. The project managers were to pay particular attention to well-functioning junctures between the construction, purchasing, production planning and trial departments as well as suppliers and to also to keep track



„Personally, I'm fascinated by the concept of augmented reality. Using technology to enrich the reality right before our eyes with valuable additional information – this will have a lasting impact on our future.”

Zoran Cutura | General Manager
BERGER ELEKTRONIK

of the quality and timeline challenges. Subsequently, the C prototypes accrued in this process were extensively validated and tested. These new magnets will be made ready for start of production in the second project phase that will follow in 2015. This goes to show that, once they have had good experiences with STAR, our customers like to opt for our solutions and services as well to handle future challenges.

STAR COOPERATION® | Engineering & EE-Solutions

Service portfolio

Technical cumulative solutions for automobile manufacturers and system suppliers with a focus on research, development and aftersales

STAR ENGINEERING

Core services: engineering and development services within the entire product development process focusing on project, process and quality management

Employees 2013: 203	Employees 2014: 176
Turnover 2013: EUR 20.6 million	Turnover 2014: EUR 18.7 million

BERGER ELEKTRONIK

Core services: development and manufacturing of individual vehicle electronics and software, assembly and modification of prototypes and test benches, manufacturing of test bench components and cable sets as well as sale of high-quality cables and plugs

Employees 2013: 106	Employees 2014: 88
Turnover 2013: EUR 8.4 million	Turnover 2014: EUR 7.2 million

Eberspächer Electronics

Core services: tailor-made development tools and services for vehicle connectivity technology as well as manufacturing of groundbreaking on-board networks

Employees 2014: 28
Turnover 2014: EUR 5.4 million



The STARS are at the core of our Group. To keep it that way, we offer an ideal work environment including trainings, benefits and STAR events.



For a company represented on four continents, interconnectedness is crucial. STAR Connect links all STARS and will make our future collaboration even easier.

ACHIEVING MORE TOGETHER

Human Resources

A goal or corporate strategy is nothing without the people behind it. Nothing without the appropriate skills and a balance between work and private life. Holistic human resources management has top priority for the STAR COOPERATION. A number of measures reflect our commitment, from junior employee development to in-house childcare.

ACHIEVING MORE TOGETHER

STAR up close and personal

There are smart and dedicated people working for the STAR COOPERATION. They are as versatile as the services they provide. This individuality constitutes the Group and spurs it on as a whole. Our customers profit from that as well through successful projects. We are aware that the STARS are the source and therefore the most important basis for the STAR COOPERATION's success.

Therefore, it is all the more significant to create a work environment in which diversity is valued, entrepreneurial thinking is encouraged, individual goals are respected and a high quality of life is ensured. For, only then we can warrant that the smartest and most dedicated people can be found at STAR also in the future.

The stories of 2014 demonstrate how this team approach is brought to life at STAR. How we foster and challenge our juniors in equal measure. How we enable young mothers and fathers to balance professional ambition and family time. And how we shape the future as well as stay fit together.

STAR introduces own social network

At the end of 2014, rumors emerged that Mark Zuckerberg and his Facebook developers were allegedly working on a business version of their popular social network. There is just one thing: We at STAR are already one step ahead. In late April 2014, STAR Connect was launched, our internal social network at STAR. Every employee automatically gained access and has had the opportunity to establish communities, share knowledge, maintain blogs, organize meetings and collaborate with others ever since. The STARS have adopted the network well and already built group for various purposes. There is a forum for sustainability issues and another one, in which our innovation management gathers and advances ideas. There is a fitness group, in which the sporty STARS can set up sports dates. And the HR community regularly provides the most important and current information on everything related to human resources. The name of the new tool already reveals its purpose: STAR Connect makes it even easier to connect with colleagues around the world, to successfully master projects together, to exchange know-how and to spur on innovations within the Group more quickly.

Fit for the future with new HR administration system

At around 700 STARS based in seven countries, the STAR COOPERATION Group has been multiplying in not even 20 years. In order to do so many employees justice and to service them as best we can, we need sophisticated processes and a powerful administration tool. In the year 2014, however, it has become clear that our hitherto existing human resources software has reached the limits of its technical capabilities. It will not be able to support our Group's future evolution optimally. Therefore, the new human resource administration system STAR People and its various separate portals for recruiting, classic HR administration and self-service functions for the STARS was introduced in November and will be implemented in several steps. Not only our colleagues in the HR department will profit from this easing of their daily work, but also potential new STARS value a professional recruiting process. Finally, the trainings, workshops and events included in the STAR Campus have now also found a new home, including a

