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**Bäumer of America shares formula for
success in the US: New Jersey subsidiary
established more than 40 years ago**



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It has been a little over a year since I moved to the Southeastern United States to join the GACC South. During that time, I have witnessed a powerful US economy, despite the challenges presented by the pandemic. The US continues to be the most important partner for Germany outside of Europe as well as the most important destination for German direct investment.

During my time thus far, I have had the privilege of visiting seven out of the eleven states in our area. I noticed that every German company here in the Southeast has an important position in the market. Our region is attractive for so many various industries: from automotive and aerospace, to oil, gas & energy, to the biopharma and healthcare IT clusters, just to name a few. Aside from observing the diversity of the region, I continue to be amazed by the warm and welcoming southern hospitality.

While we have all become accustomed to working and meeting virtually, there is truly no replacement for an in-person meeting with you, our members and partner organizations, to revitalize our network. I have had the honor to speak at events, meet with government officials, visit many of your facilities and attend several of our own events together with you. I find it of utmost importance to visit and learn from you, so we can adjust our overall strategy accordingly to meet your needs. Regionalization is a strategic goal for me, and COVID-19 has brought along opportunities through digitalization to achieve what had not been possible before.

From the many voices I have heard from within our German American community, it is evident that business has evolved during the pandemic, but also that, in general, change has accelerated. We want to serve as a compass to help you navigate through this new world: How can we become more resilient to supply chain issues and digital risks? What is the best



Matthias Hoffmann,
President & CEO at GACC South

strategy when dealing with the ongoing decoupling between the US and China? How to embrace the topics of ecological and social sustainability? How to quickly adapt to workforce needs as many of us continue to struggle with high turnover and a lack of skilled workers?

It is now a fast-paced environment for businesses and our chamber needs to adjust to meet your new needs. We aim to keep you informed regularly about new market trends, create new exchange platforms, and generate innovative services and benefits for you.

The GACC South is also adapting to the changing work patterns spurred by the pandemic as we've chosen a more suitable office and location to serve you better. By the time of publication, we will be settled into our new offices located in the heart of Atlanta at Atlantic Station. We welcome you all to come by when you find yourself in the "ATL", grab a cup of coffee with us and I am certain we will also find a work desk that's available for you.

I hope to see many of you soon.

Sincerely,
Matthias Hoffmann

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Bäumer of America shares formula for success in the US

New Jersey subsidiary established more than 40 years ago

When Uwe Scharfy started as CEO at Baumer of America Inc. in 2017, his goal was to further expand Bäumer's market position in North America and to strategically adapt to the growth in recent years.

After 4 years, the goals are being realized. With a turnover of more than 30 million USD and over 40 employees, the company has tripled its size during his tenure.

In 1979, Baumer of America Inc. was founded in New Jersey. The establishment of the first subsidiary was the logical consequence for the German machine engineering company Albrecht Bäumer GmbH & Co. KG. It developed very close relations with the North American

continent from day one onwards. In 1954 Bäumer Germany delivered their first foam cutting machine with its destination USA. Bäumer builds, for the foam industry, special machines, plant layouts, develops software, offers customized, comprehensive, intelligent concepts and solutions for foam processing. It is quite likely that the mattress you sleep on, the sofa you sit on, the dish sponge that lies in your kitchen or the headliner in your car has been cut on a foam cutting machine from the market leader Bäumer.

Baumer of America initially operated purely as a sales and service subsidiary. For several years now, the subsidiary, which operates independently with its own management structure, has been producing its own original spare parts, retrofits and assembles new machines. Band knives are a classic wear part on the foam cutting machines and are in high demand. The USA is Bäumer's largest market with over 2000 machines and plants.

The buildup of the production of knives in the USA in recent years is remarkable. In a 2-shift production, Baumer produces over 12,000 band knives per year. The American knife production offers local



BÄUMER

customers not only cost advantages but also fast availability.

This is also the reason for a huge warehouse in Towaco, New Jersey, that ensures replacement parts are always readily available and keeping shipping costs to a minimum. The expansion and the extension of the product range “Made in USA” are pushing the building in Towaco to its limit, which has been repeatedly renovated and extended, to its limits. With further growth, Baumer of

America will certainly have to move or build a new building in the next few years. The expansion of the American plant fits in with CEO Uwe Scharf’s mindset: “We want to support the American economy, just as it supports us. If you want to be successful in the USA, you will need to build a strong presence with local employees.”

Another focus of the US subsidiary is on service, partly because the focus on service is a notch higher

In the USA in particular, a shortage of skilled workers is a real challenge for foam processors. We ease this pain with automation solutions: by making machines and systems increasingly intelligent and self-sufficient, then operator dependency decreases.



Baumer of America

than in Germany. "The goal of most American companies is customer satisfaction under all circumstances," explains Scharfy. Baumer of America (BoA) provides 13 service technicians in total of which 8 are full time travel service technicians. We have strategically positioned our techs all over the country to be closer to our customers. For technical support via phone and online, we have a well-trained technical service Hotline that can answer phone calls from 7:00am to 9:00pm and Saturdays from 8:00am to 12:00pm. The Hotline offers personalized customer service, not automated, to meet individual customer needs to the maximum.

Baumer of America has a wide variety of employees with over 10 different cultural backgrounds.

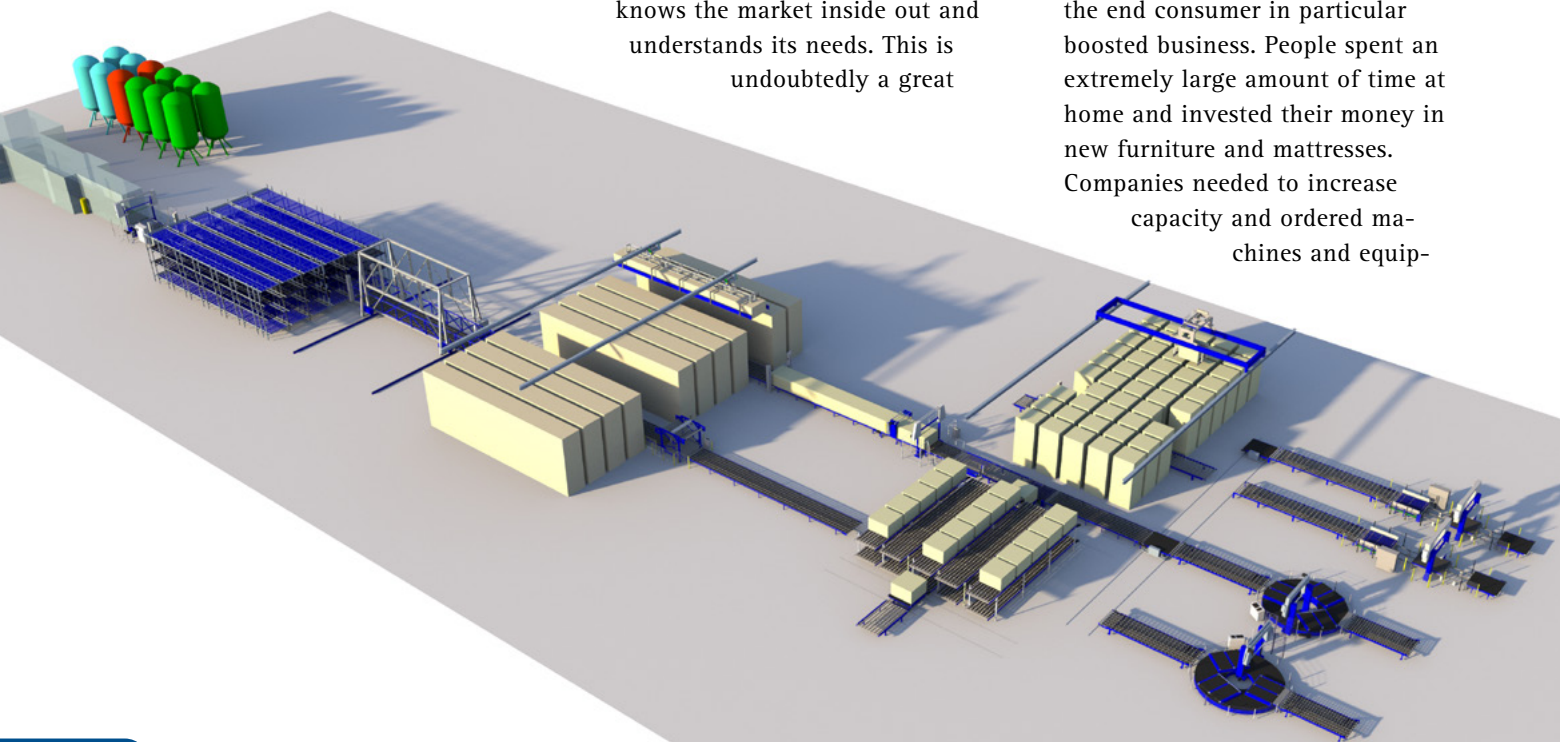
Perfect communication with
the customer thanks

