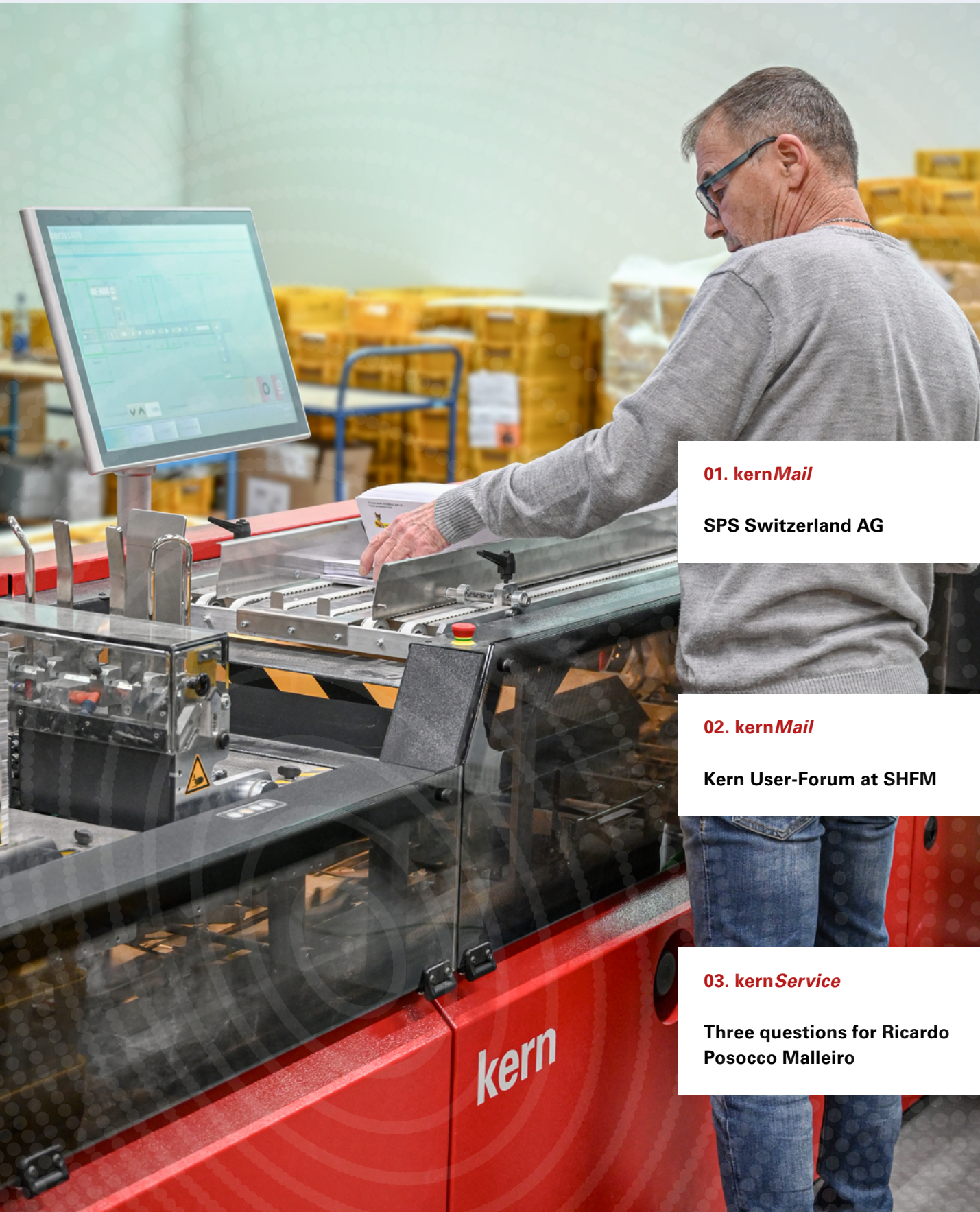


Edition 01/2024

The magazine of the Kern Group

best of kern



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SPS Switzerland AG

02. kernMail

Kern User-Forum at SHFM

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Three questions for Ricardo
Posocco Malleiro

Editorial



Stefan Wüthrich, CEO Kern Group

Dear Readers,

since the beginning of its history, the Kern Group has stood for innovation, continuity and reliability. This trinity forms the stable foundation on which our success story is based. Standing shoulder to shoulder with our customers is the decisive building block on our joint path into the future: strong customer loyalty has always been part of the Kern Group's corporate culture.

This is closely linked to our aspiration: We want to offer the best service in all areas and aspects and be there for our customers at all times.

A lot has changed within the Kern Group in recent months. We are consistently implementing the cultural change at all levels, while remaining true to our roots.

