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German-American
Business Forum



**Tensions, Trump, and Tariffs –
Why German Companies Should
Still Invest in the US**

USA Discovers Energy Efficiency for Itself

Cryptshare Secures Companies' Digital Gold



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Taking on new challenges is always an adventure. In my role as newly-elected chairman of the GACC NY, I look forward to embarking on yet another intriguing path in a long international business career that has spanned several continents and provided me with experiences that I will draw on to support the GACC's worthwhile mission.

We're living in a world economy that is both intense and constantly shifting. On the one hand, many countries, including the US and Germany, are thriving -enjoying record growth and unemployment. Yet at the same time there is some concern and uncertainty about whether this economic boom will hold up against geopolitical forces.

Reassuringly, a strong sense of optimism still exists in the business community. Many believe that the foundation of economic prosperity is still solid and will stay healthy, as mirrored by the opinions put forth by participants in the GACC's last German American Business Outlook survey (GABO).

Both Germans and Americans take a lot of comfort in knowing that their nations are deeply intertwined for better, not worse. There is a genuine affection and respect between Germans and Americans underscored by a common commitment to an enduring friendship and mutual success. Nothing will undo that.

These days the GACC's mission is more relevant and important than ever! We've always provided politically neutral business platforms that actively reinforce those historically strong ties between the US and Germany.

Included among our many initiatives are: startup support, networking



*Andreas Fibig
Chairman & CEO,
International Flavors & Fragrances*

events, business delegations between the US and Germany (for both professionals and students), sustainable energy and smart city forums, the J-1 visa exchange program...and laying the groundwork for much needed apprenticeship programs in the US.

There are, of course, quite a few additional transatlantic programs our organization offers that directly benefit our members in the German-American business community.

We will continue to expand and enhance these existing services while developing new and innovative experiences.

I am inspired by all that the GACC has accomplished and will continue to accomplish. And I am eager to join this organization's impressive team, so that I can support their ongoing efforts to forge productive German-American business interactions and opportunities.

Andreas Fibig

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Chambers of Commerce
Deutsch-Amerikanische
Handelskammern



REPRESENTATIVE
of German Industry + Trade

German American Business Forum

Tensions, Trump, and Tariffs – Why German Companies Should Still Invest in the US

By Jasmin Welter, GACC

The conference room at the IHK Potsdam was full to the brim, despite record-breaking temperatures in Brandenburg, Germany. In 2019, the German-American Business Forum made its first stop in Eastern Germany.

The host state of Brandenburg plays an important role in German-American trade: the US is the second most important export market for Bran-

denburg, and major US players like eBay and DOVER call it home.

The event, organized by the German American Chambers of Commerce (GACCs) in conjunction with the IHK Potsdam, attracted 250 business representatives from the US and Germany. Now in its 6th year, the event was designed to foster an open dialogue about the potential as well as the challenges of the US market

for German companies.

“What are we supposed to do now?”

Addressing feelings of insecurity among investors and executives was a key task for hosts and panelists alike. Despite the hesitation resulting from recent international trade tensions, Dr. Martin Wansleben, President & Chief Executive of the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DIHK), pointed out that global business relations do not thrive on a tit-for-tat basis. He also underlined that the German economy, traditionally strongly invested in export activities, is nestled in a framework of global interdependencies. Therefore, German companies rely on fluid transactions across borders. In an increasingly connected business world, “there are no foreigners, only neighbors, that is close collaborations partners of our companies,” Wansleben said.

Free Transatlantic Trade: A Mutually Beneficial Partnership

The network of German Chambers Abroad, which spans numerous economies across the world, encourages companies to take advantage of booming markets



Guests making connections at DAWT



German-American Business Forum

despite the isolationist rhetoric from the US.

“The German American Chambers of Commerce know that it is more important than ever to be a reliable partner for German companies today,” said Peter Riehle, Chairman of the GACCs Board of Directors.

With an active network and experienced staff, the GACCs are an important ally for companies tackling the process of US market entry. The organization also supports companies through initiatives that address the most pressing problems German subsidiaries abroad face.

Take the growing skills gap as an example: The German American Business Outlook, an annual survey by the GACCs, identified that many SMEs are struggling to find skilled workers. In response, the network increased its efforts and, spearheaded by GACC Midwest, introduced the Industry Consortium for Advanced Technical Training (ICATT) Apprenticeship Program, a dual education system benchmarked on German standards, to the US. The GACCs’ workforce development efforts and the transatlantic cooperation that ensued has added new dynamism to traditional German-American business relations: Over 60 compa-

nies in the US profit from the ICATT Apprenticeship Program alone, which was established in 2014.

Doing Business in the US Today

In several panels throughout the jam-packed day, executives from different industries discussed the ins and outs of doing business in the US today. A pitch session with multiple representatives from US states underlined the importance of selecting the appropriate location for a subsidiary in the US.



Dr. Martin Wansleben, President & Chief Executive of DIHK, sharing his vision for transatlantic trade.



Evening reception of VIP guests at Sanssouci Palace

“Engineering made in Germany is still extremely popular, and German companies are valued business partners”

Peter Riehle, CEO of German subsidiary WITTENSTEIN North America



Peter Riehle, President & CEO of WITTENSTEIN North America, at the opening panel



Networking during the DAWT

“While there are seemingly unlimited opportunities, site selection is one of the most crucial decisions in the market entry process,” said Gerrit Ahlers, Director of Consulting & Corporate Development Services for GACC Midwest.

While reliability has become a major concern for businesses pondering investment in the US, companies in the market advise to look beyond headlines: business is buzzing, and reductions in regulations as well as major tax reforms have created one of the most business-friendly environments the country has seen in years.

German companies also have a lot of highly sought-after expertise in areas where the US is trying to catch up. In fields such as automation and intelligent enterprises, German firms have ample opportunities to set themselves up for success in the US. ■

For more information:

In 2019, the German American Business Forum was organized by the German American Chambers of Commerce (GACCs) in conjunction with the IHK Potsdam. Our 2020 forum will take place in Bielefeld on June 23.

If you are interested in the US market or information about specific industries in the US, please get in touch with Gerrit Ahlers

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Welcome to the US

Business Investment Considerations

By Alexander C. Opaschowski, Ernst & Young LLP, German Business Center Leader – North America & Mexico and Christian Koller, Ernst & Young AG, Indirect Tax

Navigating the US investment landscape

Global economic and geopolitical uncertainty is affecting the day-to-day investment decisions of companies in virtually every industry and region of the world, whether they are middle-market, family-owned or listed on a stock exchange.

Many global companies continue to analyze whether to expand existing United States (US) operations, acquire US-based companies or enter the US market.

US tax reform, a significant consumer market, reduced business regulations, the relative ease of doing business and plentiful resources are some of the factors that make the US an attractive market in which to invest.

Entering a new market or expanding existing operations in the US creates unique tax, trade and compliance complexities. Adding to this complexity is the reality of ongoing trade

disputes that can have a significant impact on existing supply chain structures. The passage of the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act was designed to reform tax and trade and increase foreign and domestic investment in the US. Tax and trade reform, coupled with a narrowing of operating cost differences between the US and other countries, has greatly increased international consideration for US investments.

Key considerations for successfully investing in the US

- **Political environment:** White House, both houses of Congress (House of Representatives and Senate), US Supreme Court, federal government and state governments; impacts of tax reform and how states will respond to attract new investments
- **Business strategy:** alignment of the business strategy with federal, state and local economic development and job creation strategies
- **Human capital:** interplay between workforce-related agencies, unions, wage requirements and legislation (e.g., right-to-work legislation, minimum wage, competitive labor market and universities); restructuring of workforce
- **US regulatory environment:** federal, state and local tax differences and implications; construction zoning and permitting
- **True costs of operating in the US:** accurate modeling of tax liability and operating expenditures; non-income taxes at the state and local level, such as property, sales, excise and employment taxes
- **Supply chain:** evaluation of population demographics to provide access to needed talent



Creating a holistic incentives strategy can increase the return on investment significantly, which reduces costs and allows “saved” capital to be used for other projects that may have not been funded.

Complex US tax structure requires thorough tax function

Even though US tax reform was implemented in 2017–18, the multilayer US tax structure at the federal, state and local levels is typically more complex than that of foreign jurisdictions. Because of this complexity, a company should create a thorough tax and financial model to consider the taxes that may impact their current and future investments in the US. Taxes typically overlooked by foreign companies because of the differences between their home country and US taxing regimes include local property taxes, state and local sales taxes, utility taxes, and local income and withholding taxes. Local fees associated with operating a business, such as development, connection, impact or permitting fees, are also frequently overlooked. The creation of a tax and financial model allows a company to understand its possible cost outlays and determine where to prioritize potential economic development discussions with state and local jurisdictions to assist in mitigating the various taxes and costs of doing business.

Credit and incentives in the US

The subsidy and incentives opportunities in the US are very different than those in a significant number of other countries. Within the US, incentives can come in a variety of forms, whether they be statutory (i.e., “as-of-right”) credits provided to companies if they meet various requirements, or through discretionary incentives that typically are negotiated with state and economic development agencies. Companies should also review federal incentives opportunities such as the New Markets Tax Credit, Work Opportunity Tax Credit, Opportunity Zone program and R&D credit.

State and local incentives usually provide the most lucrative assistance, but companies may be required to present a “but-for” argument demonstrating that an alternative jurisdiction is being considered. This “but-for” concept and states’ proactive competition against one another are different than State Aid restrictions in the European Union, for example. After receiving preliminary offers from potential jurisdictions, a company can evaluate the cost benefits of doing business in one jurisdiction versus another.



Building a better working world

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Businesses should closely examine whether proposed incentives packages are realized through the offsetting of a current or future tax, above-the-line benefit (e.g., indirect tax offset or refundable credit) or operational offset (e.g., infrastructure assistance). For instance, many states offer income tax credits that are limited in benefit to a company's state corporate income tax liability. In many cases, manufacturers have very little or no state corporate income tax due, so this incentive would be of little to no value. States that target manufacturers often have statutory sales tax exemptions that apply to purchases of manufacturing machinery and equipment. While it may seem as if an economic development agency is offering a company a great incentive deal by providing a big exemption, the company may already be entitled to this benefit.