to numerous languages is not the only reason for a diverse team. This diverse workforce produces the best ideas and creates added value for customers and the company. "We observe that the diversity on our team, bringing together such different talents, clearly contributes to our success. Our productivity has increased, as different perspectives, knowledge and experiences are brought to projects. The collaboration of different cultures produces new approaches, proposed solutions and improves creativity. The language diversity is, of course, another advantage. Personally, the topics of openness and tolerance are very important to me, which is automatically promoted by a culturally diverse workforce," states Scharfy.

The BoA branch puts the company right in the center of the US market. The American Baumer team knows the market inside out and understands its needs. This is undoubtedly a great

advantage in terms of being right on the pulse of the market and being able to serve the market quickly and easily. This was reinforced during the Corona crisis. Because the company is so strongly positioned locally, even in times of lockdowns and entry bans, it was able to provide optimum support for American customers. Assembly, commissioning of machines and systems, carrying out of maintenance and repairs, all the while working independently from the German headquarters.

Speaking of the Corona crisis, the entire Bäumert Group, with BoA in particular, have posted record sales over the past two years. "Even though the automotive industry slumped, we were able to more than compensate for the losses with orders from the furniture and mattress industry. Not only did hospitals need additional beds, but the end consumer in particular boosted business. People spent an extremely large amount of time at home and invested their money in new furniture and mattresses. Companies needed to increase capacity and ordered machines and equip-



"We want to support the American economy, just as it supports us. If you want to be successful in the USA, you will need to build a strong presence with local employees."

Uwe Scharfy, CEO Baumer of America

ment from us," explains Scharfy.

Another reason for the high demand for Bäumer solutions in the North American market is the high level of automation offered by the company. Uwe Scharfy highlights: "In the USA in particular, a shortage of skilled workers is a real challenge for foam processors. We ease this pain with automation solutions: by making machines and systems increasingly intelligent and self-sufficient, then operator dependency decreases. Not only are fewer people needed in the process, but end-product quality remains consistently independent of the operator."

Process control based on artificial intelligence and supported by human experience will create the best of the resources. So finally, the most intelligent, specialized, and comprehensive software tool will ultimately decide the marked leadership. That is why Bäumer brings their decades of machine and process know-how together with the newest digitalization technologies.

In the context of automation Bäumer brought to market the MES (Manufacturing Execution System) SOPHIE, especially designed for the foam industry.

This intelligent MES opens new possibilities in data collection and data sourcing. Today's loose empirical values or feelings, tomorrow will be proven by intelligent systems. For example, in product control: The software knows, which product has been produced when, which raw materials were used and where certain charges went.

So, manufacturers can react appropriately when there is a product recall by one of their



Uwe Scharfy, CEO Baumer of America

suppliers or if quality issues arise in their plant. This will be one key to success to increase productivity and quality and to increase sustainability.



According to the motto: All you can measure you can also change.

That's why Bäumers works together with different Research Partners to develop intelligent machines. Additionally, Bäumers has understood that an efficient production is more than high quality and efficient machines.

All weaknesses in the whole process chain must be analyzed and optimized considering the full

picture. Therefore, more and more focus are placed on interlinking of machines and process steps and sharing data and information up- and downwards the process chain, from foaming to packaging.

Both, the intelligent machines, and the interlinking will contribute to exploit more and more potential for reduced throughput time and costs through better planning and controlling, higher quality, reduced waste, etc. The American market is one of the great drivers of those projects.

For two years now, the US subsidiary BoA also contributes to research and development projects which traditionally only took place in the German headquarter. The initial idea and development of a new machine, which Bäumers will launch in 2022 has been done at BoA. The German R&D team is now

working hand in hand with BoA to take the project to completion

Baumers of America, although highly independent, also celebrates its extremely close ties to Germany. Regular in-house trade fairs are held in the style of the German Oktoberfest "It's great to see how many customers are Bäumers fans to the core. They don't want anything else and value a German premium product. Why then not celebrate together in German style?" Uwe Scharfy explains with a smile.

A success factor of the German company Bäumers is the training work. With a training quota of 15-20%, the highly qualified and specialized skilled workers are trained in-house. The subsidiary also adapted this model for New Jersey. The efforts to bring German-style apprenticeship to New Jersey have been a long-standing





initiative for the state and for GAACs nationwide. Baumer of America is one of the host companies for the Apprenticeship Program and is currently training one mechatronics technician. "Employees should be better trained in the future. So far, there have been no classic training occupations as we know them from Germany," says Uwe Scharfy.

In cooperation with the German American Chamber of Commerce, junior staff will be trained according to the German model. Stays in German branches will make it possible in future to familiarize trainees with the new training model. Uwe Scharfy explains enthusiastically: "During a three-week stay in Germany, the trainee can experience live what the training in Germany looks like and get a picture of it".

As in Germany, the training lasts three years. During this time, the trainee works three days a week in

the company and two days at vocational school. After successful completion, the trainee receives a training certificate. Baumer of America is very proud having reached this important milestone for the training of workers at the Towaco site and being the first to initiate a training program in the state of New Jersey together with the company Arconic.

On the other hand, the headquarters also benefits from an exchange program with the USA. In Germany, too, it is becoming increasingly difficult to recruit good young people for training at Bäumer. Commercial trainees have been allowed to spend a month at the American branch for a few years now and enjoy combining business with pleasure during their 'American adventure'.

But not only trainees, also senior team members benefit from the exchange program. "A stay of several weeks at Bäumer Germany

Baumer of America, although highly independent, also celebrates its extremely close ties to Germany. Regular in-house trade fairs are held in the style of the German Oktoberfest.

is part of our onboarding process at BoA and also strongly supports the bond between our employees and the parent company," emphasizes Scharfy.

In the coming years, Baumer of America is to be further expanded and take on additional tasks that were previously reserved for the headquarters. Well-trained employees and a high level of loyalty to the company are the prerequisites for this. The course has been set.

All we need to do is follow it to success. ■

BAUMER

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Inflation's new drivers

By Clarissa Dann, Deutsche Bank Corporate Bank

As central banks grapple with keeping inflation under control, other more seismic forces are at play, not least of which is the unwinding of globalisation. Deutsche Bank's Clarissa Dann summarises Deutsche Bank Research's latest reflections on what could determine medium-term inflation.

In our September Economist's Corner, we reflected on the Federal Reserve's hand on the monetary policy tiller, given the headwinds of inflationary pressures. Indeed, at Jackson Hole, Chair Powell had cited "prevalence of global disinflationary forces over the past quarter century" as one of the reasons why current inflation pressures were likely to be temporary.

On 27 October, Deutsche Bank Research US Chief Economist Matthew Luzzetti and his colleagues published the report, *From secular stagnation to secular stagflation? Inflation post supply shocks*. This takes a more detailed look at the various structural drivers and attempts to quantify their impact on medium-term inflation.

Unwind of globalisation

Rising globalisation, says Luzzetti et

al, has acted as a disinflationary force for the US economy over the past three decades. Firms could site their production in geographies that minimised labour and other costs, keeping down the import prices of final goods and services, and improving productivity.