Flat hierarchical levels, efficient communication channels and an open and transparent information policy are key elements of this change.

The co-operation with the third generation of the Kern family has worked very well. We are a strong team and we all live the 'we-feeling'. This creates an atmosphere in which we can optimize the development of our systems to the latest technical standards. All of these factors ensure a very good volume of orders: we feel a high level of confidence in our platform concept and are gaining market share in a shrinking market.

The signs for a successful 2024 are excellent. As usual, Kern technology sets new standards. The Kern 1600 and Kern 3200 have been further developed. The Kern 3600 is also state of the art. This means that all our systems are on the same platform, from the software to the control and operation.

With a view to the Hunkeler Innovationdays, I can already reveal today: You can look forward to exciting innovations from us. We are strengthening our core business in every respect. Our

aim is to be at the top, and we are optimising our processes to achieve this. The decisive factor here is to form a unit with our customers. Direct contact with customers is also very important for us at management level: This is the only way we can achieve our goals. In doing so, we are building on the very stable basis of our employees. Kern is ideally positioned here. We have succeeded in strengthening the team in certain areas.

Further optimization potential is to be leveraged in all areas and new fields developed: At PackOnTime, we are sharpening our strategy and coming up with new packaging solutions in a timely manner.

I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to the Kern User-Forum on September 17 - 18 in Schwäbisch Hall. The Kern 1600 and Kern 3200 multi-format inserting systems will be presented at the premises of a long-standing customer, Schwäbisch Hall Facility Management GmbH.

Whether at the User-Forum or on another occasion: I look forward to sharing ideas with you.

Yours, Stefan Wüthrich

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Strategy meeting at Lake Thun

Together into a successful future



The new corporate culture at Kern also includes transparent and open dialogue internally. Consequently, the internal strategy meeting at the Kongress Hotel Seepark in Thun was focused on team building and the development of forward-looking strategies.

The first day was characterized by an exchange between the international management, the Kern family and the Kern Board of Directors. Together, the participants worked out typical key elements and explored the question of what values the Kern Group stands for.

The aim was to develop a vision for the future direction of the company.

The supporting program, including an excursion into the Swiss mountains, also provided plenty of opportunities to talk to each other. The second day was dedicated on concrete measures to implement the strategies discussed in line with the developed vision and values. The main focus was on defining the next steps and responsibilities.

The meeting made the new sense of unity within the Kern Group tangible for everyone. The very

trusting cooperation between the management, the Kern family and the Board of Directors is bearing fruit, as the participants were able to experience on both days.

“The meeting has sharpened our view of the future,” says Stefan Wüthrich and adds: “The strategy for the coming months and years has clearly crystallized. Now it’s time to realize the various measures and projects.”

Jira Service Management Software



Kern offers its customers world-wide a comprehensive and reliable service to optimize system availability and productivity. Fast support and short response times guarantee maximum efficiency, process reliability and system availability.

This service has been completed in recent weeks by the introduction of Jira Service Management from Atlassian, a global customer support software company.

The web-based application offers our customers the opportunity to quickly and easily contact our service team 24/7 with their concerns. We use Jira to bring

Photo: Marius Rump, Kern product specialist for the Jira ticket system, PackOn-Time and Kern 1600, was jointly responsible for the introduction of Jira and trains our service technicians internally and our customers externally and is available to answer any questions about the Jira service management system.

development, operations and customer service teams together on one platform!

In concrete terms, this means that Kern uses ONE central system in which inquiries from the customer to the mother company's development department are processed centrally and therefore tracked seamlessly throughout. The system is 100% transparent for the customer and always up to date regarding the processing status of their inquiry.

As the system is a web-based application, few technical requirements are necessary - the user only needs a web browser and can access the system from anywhere.

We now use the Jira system in communication with ten major customers throughout Germany - with a consistently positive response so far!

At home in the Kern system

SHFM: Print center extends with a Kern 1600



From left: Rainer Rindfleisch (Kern), Michael Hinderer (SHFM), Ralf Schneider (Kern)

“If you’re at ease with the Kern system, then you’re quickly familiar with its operation,” is how the managers at Schwäbisch Hall Facility Management GmbH summarize the successful installation of the Kern 1600 *fast* in their printing center. With a Kern 2600 and a Kern 3500, two systems “Made in Switzerland” have already been in use at Schwäbisch Hall for a long time. Overall, the renowned full-service provider for facility management and document services has been relying on systems from Kern for over 30 years. This proven and trusting cooperation has most recently

been expanded with the Kern 1600: The new system has been integrated into the processes since the end of last year. Everyone involved agrees that this system shows how high the degree of customization can be in practice. “We work here with a very complex system with multi-channel processing,” explains Manfred Klenk, responsible for New Customer Sales and Key Account Document Service. Michael Hinderer, Team Leader Print and Outgoing Mail, agrees with him: “The many customized applications were definitely very challenging during the preparation phase.”

