

Leading system and plant manufacturer gears up for the future

SMB International expands management

Quickborn, 01.09.2021 – SMB International GmbH will have a dual management team as of the first of September 2021. In future, Dr Arne Dethlefs will manage the business of the Quickborn-based system and plant manufacturer together with the long-standing managing director Dipl.-Ing. Andreas Heckel. The background to this personnel decision is, among other things, the strong growth of recent years, which has made SMB International one of the leading companies for individual process solutions and large-scale projects in intralogistics. For the new management duo, it is now a matter of further expanding the company's existing strengths and creating a solid foundation for long-term success and sustainable growth.

The current portfolio of the system and plant manufacturer, which can look back on a history of more than half a century, includes filling systems, storage systems, palletisers, robotics, conveyor technology and ship loading systems, which are primarily developed, designed and produced at the Quickborn site near Hamburg. In recent decades, the company has also been able to position itself increasingly on the world market: numerous major projects have been and are still being produced within the company, and prestigious customers are increasingly ordering complete solutions in the field of storage and palletising systems. This trend should be further strengthened by the international experience of the new managing director: Dr Arne Dethlefs will be taking a close look at the processes and structures that ensure the company's success and enable sustainable growth. As a former production manager and managing director of an American company, he has a background of solid experience in medium-sized manufacturing companies and is very familiar with foreign business.

His scientific credentials also rest on solid foundations. After studying mechanical engineering at the Technical University of Hamburg and in Sweden, Dr Dethlefs, who comes from Lower Saxony, carried on research at the Technical University of Berlin and at the Fraunhofer Institute for Production Systems and Design Technology. After obtaining his doctorate in engineering, he first became production manager at Garz & Fricke in Hamburg and later CEO of one of the company's subsidiaries in the USA. What appeals to Dr Dethlefs most about his new job at SMB International is the complexity and versatility of the task – SMB does after all cover a very broad spectrum with its high vertical range of manufacture and great development expertise. Here he will also be able to contribute his extensive

experience in the field of automation. 'I am generally inspired by companies from the SME sector, in which complete and complex systems are created, innovations can be implemented quickly and everyone involved is very passionate about what they do,' says Dr Dethlefs. 'At SMB International, I see this as being one hundred percent the case, and I am already very much looking forward to the new tasks and to working with the specialists!'

Dr Dethlefs' entry comes at a good time in the company's history: many new developments have proven their worth and extensive large-scale projects are constantly being implemented for major highly regarded customers. Accordingly, the demand for SMB systems and equipment is steadily increasing and in spite of the corona crisis the company has a large backlog of orders. At the same time, the number of employees has increased almost tenfold within the last 20 years, which means that SMB International is also focusing on recruiting skilled workers and young talent. Managing Director Andreas Heckel, in particular, will make the issue of human resources even more of a management issue in future. In addition, he will remain responsible for foreign business, sales and finances as well as functioning as managing director of MBA Instruments GmbH, a company specialising in level measurement technology and conductivity measurement. As specialists for automation and instrumentation, SMB and MBA have been operating together under the umbrella of the SMB Group since 2008. Their sophisticated solutions in system and plant engineering are in demand among industrial customers and continue to set new standards in the field of intralogistics.

SMB International: the experts for intralogistics and large-scale operational projects offer complete solutions from a single source worldwide

At SMB International, intralogistics is writ large – the company is a leader in the planning, development and manufacture of customised systems and equipment: storage systems, palletisers, robotics, conveyor technology, filling and ship loading systems. The company deliberately relies on a high share of in-house production at their location in Quickborn near Hamburg. Even extensive projects such as the construction of a complete factory can thus be realised quickly, specifically and with consistently high quality – anywhere in the world. The companies' design and production facilities and programming solutions provide the basis for a high degree of vertical integration, which permits the timely delivery of high-quality products. The service team works on large-scale projects both nationally and internationally. The distribution network, which operates globally, ensures swift and effective information-sharing and coordination.