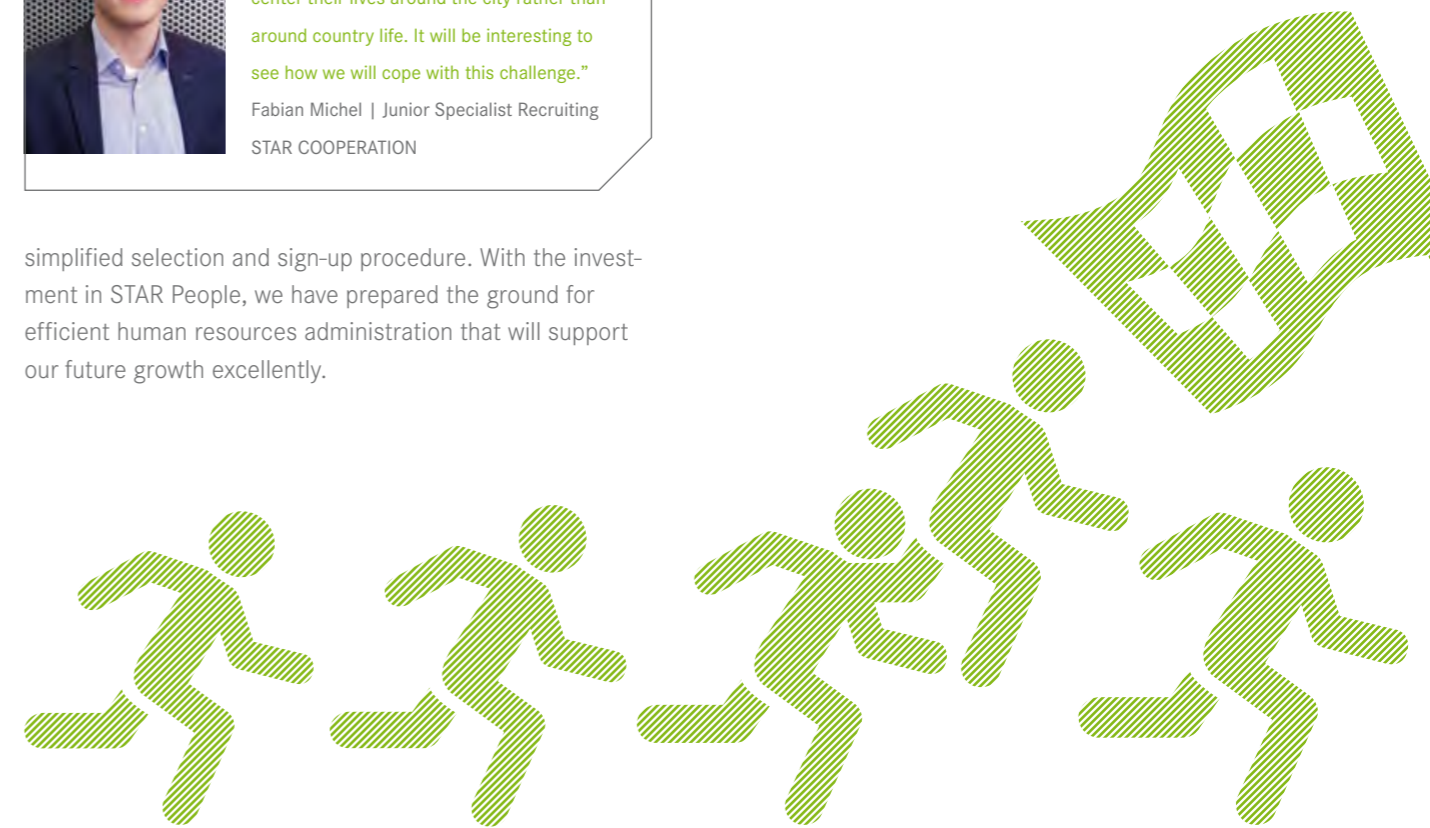
STARS out on sporty business

Even though we have our roots in the automotive industry, we also use our legs to get ahead quickly. At least, that is what the record number of STARS participating successfully in different corporate races across Germany has proven in 2014. The Wolfsburg team consisting of six STARS led the way by representing us at the Braunschweig Nachtlauf in June. All of them were able to post a new personal best on the six-kilometer course. Shortly afterwards, the Bavarian capital trembled under 60,000 running shoes. The Munich STAR team completed the Olympiapark circuit with flying colors and managed to place within the best of their category. The biggest squad participated in the corporate race at Böblingen Flugfeld in September. Especially, the best mixed team excelled and came in 27th out of 267 competing teams. STAR is happy to support these events: on the one hand, they promote the balance between professional and private life so often evoked. On the other hand, the proceeds partly go to social institutions that benefit e.g. children. Therefore, it does not cost us much effort to support the teams by paying the race fees, organizing green STAR gear and cheering them on with a large number of fans.



„I'm wondering about how and where we will be living in the future. Urbanization as a trend goes on and significantly more people will center their lives around the city rather than around country life. It will be interesting to see how we will cope with this challenge.“
 Fabian Michel | Junior Specialist Recruiting
 STAR COOPERATION

simplified selection and sign-up procedure. With the investment in STAR People, we have prepared the ground for efficient human resources administration that will support our future growth excellently.



Patronage and sponsorship for others

At STAR, we are aware of our social responsibility and we assume it gladly. For example, by sponsoring talented young academics. Each year, we employ numerous students in different areas of the Group, as interns and working students, for individual projects or their thesis. By doing so, the young people learn first-hand what professional life has in store and they can utilize their theoretical knowledge in real projects. In return, STAR taps into the important scientific stimuli the students bring along from their colleges. We incorporate that in our work and get an impression of the expectations and requirements of a new generation – clearly a win-win-situation. Furthermore, the cooperation with colleges was complemented with tangible measures like sponsoring a lecture hall at Hochschule Esslingen as well as the hands-on support of a racing team in the past year.

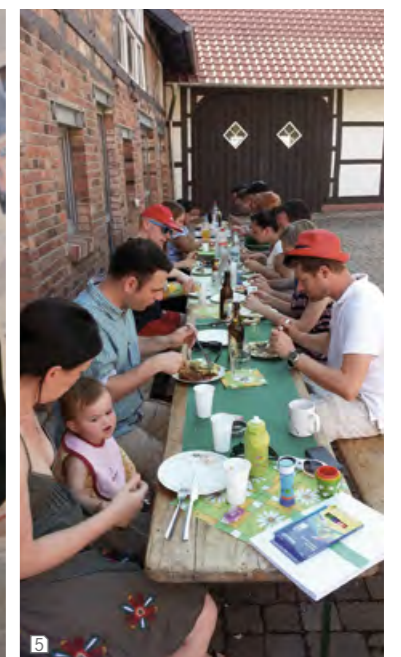


We were also active on social territory in 2014. The story of how the Sterntaler, the STAR COOPERATION's apprentices, facilitate various institutions supporting children and handicapped people with their activities will be told in detail in the chapter titled Sustainability. Beyond that, we continuously help people in the Böblingen region who live in less privileged circumstances, e.g. with a lunch soup kitchen in Sindelfingen. In the range of sports, we foster the STARS' fitness with contributions to corporate runs and regular football matches. Finally, our STAR Insight events provide young and local artists with a platform to present their art to a larger and culturally interested audience. We will continue many of these activities also in 2015 and beyond.

¹ Social welfare is close to our hearts. For instance, by supporting STAR's running teams. ² The youngest STARS are cared for at the Kids Company. ³ STAR Insight provides young and local artists a platform for higher exposure. ⁴ The Sterntaler lobby as ambassadors for apprenticeships – and receive awards for it. ⁵ A team also outside the office, e.g. at the summer BBQ in Wolfsburg.

STAR gets more colorful

If you take a walk along our Böblingen headquarters' ground floor, you'll sooner or later come across unusual signs. A stroller is neatly tucked away in a corner, colorful letter manikins are stuck to a door and from behind it, you can hear happy children's voices. That is the Kids Company, the in-house day-care center of STAR, MOOG and Plana Küchenland, which opened at the beginning of 2014. After our colleagues expressed a wish for such a facility during the employee survey of 2012, months of preparations followed: Debating the actual and potential demand, searching for the right type of care, finding a fitting partner, clarifying the necessary legal and regulatory issues and transforming the apartment initially provided for the janitor into a child-proof and -friendly environment. By now, the offspring of four STARS are cared for by a day nanny there. And when they are on their way to an outing, they are often met by smiling adults. Meanwhile, their parents can focus entirely on their work because, in case of an emergency, they get to their children quickly. This is just one of the measures by which we want to retain the expertise of these valuable employees in our company and to strengthen the personal relationships with our customers in the future.