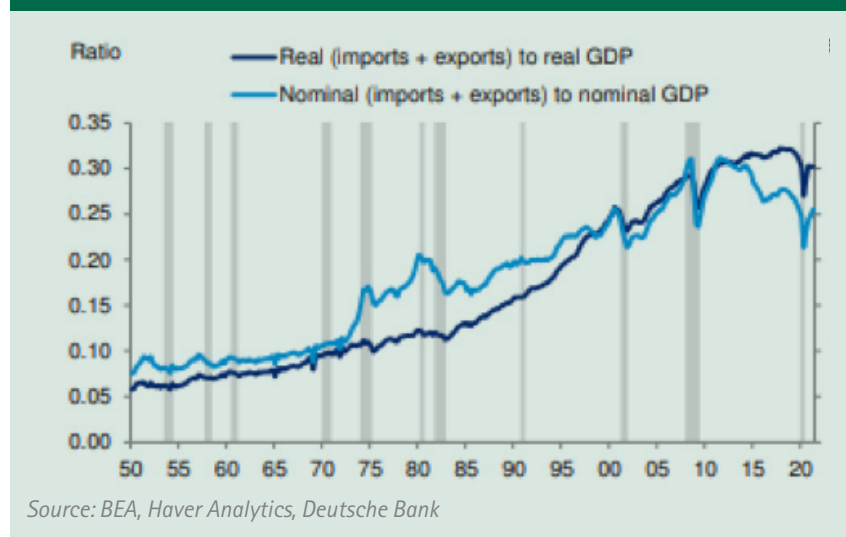
The team notes that the import share of US GDP (in inflation-adjusted terms) more than doubled between 1990 and 2018, from 8% to 18.5% during that time. Over that same period, the export share of GDP (again in inflation adjusted terms) doubled from 7% to 14%. As a result, the total trade penetration in the US economy (real imports and exports relative to GDP) more than doubled over this period, from 15% in 1990 to nearly one-third in 2017 (see Figure 1).

This rise in global interconnectedness was associated with a clear decline in US inflation, particularly for core goods, with the correlation around -75% over this period (see Figure 2). However, they note, trade penetration in the US economy and globalisation "more broadly appears to have peaked prior to the pandemic" and does not look set to reappear anytime soon. Why? The team identifies three main drivers:

I. Change of political climate.

Concerns about how the past several decades adversely impacted domestic industries and pockets of the population came to a head.

Figure 1: Trade intensity of GDP rose sharply over time but peaked before the pandemic



"The unwind of globalisation could add up to 40bps to core inflation over the next decade"

Matthew Luzzetti, US Chief Economist, Deutsche Bank Research

2. Disruptions to global

supply chains in key industries due to the pandemic have reinforced the underlying political shifts that were already in motion and heightened the focus on ensuring that the US has control over supply chains in critical areas.

3. Demographic forces in other major economies,

most notably China, and greater potential for automation indicate that the comparative advantage of producing overseas rather than the US will continue to narrow over time.

The report estimates that this unwind of globalisation could add "up to 40bps to core inflation over the next decade" but "the magnitude will depend on how much further trade

relations fracture and how key offsetting factors like the dollar respond".

Other key factors

Disinflationary forces are, note the team, also at play and could offset the tailwinds summarised above. The leader of the pack is digitisation. "Reasons to expect a greater drag on prices from this source include: a higher share of online sales, the rise in prevalence of these forces in services, and the potential for a variety of innovations to power stronger productivity growth," they explain.

While not wanting to nail their colours entirely to the mast, they do see "disinflationary forces from innovation" likely to exceed the -10 to -20bps drag they had previously estimated.



Matthew Luzzetti, Chief US Economist, Deutsche Bank

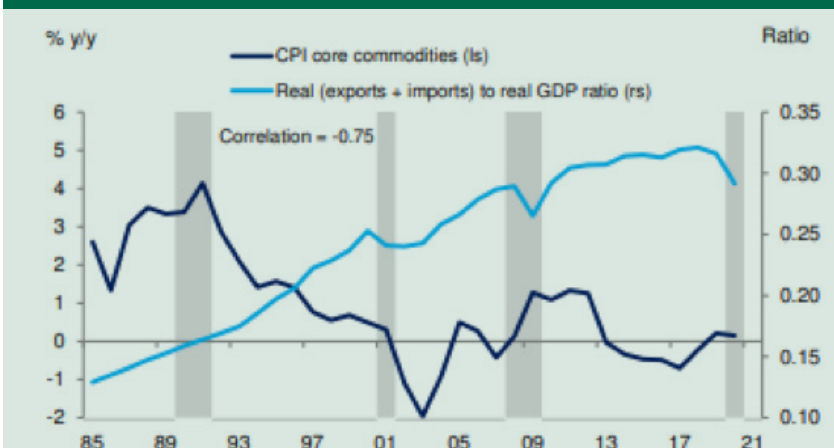
As the world gathers for COP26 in Glasgow, the impact of climate change policies on inflation cannot be ignored. But, says, Luzzetti, climate policy represents the greatest source of uncertainty – and potential for upside – to their medium-term inflation outlook. "However, with carbon taxes seemingly not under consideration for the time being, we do not see climate policy as directly driving inflation trends over the next few years," they predict. In conclusion, they make the points that with more aggressive policy responses (i.e., carbon pricing) not seeming to get traction in the near term, "assessing the inflationary effects of climate policy with any precision will have to wait until greater clarity is available on what could be actually be implemented." ■

Clarissa Dann
Editorial Director of Marketing,
Deutsche Bank Corporate Bank

Deutsche Bank



Figure 2: Trade share of GDP strongly negatively associated with core goods inflation



Source: BEA, Haver Analytics, Deutsche Bank

Alternative banking solutions for financial peace of mind:

An Interview with Jennifer Bell, Business Development Manager at Advancial Federal Credit Union

In the US, how is a credit union different than a traditional bank?

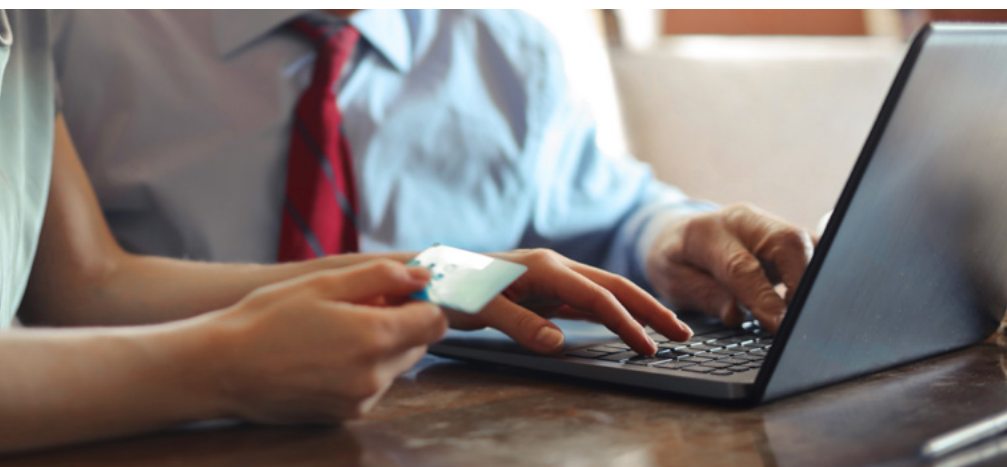
A credit union in the US operates similarly to a bank, but is very different structurally. Credit unions are not-for-profit, have a voluntary, unpaid board of directors and our owners are you – the member. As a member-owner, you're entitled to vote for the board of directors, giving you a direct say in the leadership of your financial institution. I'd say that's a huge win for everyone.

Because of our not-for-profit status, credit unions generally provide more competitive financial benefits for our members through lower loan rates, higher deposit rates and fewer fees than traditional banking institutions. The Credit Union National Association (CUNA) estimates that credit unions provided over \$14 billion in direct financial benefits to the nation's 121,989,256 members between March 2020 and March 2021. These benefits are equivalent to \$115 per member or \$242 per member household.

When choosing a financial institution it's very important to consider the differences between these types of business models and how that affects you as a consumer – especially if you're new to the United States. As a credit union, Advancial delivers these benefits and also demonstrates value to our members through our philosophy of personalized service, community involvement and innovative financial solutions that beat our peers. Everyone wants to bank with a financial partner who is working on their behalf to achieve personal financial success. You'll find that at Advancial.