To properly articulate the proposed project to relevant governmental agencies, an economic impact report should be considered. In addition to addressing job creation and economic investment in the jurisdiction, the report should highlight the indirect and future economic benefits to the community.

There is no end to what can be modeled and analyzed, but the greatest amount of resources should be focused on the most-significant variable costs. In addition to incentives, taxes and trade, there are other financial and operational factors, often deemed more important to the long-term success of a project.

Whatever factors are important to a company's US investment decision, through comprehensive due diligence and planning, a business can make

optimal investment decisions while achieving the highest return on investment.

Summary

Creating a holistic incentives strategy can increase the return on investment significantly, which reduces costs and allows "saved" capital to be used for other projects that may have not been funded. Certain discretionary incentives are only available if pursued prior to the announcement of a location or expansion of the business. Partnering with the right team for strategy development and execution is key. ■

The views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of Ernst & Young LLP or any other member firm of the global EY organization.



ACHIEVE TOGETHER



As an integrated professional services firm, Rödl & Partner is active at 111 wholly-owned locations in 50 countries. We owe our dynamic success in the service lines audit, legal*, management and IT consulting, tax consulting as well as tax declaration and BPO to our 4,900 entrepreneurial minded partners and colleagues.

Rödl & Partner USA has specifically tailored our accounting, auditing, tax and business consulting services to the unique needs of your foreign owned business in the United States of America. For the past 40 years our core practice has been serving the accounting and tax needs of primarily German speaking and other foreign owned “Mittelstand” companies operating in the U.S.

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Cryptshare Secures Companies' Digital Gold

In the digital economy, information is power. Yet, sophisticated hackers mount increasingly more complex attacks to access this valuable digital gold. Not only are data breaches creating liability for companies on both sides of the Atlantic, paying ransom to rescue digital gold from nefarious actors is becoming a more pervasive threat.

As market-leading companies around the world battle for the financial and competitive advantages associated with their respective caches of digital gold, they routinely look to Cryptshare, a

German-based company of data security experts who create security innovations, for help in thwarting digital pirates.

In this article, Mark Forrest, president of Cryptshare Inc., addresses the difficulties businesses face and how Cryptshare and their technology is helping thousands protect their most valuable assets: their data.

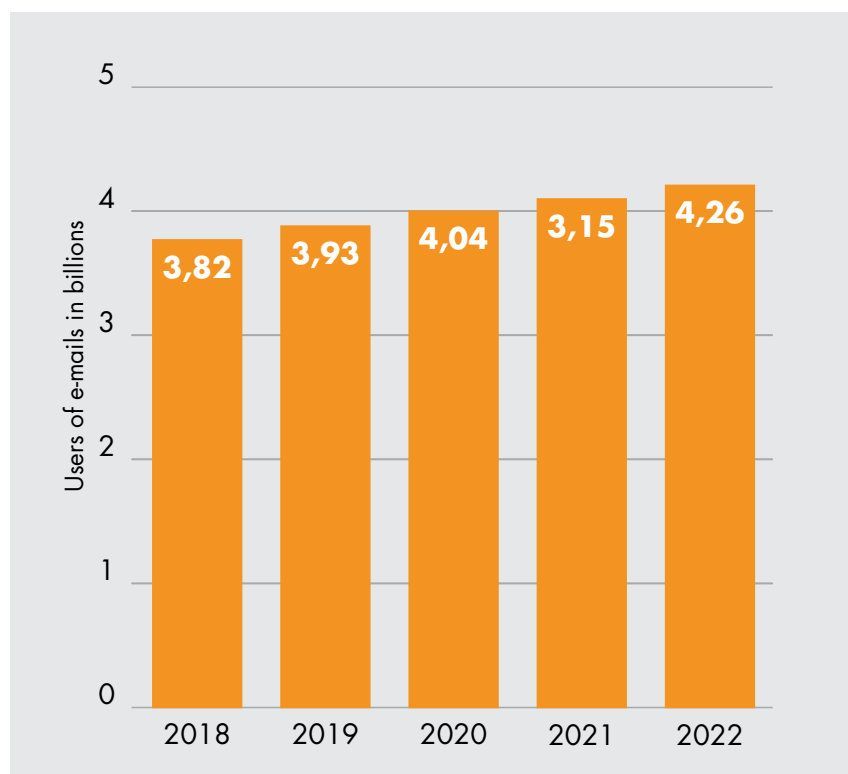
Companies in all market segments must prepare for the challenge of collecting, storing and transferring data within and between the EU and

the US against a backdrop of increasingly tenacious hacker attacks. Users unknowingly jeopardize sensitive trade secrets and the confidential demographic information of customers, partners and employees every time they send an email or transfer a large file.

Companies also face mounting pressure to adopt the newest technology needed to deliver the best digital experience possible for customers, partners and consumers. However, high consumer expectation for these robust online experiences must be balanced with protecting the confidentiality and privacy of sensitive information.

- The EU's approach favours stringent regulations to respect the privacy rights of individuals, with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) supporting that effort.
- In the United States, however, data is seen as a corporate asset to be commercialized for profit. Privacy legislation is emerging fast however.

Despite these differences, US-based companies doing business in the EU are liable for compliance with GDPR regulations. Earlier this year, the French data protection authority leveraged the GDPR to levy a \$57 million fine against Google for not disclosing to users how it tracked users' activity on its search engine,



Forecast of the number of e-mail users worldwide in the years 2018 to 2022 (in billions)
Source: The Radicati Group



Google Maps and YouTube to target digital advertisements.

At the heart of Cryptshare's digital innovation is secure email. With email turning 50 years of age this year, it's a communication technology embedded throughout corporations around the world. However, email's ubiquitous status as an information exchange standard makes it an almost universal gateway for digital pirates as well.

Simply explained, email is a plain text message that seeks out the fastest way to move data from the sender to the recipient. That most efficient route from a location in the

EU to a location in the US could cross hundreds of servers. A hacker could access and copy the email along with its metadata and attachments at any point along this extensive electronic journey and any assumptions by users of confidentiality are misplaced. Because there is no online "evidence" to document the hacker's action, neither the sender nor the recipient would know the message had been copied.

Cryptshare encrypts every message, each attachment, meta data and subject line before the data leaves the sender's site and again at the information's destination, creating a

Companies in all market segments must prepare for the challenge of collecting, storing and transferring data within and between the EU and the US against a backdrop of increasingly tenacious hacker attacks.



**Empowering
Companies
To Secure Their
Digital Gold.**



full audit trail that allows senders and recipients to communicate with confidence. In addition, Cryptshare scans every transaction for malware and so stops the exchange of infected communicues before they have a chance to do harm.

In addition to protecting email, Cryptshare's advanced encryption can be extended to safeguard the largest files that business users routinely send but email will not accommodate. Business users must utilize a separate program, not email, to send attachments larger than 10MB. In many cases, the recipient receives an email alerting him or her to the file being sent with instructions to go to a second site to retrieve the file. This two-step process creates a new set of hacking opportunities. Alternatively, Cryptshare employs the same advanced encryption it uses for email to send a large file, which is

bundled with the email as a single exchange. As a result, users no longer need to navigate multiple programs and portals that require passwords that must be shared with the recipient.

Cryptshare's proven secure transfer solutions for email and files can also be applied to the multitudes of key business applications ranging from ERP to CRM, payroll to finance that require the capability to share sensitive information with external recipients. As a secure transport service Cryptshare is unique in providing a reliable and secure pathway for all data types, accessible to users directly from email or standing as the automated channel with clear policy controls for all use cases. Downstream emerging IoT technologies will require similar levels of protection and simple API access to the Cryptshare service will enable this.

Discover the advantages of using Cryptshare at:

>> cryptshare.com/why-cryptshare/

Cryptshare's proven secure data transfer solutions position the company for long-term success in the global corporate market, as well as in the new and rapidly growing IoT space where industry analysts predict that businesses and consumers will be using 20.4 billion IoT devices by 2020. ■

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Oklahoma Gaining Traction in the Auto Industry

Oklahoma is traditionally known for oil and gas production, and for good reason: the state is rich in oil and gas deposits and the Cushing Oil Depot in Oklahoma is known as the pipeline crossroads of the world. The state is also a hub for aerospace, with the two largest maintenance, repair and overhaul facilities in the world located in the state. That is to say, when Oklahoma is committed to an industry, that sector thrives in the state.

If you couple Oklahoma's renowned reputation for innovation and ingenuity and its strong workforce skilled in engineering and advanced manufacturing, with its newly established Automotive Engineer Workforce Tax Credit, Oklahoma is well positioned to attract auto manufacturers and become the next new hot spot for the auto industry.

Located just north of Texas, in the central part of the United States, Oklahoma should be top of mind with automotive corporate executives considering expanding their operations within or entering the U.S. market.

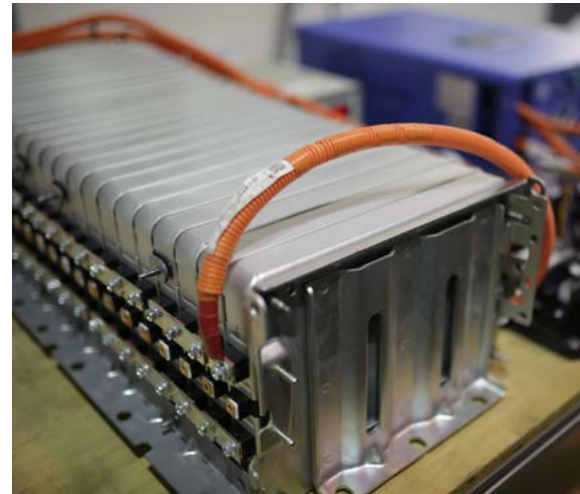
■ With the automotive industry in the U.S. moving increasingly westward, Oklahoma is ideally situated to meet the needs of OEMs and auto part manufacturers, both in terms of its central location, low costs (both operating costs and wages), and availability of workers with required technical skillsets.