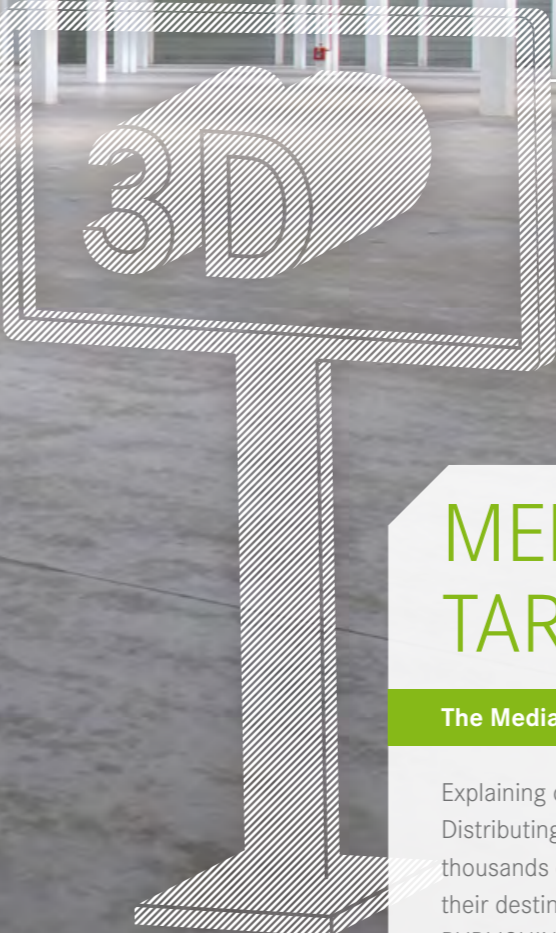




Bulky product catalogs are out. The future lies in apps for sales and service, for trade shows and pitches, for tablets and smart-phones.



Just in sequence – that is the future of production. We deliver print media, additional parts and signage to the assembly line exactly when they are needed.



Experiencing 3D without uncomfortable glasses – that is possible with the right technology and tailor-made contents.

MEETING TARGETS TOGETHER

The Media & Logistics division

Explaining complicated topics simply. In every possible language. Distributing contents across different media and channels. Delivering thousands of parts all over the globe on time and without detours to their destination. STAR DISTRIBUTION, STAR MARKETING and STAR PUBLISHING master this complexity, individually and as a team. No matter how many ways, how many languages, how many parts, how many destinations. Scalable for future tasks in many different industries.

MEETING TARGETS TOGETHER

The Media & Logistics division

The Media & Logistics division unites the media with the logistics professionals of the STAR Group. They set trends and standards in marketing and communications, in media production and steering, in global media and parts logistics. The creative minds of STAR MARKETING think up individual and tailor-made communication solutions, from key visuals to holistic marketing concepts. STAR PUBLISHING's media experts put their good ideas into action and develop, produce and steer communications means of all kinds, in print, online and live. And the logistics professionals of STAR DISTRIBUTION provide ideal commerce and delivery processes and make sure that commodity, information as well as payment flows adhere to the customer's demands. Backed up by optimal consulting and high-quality project management. The entire process of modern marketing communications and supply chain optimization under one roof – that is our Media & Logistics division.

The year 2014 has proven that the division is on the right path with its efforts to win over customers from all kinds of industries. For them, we want to be the leading solutions and technology supplier of communications, media and logistics also in the future. We are defined by the unique combination of these areas in our Group. We emphatically foster the development of innovative product solutions, e.g. individual apps for the sales department. We track down trends and integrate them into our service portfolio, e.g. tangible communication worlds. And we continue working on offering comprehensive logistics solutions for tomorrow's world.

New milestone for the US business

It is commonly known that our colleagues at STAR PUBLISHING are experts in producing print media and delivering them on time to wherever they are needed. At our location in Southern USA, we made a big leap in 2014 and extended this expertise. Since May, we have been supplying our customer from the automotive industry as a general contractor not just with the necessary car manuals for the vehicles produced in the factory, but also with additional parts from a total of 24 suppliers. That means, STAR now brings warning triangles, navigation DVDs and multimedia fasteners and many other parts just in time to the assembly line. Already the size of the project team with eight members is an indication of how much time and effort had to be put into the smooth start-up of such a venture. And although the colleagues literally worked 24/7, this investment in a comprehensive solution will be worthwhile in the future. The way for a continuous expansion of this and similar services has been paved.



"For me as a manager, the trends on the job market are very important. The generation Y comes with totally different goals and expectations compared to employees 30 years ago. For employers, this will lead to entirely new challenges regarding work space, time and contents in the future."

Ramona Kaden | Managing Director
STAR PUBLISHING | STAR DISTRIBUTION



STARS by the sea

Off to see new shores. That is where STARS DISTRIBUTION was headed. In the truest sense of the word. Namely, to Bremerhaven. There, we have acquired Lambrecht Quality Services (LQS) at the beginning of last year. The team has specialized on quality management in transport logistics particularly in the automotive sector. That means, they evaluate and audit the processes around truck- and shiploads for their customers based on the North Sea shore and internationally. For, the highest accuracy and quality is imperative especially for upscale payload. By acquiring LQS, STAR DISTRIBUTION was able to expand its competences in the area of auditing logistics suppliers significantly. Selling the company to STAR also has positive effects for LQS' existing customers: The former owner remains with the company, can continue to nurture the relationships built over years and can use the possibilities provided by the STAR Group to develop the service portfolio further.



"In the past, key chains, ice scrapers and shopping cart chips were common merchandise products. However, the means to increase customer loyalty will look differently in the future – more individual and increasingly digital. We will face these demands with intelligent solutions."