How does Advancial assist organizations and individuals with their needs?

Our credit union members come from all types of organizations. Associations offer Advancial to their members as an exclusive financial perk, and employers offer Advancial as a unique employee





Jennifer Bell, Business Development Manager at Advancial Federal Credit Union

benefit. Both can be a great recruitment and retention tool. Most importantly, offering a credit union benefit is a gesture to show you care about the financial health of your members or employees.

Advancial contributes to the total financial wellbeing of our current and future members. Through education, consultations and advice, we help people choose the right solutions for their financial needs. We understand that it's not enough to offer financial products, which is why we strive to provide our members with the tools and knowledge they need.

As our economy struggles to recover, consumers are relying on their credit union to put members' financial wellbeing ahead of their bottom line. In good times and bad, credit unions



are here to help members build and maintain a brighter financial future. Many credit unions, including Advancial, offered unique assistance programs during the COVID-19 pandemic including loan modifications, small loan assistance, payment postponements and waivers, emergency savings tools and more. Aligning your organization with a resource like this is vital to improving each and every person's wellbeing so they can focus more on work-life balance.

Are there any unique offerings Advancial provides to GACC members or member companies?

Yes, we are very proud to serve the international community through our award-winning program - Inbound USA. This suite of banking products and services is designed specifically for relocating professionals who may not have a US social security number or credit history established yet. We've helped thousands of expats and localized assignees transition with ease by providing highly competitive, easily accessible and personalized banking solutions. Everything from free checking and low-rate credit cards to auto loans and mortgages.

Key Facts about Advancial

- Advancial has helped members save and earn more since 1937
- \$2 billion in assets
- 100,000+ Advancial members worldwide
- 10 Advancial branches across Alaska, Oklahoma, Louisiana and Texas, with more coming soon
- 5,600+ shared branches available nationwide
- 3.5 million free ATMs globally
- 24/7 virtual account access no matter where you live or work

How can a company work with Advancial?

Any organization is eligible for membership with Advancial. We have partnerships with organizations around the country, across industries and of varying sizes. Offering Advancial as a benefit is quick and easy - simply initiate a discussion with our team and we will begin the process to add you to our list of eligible organizations. Our service is turn-key and no-cost. Our partner-organizations offer Advancial to their members and employees in many different ways, but the mission is the same - to increase an individual's financial health through easily accessible and affordable financial products, services and education.

What's on the horizon for Advancial?

Advancial is growing together with our partner-organizations like the GACC. We are growing in market diversity as well - which is very exciting! Consumers can always look forward to new branches being built in all of our regions. We are excited for our newest expansion into the Charlotte, North Carolina metro area, with a branch coming soon! This aligns perfectly with the GACC membership. Our mobile and online technology will continue to be at the forefront of our industry along with offering new product solutions for Inbound USA and other specialized programs. We are also very focused on targeting retail businesses in our new markets so consumers have an

easier way to finance those high-ticket items like healthcare devices, home repairs and more.

Looking ahead, you'll see Advancial strengthening community relationships in the Carolinas and beyond, and we invite community and chamber members to get to know us better and learn more about what makes us special in the financial services industry. ■

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Advancial Federal Credit Union in Houston, Texas

Does your URL need SEO or CPR?

By Chris Pollok

Let's be honest. How many people really understand or know what's involved in getting your company or business name to appear as one of the top results on search engines such as Google or Bing? Do you? If you do or if you're an IT person, you may skip the rest of this article unless you're interested in learning about Website CPR (recommended).

You're happy with your website – you've had it for years. You have it updated from time to time and you're content with having your presence on the web. To you it's like having a permanent online business card or brochure. People happen to find your site, take a few glances and, if you're lucky, click on a couple pages. Voilà, a prospective client or customer may be contemplating to contact you. But, in reality, the calls or email inquiries are just not pouring in. As if they ever were! Talking to friends or colleagues or even your teenage kids you learn that the reason you may not have as many site visitors as you could is because your site is lacking, for example, effective anchor text to boost your SEO. And you go...huh, anchor text what? Upon further investigation you find out that "anchor" has nothing to do with boating, so you hire someone who does know what to do and who can guide your site to new heights. Then you sit back anxiously waiting for the promised results to roll in.

But maybe your website needs something else. Something that cannot be produced by computers, tech-savvy experts or algorithms alone. It's called creativity. Creativity originated in the human mind. Filling a void where there was nothing but a blank page before. A genuine idea. An inviting layout. Not just a laundry list of services you offer. Not just lackluster stock photos but provocative, memorable images that capture people's attention and stay with you. And copy that sells and is not dictated by the keywords your IT expert suggests must be present for the web crawlers to propel your site to a higher ranking. This may lead to a difficult choice. Either please the "robot" alias search engine or seduce the human site visitor.

One might argue that it's more important to cater to the robot since it produces more viewers.

But what if those visitors are not enticed to spend more time on your site because it's boring, predictable and laced with corporate jargon? Wouldn't it be better to have fewer visitors but more that feel compelled to contact your company because your site is engaging, interesting and evokes emotional responses which lead to real, meaningful connections?



If you feel it's about time to spruce up your site, sure, talk to an SEO coder and let him/her do their thing. But don't ignore the other option and focus your attention on equally-important aspects: arresting visuals, a layout that intrigues and crisp copy that's both informative and fun to read.

In actuality, a desirable goal is to strike the right balance between functionality and excitement. ■

HOT IDEAS NYC

Hot Ideas NYC

Creative communications: from newsletters to website development and everything in-between.

Chris Pollok is an award-winning copywriter and marketing consultant

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Interview: Crispin Teufel

CEO of Lincare Holdings Inc.

How has Lincare responded to the Delta variant and the resurgence of COVID-19?

Lincare provides critical respiratory healthcare services in the home, which has come to be an integral role throughout the pandemic as a second line of defense. We responded quickly to partner with hospitals and medical facilities at the start of the pandemic to help with capacity issues they were experiencing. So now with the Delta variant cases sadly increasing hospitalizations again, Lincare's respiratory services in the home give the appropriate

patients an option outside of hospitalization. Further, Lincare expanded a bit with our services during the pandemic for INR testing for those patients on Coumadin. Where patients would normally go to a facility for routine testing, we could provide that support in the comfort and safety of their home.

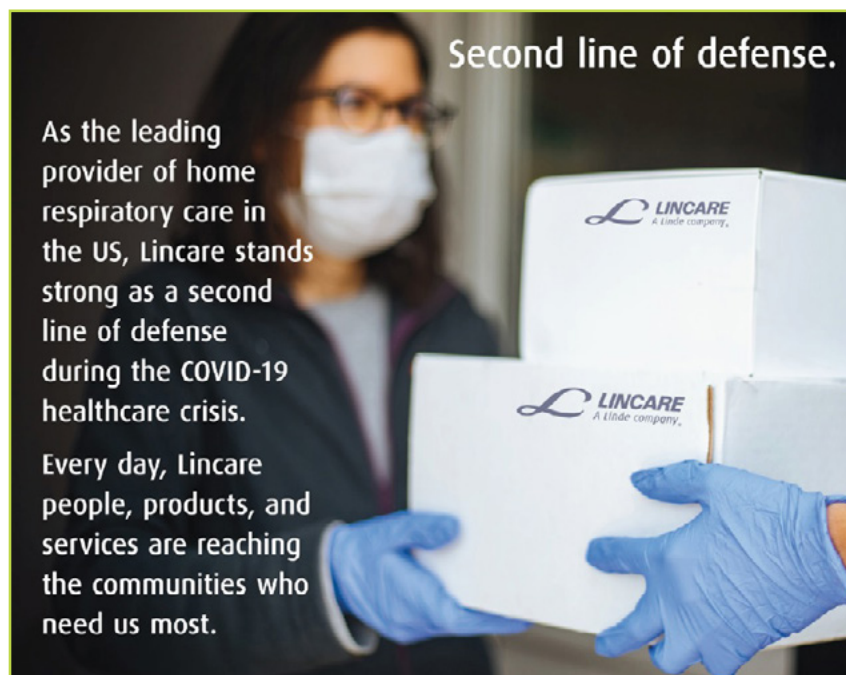
How have the German American Chambers been responding and adapting during the pandemic?