■ Oklahoma is a constitutional Right to Work state with low unemployment insurance taxes and programs significantly reducing hiring and training start-up costs.

■ Centrally located and accessible by air, rail, road, and water with some of the most inland ice-free ports in the U.S, Oklahoma offers easy access to Midwest and South East USA (location where most OEMs are presently located). In fact, within a 16-hour drive, you'll reach every single OEM manufacturing facility within the U.S. southern southern corridor.

■ Automotive Engineer Workforce Tax Credit. Automotive companies hiring engineers in a variety of fields will receive tax credits equal to 5% of the compensation paid to

an engineer and 10% if the engineer graduated from an Oklahoma college or university, plus another credit of up to 50% of the tuition reimbursed to an employee. Additionally, the engineer hired receives a tax credit of \$5,000 per year.



Energy Storage

Competitive wages		
Occupation Description	Median Hourly Earnings, Oklahoma	Median Hourly Earnings, Nationwide
Aerospace, Chemical, Electrical, Materials, Mechanical Engineers	\$38.36	\$42.30
First-line Supervisors of Mechanics, Installers and Repairers	\$27.42	\$29.34
Machinists	\$17.01	\$19.00
Welders, Cutters, Solderers and Brazers	\$17.37	\$17.54

Oklahoma's wages are among the most competitive in the country.

■ Oklahoma CareerTech, located across 169 sites throughout the state, with more than 397,515 enrollments annually, offers training in specific pathways aligning with the automotive workforce demand. Some of those pathways include ASE technician, CNC, machinist, diesel service, metal fabrication, electronics and

welding, to name a few.

■ Oklahoma's key industry sectors; aerospace and defense industry and oil and gas, each employ 120,000 workers respectively. These workforces offer a baseline of skills and knowledge that can easily be adapted and retrained to meet specific needs of auto manufacturers.

■ The state's workforce training program customizes solutions for companies investing in Oklahoma to meet skilled labor demands. The conversation begins with defining a company's exact workforce needs. From pre-employment, industry-specific and customized training, the state integrates various work-based learning experiences (including German apprenticeship like programs) with its industry aligned curriculum to create a pipeline of workers for current and future needs.

■ Oklahoma Center for the Advancement of Science and Technology (OCAST) has established a program that places qualified interns within Oklahoma companies to test drive and ultimately recruit. The OCAST program is already placing candidates within companies in the state servicing the auto industry.

"Oklahomans are innovative and determined entrepreneurs who have transformed the state into major centers of excellence across multiple industry sectors," said Oklahoma Governor Kevin Stitt. "We believe that with more inventive companies, like Spiers New Technologies choosing to do business in our state, the same will soon apply for the automotive industry."

Thanks to Spiers New Technology (SNT), a local start-up that has transformed into the leading full-service provider of services and battery life cycle management for advanced battery packs used in



hybrid and electric vehicles, a new international battery cluster is fast forming in the state. SNT recently expanded internationally duplicating its Oklahoma remanufacturing and servicing facility with a 34,000-square-foot location in Ede, The Netherlands, and is soon planning additional locations in California and China.

Oklahoma is already home to hundreds of foreign-owned companies that support more than 48,000 jobs in the state. With respect to Germany, the state is home to about 60 German-owned companies which employ more than 2,500 people. Lufthansa Technik (Bizjet Int'l), ALDI, T-Mobile, and Linde are amongst the largest German-owned employers located there.

In 2016, Oklahoma was the largest US state supplier to Germany of both Aeronautical Navigation Equipment and Iodine. Germany was the largest purchaser of Oklahoma's Aeronautical Navigation Equipment, Thermostats & Regulators, Appliance/Machine Measurement Instruments, and others, including more than \$10 billion in valves and pumps.

Over the past five years, Oklahoma has been actively forging links with German industry associations, attending industry sector trade-shows like Hanover Messe, Auto Testing Expo, and the Aviation Forum Hamburg and meeting with companies in Germany to encourage trade and investment opportu-

nities. A long established connection exists between sister cities Tulsa and Celle, Germany which have been actively establishing cultural and trade links between both metropolises.

With aerospace as a prime example of the state's focus leading to success in an industry, auto

manufacturers should take note of the new direction of Oklahoma's leadership. Governor Stitt, the Oklahoma legislature and community economic development leaders are putting the right elements in place to open up significant and swift growth and investment in the auto industry. ■



Life Cycle Management



Production Line

USA Discover Energy Efficiency for Itself

Many certifications for buildings have been established

Article by Ullrich Umann, Germany Trade and Invest (GTAI) · Translation from German by Sandy Jones, GACC

The US market for energy-efficient construction is set to grow – but the topic is not met everywhere with equal interest.

The single-product and custom installation market for the design, construction and certification of energy-efficient green buildings is expected to reach \$ 254 billion in 2020. That's what the Green Building Alliance, a nonprofit organization based in Pittsburgh, has calculated.

Increased attention to issues of environmental protection and energy saving in the construction industry is only partly market

driven. After all, energy sources are widely available and cheap.

Strong commercial motives are primarily developed by large real estate administrations, because the energy balance of their building stock is decisive for their profitability – falling energy bills are an essential part of their business model. If their properties are also certified as "green", rent increases can be more easily justified.

Many different certifiers

More than 30 different energy efficiency standards and ratings have been established in the marketplace. Commercial reasons play a role here, because certification is quite profit-

able. In addition, there are popular programs for saving energy such as "Energy Star" of the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) or "Green Globes" of the Green Building Initiative.

Other certifiers offer a combination of different criteria, including the Living Building Challenge. It combines the criteria of space, water, energy, health and well-being, materials, equipment and aesthetics.

According to the Green Building Adoption Index, 4,700 office buildings in the largest 30 US cities in 2018 received one of more than 30 certifications. Chicago, San Francisco and Atlanta have the most certified buildings respectively.



GTAI GERMANY TRADE & INVEST

AI increases energy efficiency

In energy-efficient buildings, automation technology is increasingly being used with the help of artificial intelligence. This starts with temperature, humidity and air quality sensors, continues through control systems for power, water and wastewater, heating and cooling, and ends with brightness sensors and motion detectors for automatic lighting control and access control.

Energy efficiency in housing rather rare

Relatively little energy-efficient solutions are used in housing construction. Occasionally, however, there have been initiatives for the public promotion of affordable housing, which explicitly focus on energy savings and the integration of alternative energy sources such as solar roofs.

Environmental awareness matures

Awareness is growing in the general public, especially in the 20-50 generation, that something must be done to combat global warming and reduce CO2 emissions: in a Pew Research Center survey conducted in 2016, 74 percent of respondents said that "the US should do everything it needs to protect the environment," compared with 23 percent who said "the country has gone too far in its efforts to protect the environment."

Because of these majorities, increasingly more companies are missing out on "green washing." Consumers are

rewarding this move with increasing brand loyalty and the willingness to pay a premium for "green" products. With Green Seal, a certifier has been established for around 50 product groups, including paints and coatings, lighting, windows and electrical appliances, as well as schools, residential buildings and hotels.

In politics, the number of bills for climate protection and energy saving is increasing in unison. Under the heading "Green New Deal", some states are even preparing basic legal climate protection targets, including in New York.

Green New Deal proposed

After the final US-Congressional elections in November 2018, a group of young, predominantly female Democrat MPs have been sponsoring the Green New Deal debate in the US Congress. But this initiative is being met with strong resistance, especially from older members of the Republican Party.

LEED obligation for federal real estate

The US government has made headway in terms of energy efficiency of buildings years ago: Federal real estate, for example, must comply with the "Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design" standard (LEED) when it is completed or overhauled.

The US Green Building Council awards this certificate with the levels Certified, Silver, Gold and Platinum.

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However, LEED is a generic term that splits into thematically graduated certificates. For example, LEED EB stands for LEED certification in existing buildings, LEED C & S for core and shell, and LEED NC for new construction and so on.

Municipal promotion

Seattle, Austin and Washington are among the communities that are leading the way in energy-efficient buildings. In Washington DC, for example, the District of Columbia Sustainable Energy Utility (DCSEU) is funding such incentives. Among other things, DCSEU supports the retrofitting of multi-family houses and commercial properties with energy-saving technology and solar systems. ■

WASHINGTON
★ UPDATE ★

NEWS FROM INSIDE THE BELTWAY

German Business Matters

RGIT publishes updated figures highlighting the importance of the U.S.-German economic relationship

by Dr. Christoph Schemionek

German Business Matters in the US

Traditionally, German companies have a strong presence in the U.S. Their subsidiaries, of which the German Central Bank counts over 5,300, represent efficient technologies, a high degree of value added, and attractive jobs across the country. By substantially contributing to America's economic health and prosperity, they play a vital

role for the daily life of American employees and their families. According to the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA), about 692,000 American jobs were created by German-owned affiliates, most of which are small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). From California to Virginia and from Minnesota to Texas, German affiliates are represented in every federal state and thus, account for

almost 10% of the total 7 million U.S. jobs created by foreign affiliates. This makes German companies the fourth largest foreign employer in the United States.

The Representative of German Industry and Trade (RGIT) updated these and other figures on German companies in the United States on its website www.germanbusinessmatters.com. The official update was part of a panel discussion moderated by Daniel Andrich, President and CEO of RGIT. Speakers and panelists included Boris Ruge, Minister and Deputy Chief of Mission at the German Embassy in Washington, Dr. Martin Wansleben, CEO of the Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DIHK), Peter Riehle, Chairman of the German American Chambers of Commerce and President and CEO of Wittenstein North America, and Josh Kallmer, Executive Vice President of Policy, Information Technology Industry Council (ITI).

Germany Invests in the US

Regarding foreign direct investment, Germany also plays in the top league, with more than 10% of foreign direct investment in the U.S. coming from Germany.