Alexander Schüle | Managing Director
STAR DISTRIBUTION | STAR PUBLISHING

STAR COOPERATION® | Media & Logistics



Complicated topics explained simply

It is easy to describe something using many words. However, it is hard to put complex products, sophisticated brand messages and comprehensive trainings in a nutshell in just a couple of minutes. STAR PUBLISHING has detected today's trend of presenting topics and information in a fun way by means of a short video and launched the new product TELL ME! in mid-2014. TELL ME!s are up to two-minute animation clips individually tailored to the customer's need which can convey even the most complicated issues to the target group entertainingly. In 2014, an animal rights group canvassed compliant donors with cute pythons. A software company presented the comprehensive functions of its presentation tool with the help of a TELL ME! Cartoon bodybuilders worked up a sweat for a local fitness group and illustrated the studios' particular workout concept via video clip. And even the STAR Unimog left its cinematic marks in a TELL ME! about the STAR COOPERATION Group's vision. All of these clips show how varied the results can be. They can be found on the TELL ME! YouTube channel:

www.star-cooperation.com/tellme



Always every information at hand

For STAR PUBLISHING, marketing communications exclusively taking place on paper has stopped long ago. By now, communications uses the most diverse channels and devices. Reinforced in 2014, the Mobile Communication team utilized this trend and developed individual apps that can be used at trade shows, in sales and on many other occasions for their customers, e.g. an internationally positioned company within the supplier industry. There, the responsible persons

asked for a new trade show app that should present the entire product range and its benefits appealingly as well as coherently and which should be operated easily, just in time for the industry's leading trade show. By using the SCRUM method, an agile approach to project management rarely used in media projects so far, the team was able to implement the customer's requests quickly throughout the entire development process. Thereby, the release was accomplished successfully in only a couple of months and on time for the trade show. Further steps will transform the app into a complete sales application and, ultimately, into an information means for the customers. More innovative app projects will follow, because, in an ever more mobile communications world, this know-how is a special focus within the STAR Group.

A minute beginning leads to huge success

Particularly nice stories can be told about small and manageable projects that gradually blossom into a long-term partnership with a high degree of trust. STAR PUBLISHING has written such a success story. Everything started at the end of 2013 with a POS gimmick, a single job for a large Southern German mechanical engineering company. Not even twelve months later, we have convinced the customer of our solutions competence and have taken up a stable and permanent space in the company's exclusive service provider pool. We have taken over the creation, production and steering of almost all promotional media for their B2C trade marketing division and supply posters, displays, signage and much more for the point of sale. This core business is complemented by continuous online marketing for the division's products in the form of ad banners etc. Additionally, we will roll out the corresponding sales app developed by STAR PUBLISHING containing the entire sales literature at the beginning of 2015. Rightly so, the colleagues at STAR PUBLISHING are proud of the fact that they were able to use the first project seed and nurture a firm stem of partnership.



„I think it's great to have so many small and creative online shops today. And trends like drop shipping enable the operators to focus entirely on optimizing their web presence, while logistics experts take care of fulfillment.“

Sven Augenstein | Manager
Business Development STAR PUBLISHING

Team performance across company boundaries

One project of the summer 2014 is a prime example for the good cooperation within the Media & Logistics division. After months of preparation, our media logistics team prevailed in a competition with high-profile market rivals and won a worldwide logistics mandate for an internationally leading audit group. Since then, we have been dispatching classic print products like annual reports or training material as well as promotional items of all kinds from our central Obertürkheim warehouse to all of the customer's locations across the globe. Interlocked closely, STAR DISTRIBUTION and STAR PUBLISHING take over the IT-based logistics management, the customer care as well as the efficient warehouse management. Since the customer placed a lot of importance on every knot, bolt and screw, the team shifted into high gear and was able to ace a first audit in fall. Meanwhile, STAR is also operating the respective online shop and is looking forward to the large array of additional articles that can be included in the project in future.

Effective rollout of a pilot project

The flashiest online shop will not help much if the complex business processes in the background, from timely delivery to integrated inventory and account management, are not running smoothly as well. A joint project of the Media & Logistics division shows that this is possible. We have established a highly functional online platform for an automobile manufacturer and its numerous brands, through which the entire global dealer organization can order many different marketing products – from a branded flag to an exclusive key ring pendant. We can also use this platform to manage standardized market demand surveys. In 2014, we have successfully moved this project from the pilot into the rollout phase and have effected great improvement in cost, time effort and quality for the customer.

Optimizing the warehouse via remote diagnostics

Material management backed by KPIs – that is a service our experts for parts logistics at STAR DISTRIBUTION were able to position successfully in the automotive industry in 2014. To be precise, we analyze the spare parts inventories of the affiliated car dealerships on our material management cockpits and issue recommendations regarding their optimization. That way, the warehouse is virtually tidied up and parts seldom used make room for fast moving components. The customers benefit: They can use the available warehouse capacities optimally, free capital and the dealer always has exactly the necessary spare parts at hand. Additionally, the upstream process chain is de-cluttered

because the planning and control of global parts demand and supply can be improved. Following Germany and the US, we will introduce this service also in other markets in 2015.

STAR COOPERATION® | Media & Logistics

Service portfolio

Development, realization, optimization and steering of communications measures as well as media, marketing and logistics processes

STAR MARKETING

Core services: individual and tailor-made communication solutions as well as holistic marketing concepts, creative think tank and comprehensive communication consulting

Employees 2013: 13	Employees 2014: 9
Turnover 2013: EUR 1.6 million	Turnover 2014: EUR 1.2 million

ATIO DRUCKKONZEPTE

Core services: extensive services in media production, pre-press, foreign language typesetting, cutting die development and preparation of finished print masters

Employees 2013: 5	Employees 2014: 9
Turnover 2013: EUR 0.5 million	Turnover 2014: EUR 0.6 million

STAR PUBLISHING

Core services: development, production and steering of communication media of all kinds, in print, video and app, creation of tangible communication worlds and implementation of innovative media processes

Employees 2013: 71	Employees 2014: 80
Turnover 2013: EUR 20.7 million	Turnover 2014: EUR 31.5 million

STAR DISTRIBUTION

Core services: holistic planning, consulting and implementation of logistics processes notably in media and parts logistics as well as steering and quality assurance of logistical business models

Employees 2013: 58	Employees 2014: 57
Turnover 2013: EUR 20.7 million	Turnover 2014: EUR 17.4 million

At STAR, we take our social responsibility seriously and support our surroundings with numerous fund-raising activities.



Economics, responsible business management and voluntary self-control - corporate governance plays an important role in STAR's daily routine.



E-mobility - that is a future trend STAR is already taking on practically. Our vehicle fleet will be expanded sustainably in the future.



ACTING SUSTAINABLY TOGETHER

Sustainability

Responsible and sustainable management has a self-evident sound to it. However, compiling the tasks involved is complex. The sustainability report published for the first time documents the concerted measures at the STAR COOPERATION. From environment-friendly developments to corporate risk minimization to philanthropic human resource management. This makes us an even more future-proof partner for our customers.

