

The in-house double-nickle chrome facility gave the company a competitive advantage

## Humpert's Centennial Marks Strong Position

**WICKEDE, Germany – Since the early twenties of the last century, bicycle handlebars have played a key role at the family owned manufacturing company Wilhelm Humpert GmbH & Co. KG. To diversify its business Humpert entered new industries in the past decades although the bicycle related and the ergotec branded products are still leading, generating some 60% of the company's turnover.**

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When talking about Humpert the handlebar production is the main activity that comes to mind for most people in the bicycle industry. The cutting, deburring, brushing, bending, and finishing of the raw tubes, are all fully automatic processes these days. In 2012 it started investing in Wafios bending machinery equipped with Kuka robots. However, the tube handling is not the only part of the production that takes place at the Humpert facility. More eye catching, the in-house double-nickel-chrome machinery creating the chrome, alloy or titan look which gives Humpert its distinctiveness and the opportunity to diversify into other industries like automotive, display, medical and furniture. Throughout the years Humpert invested several times in new double-nickel-chrome machinery and they even founded their own chemical company, Humpert Galvanotechnik, in order to obtain maximum control over the quality of the double-nickel-chrome process. In 2005 Humpert acquired a nearby double-nickel-chrome company to expand the capacity for its growing automotive business. This acquisition made Humpert one of the biggest double-nickel-chrome companies in Germany. Since 2017, Humpert has been working in compliance with REACH conform Chrome (III).

### Creating own brands

Today Humpert employs some 125 people on two production locations. Next to Wickede and Iserlohn, Humpert also has its own R&D office in the German city of Stuttgart which handles

the development of new products as well as internal and external product management. 'Stuttgart' is also the company's sales office for South Germany, Austria and Switzerland as well as the interface to Humpert Asia. This trading office was founded in 2002 and takes care of the coordination of all purchasing activities in Asia and quality control in Asia.

Humpert took its first footsteps in Asia in 1990. Initially the company sourced the small sized and standard components in Asia. Today a part of Humpert's product range is exclusively made in Asia. "In the nineties we started with the automation of the production in Germany while we also enlarged our product range with the X-tas-Y and X-Act branded products," explains Wilhelm Humpert GmbH & Co. KG CEO Willi Humpert. "We decided to outsource the production of all items which could not be made by machines." The opening of the Stuttgart office gave Humpert the opportunity to meet demand for more products made to customer's specification. "Standard items have become less and less over the past year, most of it made exclusively," says Willi Humpert. "Next to that the introduction of our brand ergotec has been very important. It was the first time that the development of handlebars and seat posts was based on scientific research in combination with safety requirements." This resulted in six different levels as a safety classification for steering systems and seatposts on bicycles. All testing is carried out in compliance with European testing standards or even higher, the ISO 4210 standard for regular bikes and EN 15194 for e-bikes. The test configuration defined by European standards require that 100,000 anti-phase load changes and 100,000 in-phase load changes are applied to the handlebar/stem unit. The test subject must not break or show visible cracks. The cooperation with the cycling expert at the German Sport University in Cologne, Dr Achim Schmidt resulted in the ergotec ergonomics consultant. Consumers will find information, help and tips on how they can correctly adjust their bicycles.

During last Eurobike show ergotec presented with EP-1 med and AHS-med the first two ergotec med products. Humpert received therefor the medical certificate in Germany.

The 'consultant' even received a medical certificate in Germany.



The bending of the tube is done fully automatically by Wafios bending machinery equipped with Kuka robots.

Photos: Humpert



Humpert's in-house test facilities

### Outlook handlebar systems

The integration of all elements in the 'cockpit' has been much discussed in the past but really became a topic with the success of the e-bike. This category first saw the integration of the motor, then the battery and now the display and buttons on the handlebar. "We are currently creating our first prototype for an integrated stem for the Bosch Kiox display and hopefully we can

show more soon," says Willi Humpert. "We are also getting all our ergotec components e-bike ready which means that they will soon all be certified according to EN 15194. It is always a big job to combine the strongest of the items according DIN EN ISO and needed ergonomical demands. Ergotec always focuses to create new integrated designs with ergonomical advantages", says Willi Humpert.



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## Humpert Anniversary

- 1918: Company was founded by Wilhelm Humpert I and produced grips, pumps, fender, handlebars etc. Chrome plating was done by hand
- 1937: Next generation took over and Humpert started to focus on chrome plated handlebars and stems
- 1972: Moved to the new factory in Wickede and invested in fully automatic double-nickel-chrome machinery
- 1990: Started the cooperation with Asian bike part suppliers
- 1998: Wilhelm Humpert IV becomes managing director
- 2001: Opening R&D centre in Stuttgart
- 2002: Foundation of Humpert Asia International in Taipei, Taiwan
- 2005: Take-over of a double-nickel-chrome company in Iserlohn
- 2008: The new brand ergotec was created
- 2010: Opening of the new test centre with 4 Big Bull testing machines
- 2012: Wafios-Bending centre started handlebar production with Kuka robot
- 2018: 100 year anniversary