The virtual events have proven to be quite successful, both the group learning and individual 1:1s. In

fact, I think the 1:1 meetings with members have increased with the online options and provided more communication between members and the Chamber. Our Chambers have done a very nice job keeping the connections between members going throughout the pandemic and have utilized the virtual options well to maintain our outreach and to ensure cross-pollination between the Chambers. While I am happy to see some of the recent networking events that could be held safely in person, I think the comfortability and acceptance of virtual options will be quite beneficial as we go forward.

What advice would you give organizations during this time of unprecedented change?

I think it is clear that getting a vaccination is the best way to get safely through this time. The pandemic – or to be more clear, the endemic – is an ongoing worldwide issue and we should realize that all countries...all people...must work together for the common safety and good. We cannot look at our actions in isolation. Therefore, from my perspective, a high vaccination rate will best address the endemic, but continued vigilance to avoid spreading the virus through social





distancing and hand hygiene will help as well. More practically, I believe that the way we all do business will not fully return to pre-pandemic times and therefore we should all find the right hybrid environment for our organizations on how to do business in times of an endemic that will stay for a while with us.

What are business lessons learned during the pandemic, especially for healthcare organizations?

At the end, there have been some things we have learned through this challenging time that we can carry forward. Personally, I have realized further how important our time is outside the office, and I think both employers and employees have seen that there can be a better work/life balance with some flexibility to work remotely. Healthcare organizations do not have as much luxury for many employees to work remotely, but flexibility in schedules should also be considered.

If you could spend an afternoon doing one activity, not work related, what would it be?

My family and I are enjoying the outdoors by visiting US national



*Crispin Teufel,
CEO of Lincare Holdings Inc.*

parks. I think we have been to over 20 throughout the US by now and counting. The country has such diverse landscapes to see. Personally, I most enjoy any of the parks out west. This provides for a good alternative to life in Florida where we for sure miss the mountains near Munich. ■

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Crispin Teufel

Crispin Teufel is a seasoned, international executive leader with deep knowledge and expertise in finance and reporting. With nearly two decades of progressively responsible experience in Germany and the US, Teufel assumed the role of CEO of Lincare Holdings Inc., the leading US provider of respiratory therapy services for patients in the home, in July 2017.

Teufel joined Lincare in 2013; he was named CFO and relocated to the company headquarters in Clearwater, Florida, after serving as Finance Director for Linde Engineering in Germany from 2011-2013. Prior, Teufel was Head of the IFRS Competence Center and External Reporting at Linde's Munich headquarters. He began his career with financial roles at PWC and Arthur Andersen.

A graduate of Ruhr-University in Bochum, Germany, Teufel is a licensed Certified Public Accountant and German Tax Advisor.

Teufel currently is the Chairman of the Board of the Council for Quality Respiratory Care (CQRC) and Chairman of the Board for the German American Chambers of Commerce (GACCs), including Chairman for the GACC South. Additionally, he serves on the Board of Directors with Bellerophon Therapeutics Inc. He served on the IFRS (International Financial Reporting Standards) Accounting Standards Committee of Germany from 2011-2013.

Teufel resides in the St. Petersburg/Clearwater area with his wife and two children.

"Working with GACC Midwest's marketing experts to create a US LinkedIn page allowed us to zero in on our target groups, refine our messaging, and grow our online audience. GACC Midwest's team was professional, knowledgeable, and able to easily navigate the challenges of intercultural marketing. We recommend GACC Midwest's marketing & localization services to any German company looking to grow their brand in the US market."

**Robert Oberhollenzer,
Marketing Manager,
American Progress
Group**



LinkedIn 101:

How to Drive Digital Growth for Your Company in the US

By Elizabeth Czapski, GACC Midwest

Once your German company is established in the US market, the question emerges: How can you spread the word about your products and services? Digital marketing is king, and without an online presence it becomes extremely difficult to build a customer base in the US. Creating a LinkedIn company profile is an ideal first step. As one of the most effective platforms for growing your company's brand awareness and making important industry connections, LinkedIn serves as your gateway to a vast network of potential customers, partners, and multipliers.

Why LinkedIn?

LinkedIn is the largest professional network in the world, with over 750 million members globally—a quarter of whom are located in the US—and is rated number one in B2B lead generation. In addition, four out of five LinkedIn members are decision makers in their companies. Those numbers add up to great potential for your US subsidiary. Once you have established a LinkedIn company page, you can start connecting with others in your industry in a multitude of ways. Organic posts show off your content to your followers and the general LinkedIn audience, while paid

marketing campaigns allow you to hone in on hyper-specific target audiences, leading to engagement no matter how niche your products are. Industry-specific LinkedIn groups provide a space for networking with others in the market, and LinkedIn's job board supports you in your recruiting efforts.

Implementing a US-Focused Marketing Strategy

Not only is it important to create a LinkedIn page for your company, but it is essential to adjust your marketing strategy to fit a US audience. Digital marketing tactics that are effective in Germany may not work as well in the US. Without this step, your LinkedIn page will likely not gain traction among the specific US audience you are looking to reach.

One first step that is essential for LinkedIn success in the US is to have a native (American) English speaker write your posts. It's easy for US LinkedIn users to tell when content is written by a non-native speaker, and they may perceive that company as being less familiar with the US market. Native speakers can more easily match the language and tone that US customers are attracted to—namely a more informal, upbeat,

and friendly approach to sharing information.

Another important tip for posting on LinkedIn is to post at least once a week. Pages that post less receive less traffic and fewer followers. Having a consistent posting schedule makes it easier for users to find your company page and for you to build your brand on LinkedIn. If you post too infrequently, users will perceive your page as inactive and may not want to engage with your content. Plus, fewer posts mean less information about your company on your LinkedIn page, and more information helps users to learn more about your company and whether or not they want to contact you.

Finally, LinkedIn posts should always include a photo, infographic, or visual of some kind. Photos with people in them perform the best on LinkedIn, especially if they are real photos of your products or employees, not stock photos. US users find posts with visuals more eye-catching and will be more likely to interact with these posts. Infographics provide information in a creative, visually appealing way and can be a great option for detailing the benefits of your products and services with statistics and other numbers. Including videos with your posts also drives engagement.

Collaboration with US Marketing Partners

In order to start on a successful path in LinkedIn marketing in the US, German companies often turn to expert partners such as marketing agencies for support. Some companies have already been in the US for



When working with outside marketing support, it's important to clearly establish your US marketing guidelines.

many years and are interested in rebranding, while others are just entering the market and want to establish their US presence on LinkedIn but might not have the capacity on their team to manage such a project. Expert marketing partners can also ensure companies are utilizing all of the available features LinkedIn has to offer. When working with outside support, it's important to clearly establish your US marketing goals as well as a timeline, target audience, and content/corporate identity guidelines. Additional research such as analysis of competitors' LinkedIn pages may also provide useful information.

LinkedIn is the top social media platform for building a professional presence in your target industry and generating leads for your German subsidiary in the US. This is most effective with an approach

designed to attract US customers specifically. Underlining the importance of LinkedIn as a marketing tool, GACC Midwest provides support in creating and managing LinkedIn pages and their content for US subsidiaries of German companies. The response from client companies has been overwhelmingly positive, with multiple companies mentioning the time and stress it saves them to outsource their US LinkedIn marketing. ■

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USA prepares funding for hydrogen projects

By Ullrich Umann, GTAI

Infrastructure package includes hydropower

The US infrastructure package provides \$8 billion in funding for the hydrogen economy. As a result, four regional clusters are to be created. The hydrogen power aspects of the infrastructure package put forth in Congress should be spared any additional changes. Especially since three members of Congress have introduced a bipartisan bill titled "Clean Hydrogen Energy Act," which cemented the points on hydrogen contained in the infrastructure package.