ACTING SUSTAINABLY TOGETHER

Look – think – feel green

The public's interest in companies and their values is keen. In the past years, this interest increasingly covers also the topic of sustainability. People want to know how companies deal with their corporate responsibility. At STAR, we also perceive this demand for more information. Still, sustainability is not just a trendy bandwagon we jump on with our first-time sustainability report. In fact, we have committed ourselves to the associated values long ago and are happy to document that. We know that a successful and sustainable future for our customers and us is only possible if we pursue social and ecological matters credibly. Only then, we can justify the trust placed on us permanently. Within the STAR COOPERATION Group, the Green STAR task force was established especially for this purpose. The team focuses on sustainability measures in the areas of people, environment and economics.



Profitability and corporate governance

We take our corporate responsibility seriously and want to live up to it with our sensible corporate strategy that is based on sustainable values and aimed at the future. Profitability and resource efficiency is a fundamental element of our service portfolio. Additionally, the question of corporate governance is an important one even for a company like STAR belonging to the strong medium-sized sector. One aspect is the focus of our business activities on long-term stability and sustainable growth. By leaning on our Consulting & Business IT, Engineering & EE-Solutions as well as Media &

Logistics divisions, we can compensate sectorial fluctuations and profit from Group-wide synergies. At the same time, STAR has installed a voluntary advisory board that advises the managing partners as well as all managing directors and can give important external stimuli. Thereby, we will stay a reliable partner for our employees, customers and stakeholders alike.

Pro environment

Saving our planet also rests on two solid pillars at the STAR COOPERATION. Many of the innovations we work on now and in the future have something to do with resource and fuel efficiency, environment-friendly technology or waste and emission prevention. For example, in e-commerce, we make sure that all of the processes involved in running an online shop are fully neutralized, e.g. by supporting climate protection projects to compensate generated emissions. The second pillar pertains to the behavior of each individual. STAR promotes its employees' environmental consciousness and encourages them to act ecologically responsible both on the job and at home. This starts very small in avoiding unnecessary printouts of e-mails and in switching off one's computer in the evening. It is more visible in our vehicle fleet, which we have shifted to more efficient models with the latest diesel technology. This led to a significant reduction of our overall fuel consumption. And it is precisely countable due to purchasing electric vehicles. This reduced our CO₂ emissions by 1.7 tons already.



„I'm curious about how smartphones will develop in the future. Already today, their functions significantly outreach making phone calls. I can even track my fitness activities. But I hope that our personal contacts will not be replaced by being dependent on such technology.“

Elena Telgenkämper | Consultant
STAR ENGINEERING and Green STAR
task force

By and for the STARS

For the STAR COOPERATION, sustainability starts with the people who work for and with us. Our employee responsibility has two dimensions. On the one hand, the company makes a point of providing the STARS with an excellent work environment so they can tap their full potential. This includes numerous provisions, e.g. flexible work schemes, a wide range of trainings and workshops, an on-site day-care facility, a corporate benefits program, subsidized healthcare and company pension schemes, employee events, special vehicle leasing programs and a lot more. We are convinced that this commitment to our employees will prove us to be one of the most appealing employers in the region in the long term.

On the other hand, we actively promote the STARS volunteering in social causes. The Sterntaler, the STAR Group's apprentices, are a good example for that. For years, they have been supporting charitable organizations like Stiftung Lebenshilfe in Böblingen, Winterhaldenkindergarten in Sindelfingen or Räuberhöhle in Herrenberg-Mönchberg with their activities.



„When it comes to future trends, smart home is the key word for me. Soon, we will be able to connect our private residence and all its appliances with our smartphone so that we can start the washing machine by using voice command. And the fridge will automatically update our shopping list when we run out of milk.“
Nik Walz | Apprentice STAR SYSTEMS

The whole year round, they raise funds by selling home-baked cake, crêpes, ice cream etc. Disadvantaged people then benefit through donations in kind. The effort is worthwhile for our apprentices, too. They develop social capabilities and train their organizational talents, their teamwork abilities and their empathy during the projects together.



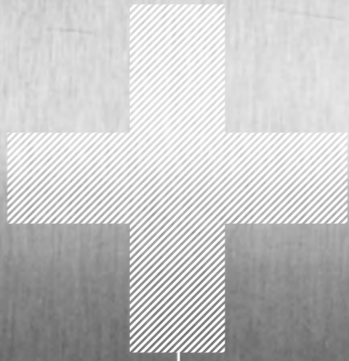
1 Good deeds – for example donating to “Lebenshilfe” in Böblingen.



2 Inducing improvements – the Green STAR task force develops new sustainability measures.



3 Preserving the environment – by using electric vehicles.



There are no limitations in our incubator for special services and ideas. Not for us and certainly not for our customers.

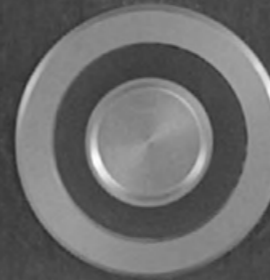
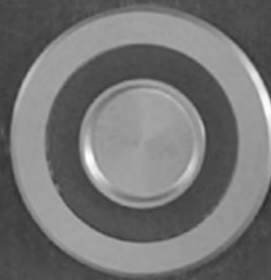
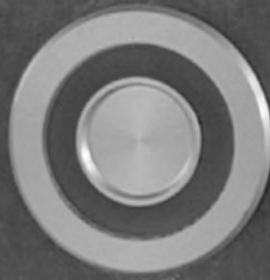
-1

0

1

2

3



+

SUPPLEMENTING OURSELVES TOGETHER

Group Specials

STAR AUTOMOTIVE, STAR EQUIPMENT and STAR FACILITY top off the overall portfolio of solutions of the STAR COOPERATION with diverse and valuable services. Also in 2014, we have provided our customers with exactly the right vehicle or have driven them safely from A to B. Have equipped the new workshop of their dreams and have delivered the necessary tools on time. And we have taken their facility management into our professional hands.

SUPPLEMENTING OURSELVES TOGETHER

The Group Specials

The Group Specials are our incubator for very special ideas, products and solutions. The STARS working there make sure that our customers' operations run smoothly. Ensuring their customers' mobility is the specialty of STAR AUTOMOTIVE's automobile experts. The workshop specialists of STAR EQUIPMENT advise and consult when it comes to planning new or modifying existing workshops and their online shop startools delivers the entire equipment right to your door. And the kind angels of STAR FACILITY always have the right answer for any everyday problem, in case an assistant cannot come to work or new offices are needed. Pronounced service mentality – these are our Group Specials.

