

# Wittur Group Unveils New Products, Strategy

During Interlift 2013, Wittur Group CEO Dr. Ing. Walter Rohregger took time to discuss the company's focus and future plans with ELEVATOR WORLD.

by Carmen Maldacena, EW Correspondent

*While in Augsburg, Germany, for Interlift 2013, your reporter was invited to visit the Wittur Group's headquarters in Wiedenzhausen, near Augsburg, and interview Wittur Group CEO and Wittur Holding GmbH Managing Director Dr. Ing. Walter Rohregger. Taking time away from the busy Wittur booth at Interlift, Rohregger discussed his role with the company, its growth strategies and its numerous new products.*

**EW:** Wittur has recently changed its motto from "Excellence in Components" to "Excellence in Solutions." Can you explain the reason for the change?

**WR:** Well, I wanted to emphasize my vision, which is to be the preferred





Opposite Page: Wittur's newly designed Interlift booth

Left: Wittur's headquarters at Wiedenzhausen with the in-house Academy

Bottom left: Dr. Ing. Walter Rohregger

Bottom right: Wittur executive management board: (l-r) Ercüment Hizal; Javier Navamuel; Dr. Ing. Walter Rohregger; Sergio Biglino; Andreas Zwerger and Dr. Daniel Wiest



solution provider. Customers present their problems and needs, and we provide the solution to the greatest level of customization, and we do this on a global basis.

**EW: At Interlift, Wittur promoted four concepts – modernization, new materials, space saving and safety. Can you explain the reasons behind the focus on these concepts?**

**WR:** Firstly, I want to put a special focus on the quality of our products. In my opinion, quality means safety in this industry, so we must provide products to our customers that comply with these two inseparable concepts. Secondly, we want to offer our customers solutions that take full advantage of the available space. For example: the size of the car must be

maximized in a given shaft environment or extra slim doors, like our FINE Line, should be offered. In addition, the recently developed MRM – gearless machine-room-less elevator for modernizations – is our newest product. It only requires an extremely reduced headroom and pit, so it is ideal for elevator refurbishment in existing buildings. Our focus on modernization just showcased a small number of the modernization solutions we already have within our group.

Established in 1978, Wittur has since been preparing itself to be able to provide solutions for all kinds of elevator brands. This year, we have also shown some examples of the research work we are carrying out, such as the use of new materials for the elevator industry like

carbon compound material. This year at Interlift we wanted to highlight our multitask capability and broad resources regarding those four concepts on a global basis.

**EW: The use of new lighter materials and prototypes were presented at Interlift. Could you explain how these processes are carried out?**

**WR:** We worked together with a well-known German university. The research was carried out over a period of six months to evaluate the potential use of such new materials. The benefits we expect are weight reduction, shorter assembly time and the potential of manufacturing new designs. Obviously, cost is still the major obstacle. However, I firmly believe that working on future possibilities is the right way to understand future options.

*Continued*

**EW: How is Wittur's Academy organized and what are its goals?**

**WR:** The Academy was first established in Germany to enhance the technical knowledge of our European sales network. It is important for me to make sure all sales personnel have a consistent updated knowledge of our products. The Academy is managed and run by Wittur employees using our own trainers and lecturers here at Wiedenzhausen. Last May, we also developed a replicated version in China to address our Asia Pacific team.

**EW: How can Wittur's worldwide branches be efficiently managed?**

**WR:** As all global companies, we are also adapting the global matrix management structure, which was rolled out mid-2012. This means that today we do have regional profit and loss statements and functional responsibilities that are

deployed accordingly to all regions. With the Wittur Group's size and complexity today, I believe this is the best way to achieve locally focused profit and loss and, at the same time, make sure our core processes are applied in the same way across the globe.

**EW: In what way has the European slack market affected Wittur's decisions and results, and how can those effects be counterbalanced?**

**WR:** The European market is more or less flat now after shrinking significantly over these last years, but I believe the worst time is over. The future lies in the modernization business, which will surely see a boost when the new EN 81-20/50 Standard is approved by mid-2014.

**EW: What are the Wittur Group's projects/plans for Latin America?**

**WR:** We currently have three business units in Latin America: a production plant in Argentina; an assembly plant in Brazil; and, as of this year, a new trading company in Colombia. We intend to expand our product offering in Brazil, focusing on the higher localization of core components currently imported. This will help to eliminate the fluctuation of the currency on our prices, enabling us to be more competitive.

**EW: Would you describe that region as promising for the Group? How does it rank in terms of business results?**

**WR:** Our business is the result of the many small businesses we have. Therefore, each little, single business is important for me as well as a big or small customer. Latin America is fluctuating. As it is the third-largest market for us, we will further focus on it to increase our product offerings.

## Wittur Unveils New Products at Interlift 2013

Wittur's booth at Interlift 2013 in Augsburg, Germany, in October was located in its traditional spot in the core of Hall 7. However, for this show, the Wittur Group designed its booth with colorful and eye-catching bands in each corner to emphasize four important concepts: space saving, modernization, new materials and safety. Showcased new products targeted these concepts:

### Doors

- ◆ The AUGUSTA EVO is a new commodity door specially designed for the residential sector. It was developed based on the traditional Augusta, while adding the benefits of being easier to install and cost effective.
- ◆ The HYDRA EVO is the evolution of the best-selling Wittur Hydra door, a versatile door for new installations and modernization projects with a new fast installation time.
- ◆ The FINELINE door for modernization of elevators in limited spaces is a four-panel door with its opening not having to be necessarily in the center, as it can be shifted to either side. Its depth between the car and the landing door is only 115mm.