The largest natural gas reserves in the United States are concentrated in two of the four future hydrogen

clusters. The production of blue hydrogen is therefore preprogrammed. Even energy sources such as coal and nuclear power are suggested for the production of hydrogen. Congressmen from constituencies where coal mines and nuclear power plants are located could thus approve the package without incurring the ire of their voters.

Electrolysis processes are optimized

In addition, the infrastructure package provides funding of US \$1 billion to optimize hydrogen electrolysis. The US subsidiary of Siemens Energy is heavily involved in this area.

Since the energy experts at BloombergNEF foresee falling costs for electrolysis in concrete terms, but also for energy generation from renewable sources in general, green hydrogen is likely to gain price advantages over blue hydrogen over time. This is currently not the case.

It is precisely for this reason that the British gas supplier National Grid, which is active in the USA, is working with Stony Brook University and the State of New York to find ways to integrate green hydrogen into existing natural gas networks, initially as an admixture.

In its report "Roadmap to a US Hydrogen Economy," the industry

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association FCHEA (Fuel Cell and Hydrogen Energy Association) assumes that hydrogen will hold 14 percent of the energy mix in 2050, if the US economy is to be completely climate-neutral.

This forecast is supported by McKinsey and the Hydrogen Council, an industrial association founded in 2017 consisting of 92 companies, including industry giants such as BP and Shell.

In addition to electricity generation, air conditioning in buildings and fuel cells, the areas of application for hydrogen will in the future also include industrial high-temperature processes (e.g. steel production) and fertilizer production. Both areas are currently still heavily dependent on the combustion of natural gas, and in some cases, even on coking coal.

USA has some catching up to do

In a global comparison, however, the USA lags behind China, Japan and the European Union in terms of infrastructure and research investments in the field of hydrogen power. There isn't even a national hydrogen strategy in the United States.

Government and industrial investments in hydrogen as an energy source in Asia and the European Union amount to up to US \$2 billion per year, while the DOE (US Depart-

ment of Energy) has received between US \$100 million and US \$280 million over the past ten years each year for the research and development of hydrogen technologies.

Fuel cell has high growth potential

Nevertheless, there are already 25,000 fuel cell forklifts in use in the USA. Fuel cells also provide an emergency power supply in data centers. In general, they offer great potential for growth.

The number of appropriately equipped vehicles on American roads is expected to increase to 1.2 million by 2030. At the same time, the number of hydrogen filling stations would grow from 100 to 4,300.

The largest operator of hydrogen filling stations is Plug Power. Shell has already reacted to this development and is also building hydrogen filling stations, including in Los Angeles.

Industrial gas company Air Liquide is investing US\$ 150 million to build a liquid hydrogen plant in Nevada that can supply fuel for 40,000 fuel cell vehicles.

So far, Toyota Motor North America Inc. and engine manufacturer Cummins Inc. have excelled at developing and constructing vehicles with fuel cells in the USA. ■

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The number of appropriately equipped vehicles on American roads is expected to increase to 1.2 million by 2030.

More information:

For further details in this report, please visit

>> <https://www.gtai.de/gtai-de/trade/branchen/branchenbericht/usa/usa-bereitet-foerderung-von-wasserstoff-projekten-vor-688194>

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NEWS FROM INSIDE THE BELTWAY

Developments in Biden's Build Back Better Plan

By Viola Meyerweissflog & Jayne Peters, Delegation of German Industry and Commerce in Washington, DC

President Joe Biden has been busy balancing both domestic and foreign policy objectives this fall. The President's ambitious Build Back Better Plan (BBB), 1/3 of the way approved earlier this year with the American Rescue Plan, has been slowly developing as foreign policy issues, including the Afghanistan withdrawal this year, have taken priority. Undoubtedly, however, one of his latest developments this fall serves German businesses in the United States a great benefit: a lift on all travel restrictions for fully vaccinated incoming non-citizens non-immigrants starting November 8. With this in mind, German companies interested in investing in the US-market should consider the latest developments regarding Biden's Build Back Better agenda.

Biden's Build Back Better Plan is

broken up into three parts: (1) the American Rescue Plan (ARP; signed into law March 11, 2021), (2) the American Jobs Plan (AJP), and (3) the American Families Plan. Perhaps the most critical of these plans for German companies is the American Jobs Plan, focused on infrastructure development and job creation.

Biden Needs Congress

Biden's American Jobs Plan is twofold. The \$1.2 trillion bipartisan infrastructure plan, which was already passed by the Senate, focuses on kickstarting the economy as it recovers from the pandemic, creating more jobs, and enhancing the United States' competitiveness for a more sustainable economy. Ongoing debates persist within Congress, but agreements may not be reached until the end of this year, which is the bill's official deadline.

On the other hand, the reconciliation bill, which would augment the budget reconciliation process for the United States, lends special attention to education, childcare, healthcare, and climate. So far, Democrats have agreed for the reconciliation bill to total \$1.75 trillion. Despite general willingness to invest in America's infrastructure, disagreements on Capitol Hill over the reconciliation bill have caused intense discussions, especially with regard to the final price tag and topics such as renewable energy funding, Medicare, and taxation.

Higher Taxes to Pay for BBB

Labor and environmental groups applaud the Biden Administration's objectives of BBB. The US Chamber of Commerce highlights infrastructure investment as "an investment in the future [which] should be paid for





Delegation of German Industry and Commerce in Washington, DC

Delegation der Deutschen Wirtschaft in Washington, DC

overtime – say 30 years.” Biden’s plan, however, anticipates a 15 year pay off period if passed alongside his Made in America Tax Plan, which, among other proposals, focuses on raising corporate tax. The President will have to face the critics who fear that the tax increase for corporations (rising from 21% to 28%) will serve as an obstacle to advancing the US economy, especially amid COVID-19 economic impacts. According to the White House, the American Jobs Plan promises that “investments also will extend opportunities to small businesses to participate in the design, construction, and manufacturing of new infrastructure and component parts.”

Workforce Development

Also captured within his agenda, President Biden is pushing for greater funding towards workforce development and apprenticeships. His American Jobs Plan emphasizes the need to “revitalize manufacturing, secure U.S. supply chains, invest in R&D, and train Americans for the jobs of the future.” These remarks echo the main objective of the German Apprenticeship model, which is mirrored within our German American Chambers of Commerce Apprenticeship programs. President Biden advocated for the apprenticeship model with a visit to one of these programs at the ICATT Network College, McHenry County College, in July where he expressed his hope to

invest more in apprenticeship-related fields like manufacturing and information technology.

Climate and Energy

Climate and energy issues remain at the forefront of Biden’s agenda. At the time of writing, Democrats are renegotiating energy components of the reconciliation bill to best represent the three-prong energy approach: tax incentives for wind, solar, and other clean energy; instilling strict rules on curbing emissions from power plants and cars; and pushing for states to institute clean energy laws. This ambition is also reflected in the Biden Administration’s international efforts, such as the announcement of the US-Germany Climate and Energy Partnership. The partnership will focus on climate action, transformational energy technologies, and energy transitions in emerging economies.

As the President continues to work through his agenda over the coming years, it is evident that Germany and the United States share a vision of a sustainable and prosperous economic future. This continued partnership ahead will benefit companies on both sides of the Atlantic. ■

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What's the best approach to achieve the end result?

By John Otto Magee

Processes govern the inner workings of a company. They describe how the work should be done. Those who have the say about processes, have the say about the work. Good. But Americans and Germans see processes differently.

Success Factor

German Approach

If surveyed Germans would rank internal processes – how the work is done – just after people as the most critical factor to the success of any company. At times, however, it can appear that people are asked to serve processes more than processes are asked to serve people.

American Approach

If surveyed, Americans most likely would not even mention processes as critical to a company's success. Instead, they would name factors such as customer orientation, innovation, rapid reaction time, pricing and

financial engineering. More relevant than how the work is done is what the concrete results are.

German View

Americans can appear disinterested or unaware of the central importance of processes. Especially in times of crisis, when their German colleagues focus on organizational structure and processes, their American colleagues do not engage in the internal discussion and analysis.

American View

From the American point of view German internal analysis of processes quickly leads to a form of navel-gazing. The longer and more intense the analysis the faster and further the company distances itself from the external world: from customers, competitors and the market.

