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Press release

Carbox recognised as top innovator

Lothar Späth grants the Bremen automobile component supplier, with production plant in Achim, the “Top 100” quality seal for its outstanding innovation management.

***Bremen/Achim* – Carbox GmbH & Co. KG is one of the top 100 most innovative companies among small and medium-sized businesses in Germany. That is what the latest study has shown as part of the “Top 100” nationwide, cross-sector company comparison. The small-medium enterprise was impressive in the 17th round of the reputable economic initiative with a customised innovation management system. Lothar Späth, retired Premier of the state of Baden-Württemberg, will be conferring the coveted “Top 100” quality seal this Friday evening at a ceremony in the Petersberg Guesthouse in Königswinter.**

Bremen company Carbox GmbH & Co. KG, with its production plant in Achim, manufactures boxes for car boots – as the vehicle manufacturer’s original accessory or as a Carbox trademark product for specialised trade. With its 30 staff, the company focuses consistently on new developments. Stefan Bellinger – third-generation managing director – personally attends to innovations. The learned businessman always makes sure innovations are not only technically feasible, but also economically sensible. “Many good engineers have gone broke and disappeared from the market; that rarely happens to good businesspeople,” is his motto. Bellinger intensively discusses upcoming new developments every week with the plant manager and sales managers for the areas of “Trade” and “OEM/automobile industry”. At these innovation meetings, technical issues are raised, milestones set and checked, and innovative ideas questioned in terms of their economic benefit. When formulating and realising new ideas, Carbox consistently focuses on co-operation. On the one hand with customers, with whom many issues are broached, and on the other with suppliers and service providers. The most important short, mid and long-term innovation projects are then recorded in writing in an innovation strategy.

For the distinction, the company had to pass a strict, two-stage process established by the Vienna University of Economics. “Our results show that the 100 top innovators approach challenges forcefully, and are thus well equipped for the current economic situation, for example. “Innovation is the top priority for most of these companies,” scientific director of the study, Prof. Dr. Nikolaus Franke, says of the analysis. The top companies thus earned two thirds of their sales through innovations and innovative improvements from the past three years – for a comparative group of German small and medium-sized businesses this was just 30%. The top companies were also able to save 12% of their costs through process innovations, while “average small and medium-sized businesses” saved just 4%. The consequence? This year’s “Top 100” include 54 national market leaders, 22 of which are even world number 1s in their field of activity.

Stefan Bellinger is pleased about the success: “Our innovation has now been proven to be one of the best the German small and medium-sized businesses have to offer. This strengthens our credibility, and creates confidence among colleagues, partners, and, of course, customers. You couldn’t counter crisis times in a better manner than this.”

Mentor and co-operation partners

Lothar Späth is the project mentor. The project partners are the Bayern Innovativ Gesellschaft für Innovation und Wissenstransfer mbH (Bavarian Innovative Association for Innovation and Knowledge Transfer), the Fraunhofer Gesellschaft zur Förderung der angewandten Forschung e. V. (Fraunhofer Association for Promoting Applied Research), the RKW – Rationalisierungs- und Innovationszentrum der Deutschen Wirtschaft e. V. (Rationalisation and Innovation Centre of the German Economy), der Verband der Elektrotechnik Elektronik Informationstechnik (VDE) (Electrotechnical Electronics Information Technology Association) and the Verein Deutscher Ingenieure (VDI) (Association of German Engineers). The Süddeutsche Zeitung newspaper is the media partner.

Scientific direction

Dr. Nikolaus Franke, Professor for Entrepreneurship and Innovation at the Vienna University of Economics, is responsible for the scientific direction. His research specialisations lie in the areas of entrepreneurship, innovation management and marketing. He is one of the world’s leading experts in user innovation.

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This text is available in digital format at www.carbox.de/presse, as is further information, image material and the benchmark report.

General image material from the event will be available in the press area of www.top100.de from Saturday 27 June.