Again, the year 2014 has shown how important a well-oiled infrastructure is for both our customers and ourselves. We want to ensure this in the future and offer the all-round carefree package of facility management, fleet management and workshop equipment. Therefore, we are already working on new solutions, e.g. on further developing our Böblingen headquarters. On expanding our activities in the area of mobility. And on new and sustainable products and processes for our workshop online shop startools.

More than just administrators

Nobody at STAR can imagine how a workday would be without our facility colleagues. They ensure that we are not cold in winter, that there are well-equipped work spaces available and that smaller repairs are executed quickly and



"I'm intrigued by the autonomic driving trend. The first prototypes have already been developed and there are already plans to implement a test track for that purpose. Maybe innovations like this will help to make our streets much safer in the future."

Martin Heinzelmann | Manager
STAR FACILITY

efficiently. Not just for us STARS, but also for the tenants of our headquarters' building, who can indulge in the same services. In 2014, the structure among our „cohabitants“ has changed significantly. Nevertheless, at 100 percent, the utilization was perfect again in the past year. Establishing our new offices at Fellbach was another big project for our colleagues at STAR FACILITY. There, they have developed and prepared new offices for the STARS working in technical documentation. Additionally, they had a very close look at their internal processes. We are convinced that the resulting improvements in efficiency will have a significantly positive effect on the STAR COOPERATION's operations in the future.



„It will be interesting to see if we can accomplish the energy revolution. If we combine reductions in energy usage and new technical innovations, we may actually succeed in gaining independence from fossil fuels.“

Markus Hack | Manager
STAR AUTOMOTIVE

Always mobile

2014 was a very successful year for STAR AUTOMOTIVE. To be precise, it was the best year since its foundation. In the meantime, the STAR COOPERATION's company car fleet comprises approximately 100 vehicles, among which is also a smart electric drive for shorter journeys. Within the scope of our employee benefits, we have launched an attractive scheme in which our Group's employees can participate in interesting vehicle leasing conditions. Furthermore, we also reviewed our daily workflow in this area and reorganized some in order to generate synergies as well as efficiency improvements. Incidentally, we will further optimize our fleet sustainably and put more emphasis on electrically operated vehicles in the future.

The equipment specialists

When it comes to workshop equipment, STAR EQUIPMENT went into hyper drive in 2014. In spring, the startools online shop was completely overhauled and celebrated its successful relaunch in July. After adding many additional customer-friendly functions, the portal now presents its more than 65,000 articles in a new and clear design and sorted according to topics. Workshop customers benefit because, instead of tediously surfing the internet in search of particular tools and suppliers, they find high quality products of all the major brands and in various price ranges in the one-stop-shop startools. From A as in air compressor to W as in wrenches. We expand the product range continuously, e.g. with tools produced sustainably. And if you sign up for the startools newsletter, you will not miss any of the numerous special offers and theme weeks we have planned for 2015.

You can reach our online shop for workshops and tools at www.startools.de

STAR EQUIPMENT masters even big challenges with ease. For example at the beginning of 2014, when we celebrated the successful completion of an equipment project for a Swiss car dealership group. In Pratteln on the outskirts of Basel, they built a truck center with a size of approximately 20,000 square meters, in which busses and trucks have been sold, maintained and repaired ever since. STAR contributed the sectorial planning of the operational equipment and ensured that all the necessary furniture, fittings, machines and tools arrived on site in time for the opening.



„We've already become accustomed to online shopping in our private lives. However, online commerce is only in the early stages in the business world. In my eyes, it's an important future trend to digitalize these purchasing processes completely and, by doing so, fulfill the demands of transparency, speed and compliance.“

Katharina Hennigs | Managing Director
STAR EQUIPMENT



GROUP SPECIALS

Service portfolio

Workshop equipment, facility management, mobility concepts and special projects

STAR FACILITY

Core services: professional services in facility, IT, reception and real-estate management

Turnover 2013: EUR 5.5 million Turnover 2014: EUR 4.9 million

STAR AUTOMOTIVE

Core services: services around mobility, rental and used cars, driver and shuttle services

STAR EQUIPMENT

Core services: individual planning, equipment and modification of workshops as well as online sales of high quality tools, operational equipment and accessories

Turnover 2013: EUR 1.3 million Turnover 2014: EUR 1.1 million



Think tank, brainstorming session or trend laboratory. No matter how you call the path to innovation, its result points towards the future.

CREATING NOVELTIES TOGETHER

Innovations

Innovation means progress, predictable future, cost reduction, process optimization and competitive advantage. Therefore, the subject is more popular than ever. How will tomorrow's markets look? What requirements arise from economic and political changes and obviously also on the companies' side? Our innovation management has the answers. Our ideas lead to solution-oriented services, market-driven products and future-proof processes. This way, our customers' path into the future will become projectable.

CREATING NOVELTIES TOGETHER

Innovation@STAR

If you want to stand your ground in the future, you will have to think in future terms. This applies to our customers and thereby automatically for the STAR COOPERATION. For, we have understood the direct link between innovative product and service ideas and future success. Therefore, we have institutionalized our innovation management in 2013. It uncovers the hidden ideas of our Group and converts them into innovative solutions geared towards the customers' challenges. Every STAR has the opportunity to hand their ideas to Stefan Göritz and Clemens Müller, both responsible for innovation management at STAR. No matter, if it is a complete novelty or a clever improvement of an existing product, if it was thought up alone or as part of a team workshop. And if it is assessed positively, they accompany the inventors from compiling a business plan to drafting a sales concept to developing the product or service right up to its marketability. In 2014, a total of 27 projects was at different stages of this process. They show the pleasant scope and imaginativeness of the STARS' creative ideas.

Higher measuring performance, lower costs

Testing and validating is part of an automotive manufacturer's business before, during and after the launch of a product. BERGER ELEKTRONIK is the right partner for this because they are the experts for vehicle modification and special testing and measuring projects. However, the devices that are available on the market and can be built into the vehicles are sometimes much more complex than necessary. Why should you mount a measuring instrument with a lot of effort in the engine block if such a device is attached much more easily in the passenger compartment and will still deliver the same high-quality test results? Our thought exactly, and that is why we are currently developing a low-cost solution for a thermo measuring module for installation in the passenger compartment. For STAR, this is the next step towards a comprehensive product portfolio aligned with the customers' demands. And the customers? STAR does not only provide them with the software, the installation services and the test execution, but also with the hardware – all with the high quality customary for STAR. Without having to pay for functions, they do not actually need.

