

# 100 Years of Rauschert Steinbach

The Rauschert Group of companies is an independent, owner-managed company and has been in existence since 1898. Worldwide some 1300 employees work at twelve production sites and nine additional sales locations. In Germany, Rauschert operates production sites at Heinersdorf-Pressig, Steinbach am Wald, Kloster Veilsdorf, Oberbettingen and Hermsdorf. Foreign sites are located in Poland, the Czech Republic, Portugal, Italy, Mexico, China and India.

The product portfolio of the Rauschert Group comprises business lines for technical ceramics, plastic moulded parts, functional components, ignition systems and heating elements, engineering and energy. The materials array in ceramics ranges from components made of alumina, magnesia and zirconia, silicon nitride, cordierite, steatite and porcelain to ceramic coatings. Rauschert supplies especially the machine and equipment engineering, as well as the textile and electrical industries. Key product groups include textile ceramics such as thread guides, pump components, machine engineering ceramics, high-temperature ceramics, electroceramics and ignition systems.

On 5 July 2014 Rauschert celebrated the 100<sup>th</sup> company anniversary at its Steinbach site. Besides technical ceramics, since 1984 Rauschert Steinbach has produced there highly complex plastic moulded parts primarily for the automotive industry as well as since the 1990s ignition components for gas, oil and solid fuel burners. For ignition systems, Rauschert is now world market leader in the heating sector. The anniversary was celebrated as an open day with over 1000 guests. Roland P. Rauschert (RPR), Managing Partner of the Rauschert Group, gave us an insight into the technology company with special focus on the activities at the Steinbach site.

**CA:** What percentage of sales do the technical ceramics, plastic moulded parts and functional components lines make up in the Rauschert Group?

**RPR:** In the Rauschert Group, we generate 50 % sales with technical ceramics, followed by plastic moulded parts and functional components each with 20 %, the rest divided between the other activities.

**CA:** How is the Steinbach plant positioned in the group with regard to technical competence (technical ceramics, plastic moulded parts, ignition components) and sales share?

**RPR:** The Steinbach plant contributes a quarter of the group's turnover. Historically, it used to be a straight ceramics production facility.

When in the late 1980s we suffered setbacks faced by competition from low-wage countries, fortunately the order books for our plastics plant in Oberbettingen in the Eifel region were so full that the freed-up production capacity became urgently needed, following corresponding investment to move the production facilities. We have been able to further develop our competence at this site.

The first extension of the plastics production in 1990 was followed in by the second phase in 1995. A third phase came in the year 2006. Last year, a large facility was built for plastic injection moulding. In the meantime, the plastics segment contributes around 35 % to sales from the Steinbach site.

But we haven't neglected to invest in technical ceramics.

Very important was the creation of a new firing facility in 2011, where state-of-the-art, energy-efficient equipment with high manufacturing flexibility has been installed. The firing installations are also state-of-the-art in respect of the environmental impact. In recent years we have pushed ahead some investment projects so as to realize them before the end of the regional economic development scheme.

**CA:** How has the number of employees in Steinbach developed in recent years? What problems did the biggest growth bring?

**RPR:** In 1990, following the shift of plastics operations from Oberbettingen, we had 110 employees in Steinbach, today



Fig. 1  
Roland P. Rauschert (RPR),  
Managing Partner of the Rauschert Group



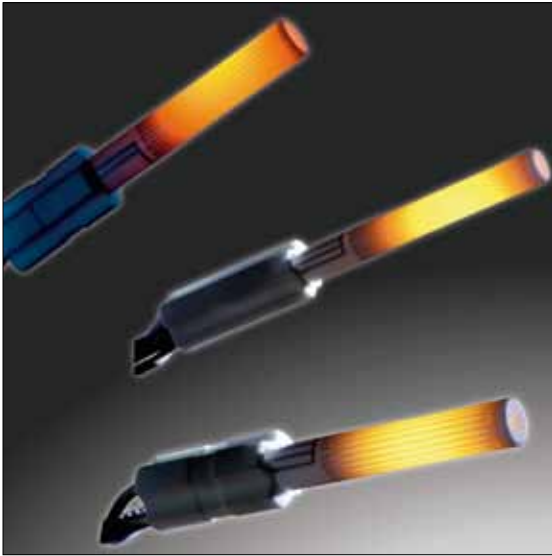


Fig. 4  
High-temperature heaters



Fig. 5  
Ignition systems and flame sensors

**RPR:** They are very different. Amongst other things, our customers called for us to follow them abroad so as to supply them from local facilities. The positioning of facilities directly in the sales markets was another motivation.

But the utilization of low-wage countries as an extended workbench is also an important aspect to cost-efficiently manufacture certain products. Geographically we try to maintain an as wide a base as possible so as to better offset market fluctuations. We are currently stepping up our activities in the USA. These include a cooperation agreement for the development and sale of ceramic products for the US-American market with the company Calix Ceramic Solutions in Clarence/NY.

**CA:** What are the most important aspects for the successful further development of your business activities?

**RPR:** The systematic further development from component manufacturer to system supplier is our strategic goal. With our extensive range of materials in technical ceramics and plastic moulded parts and a wide range of shaping methods, we offer users great potential in innovation for the development of new assemblies and functional components. In cooperation with Fraunhofer and university institutes, materials, joining and production processes are constantly further developed.

**CA:** Thank you for talking to us.

KS



Fig. 6  
Advanced ceramic products from Rauschert

[www.ceramic-applications.com](http://www.ceramic-applications.com)