Rank	Country of the Headquarters	Employment
1	United Kingdom	1,238,000
2	Japan	861,000
3	France	729,000
4	Germany	692,000
5	Canada	679,000

US jobs in foreign-owned affiliates, 2016

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, US Department of Commerce

Rank	Country	Investment (USD in Billions)
1	United Kingdom	615
2	Canada	524
3	Japan	477
4	Germany	406
5	Ireland	329

Foreign direct investment in the US, 2017

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, US Department of Commerce

By substantially contributing to America's economic health and prosperity, subsidiaries of German companies play a vital role for the daily life of American employees and their families.

Manufacturing is by far the largest sector that benefits from German investment. Other areas of German investment activity include trade, insurance, and finance. On average, German-owned affiliates spend more than \$7.8 billion annually for research and development. Almost 80% of these expenditures are directed towards the manufacturing sector thereby contributing to the long-term competitiveness of this sector in the U.S.

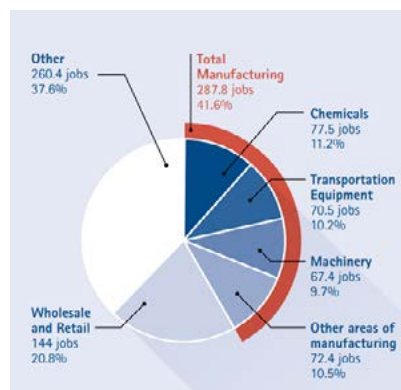
Manufacturing is Key

Against this background, it is not surprising that over 40 percent of the jobs created by German affiliates in the U.S. are in manufacturing. Among foreign investors, Germany was the second-largest job creator in this sector. German companies thus play a key role in U.S. efforts to strengthen the industrial base. ■

More information:

Find out how German-owned affiliates contribute to your state. Our on-line-tool, "German Business Matters: A State-by-State Analysis of Imports, Exports, and Jobs," offers an objective and comparative analysis of German business activity in the United States by employment and trade

>> www.germanbusinessmatters.com



Employees in German majority-owned US affiliates, 2016 (in thousands)
Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, US Department of Commerce

About the Author



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This material is distributed by the Representative of German Industry and Trade (RGIT) on behalf of the Federation of German Industries (BDI) and The Association of German Chambers of Commerce and Industry (DIHK). Additional information is available at the Department of Justice, Washington, DC.

Mercedes-Benz USA

An interview with Christian Treiber

GAT: Over the course of your career you have moved between Germany and the US multiple times. What does it mean to have a leading position in the US vs. a leading position in Germany? Do you prefer one experience over the other?

Christian Treiber (CT): For me, it's critically important to prioritize teamwork, development of our people and empowering our teams to challenge the status quo. Based on my experience, I've observed that the US culture seems to be a bit more flexible when it comes to embracing change and working independently.

GAT: You are the head of customer service. What are the trends you are seeing for companies to address customer expectation and (hopefully) exceed them?

CT: With increasing access to technology, I believe "time" follows closely behind "health" as a critical priority. We are all overscheduled. So we are constantly striving to refine our processes to ensure we make access to the buying or service process seamless and convenient, and mobile solutions are central to this focus. Ease of doing business is our central focus, and we carefully examine every touchpoint. From my perspective, the connected car provides us with a tremendous opportunity to receive real-time info about the vehicle's systems, allowing us to curate a more personal and tailored service experience for our customers. This will not only enable customers to make better decisions about their vehicle, but enable them to spend more time enjoying other activities in their busy lives.

GAT: You head a large organization in multiple locations. How do

you stay connected to your employees? Tell us your secret how you keep your ear on the ground?

CT: Frequent communication is vital to the success of any team to ensure everyone understand the mission. You cannot lead a team via email. We host numerous online town halls via skype, distribute a newsletter and most importantly, walk around and reinforce a culture of face to face discussions. Despite my busy meeting and travel schedule, I prioritize skip level discussions, deploy employee surveys and encourage our team members to be open and honest with their comments to help us improve our culture. Listening is also central to good communication, so it's important to ask lots of questions and tune in the perspectives of others, independent of level. Open and honest brief and de-brief is critical to continuous improvement.



A 220 in Jupiter Red with Night Package and 19-inch AMG multispoke wheels



Mercedes-Benz

GAT: The Mercedes Benz product portfolio is expanding in the US with the new A-Class and a range of electric vehicles. What are your expectations in these segments?

CT: We have the broadest and youngest model lineup with a host of new models coming, so we are very well positioned to assert our strength in every segment and with every technology. The A-Class launched earlier this year, featuring our most advanced user interface (MBUX) in our entry level car. The A-Class establishes a new entry point for the brand and brings new buyers to Mercedes-Benz. The goal here is to attract customers when they are young, provide them with a great service and customer experience at every touch point and keep them for life. Next year we will launch our new EQC, the first of our new generation of electric vehicles. This SUV includes many intelligent features in a versatile and advanced package for those customers who want their next Mercedes to be an electric Mercedes. Additionally, demand for SUVs is really driving the market across the globe and I think you will see this continue for quite some time. I have to say, we are very bullish about our prospects for success.

GAT: Self-driving cars are all the hype. What challenges do you see with that technology and when can we see the first truly self-driving car?

CT: I think you will continue to see a progressive, step by step approach to autonomy, and some of the basic functions are available today for

limited amounts of time in certain driving situations. Of course, there are also some new standards and legislative implications which also need to be addressed. A fully autonomous car is a longer term goal, however, our customers expect Mercedes to have the smartest and most intelligent systems available vs. simply the first. Development is ongoing, and Daimler prioritized Autonomous development as a core priority moving forward. However, you'll see more and more capability in our cars each year which will make an important leap forward in terms of safety. It's a safe assumption that the first self-driving cars will debut in commercial applications such as Robotaxis and perhaps long-distance trucks as a first step and we're working diligently to advance this technology.

GAT: You are a single-handicap golfer. How did you get started playing golf and what has golf taught you? What was your most memorable golf experience?

CT: I began playing golf shortly after I was diagnosed with Diabetes at age 16. I grew up on a farm, and my dad's friend Juergen showed me how to hit golf balls. I spent many hours practicing between the cattle running around in our pasture which presented a few unique challenges. Golf has taught me that there are no excuses. It's all about constant improvement. It forces you to look in the mirror to debrief, reflect, learn, correct and move on. Each year, I get together with 5 close friends from Germany and Switzerland. We've kept this tradition going for 17 years and it's certainly a highlight on my calendar. ■

Christian Treiber

Vice President, Customer Services
Mercedes-Benz USA



Christian Treiber became vice president, customer services for Mercedes-Benz USA (MBUSA) in January 2016. In this role, Treiber has overall responsibility for the company's customer service operations, engineering services, after-sales business development, parts logistics, Mercedes-Benz Academy and MBUSA's award-winning customer assistance center.

Treiber started his career with Daimler in 1992 at the retail store in Dusseldorf. After completing his bachelor's degree, Treiber worked in Daimler owned retail sales for eight years before assuming responsibilities as general sales manager for automotive and non-automotive accessories. In 2005, Treiber came to MBUSA's corporate headquarters as general manager of after-sales marketing and parts logistics. In 2011, he returned to Stuttgart to head up after-sales parts for Mercedes-Benz Cars and smart. He currently resides in Atlanta, GA.

Blickle USA:

A prime example of Mittelstand business excellence

Established in 1953, Blickle Räder+Rollen GmbH is a third-generation family company with more than 30,000 items in its standard product range, and is one of the world's leading manufacturers of wheels and casters. In addition to the production facilities in Rosenfeld, Germany Blickle has 17 sales subsidiaries in Europe, North America and South America, Asia, and supplies casters and wheels to over 120 countries worldwide.

To better serve the North American market in 2018 Blickle USA took occupancy of a new 62,491 square foot multi-million-dollar facility in

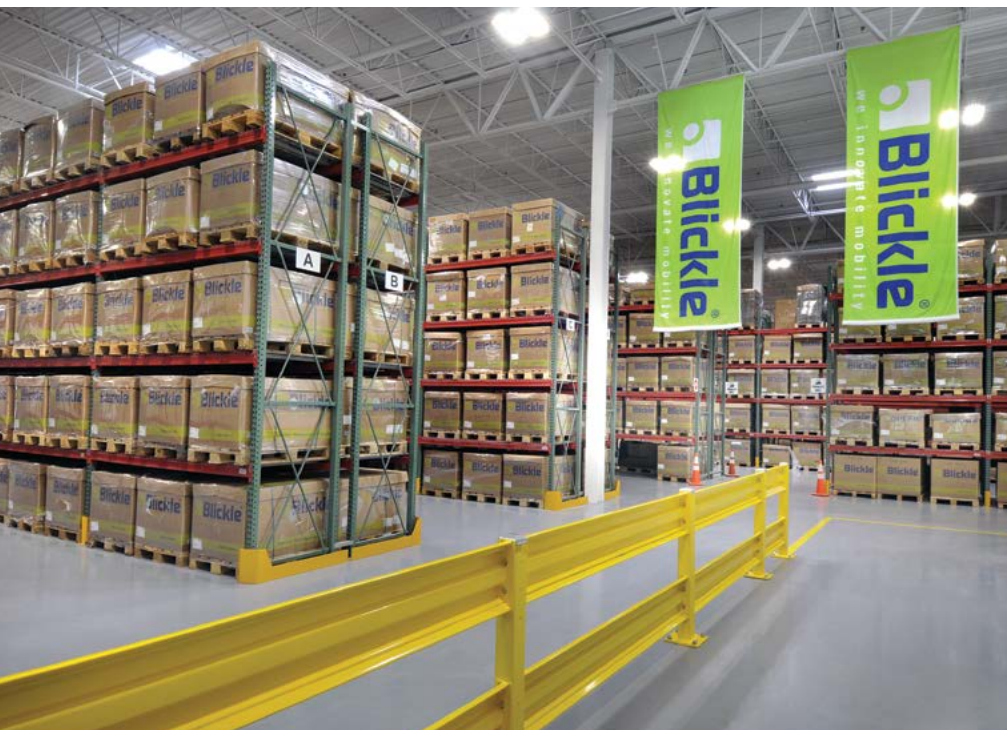
Newnan, GA. The building, designed and built specifically for Blickle, represents the completion of Phase One of the company's US Headquarter Campus. With three more phases planned, the approximate 20-acre site has been developed and prepped with utilities in place for future expansion. Provisions for a railway spur to service the facility have also been made.