It was therefore all the more important that the operators experienced with Kern systems were quickly familiarized with the new system thanks to their wealth of experience, because the familiar basic elements are also installed and programmed in the Kern 1600 *fast*. The special applications and settings initially required a short period of familiarization. “That requires a certain learning curve,” says Manfred Klenk. And this curve was steep: “We have definitely become even more effective now,” says Michael Hinderer, referring to the annual output: Around 50 million mailings leave the printing

center every year. The majority of these are handled by the Kern systems, with the company using other machine systems as a back-up.

As a flexible multi-format system for the medium to high output range, the Kern 1600 *fast* shows off all its strengths in Schwäbisch Hall. Changing from C6/5 to C4 envelope formats and back again is the big advantage of the system thanks to the automatic format changeover. An aspect that played a key role in the decision in favor of Kern, as did the high degree of customization options.

The Kern service also played a positive role in the decision: "Of course we are satisfied with it, you get a good result quickly, which is extremely important for our production reliability," emphasize Klenk and Hinderer. After all, customers have high expectations of the service provider from Schwäbisch Hall. The subsidiary of Bausparkasse Schwäbisch Hall AG has a large customer base from many sectors and manages the business and daily mail of renowned companies. As a full-service partner, it offers all services relating to preparation, printing, dispatch, mailconsolidation and input management.

The expectations of the Kern 1600 *fast*, which has long since proven itself and established its place in day-to-day business, were correspondingly high. "We would definitely make the same decision again," summarize Klenk and Hinderer.

Kern User-Forum in September

The various Kern machines in use in Schwäbisch Hall provide several reasons for organising the Kern User-Forum at Schwäbisch Hall Facility Management GmbH: On September 17th and 18th, the Kern 1600 and Kern 3200 multi-format inserting systems will be presented live on site. Presentations on the kernMail and kernService business units

and plenty of space for a get-together will round off the program. "We are looking forward to welcoming many participants and to presenting two innovative Kern solutions to one of our long-standing customers," says Kern GmbH Managing Director Rainer Rindfleisch. September 17th is primarily

aimed at German-speaking customers, interested parties and partners. On September 18th, international representatives and their customers, interested parties and partners are especially invited.

Registration:

Scan the QR code and fill in the registration form



SAVE THE DATE!

User-Forum
17 - 18 September 2024
Schwäbisch Hall - Germany

|

Three questions for...

We have recently launched a new series of interviews in which we ask our employees, customers and partners about Kern solutions and products. They are each asked 3 questions to shed light on their point of view. We start with **Ricardo Posocco Malleiro**, Service Manager at Kern GmbH.



Ricardo Posocco Malleiro

1 What is the biggest challenge for customers from the Kern Service perspective?

It is particularly important for us to have a trusting relationship with our customers and to work constructively and in partnership with them. This also applies to the coordination between the service technicians on site, the regional service managers and the national and international product specialists. In this way, we guarantee a sustainable

transfer of knowledge that enables the operating team to set up the inserting systems competently on site and to operate them routinely and efficiently.

2 The Kern inserting systems are particularly successful because...

...our systems are based on a **cross-system platform** strategy. In concrete terms, this means that systems, modules and accessories are developed across all products. In this way,

we guarantee maximum efficiency and continuity, as almost every further and new development can be used across all Kern inserting systems. An important effect is the resulting **simplified stocking of spare parts** and the fact that there are no major changes in handling for the operators, even when a new Kern inserting system is installed.

3 In your opinion, what are the strengths of the Kern Service?

Our Kern Service is characterised by a **dense, Germany-wide service network** that enables us to respond to service cases extremely quickly and easily. Our service technicians, who are always available as the first point of contact, deserve special mention here.

This speed is complemented by **professionalism, commitment** and a **high level of expertise** in the various service depart-

ments. The already mentioned, well-functioning transfer of knowledge also contributes to the strong service. This is largely guaranteed by professional training and further education, which takes place continuously at our **product training** center in Bensheim or at the headquarters in Switzerland.

Ricardo Posocco Malleiro has been Service Manager Germany

since 2022, where he is responsible for all service tasks and brings his experience from previous jobs to the company. In his free time, Ricardo is an active handball player and volunteer referee.

