

Interview with Dirk Obenhaus



Where do the strengths of Stadler Edelstahl lie?

Obenhaus: We are a manufacturing company. That is our strength. We are able to address and realise the individual needs of our customers. To do this we apply all our technical skills and know-how. Most of what we produce we manufacture ourselves, and we continually work on improving the processes we apply. And this bears fruit.

Customers often approach us with what they believe to be unusual enquiries. But it is usually pretty clear in the course of the first telephone call that we will be able to deliver a solution.

Who would you say is your prime clientele?

Obenhaus: Kitchen manufacturers and firms that focus on kitchen equipment; designers and architects are also a key target group, as are kitchen specialist dealers and craftsmen such as joiners and carpenters.

What can your customers expect when they opt to collaborate with you?

Obenhaus: The highest possible quality, reliability, and our dedication to meeting their specific needs. We have delivery times of six to seven weeks. We tend to manufacture primarily individual parts or items, but we are also open and able to handle contract business.

What sort of machinery do you have in your plant?

Obenhaus: A welding machine, a folding press and a laser-cutting machine are all installed in our factory. Our production process is computer-controlled. We create 3D CAD drawings and an animation for every project we undertake. These are made available to the customer to ensure all the technical data is correct. And we do not commence production before the customer has given the green light.

How fast do you react to new technical developments?

Obenhaus: On the one hand, we develop and create our own tools, which are tailor-made for the products we manufacture. The wealth of experience we have is a huge benefit in this regard. On the other hand, we naturally replace machines at regular intervals in order to keep abreast of developments on the technology and engineering front. Or we upgrade the machines, for example, if the software is no longer up-to-date.

You cover a wide scope of manufacturing operations. What sort of work do you outsource?

Obenhaus: When parts need sanding down, coating or polishing, we tend to outsource that work. We could handle part of that ourselves, but it would not be economical, and we would have to charge any additional costs to the customer – we don't want to do that. But we do pay close attention to whom we opt to work with so we are sure we can maintain our standards of quality.

Is there work that you perform that you would say you are specialists in?

Obenhaus: Surface finishing by hand. silver-Touch is a surface, or finish, that we developed ourselves. Since 2009, we are the only ones who provide this. Feedback we receive from the market shows that people are very satisfied as far as everyday use is concerned. Which confirms that we are on the right track with this development.

Surface finishing as a field of innovation – where does that go from here?

Obenhaus: We are currently working on ways of providing surface finishes to non-ferrous metals. The important thing is: these have to be reproducible and marketable before we go to market our ideas.

What does Stadler Edelstahl have planned for the future?

Obenhaus: With the size of our company, we have reached a level at which we can supply our customers with top quality goods within a reasonable delivery time. Our task now is to develop our business, based on what we have accomplished (under my management since 2011).