All US American operations are managed from the Newnan, GA facility including Engineering, Custom Manufacturing, Sales, Customer Service, Product Testing, Customer and Distributor Training as well as Shipping.

Product availability is a cornerstone of Blickle USA, so the new building is dedicated in part to maintaining a vast inventory of wheel sizes and caster configurations. This commitment to inventory allows the company to offer an unprecedented number and variety of products from both their Blickle and Pegasus Lines for immediate shipment. Products in the Blickle line also carry an industry leading 4-year warranty.

Made by Blickle

Blickle's demands are simple: to develop the very best caster and wheel solution for every conceivable material handling application – based on their ideas, commitment to innovation, expertise in materials and manufacturing technology, many years of experience and motivated, committed employees. Blickle is known worldwide for high quality, long-lasting and maintenance-free casters and wheels that are “Made in Germany”. Leading the market means setting high standards. The Blickle way is manufacturing and developing everything from scratch. This gives Blickle complete control over quality and delivery dates. It also allows them to react with speed and flexibility to customer and market requirements while using environmentally friendly manufacturing processes. Blickle is uniquely certified ISO 9001, ISO 50001 (Energy Management System) and



Blickle is known worldwide for high quality, long-lasting and maintenance-free casters and wheels.



ISO 14001 (Environmental Management System). A one of a kind dedicated “Customer Experience Center” is located at the new plant in Newnan, Georgia allowing for a “hands on” approach to ensure the best possible ergonomic caster and wheel solution. Various test carts help to demonstrate the unique operating conditions for virtually any material handling application. A state of the art “Product Training Center” allows for dedicated training and product certification to ensure a professional and knowledgeable staff of caster professionals with the goal of optimizing mobility solutions regardless of the industry type (manufacturing, medical, food service, retail, hospitality, distribution, etc.).



contribute to continual product improvement. After the sudden death of the company’s founder Heinrich Blickle in 1961, his wife Elisabeth Blickle took over as Managing Director.

Today, Reinhold Blickle, son of the company’s founder, runs the company as executive partner together with his wife Denise Blickle and Walter Wager.

Under their management, Blickle has developed into one of the leading manufacturers of wheels and casters worldwide over the past few decades. Blickle Leadership continues to grow with Dr. Sarah Blickle-Fenner and David

Blickle M.Sc. transitioning into management roles to continue their families legacy. Sarah will focus on international business affairs while David focuses on engineering. We are excited to see the third generation join the organization. Progress and keeping with the traditional values of the family company go hand in hand – a corporate philosophy that will be continued into the third generation. ■

Contact information:

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Newnan, GA 30265

Ashley Fowler
>> Ashley.Fowler@Blickle.US.com
888-558-7878

>> www.blickle.com

About Blickle

In 1953, Wilhelm Sülzle split his long-established ironmongery factory among his sons and his son-in-law Heinrich Blickle into three standalone companies. The newly founded company Blickle assumed the production of iron wheelbarrow wheels, developing it into a range of high-quality wheels in addition to swivel and fixed casters. Swabian virtues such as hard work, an obsession with quality and the genes of inventors all



Roto Frank of America Marks 40th Anniversary

The GACC NY congratulates our member Roto North America on the company's 40th anniversary!

Roto Frank of America, Inc. celebrated their 40th Anniversary this past May in Connecticut with a celebratory luncheon that included the Lt. Governor of CT Susan Bysiewicz, State Senator Norm Needleman, Chester's First Selectwoman Lauren Gister, the President & CEO of the German American Chamber of Commerce New York Dietmar Rieg, Middlesex Chamber of Commerce President Larry McHugh and Vice President Jeff Pugliese, and CT Invention Convention President Dr. Demetrios Giannaros.

Roto also welcomed representatives from US Senator Chris Murphy, US

Congressman Joe Courtney, and State Representative Christine Palm's offices as well as many other dignitaries and invited guests. Roto Frank of America was honored to receive 3 citations: Lt. Governor Bysiewicz presented a State of CT Proclamation and State Senator Needleman and State Representative Christine Palm presented a Citation from the CT General Assembly on the occasion of Roto's 40th Anniversary.

Roto executives Dr. Eckhard Keill, Global CEO; Marcus Sander, incoming CEO of the Window and Door division; and Jens Busse, Director Western Hemisphere also joined from Roto's Corporate Headquarters.

President & CEO, Chris Dimou, said during his key note speech, "Endurance isn't easy and meaningful endurance is even harder. For an organization to endure for 40 years, and to be as relevant today as it was at the founding, is quite an accomplishment. But what matters most now is what we do next. We have to, and will continue to, relentlessly pursue what has made us successful in the first place: To create superior customer value."

*From left, front row:
Lauren Gister, Chris Dimou, Lt. Governor
Susan Bysiewicz, Dr. Keill.
Back row: Marcus Sander, Jens Buss*





Roto Frank of America, Inc. was founded in Chester, Connecticut in 1979 as a wholly owned subsidiary of Roto Frank AG; headquartered in Germany, with 18 production plants and more than 40 subsidiaries globally. The Roto Group now has a presence in over 40 countries with over 4900 employees.

Roto Frank of America, Inc. began manufacturing roof

windows and distributing Tilt&Turn hardware. Later on, the company realized the great potential that existed in the window and door hardware market expanding it's products towards the North American market. Roto Frank of America, Inc. has been an integral part of Connecticut's manufacturing industry for 40 years. ■

About Roto Frank of America, Inc.

Roto Frank of America, Inc. is wholly owned subsidiary of Roto Frank AG, a global leader in window and door hardware, with 18 production plants and more than 40 subsidiaries worldwide. Roto Frank of America, Inc. is a Chester, Connecticut-based manufacturer of window and door hardware which offers solutions for North American and European applications.

For more information please visit
>> www.rotonorthamerica.com

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Latest STEP USA Alumni Pitch Night Focuses on Internationalization

Program Paves the Way for 250 German Startups Entering the US Market

The German American Chamber of Commerce, Inc. (GACC NY) held its fourth STEP USA Alumni Pitch Night which took place in Berlin this past June, encompassing dynamic lectures and workshops on internationalization.

Leading experts on internationalization, venture capital and technology transfer provided their valuable insights. Participants

included: Nico Gramenz, CEO of the Factory in Berlin, Julian Riedlbauer, Partner at GP Bullhound, Astrid Freier, Head of SAP.io Foundry Berlin, Marc Bovenschulte, Director at the Institute for Innovation and Technology and the long-standing STEP USA Partner Brian Frumberg, CEO & Founder from VentureOut New York.

During several panel discussions,

fireside chats and lectures, the experts addressed key aspects of US market entry. That included shedding light on the criteria that German startups must fulfill in order to be successful in the USA. The presentations provided the audience with intercultural skills, best practices, day-to-day working experiences of established German startups and legal foundations for the secure, long-term development of business in the US.

The highlight of the event was the STEP USA Pitch, where five alumni of the STEP USA program presented their company business models before a jury of business innovators. The winner of the competition will attend the GACC NY's "New-comer of the Year Award" this fall in New York.

Among the five STEP USA alumni competing for the ticket to New York were Alugha GmbH, Psoido, a Fraunhofer spin-off, Genie Enterprise Solutions Inc., MoBerries GmbH and Ineratec GmbH. Philipp Engelkamp, Ineratec's managing director from Karlsruhe, prevailed with his pitch. He impressed the



Leading experts on internationalization, venture capital and technology transfer provided their valuable insights.

jury with his innovative product. Ineratec participated in the STEP USA program in December 2017. The company is a KIT spin-off in the chemical technology industry and has received several awards, most recently the German Founder's Award.

The five-day, short-trip STEP USA program was launched in 2014 by the GACC New York to support German startups in their US market entry. It takes place quarterly at New York, Boston or Silicon Valley locations.

To date, this program has taken place 22 times, with more than 250 German startups having successfully completed STEP USA, leading to 51 US subsidiary companies

being established and resulting in successful business with U.S. customers. Almost 30 of these startups have secured investments, mostly in the single-digit million range. ■

For more details about STEP USA please visit:

>> www.stepusa.io



Winners Ineratec with Dietmar Rieg

Upcoming Trips: STEP USA

15. – 20. 09. 2019

(Nordrhein Westfalen startups only:
New York & Boston)

03. – 08. 11. 2019

(Rheinland-Pfalz startups only:
New York)

08. – 13. 12. 2019

(open for all startups: New York)



Panelists at the STEP USA Alumni Pitch Night

Can Germans and Americans Agree on the Ideal Approach to Customer Service?

By John Otto Magee

A company's success depends on meeting the needs of its external customers. A team's success depends on meeting the needs of its internal customers.

Meeting needs, though, runs deeper than merely supplying a particular product or service. The foundation is a common understanding of the business relationship between customer and supplier.

There are significant differences in how Germans and Americans fundamentally understand business

relationships. Regardless of whether the customer is internal or external, divergent customer philosophies mean divergent customer approaches.

Although both German and American colleagues have the best intentions, namely to best serve their customers, each side will see themselves as having the optimal approach.

The two approaches don't necessarily have to clash. On the contrary, important aspects in how the two

cultures approach business relationships can be joined to produce a more effective approach. This, in fact, is the overall goal of collaboration: to find the best ways to work together.

German Approach

Germans use the word "service" very often and in many different situations. But "service" is not native to the German language. The German equivalent for "service" is "dienen". And the word "dienen" can be traced back as far as the 8th century.

At its root, "dienen" was in connection with "Läufer" (runner), "Bote" (messenger) or "Knecht" (farm laborer or servant). "Dienen" means simply to be helpful or to be useful.

But, it also means (and is often felt by Germans to mean) service in the sense of servitude, subjugation or subordination of one person to another person, to the one served, assisted or helped.

Especially if one is serving exclusively the individual needs, wishes or interests of another person, one can feel a loss of independence and autonomy. One is captive, no longer free.