Kern GmbH quick overview



Kern has a tradition of innovation. For over 75 years, Kern has been developing, manufacturing and distributing the most precise systems for document processing and packaging. Our customers include public authorities, printing companies, print service providers, energy suppliers, financial service providers, graphics companies, post offices, data centers and other companies in the medium to very high shipping volume sector, as well as companies from all industries that want to break new ground with our innovative logistics solutions.

We offer print service providers various opportunities to expand their traditional business models and offer additional marketing services. We are one of the largest subsidiaries of the Kern Group. Our customer service is available with 85 employees available around the clock, 7 days a week. Our numerous references are impressive!

Kern 3200 impresses at SPS Switzerland AG



From left: Markus Bertschi (SPS Operations Manager Härkingen), Claudio Suppa (Kern AG), Rainer Rindfleisch (Kern GmbH)

An impressive pilot phase was followed by successful continuous operation: the Kern 3200 has been working reliably at SPS Switzerland AG in Härkingen for several months now. With the Kern inserting system, the Swiss company has opened a new chapter in its machine park.

SPS is a leading provider of solutions for outsourcing business processes and innovative document management services. The requirements profile for a new inserting system was clearly defined: Intuitive operation, high flexibility and speed. "Like all companies, we

are striving to increase the efficiency of our processes," says Michael Benkner, Head of Delivery Document Output Switzerland & Germany at SPS.

The expectations of the Kern 3200 were correspondingly high. Benkner is particularly impressed

by the intuitive user interface, which means that employees can familiarize themselves with several systems after just one training session. However, the new innovative platform strategy was the decisive criterion. The outstanding Kern service also played an important role. "The cooperation is excellent," emphasizes Benkner.

The Kern 3200 modular multi-format inserting system leads the way in terms of flexibility, compatibility, efficiency and investment protection. The system can handle up to 22,000 insertions per hour, enables quick changeovers and simple job changes. It is the only system in this performance class to be equipped with more than one envelope magazine, which enables the fully automatic processing of different envelopes. "The changeover time from C4 to C5 is impressive," adds Markus Bertschi, Operations Manager Härkingen.

With automatic speed adjustment and preventive fault rec-

tification, the Kern 3200 guarantees increased efficiency. The modular design and the possible integration of up to 16 enclosure stations are further special features. The machine is operated via a central touch panel: the operator recognizes all key information and data on it. The user-friendly ergonomics enable the enclosure stations to be refilled quickly, and the electrically adjustable folding unit fulfils the high demands of SPS customers.

For SPS Switzerland AG, whose mailing volume is 950 million printed pages per year, which corresponds to 290 million envelopes, the overall package of the Kern 3200 was ultimately decisive for the purchase decision in favor of Kern and the conclusion of an all-round successful pilot phase.

[spsglobal.com](https://www.spsglobal.com)



About SPS

SPS is the global market leader in the outsourcing of innovative business processing and data management services. As a strategic outsourcing partner, SPS stands for high-performance solutions in all sectors. With SPS at their side, companies succeed in the transformation to a hybrid working world. With the omni-channel solutions, SPS customers communicate in a modern and effective way.



Schwäbisch Hall - a town with centuries of history

Schwäbisch Hall (1802-1934 officially just Hall - as it is colloquially known to this day) is a town in the Franconian-influenced north-east of Baden-Württemberg, around 37 miles east of Heilbronn and 60 miles north-east of Stuttgart. It is the district seat and the largest town in the Schwäbisch Hall rural region and forms a medium-sized centre in the Heilbronn-Franken region. With its picturesque old town and more than 42,000

inhabitants from around 120 nations, the town of salt boilers on the Kocher river is cosmopolitan and particularly attractive - true to the motto: "Beautiful towns attract people".

The industrial settlement that developed around a salt works on Franconian royal property in the Middle Ages, first documented in 1156, became a royal town under the House of Hohenstaufen. In 1280, Hall attained the status of an impe-

rial city in the Holy Roman Empire and was able to retain this until its mediatisation in 1802. Schwäbisch Hall has been a large district town since October 1960. The town is known for the Heller (early German coin worth half a pfennig, named after the town Schwäbisch Hall), as well as for the salt boilers, the Schwäbisch Hall savings bank and the open-air theater on the grand staircase in front of St. Michael. [schwaebischhall.de](https://www.schwaebischhall.de)

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Subsidiary

Kern GmbH

64625 Bensheim / Germany
Phone +49 6251 582-0
Toll-free service number:
0800 / 5376000
sales.germany@kernworld.com
kerngmbh.de

Head Office

Kern AG

3510 Konolfingen / Switzerland
Phone +41 31 790 35 35
info.switzerland@kernworld.com
kernworld.com

Other subsidiaries

Belgium: kernnv.be
France: kernfrance.fr
Netherlands: kernbv.nl
USA / Canada: kerninc.com