### Machines

- ◆ The latest models of Wittur's S series of gearless machines: S2.4 and S3.6
- ◆ The gearless T0: a new gearless design integrated in MRM W Line, a Wittur complete MRL elevator package for modernizations. It is a smaller machine with a 160-mm sheave that was developed for hydraulic elevator refurbishments, as it can be used with a cantilevered frame.
- ◆ The flat WSG 09 "Pancake" machine: produced in China with a capacity of 450 kg, with 1:1 roping and a 400-mm sheave with 10-mm ropes

MRM W Line



Explaining the details of the new HYDRA EVO at Wittur's booth



**EW: What policies will Wittur focus on in the near future?**

**WR:** For the time being, we are reviewing our product range in the light of the approaching new EN 81-20/50 Standard, and we will make sure the customer can get all compliant products, accordingly. Focusing on quality and our employees' safety will remain our highest priorities.

**EW: Please describe Wittur Holding GmbH in figures.**

**WR:** In 2013 our global sales will reach close to EUR500 million with approximately 3,000 employees. We will have produced more than one million doors, which are and will remain our most important products. Accordingly, our main R&D activities are focused on doors. We have just finished our first prototypes for a new commodity door and for our new


HYDRA EVO. These doors are ready to comply with the new EN 81-20/50 Standard.

**EW: How would you describe your new experience in the elevator industry up to now?**

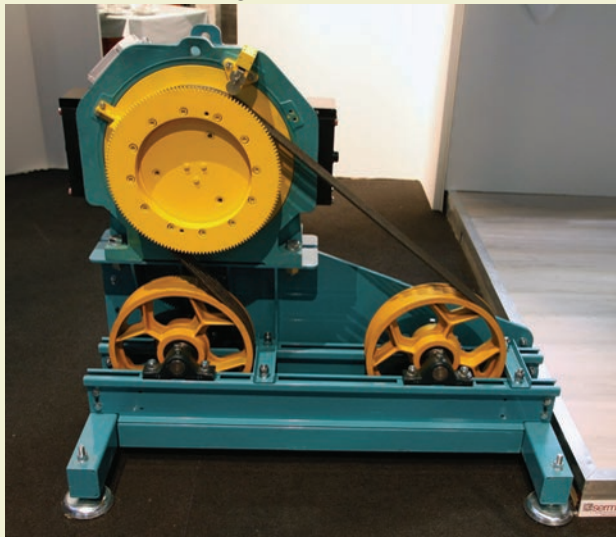
**WR:** I joined this industry at the beginning of 2012, and I must say it is a great industry to be in. It is an industry segment with the right fundamental drivers for growth: aging population, more safety standards, and more inhabitants on the remaining land on earth. So, there is hardly any other industry that will show a sustainable growth for many years to come. I have also realized that people in this industry know each other; it is a kind of closed family. It is an industry with a high amount of independent elevator installers where local proximity is essential. For this reason, we have a widely spread sales

network around the globe to be close to our customers.

Furthermore, I enjoy a business where there is no limit as to the product appearance. Over the years we have manufactured all kinds of solutions from round-glass cars to golden-plated doors, and this variety and the desire to develop an individual product for our customers is what keeps Wittur in motion every day.

Considering my 25 years' background spent mostly in the automotive industry, I can also bring into the Wittur Group some global management experience as well as some methodology in the various business processes. My goal is to develop Wittur as the leading global component and system supplier and, at the same time, to achieve recognition as the leader company for technology and safety. 

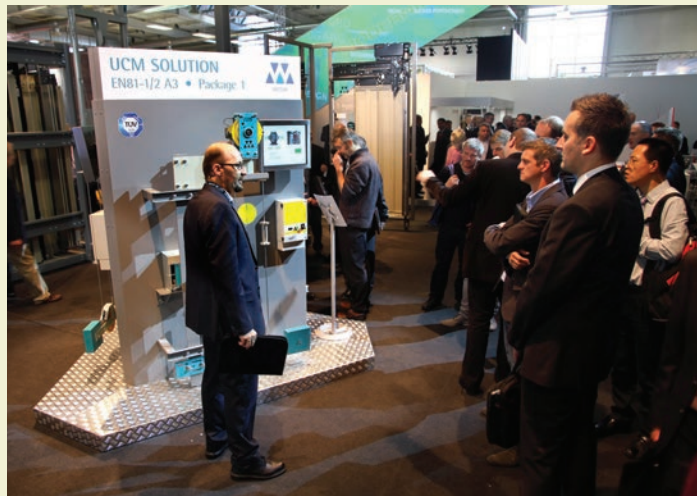
The new WSG 09 Pancake gearless drive for modernizations



Wittur hosted a dinner party, complete with music and dancing, for its customers and personnel during Interlift.



The AUGUSTA EVO door attracted many visitors.



UCM solution