Although both German and American colleagues have the best intentions, namely to best serve their customers, each side will see themselves as having the optimal approach.

However, if a common goal or common purpose is being served, something for the good of all, then serving is understood as positive.

This might provide an indication for why contemporary Germans avoid using the term “dienen”, and prefer the English word service, or a combination of a German and an English term (e.g. Kundenservice = customer service).

The German term “beraten”, on the other hand, means to give someone advice about what they should do. The root is “Rat”, which means “counsel”.

To “beraten” with another means to discuss and consider together, to hold council on a specific issue, situation or problem. A “Berater” is a consultant.

The original definition of “beraten” means to take precautions, in the sense of food and provisions in a household: “Hausrat” (household things), “Vorrat” (supply, reserve, stock), “Gerät” (tool, utensil, appliance, device).

“Beraten” (to give advice, to consult) is oriented, therefore, towards a future action, something to be done. “Beraten” serves the purpose of preparing someone for a future or possible situation.

American Approach

The English term “service” implies graciousness, helpfulness and to a degree selflessness. To serve is to be humble. Serve stems from the Latin word “servitium”, which meant the condition of a slave.

Service, at its roots, involves one person serving another or several. It is inherently personal. The term “service” in the context of American business involves the notion of “servitium” (to respond to the needs of your customer, to serve that customer personally and individually).

But service also anticipates compensation (payment, customer loyalty, growth of the business). Service is both personal and commercial.

They go hand-in-hand. Impersonal service seldom leads to commercial success. Personal service without fair compensation is servitude. And, indeed, some business relationships are so one-sided that the one serving feels more like a slave than a free person.

To consult means to seek advice, to refer to, to take into account, to consider, as one would consult an attorney or a physician. To consult also means to exchange views, to confer. As with service, consult has its roots also in Latin: “consultare”,

meaning to deliberate, counsel, consult or take counsel.

Moreover, to consult means to advise, to recommend, to suggest, to provide an opinion about what could or should be done in a certain situation or in response to a certain problem. The consultant, therefore, is the expert applying her knowledge and expertise to improve the situation of a customer.

But, essential to consulting a client is understanding their needs, their situation. This is done by first consulting with, meaning listening to that customer.

German View

Germans clearly prefer consulting over serving a customer. Consulting in the sense of imparting your expertise to one who is in need of it. The relationship is more balanced in terms of power and respect. Consulting also involves problem solving and planning together with the customer. It is, in a way, a two-way street.

Whereas serving is more of a one-way street. The customer knows what he wants, chooses one who can deliver, then expects the deliverer (runner, messenger) to react as the customer wishes. Serving, therefore, is seen by Germans as a bit degrading, demeaning, a misuse of their

skills. Serving is unworthy of the educated and skilled.

Germans can, therefore, find their American colleagues to be too eager to serve the customer in ways which are imbalanced. It can appear to them that Americans jump into action at the faintest sign of a request from the customer. From the German perspective, American customers are sometimes too, or unrealistically, demanding.

Germans believe that one can command more respect, and thus be more successful, by demonstrating more independence, and not instinctively giving the customer what he wants.

In fact, the customer often does not know what is best for him. To truly serve the client means then to maintain your independence and autonomy, in order to objectively advise the customer of how to solve his problems (a consulting approach).

In the end, the German customer neither respects nor wants a servant, but an expert who is willing to place his expertise at the center of the business relationship.

American View

Americans, on the other hand, also prefer consulting versus serving, and this for the same or similar reasons as their German colleagues. However, Americans are more willing than their German counterparts to serve the customer in ways which involve limited elements of consulting. From the American perspective there is nothing inherently demeaning or degrading in serving another person.

And serving a customer in the business context implicitly involves compensation. For an American, serving a customer only becomes degrading (meaning “not worth it”) when the compensation is not in an acceptable balance with the work performed.

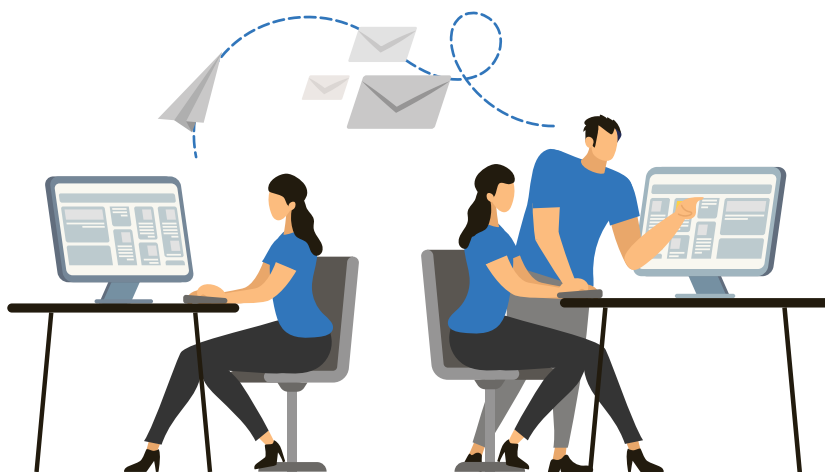
From the American perspective, the German approach to serve versus consult will not lead to success. It comes across not as customer-oriented, but supplier-oriented. In other words, the customer has to orient himself to the supplier. It implies not a balance in the relationship, but an imbalance in favor of the supplier. The customer can easily gain the impression that he should be thankful to be served by the supplier.

For Americans this is a highly risky approach in the American business context, for customer-orientation is one of the very key success factors in the U.S. economy. The German approach to serve versus consult, therefore, can come across to American customers as simply arrogant and unresponsive to customer demands.

Advice to Germans

Make unmistakably clear to your American clients that you are fully focused on serving their needs. Signal to them that you are listening and responding attentively to their situation and want to help them in any way possible.

Especially in the early stage of your collaboration avoid using the terms “consult,” “consulting,” “advice” or “advising”. Even if you are in fact doing those things, use vocabulary which say “service” and “serving”. Consult and consulting can be misinterpreted by an American customer as distanced, not fully engaged, not serving, merely advising, and not involved



in the implementation of needed measures.

In your initial meetings with your American client it will be your natural tendency to ask intelligent and analytical questions, perhaps many of them. And if it seems necessary, you will also ask critical and penetrating questions. If your American client is not familiar with your work, or working with Germans, he might be a bit surprised by your approach.

A highly analytical, dialogue-based conversation, with questions going to the core of a business, implies a close business relationship. It could be that your collaboration has not yet reached that stage. Your American customer sees herself as managing the relationship, as deciding if and when you reach full collaboration.

Restrain your consulting-oriented approach until you are sure that you have reached that stage. Work your way towards it carefully. Early in the business relationship focus on listening, understanding, and clarifying. Americans want to be sure that you have understood their situation, their needs and challenges, before they are willing to accept you as a consultant who serves their needs.

Advice to Americans

Germans respond positively to American customer-orientation. However, if that friendliness and responsiveness is not backed up by a solution to a German customer's problem, they are viewed as providing little value. Give clear indications to your German customer - whether external or internal - that you are focused fully on solving their specific problem.

Americans
also prefer
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colleagues.

German customers expect a strong consulting element in your approach to serving them. Early in the business relationship avoid the terms "serve" and "service." Even if your actions are clearly customer- and service-oriented, use the words "consult" and "advise."

For German ears "serve" and "service" can come across as a substitute for real and proven knowledge and expertise. Seek some distance and detachment from the customer as a person. Depersonalize the business relationship in the sense of an outside consultant who applies his expertise to a specific problem.

As an American, your natural inclination is to avoid entering too early into a consulting dialogue with your customers. You will ask intelligent questions and listen attentively. You will hold penetrating and critical questions for a second or

About the Author:



John Otto Magee is an American who has lived in Germany for 25+ years. He was a senior-level staff member of the CDU/CSU Parliamentary Group in the Bundestag from 1995 until 1999, advising its leadership on the relations between the United States and Germany. He was a consultant for Siemens AG from 1999 until 2002 supporting the post-acquisition integration of Westinghouse Power Corporation. Since 2002, John has been an independent consultant, advising global companies on cross-border collaboration.

>> www.johnottomagee.com

possibly third conversation. Your German customers, however, expect a consulting dialogue at the very outset of the business relationship.

Immediately begin a dialogue involving the most complex and critical issues. Ask the penetrating and sensitive questions. Avoiding these questions will give your German customer the impression that you either do not grasp the problem in its complexity, or are reluctant to address them. Neither of these explanations cast a positive light on you as a consulting-oriented problem-solver. ■

Thi Thu Hoang

Currently a business mathematics master student from Germany

It's a great experience to come to the United States with J1 visas. I was lucky enough to get my two J-1 Exchange Visitor visa applications accepted for doing two internships in different fields at the BMW plant in Spartanburg, South Carolina.

During my first time in the US, I worked as an international intern in a logistics department at the BMW

Manufacturing Co. LLC. The second time I came to the US with my J-1 Exchange Visitor visa, I had the opportunity to do research on artificial intelligence at BMW Group's IT Innovation and Research Lab, one of the best labs worldwide.

Beside work, I took time to travel as much as I could. I traveled across the US, visiting the most southern point of the country, Key West, Florida, and the lowest point of North America in Death Valley, California. I also hiked to the top of the Nevada Fall, a 181-meter high waterfall on the Merced River in Yosemite National Park, California.

My most cherished gift from the J-1 Exchange Visitor Programs are all the friends I made for life,

who helped me to feel safe and welcomed while living abroad.

I would like to thank you all for giving me one of the greatest experiences of my life! ■





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Invest in the Next Generation of Leaders

Learn how apprenticeship programs help companies navigate the handover from the baby boomers

The American workforce is at a pivotal moment as more baby boomers move into retirement and younger generations of workers step up to take their place. Companies from all industries are now facing this challenge, and smart business leaders are planning ahead to smooth the transition, preserve institutional knowledge, and train up-and-coming leaders.

