



Press – Information

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Fulterer pools its expertise in the Rhine Valley.

Acquisition of Merz Meyer AG sealed on Friday.

Fulterer Auszugssysteme GmbH, headquartered in Lustenau, is known around the world for its high quality drawer slides and slide systems. The company has now moved to continue the expansion in capacities and place its market position and business activities on a broader footing in the Rhine Valley through the acquisition of Merz Meyer AG of St. Margrethen, Switzerland.

“The contracts were signed on Friday and represent another bridge for business spanning the Austrian and the Swiss sides of the Rhine,” read the statement from Fulterer Auszugssysteme GmbH headquarters in Lustenau, confirming that it had bought Merz Meyer AG. Both parties have agreed not to disclose the purchase price.

Stronger together

Competition between the two companies to date demonstrates that they are a perfect match and complement one another in many key areas. Starting this week, company boundaries will be crossed in order to use synergies. They will now work together mainly in research and development, production and sales, thus implementing a key part of Fulterer’s corporate strategy, which began with the investment of several million euros in expanding machinery in Lustenau over the last few years. According to the official statement, “Fulterer and Merz Meyer have known one another and have been monitoring each other for decades. It is now the right opportunity and the structures and the timing are right to unite both companies.”

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Extended product range

The acquisition means that Fulterer can continue to hold its leading role as a manufacturer and supplier of high quality slide systems on the international market for the foreseeable future. By merging with Merz Meyer AG, Fulterer is strengthening and expanding its product range with top quality office ranges with strong demand, especially among specialist furniture manufacturers. Fulterer is using synergies within the new, larger company group in overlapping product groups such as heavy-duty slide systems for shop fittings and operating equipment and stainless steel slide systems for the hygiene and catering sectors.

Working together to improve earnings

As company headquarters in Lustenau emphasizes, "The many areas that Fulterer and Merz Meyer AG have in common will generate improved earnings." To be precise, this means that the 185 employees in the Fulterer Group will in future work together with 125 new colleagues in supplying the international market. Based on last year's earnings, expectations are high: Fulterer generated 34 million euros and Merz Meyer 12 million euros. In keeping with its slogan "Ideas in motion", Fulterer has its sights on new and higher sales targets in the wake of the acquisition.

Brands to remain independent

There will be no changes for the customers of both the traditional companies at first. "Both brands will remain in their current formats and will remain unchanged on their respective core markets," says headquarters in Lustenau. There will be changes at the top of the company, however. Manfred Fulterer, owner and Managing Director of the Fulterer Group, will become Chairman of the Executive Board at the Swiss company. His son Axel Fulterer will take over management of Merz Meyer AG. These changes in company management also coincide with the retirement of the Managing Director of Merz-Meyer, Hubert Jäger.

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Greater flexibility in customer orientation

Both parties on either side of the Rhine are confident that “Fulterer and Merz Meyer is a powerful combination that will open up completely new opportunities on the global market.” Fulterer has been operating at the international level for many years already. In addition to the key European market, the company has been successfully conquering the North American market since founding Fulterer USA Inc. in the 1990s. The company will now build on its expertise in producing customized solutions for the furniture industry and the specialist retail and wholesale trades. The takeover of Merz Meyer AG is a clear symbol of Fulterer’s commitment to the Rhine Valley as a business location and the creation of jobs in the region. As Fulterer says, “We can now focus on bigger goals together and expand our position as a key player on the international market.”

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Founded by Dr. Karl Fulterer in 1956

Group Managing Director:	Manfred Fulterer
Consolidated sales 2006:	34 million euros
Key markets:	Germany, Austria, USA
Employees:	185
Business activities:	Developing and producing high quality steel and stainless steel roller bearing slides and slide systems (standard solutions and customized special solutions and systems) for industry and retail.

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Founded by Alice and Oskar Merz-Meyer in 1948

Sales 2006:	12 million euros
Key markets:	Switzerland, Germany, Italy
Employees:	125
Business activities:	As for Fulterer, plus high quality office ranges (drawer slide systems and accessories) for the office furniture industry.