



Business report: Individual systems are created in Schierbrok for luxury yachts and the police fleet

Ship technology from Ganderkesee

Ganderkesee-Schierbrok. The high-tech bridges that are being developed by the “Böning Ship Automation” company in Ganderkesee for worldwide shipping look a little like the cockpit of a spaceship. With relatively few manual buttons and three displays, which can also be navigated by finger pressure, the demonstration object, which State Economics Minister Olaf Lies examined on Thursday, who also stopped in Schierbrok on Thursday on a summer tour through various companies.

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From Marie Lührs



innovative ship bridges that his company in Ganderkesee develops and produces, among other things.

Foto: Ingo Moellers

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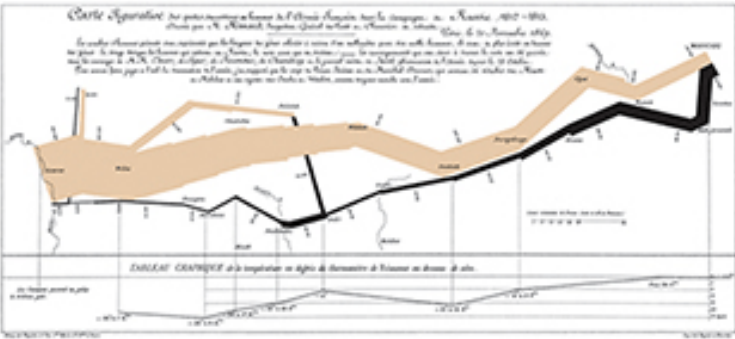
Ganderkesee-Schierbrok. The high-tech bridges that are being developed by the “Böning Ship Automation” company in Ganderkesee for worldwide shipping look a little like the cockpit of a spaceship. With relatively few manual buttons and three displays, which can also be navigated by finger pressure, the demonstration object, which State Economics Minister Olaf Lies examined on Thursday, who also stopped in Schierbrok on Thursday on a summer tour through various companies.

“We have few walk-in customers”, says managing director Günther Böning and jokes: “If we were to sell shoes, that would be bad.” But in the business in which Böning earns its bread, customers come anyway. The entrepreneur took up a position in the industrial area in Schierbrok almost 20 years ago. It was actually founded even further back. 1977 is the year of birth of the family company. The company has made a name for itself in the field of high-speed engines, explains Böning. Many thousands of ships are out on the water with equipment from his home. Last year, Böning achieved sales of a good 15 million euros.

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Started with seven employees, the company now has 107 employees. But these jobs were threatened during the economic crisis. “The maritime crisis hit us very hard,” Böning recalls, and this economic sector is still a little ailing. A good basic mood is necessary for this industry, because otherwise nobody would want to sail their ship. At the end of 2008 sales collapsed by more than 50 percent. “The coffers were full at the time,” explains Böning. As a result, the company manager was faced with the decision: adapt the company to the new circumstances, i.e. downsize, or find the right niche and specialize. Böning decided on the latter: “We then went on an expansion course.”



washing machines in Ganderkesee, he would have to sell each for 50,000 euros. However, if it opens up to a larger market, significantly more machines could be produced and offered increasingly cheaper. A large amount has also secured the marketability of his company and is still doing so today. Subsidiaries can be found in Brazil, Italy, Florida, Croatia and, more recently, in Spain on Mallorca. There are also service points in almost 20 other countries. It is easy to explain why the company has so many branches: "Because we always have to be close to our customers.

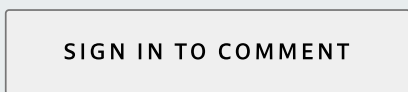
The company's customer base is broad. The engineers equip the police and pilot ships, but also other vehicles from the commercial shipping sector. But even private owners of luxury yachts with the necessary change come back to the offers of the Ganderkese company. "Fun boats", which cost between one and ten million euros, are being equipped more and more. The main thing is to connect the various devices on the boats with one another, "so that all systems speak the same language," explains Kai Lindermeier, who heads the development department. Away from individual devices towards a product that is compatible and space-saving Interface is. So not only the vehicle can be controlled via a modern bridge, but also the water level of the tanks,

The team worked on the new bridge, the Smart Bridge, for two years, explains Lindermeier. Now the complex table with the controls is available for around 100,000 euros. This means that the company is among the five most innovative of its kind worldwide, says the head of the development department.

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