Forbes Coaches Council featured a roundup of advice from its members, top business and career coaches, on how to navigate this handover – and many of the recommendations are addressed by apprenticeships. High-tech manufacturing companies are already facing a skills shortage, and this generational shift is only one factor to consider.

While larger companies might have the resources to establish in-house training programs, consortium-style options like Industry Consortium for Advanced Technical Training (ICATT) and Georgia Consortium for Advanced Technical Training (GA CATT) allow small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) to invest in skilled workers.

Here's some of the guidance that members of Forbes Coaches Council offered to companies that want to develop their next generation of leaders, and how it can be applied to investing in apprenticeship programs.

Don't Wait To Start

"It is imperative that companies look to the next generation for ways to merge technology, soft skills, and the

new ideas necessary to seamlessly keep the organization afloat and profitable." – *Kenneth Johnson, East Coast Executives*

Now is the time to start training younger workers – before your skilled technicians retire and take their knowledge with them. Apprenticeship programs offer a structured way to pass along this expertise to the next generation.

Develop A Buy-And-Build Strategy

A pipeline of talent is precisely what apprenticeships are designed to create. By educating, nurturing, and mentoring younger workers, manufacturing companies invest in the future of their employees – and their employees return the favor.

Leverage The Success Of Mentoring

"Pair baby boomers who have the time and inclination with high potentials. Create program guidelines and train both mentors and mentees. Curate topics to focus their discussions and maximize their time together. Monitor program results." – *Loren Margolis, Training & Leadership Success LLC*

When you design a program thoughtfully, with specific goals and metrics in mind, mentors and mentees get the most out of their time working together. Apprenticeships are organized around the knowledge mentors have and



ICATT encourages apprentices to do rotations in all departments of a company.

“Determine where you need to buy talent in the short term and where you can build talent in the long-term. Leverage the new talent you buy to build a future pipeline in your organization.”

Amy Douglas, Spark Coaching, LLC

mentees need, and the experienced employees guide apprentices toward success.

Train Senior Leaders How To Effectively Coach And Mentor

“Coaching and mentoring are the key to developing the next generation, but there is a gap between desire and knowledge. Most senior leaders want to create a succession plan that includes coaching and mentoring, but when they are honest, they don’t know how.” - *Michelle Braden, MSBCoach, LLC*

High-tech companies are made up of knowledgeable employees, but doing and teaching are distinct skills. Leaders need training to be able to help others learn. The ICATT Apprenticeship Program developed the Train the Trainer Seminar to solve this common challenge.

Encourage Collaboration

“Create a professional development program to educate new leaders and share organizational knowledge. Encourage cross-generational relationships with formal mentoring programs and skills-based volunteer opportunities.” - *Meredith Moore Crosby, Leverette Weekes*

Organizations are able to grow and thrive when younger employees are regularly exposed to diverse experiences, skills, and perspectives. ICATT

encourages apprentices to do rotations in all departments of a company, not just their “home” department, so they can build relationships and try a variety of responsibilities. ■



The ICATT and GA CATT Apprenticeship Programs make apprenticeships accessible for SMEs.

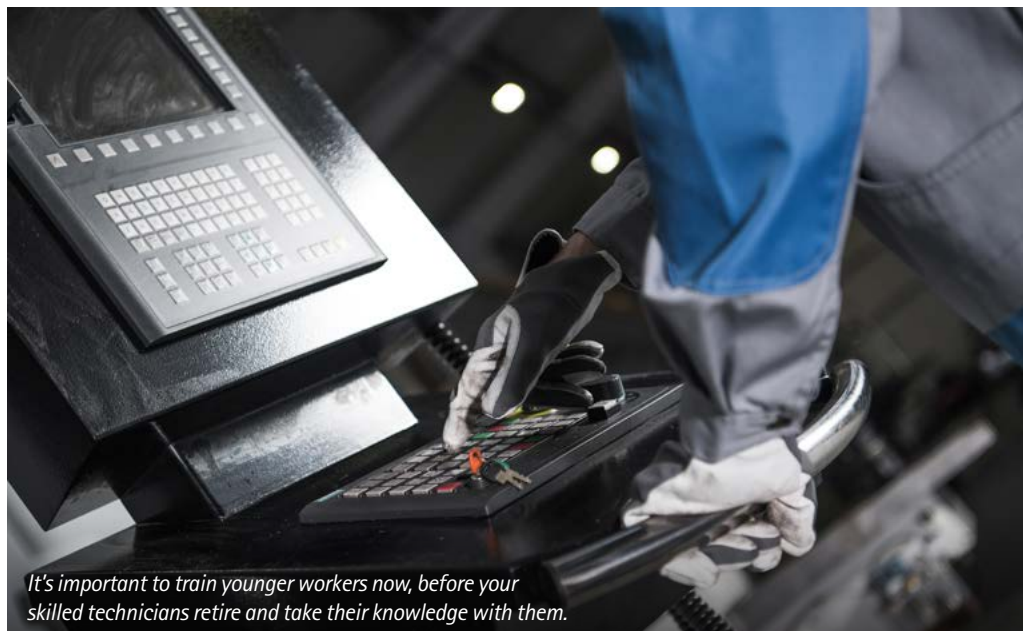
ICATT | APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM
TRAIN.RETAIN.GROW.

About the ICATT Apprenticeship Program

Industry Consortium for Advanced Technical Training (ICATT) is the leading apprenticeship program in the Midwest for high-tech manufacturers and companies with complex technologies or logistics. It is the only program fully benchmarked on the German Dual Education System – an approach recognized globally for its combination of company-specific knowledge, theory, and hands-on learning – resulting in highly-trained employees that position companies to embrace technical advances, keep pace with market demands, and harness growth opportunities.

To find out more about ICATT, visit icattapprenticeships.com or contact Virginia Rounds at

>> rounds@gaccmidwest.org
or 312-494-2163.



It's important to train younger workers now, before your skilled technicians retire and take their knowledge with them.

Essex County College Students Gain Digital Manufacturing Skills through New Mechatronics Certificate Program

By Matthew Allen, GACC

Esex County College (ECC) in Newark, NJ is moving quickly to build dynamic new educational pathways to address both community and industry needs in the Garden State. Through close coordination with state representatives and local partners, the college has innovated a new Mechatronics Certificate as part of their Mechanical and Manufacturing Degree program.

The combination of mechanical and electrical competencies their students gain will allow them to adapt to the developing needs of advanced manufacturing. The German American Chamber of Commerce, Inc. (GACC NY) is excited to partner with ECC on the new program by integrating German-based apprenticeships in Mechatronics with local manufacturers. Through the growing cooperation, ECC and the GACC NY will target the skills gap in manufacturing, while providing students with debt-free education and accelerated career pathways.

During a tour of ECC on May 1st, President Dr. Anthony Munroe, Professor and Dean Dr. Jill C. Stein and Executive Director of Enrollment Management Sanjay Ramdath introduced GACC NY representatives

Matthew Allen and Alexandra Hoffmann to their Mechanical Engineering Technology training center while highlighting the infrastructure the students have access to. One of the students was from their lab was commended for her team's success at acquiring, assembling and placing into service the college's new CNC machine.

ECC's other innovative initiatives include a large and growing study abroad program and a passport assistance program for students that have never had the opportunity to apply for a passport.

The GACC will continue to deepen its partnership with ECC on initiatives, which support the New Jersey economy and grow the transatlantic relationship. ■



GACC Awarded Funding to Support Apprenticeship Programs in New Jersey

Bäumer of America and Arconic Are First to Participate

By Alexandra Hoffmann, GACC

This past May, NJ Governor Phil Murphy announced grant awards totaling more than \$3 million to fund programs that will employ and train registered apprentices in New Jersey. Through the GACC's close partnership with Morris County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC) and the dedication of GACC NY apprenticeship representatives Matthew Allen and Alexandra Hoffmann, our organization has been awarded funding by the Department of Labor and Workforce Development's Growing Apprenticeships in Nontraditional Sectors (GAINS) competitive grant.

These funds will support the initial investment of companies hosting apprentices in the field of Mechatronics. We congratulate our first two participating New Jersey companies, Bäumer of America and Arconic. We are excited to connect them with the state's targeted workforce development initiative and allow them to grow as strategic New Jersey manufacturers. The new apprentices will enter dynamic work environments with competitive wages and strong career development opportunities. Upon completing their three-year programs, the apprentices will gain their Registered Apprenticeship credentials, German Apprenticeship certificates

and Associates Degrees, while accelerating their career development debt-free.

The program will additionally concentrate on developing the current skilled workforce with the knowledge and resources to pass on their skills and build the next generation of their team. Our first Train the Trainer course was offered at the end of July to the participating companies as well as other employers who are developing their skilled workers into leadership roles.

GACC-supported programs have grown extensively throughout the US, securing placements for over 500 apprentices. Uwe Sharfy, CEO of Bäumer of America, was the first to sign on to this robust program in New Jersey. For more than half a century, the pioneers at Bäumer have worked in the range of specialty machines for processing of polyurethane foam. Their work is accomplished with a high degree of personal drive and commitment; and they provide best-in-class solutions in their industry using cutting-edge technologies and are forecasting continuous growth needs over the next several years.

While perhaps not a household name, Arconic produces the high



precision engine components, which power our aerospace industry. All airplanes flown in the US utilize Arconic's parts. And the single-crystal super-alloys, which are exclusively produced by Arconic in Dover, NJ, are used for the most advanced aerospace engines in production today.

This work is only a part of Arconic's important production, which spans the industrial, automotive, construction and many other sectors thanks to the commitment of their 40,000-plus employees. They also are projecting accelerating growth in demand over at least the next 10 years.