Advice to Germans

Analysis of how the work is done is important. But be sure to focus on the cause and

effect relationship with the results for your external customers. Engage your American colleagues by starting with your customers, then working back into your organization to its internal processes.

Advice to Americans

Be patient. Listen carefully. When Germans talk processes, they're talking output, and therefore the business bottom-line. From their perspective they are one and the same. At their core Germans are European craftsmen. Success is based on craftsmanship. It's all about how the work is done. Get engaged in the discussion about processes. Then add your pragmatic American approach.

Deductive vs. Inductive

German Approach

Deductive thinking is inference. The conclusion about particulars follows necessarily from general or universal premises. German processes and procedures are arrived at deductively, based on standards and norms, which provide guidance on how to do the work.



American Approach

Inductive thinking is also inference. It is a generalized conclusion based on particular instances. American processes and procedures are arrived at inductively, based on experience, which provides guidance on how to do the work.

German View

From the German perspective Americans don't gain sufficient distance from the details of their work in order to recognize certain patterns. The foundation is not there for process optimization, an analysis of what is and is not working. Abstraction is required.

American View

From the American perspective German processes are developed in a vacuum, are theoretical, too far removed from everyday business. Deduced from principles (standards and norms) they can have a one-size-fits-all character, not taking into account the particulars of the US market, of American customers.

Advice to Germans

Explain your standards and norms, and how you arrived at them, your data and methodology. Most importantly, engage in a dialogue with your American colleagues about when the processes can be adapted to the situation on the ground. Strive to understand the impact of processes on their reality.

Advice to Americans

Don't sit just back and criticize German processes. Step into their process laboratory. Gain distance from the details of what you do. Get abstract. Search out the deeper-lying principles governing how you do the work. Engage in the discussion of when to deduce from the principle,

when to induce from the particular.

Guaranty vs. Tool

German Approach

For Germans the goal and the path to that goal are almost indistinguishable. The product, and the processes which lead to the product, are two sides of the same coin. A work result – an output or literally a product or service – is only as good as the processes which led to it.

American Approach

For Americans processes are tools, a means to an end. Processes assist, support, enable people to organize their work and their interaction. Processes cannot, and should not, replace human judgement.

German View

To Germans the American processes often appear to be a series of to-do lists. Like cooking recipes, no more than tools, a helper's helper. The potential of well-defined processes is either misunderstood, underrated or misused.

American View

To Americans the Germans attempt to solve all problems via processes. They misunderstand their limits. Many aspects of a complex business are difficult to objectify, to make abstract, to force into a process. Constant incremental modification of processes often does more harm than good. Its added value is questionable.

Advice to Germans

Naturally the question of how the work is done is important. But don't overstress it. Together with your American colleagues identify those aspects of your work which are best understood and managed via processes. Other areas, due to their complexity and deeply human nature-leader-

About the Author:



John Otto Magee has lived and worked in Germany 25+ years, consulting for many well-known German brands as well as governmental organizations. He is an expert in explaining the differences in how Americans and Germans think and work. Visit his website [Understand-Culture](http://www.understand-culture.com) to learn more on how to effectively navigate German-American workplace interaction.

>> www.understand-culture.com

ship, customer interaction, innovative thinking-will only be frustrated, limited, hemmed in by forcing a process on them.

Advice to Americans

Join your German colleagues in the discussion recommended above. Explain to them when you rely on processes and when they are of only limited value. Describe how Americans use processes as a tool to achieve results. Also, explain to your colleagues the very practical and pragmatic role of checklists.

Discipline vs. Deviation

German Approach

Processes are most effective when they maintain a balance between conformity and flexibility. Germans prefer generally formulated processes

allowing for interpretation based on the parameters of a specific situation. Judgement calls are driven by training and experience.

American Approach

Like their Germans colleagues Americans seek that fine line between process discipline and flexibility. The moment a process step makes unnecessary – no added value – demands, Americans will consider deviation. Judgement calls are made via internal communication within the team and with next level management.

German View

When and why Americans adhere strictly to a process versus when they deviate, appears arbitrary, remains a mystery to Germans. It can be a source of irritation. Because the Germans construct complicated and interconnected processes, it is critical to be informed early about deviations.

American View

And it's the same for the Americans: When and why Germans adhere strictly to a process versus when they deviate, appears arbitrary, remains a mystery to the Americans. It can be a source of irritation. And although many Germans processes are formulated in only very general, often theoretical language, they seem to expect strict adherence to them.

Advice to Germans and Americans

Get together. Address those processes which are key to your success. Identify their key gates or checkpoints. Discuss, understand, then if possible decide when specific process steps must be followed strictly versus when they can be interpreted.

Also, agree on how you will inform yourselves of these choices. Life is

fluid. The business world is fluid. Your internal processes need to be fluid. Be prepared to discuss on a regular basis so that you remain fluid in your collaboration.

Process as Power

German Approach

If processes and procedures make up the manual governing the inner workings of a company, whoever writes that manual determines how the work is done. This is especially the case in industrial sectors where processes are essential to the development, manufacturing and installation of complex products and systems. Because Germans are strongly product oriented, they instinctively strive to have the say about internal processes.

American Approach

Because Americans are less inclined to view processes and procedures as making up the manual governing the inner workings of a company, the writing of those rules is rarely the forum where battles over power and influence take place.

Americans believe that all activities should be oriented on the conditions of the market and on the needs of customers. In the US business context those driven by power and influence strive to have the say about access to and analysis of the market and customers.

German View

The more that success is based on the product itself, the less important are the disciplines sales and marketing. Americans don't understand the primacy of product. Germans, therefore, are less concerned about Americans having the say in sales and marketing.

American View

The more that success is based on the



relationship with the customer, the less important are the disciplines development and manufacturing. Germans don't understand the primacy of market orientation. Americans, therefore, are less concerned about Germans having the say in development and manufacturing.

Advice to Germans

You Germans and Americans are colleagues. Get out of the power and influence game. If processes are crucial to success, convince your American colleagues to remain involved. Don't make the mistake of creating processes without total transparency and involvement of your US colleagues.

Otherwise you'll produce German processes which don't work in the US. Your American colleagues will not implement them and make convincing arguments to upper management why. You'll lose that battle. And it will be painful.

Advice to Americans

Whether you think it important or not, get engaged in the internal discussions about processes. To prevent it from devolving into a power struggle, demand full representation, full transparency and full accountability. While involved, avoid being drawn into skirmishes.

Focus, and keep your German colleagues focused, exclusively on those processes which improve performance and the bottom-line. At the same time, get your German colleagues involved in your strategic thinking about how you go to market. Give up some of that power. ■

J-1 interns begin entering the US again after travel restrictions lifted

By Cindy Klarwasser, GACC

Before they could start their assignments as interns in the US, Lukas Kuegler, Hannah Horcher and Tim Tewes had to undergo the arduous task of obtaining their DS-2019s and J-1 Visas to enter the country. For a while it was unclear whether they would receive an NIE (National Interest Exception), which would allow them to enter from the Schengen area while the US Presidential Proclamation 10143 travel ban was still in effect. Fortunately, it all worked out for our J-1 trio, and they eventually made it to the US.

They enjoyed a quick stop in NYC this past September to experience the Big Apple, including a visit to the GACC NY office in downtown Manhattan. After that, they headed to South Carolina, where they are now interns at BMW Manufacturing in Greenville.

For more than 18 months the GACC NY Careers & Education team was unable to welcome J-1 Exchange Visitors to the US, so we are now extremely delighted to see international exchanges return on a bigger scale and borders reopening for travel. The recent announcements for lifting travel to the US will make it much easier for exchange visitors from Europe to enter the US and

start their internships here.

We wish Lukas, Tim, Hannah and all other program participants a productive and enjoyable time in the US now that the travel restrictions have been lifted. ■

The recent announcements for lifting travel to the US will make it much easier for exchange visitors from Europe to enter the US and start their internships.



Dr. Schar expands New Jersey facility to meet US market demands

By Matthew Allen, GACC

Ten years ago on September 10th, Dr. Schar added another chapter to the company's history when eight employees, shovels in hand, broke ground on a New Jersey gluten-free bread production site. On the anniversary of that date, this past September Dr. Schar again broke ground on an exciting new expansion that will support its ability to meet robust growth and demand.