Setting new standards in e-commerce

Trade's future is online. This is what our customers have realized. Therefore, they increasingly ask for support in taking their existing world into the e-commerce era. However, bigger solutions often fail due to budget constraints. That is why STAR SYSTEMS also offers web shop services including open source software like Gambio when requested. Our innovative achievement: Currently, we are working in-house on a standard interface with SAP, which is one of a kind. With the help of this interface, shop operators can directly link their order and customer data gathered through the online shop with SAP modules already implemented. That way, they get the chance to set up lean processes for order and fulfillment management with little effort. For customers, this means familiar user interfaces, high efficiency, low costs. And that is exactly what people want to see when making the first steps into the e-commerce world.



„For me, one of the most important future trends is e-mobility. It's a big challenge to introduce as many people as possible as quickly as possible to the concept of energy efficient e-mobility at manageable costs.“

Stefan Göritz | Senior Consultant
STAR CONSULTING

BERGER battery cart 2.0

Is it an innovation if you render an established product lighter, better, more efficient and more economic? From our point of view, yes. For example, our colleagues of BERGER ELEKTRONIK have put their well-tried battery cart to the test in the past year. This resulted in an entirely new construction and technology concept, which incorporated the latest materials and engineering knowledge. Currently, the pilot assembly is in full swing and we hope that our customers will be just as convinced of these improvements as we are. Eventually, they will profit from the increased efficiency of a lighter, more powerful and lower-cost tool for their daily work on vehicles.



All-inclusive testing weeks

One of the innovation projects in 2014 was the idea of a colleague at STAR ENGINEERING. It is so recent that it does not even have a real name yet. In future, we want to offer comprehensive services for test runs to our customers from the automotive sector. Already, we have chosen an appropriate test track in Spain. The chief attraction for the customer: He does not have to take care of anything. Within this solution, every service is supplied from one source, from planning to transport, from preparing the vehicles to allocating the necessary workshops and employees, from on-site organization and execution to analyzing the results in the end. Even open-country tests are possible. We are convinced that this project will hit home with our customers, even if it is still early days.

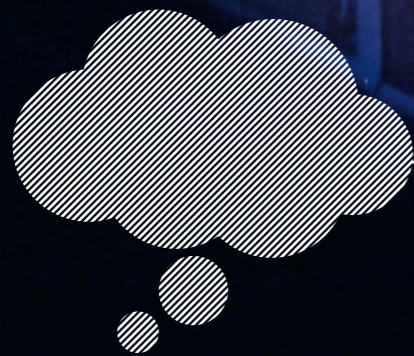
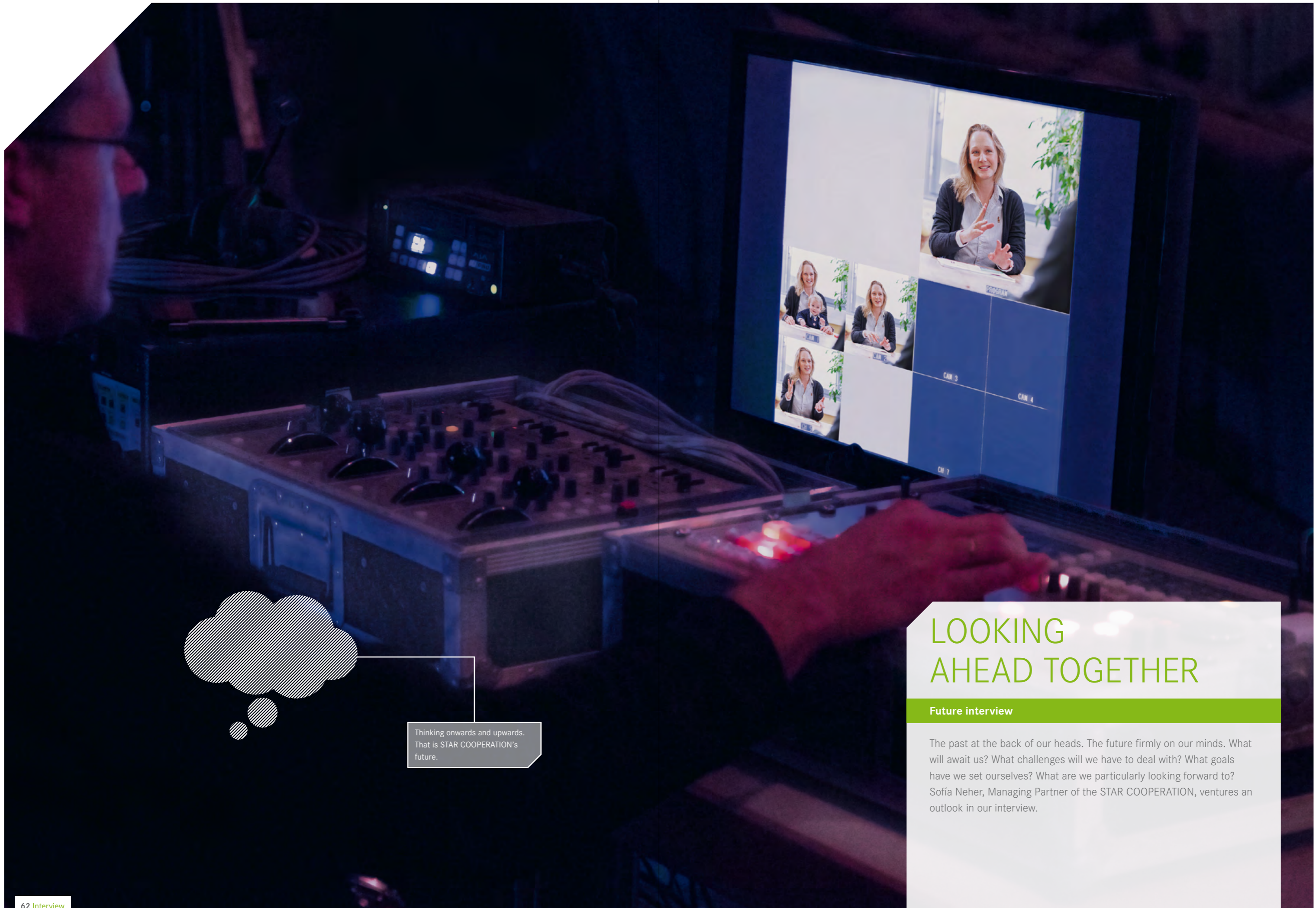