Both Bäumer and Arconic are excited to do their part in developing the next generation of skilled manufacturers. We congratulate them on the start of this journey! ■

Eastern Millwork Enters Partnership to Develop Joint Apprenticeship Program

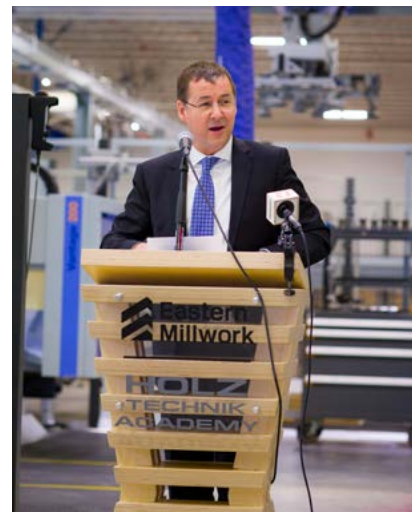
GACC NY member Eastern Millwork (EMI) has forged a partnership with Hudson County Community College (HCCC) and Pittsburgh State University (PSU) to develop and implement a joint apprenticeship program.

GACC NY CEO & President Dietmar Rieg attended a May 15 ceremony at EMI's Jersey City, NJ facility to mark the launch of the partnership. EMI President/CEO Andrew Campbell welcomed guests and keynote speakers to the event including: NJ Governor Phil Murphy, David Gill

Consul General of the Federal Republic of Germany, Jersey City Mayor Steven M. Fulop, Hudson County Executive Thomas A. DeGise and Hudson County Community College President Dr. Christopher M. Reber.

W. Nevins McCann, Esq. Partner Connell Foley LLP served as the Master of Ceremony.

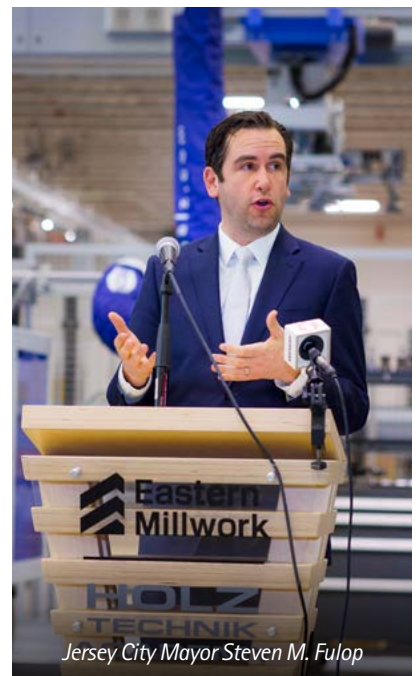
EMI's five-year, dual-education program kicks off this July. Apprentices will have a starting salary of \$24,000 and earn up to



General Consul David Gill



NJ Governor Phil Murphy with participating students



Jersey City Mayor Steven M. Fulop

The interactive classroom will allow the apprentices to engage with the professors in Pittsburgh, Kansas, along with fellow classmates in Kansas, Florida and California.

\$70,000 after the fifth year. They will be awarded a Associate of Applied Science (A.A.S.) degree in Architectural Manufacturing from HCCC in four years and have their Bachelor's degree in Advanced Manufacturing Management (AMM) from PSU in the fifth year. As full-time employees, the apprentices will receive full benefits – paid vacation and holidays, 401K plan and health insurance.

Holz Technik dual-education model is based on proven European forms

of education. In the model, apprentices hired by EMI will devote three days a week to practical experiences and two days a week to coursework for their degree. One day of coursework will occur at HCCC facilities and one day EMI's Jersey City interactive classroom with PSU. The interactive classroom will allow the apprentices to engage with the professors in Pittsburgh, Kansas, along with fellow classmates in Kansas, Florida and California. ■



Thomas A. DeGise



Dr. Christopher M. Reber





From: Leverkusen, Germany

Past career: I moved to New York in February 2011 to join the Business Development Consulting team at GACC New York, where I was responsible for market entry consulting in the Northeast.

Through the years, I've supported numerous German companies and organizations with a variety of services including market research, virtual office, business partner search, delegation trips, and events.

Contact: Tel: (212) 974-8836
 >> consulting@gaccny.com

Susanne Rehse

Executive Director, GACC Philadelphia

Before she moved to the US, Susanne studied Business Administration at Cologne University of Applied Sciences and University of Wisconsin-Whitewater. She also completed an apprenticeship in office communication with Deutsche Telekom AG in Cologne, Germany, and worked as Executive Assistant at T-Mobile International AG & Co. KG in Bonn, Germany.

What does your new role entail?

Build/maintain/grow a strong business network and membership base in the Philadelphia region, plan and organize events and networking opportunities, support and connect German and US businesses in the region

What are some goals you have for the new position?

I would like to grow membership in the Philadelphia region and offer local and German companies an active platform to explore business opportunities. It is also the goal to actively promote GACC's dual apprenticeship program. We plan to work with local companies seeking to build a trained workforce and to close the skills gap.

What do you like best about your job?

I love to work with the German-American community. I get to meet many different people and companies from various industries and can support their business endeavors in the US. ■

		June 8 A Transatlantic Dialogue on Data-Driven Innovation GACC New York New York www.gaccny.com	June 9 Summer Social GACC New York New York www.gaccny.com	June 20 Stammtisch & Charlotte airport tour GACC South Charlotte, NC www.gaccsouth.com	June 22 - 26 Roadshow: A Taste of Germany GACC New York New York www.gaccny.com
July 9 German American Future Mobility Dialogue GACC West San Francisco www.gaccwest.com	July 10 Evening Reception of the Free State of Saxony GACC West San Francisco www.gaccwest.com	July 10 Business Luncheon July: Challenges of a Growing SME GACC Midwest Schaumburg, IL www.gaccmidwest.org	July 15 - Aug 2 Innovation Camp BW 4 GACC West Silicon Valley www.gaccwest.com		July 17 European Business Networking GACC Midwest Chicago, IL www.gaccmidwest.org
July 18 Summer Soiree 2019 GACC South Atlanta, GA www.gaccsouth.com	July 18 Webinar: Recruiting in the US - Understanding Employee Benefits GACC Midwest Chicago, IL www.gaccmidwest.org	July 23 Job Impulse HQ - Open House GACC South Greenville, SC www.gaccsouth.com		July 23 - 26 Train-The-Trainer Seminar GACC New York New York www.gaccny.com	July 25 US-German Cultural Awareness Training GACC South Atlanta, GA www.gaccsouth.com
July 26 WI Chapter: German Fest Reception GACC Midwest Milwaukee, WI www.gaccmidwest.org	July 30 CO Chapter: Tour of the GrowHaus GACC Midwest Denver, CO gaccmidwest.org	July 31 Stammtisch: Hans & Franz Biergarten GACC South Greenville, SC www.gaccsouth.com	Aug 7 Business Luncheon August GACC Midwest Schaumburg, IL www.gaccmidwest.org		Aug 17 GACC Soccer Social GACC Midwest Bridgeview, IL www.gaccmidwest.org

Aug 21 Summer Member Reception GACC New York New York www.gaccny.com	Aug 21 High-Tech Apprenticeships for an Industry 4.0 World Workshop GACC Midwest Troy, MI www.gaccmidwest.org	Aug 22 Webinar: Section 301 Tariffs on Chinese-Origin Imports GACC South Atlanta, GA www.gaccsouth.com	Aug 23 Audi Northlake test drive GACC South Charlotte, NC www.gaccsouth.com		Aug 24 German Bierfest GACC South Atlanta, GA www.gaccsouth.com
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Sep 17 EACC Fall Networking Boat Cruise GACC New York New York www.gaccny.com		Sep 18 STEP Pitch Night – September GACC New York New York www.gaccny.com	Sep 18 Fall Networking Event with Knoll GACC South Atlanta, GA www.gaccsouth.com	Sep 19 Key Employment Law Considerations for Employers South Carolina GACC South Spartanburg, SC www.gaccsouth.com	Sep 19 Stammtisch: OMB GACC South Charlotte, NC www.gaccsouth.com
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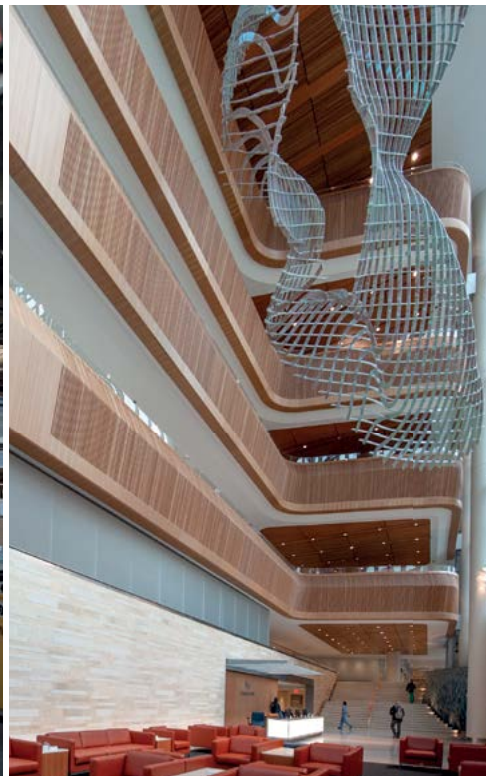
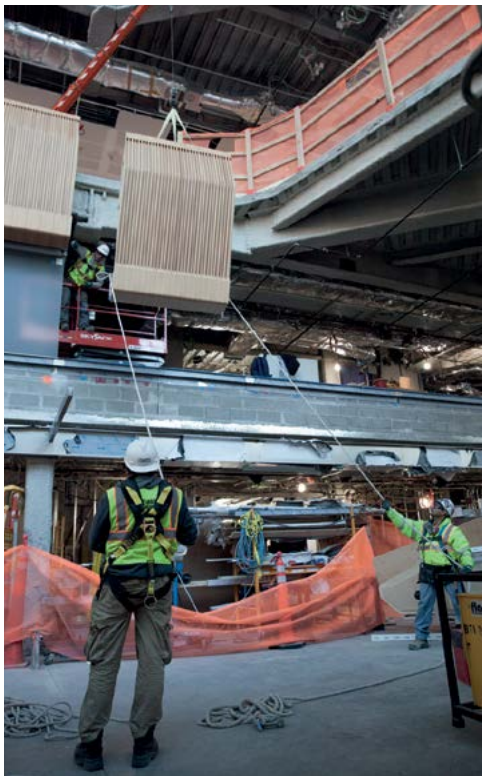
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