This strong and continuing development has resulted in the company outgrowing its capacity. The new 42,000 sq ft building addition will allow the company to expand production to meet the growing demand for their high-quality gluten-free products.



At this year's ceremony, CEO Hannes Berger shared that Dr. Schar, a European-American producer of fine gluten-free snacks and breads, has grown over the past decade to 115 US employees, including their mechatronics apprentice, who is training to the German dual-education standard under the sponsorship of the German American Chamber of

Commerce. Today, Dr. Schar's products are available in major grocery chains all across the country.

Thanks to the vision of Plant Manager, Simon Steckholzer (pictured), the new facility will include a vegetable garden in the back and carefully-designed windows to bring in natural light for a bright and

productive interior environment.

The new wing is scheduled for completion next year, when the official ribbon cutting will kick off the expanded production.

Congratulations to Dr. Schar on the success of their great products being so well received in the US! ■



Simon Steckholzer, far left



Hannes Berger



Transatlantic Ruhr Fellowship program forges ahead despite pandemic challenges

By Cindy Klarwasser, GACC

In light of the ongoing pandemic, the Transatlantic Ruhr Fellowship was required to once again go virtual this year, but the program was, nonetheless, as successful and purposeful as ever.

Ten Ruhr Fellows participated in the three-week program this past summer (August), from various academic backgrounds such as water science, philosophy & political science, law and cultural studies; the most diverse group the GACC NY has ever worked with.

The two-week program was filled with many inspirational speakers who are steadfast supporters of the GACC NY. Among them were: Felix Zeltner (RemoteDaily), Jan Roessner (One EarthRising), Viola Meyerweissflog (AHK Washington) and Robert Napoli (Hapday Group). Each speaker shared insights into his or her own career path and offered valuable advice for our fellows' future.

Mirja Hoffmann and Samira Allen, recruiters from BMW Group, and Mary-Jane Goodson from Mercedes Benz USA, offered our Ruhr Fellow students practical career advice, including how to make their applications stand out in the big pile of applicants that these two major global players regularly receive.

One of the program's highlights was a Zoom cooking competition, which served as an effective and fun team-building exercise. Students were divided into three teams: California Street Food, Cajun Southern Cuisine and Hawaiian Deliciousness. Teams cooked together in person in Germany and virtually via Zoom from other locations. It proved to be a close race!

We are very excited for the next Transatlantic Ruhr Fellowship 2022, which will be - fingers crossed - in-person and in New York again! ■



Students in the Zoom cooking event competed in one of three teams: California Street Food, Cajun Southern Cuisine and Hawaiian Deliciousness.

Event planning, branding rely even more on technology to remain innovative

Creating engaging, unique and entertaining branding events has become increasingly challenging for both corporate and non-profit organizations these days. The stakes to impress clients and member have become exceedingly high.

The GAT magazine recently spoke with one of our new members, Satis&fy, on how this one-stop, global branding company uses cutting-edge technology along with a big dose of energy and creativity to develop some amazing branding experiences.

GAT: Satis&fy has been providing branding experiences since 1993. Can you briefly tell us how the company got started?

Satis&fy: Our founders were aspiring rock musicians. They were looking for the latest theatrical lighting gear to give their touring stage presence a “wow!” factor. When they were unable to find the lights to

rent, they decided to purchase these lights themselves. After their tour, friends in other bands wanted to use the lights. From these modest, yet “Rock-And-Roll!” roots, SATIS&FY grew quickly. Since those early days, we have acquired millions of dollars in the latest gear for event technology, added experts in all fields of Live Entertainment and Event production and added offices across the world. Today we produce high-design, technologically-rich event environments for the world’s greatest brands. Our success is grounded in creativity, hard work, top-notch client service and the latest event technology. Our success is also thanks to our founders being better event producers than rock stars!



SATIS&FY

GAT: When did the company open its NYC office?

Satis&fy: We opened that office in 2015. From Berlin to Los Angeles and Amsterdam to New York, our network of 10 branch locations has built a reputation for delivering unforgettable events.

GAT: What are the challenges and differences in creating events for a German/European audience/business versus and American audience/business?

Satis&fy: The main differences in working in the USA vs. Europe comes down to higher labor costs, union labor restrictions and the

distance between major cities in the USA. Shipping and labor costs are a much bigger driver of costs in the USA than Europe, which warrant careful planning when producing an effective event in the USA.

GAT: What are the core branding services you provide?

Satis&fy: Event concept, environmental design and attendee experience design are all part of our creative offering and a critical extension of our clients' branding. While we don't offer total rebranding services for clients, we often are designing elements for clients in 3D for the first time. Many brands activate their brands on the web, social media and other 2D media, but we

work with many companies who are new to marketing in 3D and who need a specialized partner who can creatively interpret their branding in this important and increasingly popular medium.

GAT: What sets you apart from other event creators?

Satis&fy: There are many A/V equipment companies and there are many fabricators who build structures for events. SATIS&FY is unique in that we seamlessly integrate and blend these two worlds into a cohesive whole. Bring our international reach, massive inventory and quintessentially German way of solving challenges and we are a cut above.



GAT: Do you incorporate digital technologies such as AI or VR into any of your event models?

Satis&fy: Yes, of course. Emerging technologies have always played an important part of the work we do. Intelligent, informed utilization of technology is important. Perhaps more important is answering the question “Are the selected technologies enhancing the attendee experience, or creating a distraction or gimmick?” The addition of any tech to our projects must first answer to the client’s measure of success for the event. If the technology positively affects those KPI, it has a place in the project. If the technology cannot prove itself on these terms, it is removed.

GAT: What are some of the challenges you’re having because of the pandemic?

Satis&fy: Our business and the passion of our teams is to create memorable experiences for people, largely by bringing groups together in a shared experience. When governments across the globe (rightly so) forbid people gathering together, our business was impacted in a dramatic



Monika Zalewski

way. Now that groups are starting to gather again, the challenge for our industry is securing sufficient staff to execute projects confidently – as many industry veterans left the business for other work during the pandemic. SATIS&FY retained one of the largest teams through the pandemic and we are well-positioned to succeed. We have recruited and onboarded many new team members in the last 12 months, and we are bullish on the future for the company.

GAT: Do you think branding events will drastically change because of the pandemic? How so?

Satis&fy: Attendance is down at many events, but the quality of the attendees has actually gone up. As non-essential travel has been canceled, our clients find they have more time to devote each attendee and that those attendees have a much higher likelihood to purchase than before.



Martin Zirkel

Certainly, safety protocols for events will never be the same for events. From handshakes to sanitation many behaviors have been altered. We are excited about a wave of evolution for registration, lead capture, information transfer and analytics at events that the pandemic has pushed forward by leaps and bounds. So, not all impacts to our industry have been negative! ■

SATIS&FY

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Hazel Wolf Coordinator, Marketing & Communications, GACC Midwest

What is your role at GACC Midwest?

As a Marketing Coordinator, I am responsible for co-managing communications and other marketing aspects of GACC Midwest. This includes our annual publications, website management, sponsorship services, and offering cross-departmental support on a variety of projects.

What do you like the most about your job?

The work environment and team dynamics at GACC Midwest are something that I really appreciate. This in turn influences my work and allows me to enjoy what I do. Currently, I'm excited about modernizing and redesigning our annual publications. With a very creative background, I am happy that my position allows me to explore new things while interacting with a diverse network.

What are you working on?

Any upcoming projects?

I am currently wrapping up our HR & Recruiting Brochure, which focuses on the War for Talent in a post-pandemic workplace and how companies can adapt to emerging work trends. I am also in the process of starting outreach and the design of our annual Midwest Report, which showcases the accomplishments of our member network and success stories during this past year. Along with these, I am leading marketing efforts for our annual German American Business Awards as well as our Apprenticeship Networks department and their new Apprenticeship Program and Awards Ceremony in November. I'm really excited to see these publications and projects come to fruition in the upcoming months! ■

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Welcome, New Members!

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