„In future, people and things all across the world will strongly interconnect. This swarm intelligence is very exciting and will totally change our future. I'm convinced of that.“

Clemens Müller | Consultant
STAR ENGINEERING

New marketing ideas for new customers

At STAR, we understand innovations also as a chance to incorporate our expertise into new products in order to tap into new customer potentials. For the media professionals of STAR PUBLISHING, such a project is called "MARKYDOO". Divided in several handy and accurately defined kits at a fixed price, it offers the entire world of marketing communications. In particular, the kits suit small companies and start-ups who know about the importance of a professional public image but only have a small budget. Large creative agencies with high-priced ideas and intransparent cost structures are out of place here. Which is not the case for MARKYDOO. Here, interested customers get exactly what they need: a basic package of business cards, stationary etc. in their corporate design. A web package including web site, social media presence and an optional e-commerce integration. Or a multilingual marketing communications package for entering international markets. Our long years of experience enable us to offer exactly that without any quality loss or hidden extra costs. The MARKYDOO kits will be available at www.markydoo.de in spring 2015.



Thinking onwards and upwards.
That is STAR COOPERATION's
future.

LOOKING AHEAD TOGETHER

Future interview

The past at the back of our heads. The future firmly on our minds. What will await us? What challenges will we have to deal with? What goals have we set ourselves? What are we particularly looking forward to? Sofia Neher, Managing Partner of the STAR COOPERATION, ventures an outlook in our interview.

LOOKING AHEAD TOGETHER



Ms Neher, before one can look into the future, one has to review the past. How did 2014 go for the STAR COOPERATION?

I look back on the year 2014 with mixed feelings because the past twelve months have not been easy. Unfortunately, we didn't achieve some of the targets we had aimed for at the outset. The reasons for this were partly not even in our responsibility. For instance, we generally have little influence on our customers' decisions regarding temporary or contractual work. Here, the market has changed quicker than we were able to adjust. Having said that, we were able to develop alongside the market shifts and give important impulses in other areas. Our media and logistics division is a good example for that. There, we had quite a number of issues only a couple of years ago and we had to do a lot of basic work. With hindsight, we have seen in 2014 that it was worth the effort. We succeeded in standing our ground in the market and in gaining large new projects. In general, we benefit from positioning our company and its three divisions along a broad strategy. Thus, we can absorb and compensate for the occasional negative trend. Nevertheless, this competitive advantage is no reason for twiddling our thumbs and just hoping for better times. We have to find answers on how we can manage the immense market changes successfully.

With this in mind, why don't you take a look ahead? What do you expect in the future?

In any case, I'm convinced that we don't have to be afraid of the future. Generating new possibilities from the challenges we encounter is part of STAR's DNA. In this respect, we're well positioned and I'm looking forward to an exciting future.

Often, your personal approach to the future changes when you're having a family. How was it for you?

Obviously, there are many changes when a family is growing. However, we deliberately made sure that there were not too many changes. I, personally, was always very much geared towards the future. For us as a family business, there was a definite change. Now, the future has a name and a face.

There are countless trends pointing towards the future. Many of them are mentioned in this annual report. Which is the most fascinating one for you?

There are so many trends that will enrich our future lives. Like Victor Hugo said: Nothing is as strong as an idea whose time has come. For example, I'm a total fan of the cloud technology. Being able to access your data anytime, anywhere and without a fixed connection – that definitely is an important future topic. Naturally, there are still very

fundamental issues of data security, especially in the economic and health care sectors. But if those were solved well, it would be a big step forward for us as a connected society. I myself perceive STAR's cloud-based IT infrastructure as very helpful, since it enables me to pursue my tasks as Managing Partner from virtually anywhere.

For you, what is the biggest future challenge and which goals have you set yourself?

In general, it's a big challenge to keep up with our times and to adjust to the constant changes. We need to stay fast, flexible and innovative in order to stay up-to-date. However, we need to apply a sensible degree of discrimination. Change for change's sake – that is something I'm rather critical about. The results need to tender a true advancement. For STAR in particular, the future challenge is to follow through seminal projects like just in time delivery. In the engineering and ee-solutions field, we're currently working heavily on making STAR fit for the future, especially through our new staff line-up. But this is also our main task and a huge amount of responsibility across the entire STAR Group. I'm convinced that we will be able to set the course for a successful future together with our team of directors. Overall, our future goals are congruent with the ones of the past: We'd like to continue launching innovative services and

products, mastering projects successfully, retaining professional expertise in our company and generating sustainable growth. For, stagnation is a step backwards.

Is there an invention you can well imagine having in the future? Maybe even a utopian one?

Well, people's imagination knows no boundaries. Unfortunately, reality soon catches up with you. We just don't live in a science fiction world where a beaming device has already been invented. Even though this would be really handy and could save us all a lot of time. But, obviously, this is utopian. For a start, we should continue working on transferring even bigger data volumes across even longer distances. Who knows what may be possible in the future?

IMPRINT

Publisher STAR COOPERATION

Design/Text STAR MARKETING

Pictures/Photos
Page 02/03: © Arend.H.Hoefman | www.shutterstock.com
Page 06: © Fotografie Dirk Kittelberger | www.dirk-kittelberger.de
Page 07: © Jag_cz | www.shutterstock.com
Page 14/15: © sdecoret | www.fotolia.com
Page 18/19: © Mats Anda | www.gettyimages.de
Page 29: © mal | www.photocase.de
Page 32/33: © Alexey Fursov | www.shutterstock.com
Page 36: © bizoo_n | www.fotolia.com
Page 38/39: © Fotografie Dirk Kittelberger
Page 44/45: © Semen Lixodeev | www.shutterstock.com
Page 47: © Der Schröder | www.fotolia.com
Page 54/55: © t50 | www.shutterstock.com
Page 64/65: © Fotografie Dirk Kittelberger | www.dirk-kittelberger.de
Page 66/67: © virtua73 | www.fotolia.com

Print STAR PUBLISHING

© STAR COOPERATION GmbH, March 2015



FUTURE STARTS NOW

STAR COOPERATION GmbH

The STAR COOPERATION has been certified according to DIN EN ISO 9001:2008.

Otto-Lilienthal-Straße 5 | 71034 Böblingen | Phone +49 (0)7031 6288-300 | www.star-cooperation.com
Böblingen | Berlin | Bremerhaven | Fellbach | Frankfurt | Göppingen | Munich | Sindelfingen | Wolfsburg
Atlanta | Barcelona | Johannesburg | Beijing | Shanghai | Tokyo | Zug

