

European News 欧洲新闻

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Hilti Group Begins Year with Further Growth

In the first four months of 2022 the Hilti Group achieved a 5.6% sales increase to CHF 2.03 billion (€2.03 billion). In local currencies, growth reached 9% compared to the same period last year.



In the Europe business region, the Hilti Group increased sales in local currencies by 8.8% with a particularly positive development in Northern and Southern Europe. In the Americas, the increase amounted to 10.9%, continuously supported by disproportionate growth in Latin America. Influenced by the Covid-19 restrictions in Asian countries, Asia/Pacific achieved only slight growth (+1.1%). The Eastern Europe / Middle East / Africa region recorded double-digit sales growth (+15.4%) as the effects of the war in Ukraine and the associated sanctions against Russia will only become visible in the business results in the coming months.

The challenging market environment and the announced rise in interest rates increases the likelihood of an economic slowdown in the construction industry. Nevertheless, Hilti Group continues to expect double-digit sales growth in local currencies for the full year, driven primarily by price increases.

Christoph Loos, CEO at Hilti, commented: “The global supply bottlenecks, combined with massive price increases for raw materials and for energy and transportation, have been further exacerbated by the war in Ukraine and the current lockdowns in China. Against this background, our continued growth is encouraging. However, the first four months have shown that 2022 will be much more challenging than last year.”

WÜRTH GROUP

Record Sales for Würth Group

Würth Group has achieved a new record with an operating result of €1.27 billion in the 2021 fiscal year (2020: €775 million). At €17.1 billion, the worldwide operating family business generated the highest sales volume in corporate history (2020: €14.4 billion). This corresponds to growth of 18.4%. Adjusted for currencies, sales grew by 19%.

Robert Friedmann, chairman of the central managing board of the Würth Group, commented: “The Covid-19 pandemic, and the resulting price increases, as well as material shortages on the procurement market, challenged us last year. The distinct increase in sales and operating result furnishes proof that our strategy is worthwhile also in times of crisis. This is the reason why we started 2022 full of optimism. That is, until February when the conflict between Russia and Ukraine escalated. Now, we have to manage this unprecedented situation of uncertainty every single day.”

With a sales share of 40.7%, Germany remains the most important individual market for the Würth Group. In the second year of the pandemic, the German companies proved to be battle-ried and generated a sales plus of 14.3%. The companies outside Germany also succeeded in achieving a sales increase of 21.4%.

Relieving Strain Through Digitalisation

Supply and material bottlenecks that already existed before the Ukraine crisis continue to complicate the day-to-day work of tradespeople. Metals, electronic components or plastics are difficult to obtain. Robert Friedmann emphasised: “There still is lots of sales potential out there once supply security has been restored.”

“The importance of the industry was demonstrated during the pandemic. Being essential businesses, the trades kept going. From the small but essential repair of an electrical installation to the sustainable infrastructure construction project – the trades are and will remain future-proof. We see it as our primary task to support our customers wherever we can.”

Lesjöfors Expands in the USA



Lesjöfors, part of the Beijer Alma group, has signed an agreement to acquire the assets and operations of John Evans' Sons Inc, a leading US spring manufacturer. With the acquisition, Lesjöfors strengthens its US presence and significantly increases its sales to the medical industry, in line with its ambition to build the leading spring, wire and flat strip component group.

John Evans' Sons is the oldest spring maker in the USA, founded in 1850, and has a leading position on the US market. The company has a diversified customer base with long customer relationships, attributable to its expertise and ability to support customers early on in their product development projects. Revenue mainly stems from customers within the medical industry but also from customers within the industrial, construction, aerospace and transportation industries. The production facility is located in Lansdale, Pennsylvania, and the company has 72 employees.

Similar to Lesjöfors, John Evans' Sons has close customer relationships, high technical expertise and strong emphasis on tailored solutions. Through the acquisition, Lesjöfors strengthens its position within the medical segment and builds further scale in the USA. The acquisition also enables other opportunities for profitable growth, such as purchasing coordination, cross-selling, resource/knowledge sharing with Lesjöfors' other US companies.



Voestalpine Records Best Results in Company's History

Voestalpine posted record results in the business year 2021/22, despite an extremely challenging environment, with revenue rising 36.9% in a year-over-year comparison, to €14.9 billion. The operating result (EBITDA) also developed positively, doubling year over year to €2.3 billion (2020/21: €1.1 billion).

Herbert Eibensteiner, CEO of voestalpine AG, explains: "voestalpine once again demonstrated its great flexibility and adaptability. By maintaining our clear focus on measures to boost efficiency, we were able to exploit the positive economic environment during the business year as best we could. We succeeded in securing our operations through suitably adjusted measures within a very short time following the outbreak of the war in Ukraine.

In the business year 2021/22, demand for the steel and technology Group's high-quality products developed along extremely robust trajectories in almost all market and product segments. Even the Automotive Components business segment, which was strongly impacted by disruptions to supply chains and related production curtailments, recorded a satisfactory performance. The development of the Railway Systems segment was once again stable. Following the economic recovery, the Aerospace segment, which had been hugely impacted by the pandemic, developed as positively as the energy sector, which was able to profit from the rising oil and natural gas prices. The boom in the Warehouse & Rack Solutions business segment, which is driven especially by the growing trend toward e-commerce, continued unabated in the reporting period.



BÖLLHOFF
Joining together!



Böllhoff Acquires Gillis Aerospace

With effect from 1st June 2022 Böllhoff Group has acquired Gillis Aerospace, a French manufacturer of fasteners for the aerospace industry, therefore expanding the product and competence portfolio for customers in the aerospace market segment.

Böllhoff Group already acquired 40% of the shares in Gillis Aerospace in January 2020. Gillis Aerospace specialises in the production of special fasteners and bolts, as well as surface finishing. Due to the high-level of automation, Gillis is especially characterised by high product quality and short lead times. Furthermore, Gillis has its own facilities for surface coating and can therefore offer the complete value chain from a single source with its comprehensive coating know-how. In addition to that, surface coating is also offered as a service to the market.

The acquisition of Gillis adds to Böllhoff's capabilities within the aerospace sector, after it acquired SNEP in June 2021. "With a comprehensive manufacturing portfolio, material expertise in lightweight materials, and development know-how, Böllhoff wants to strengthen its position in the aerospace market as a leading supplier of innovative fastening solutions and support the aerospace industry as a competent partner in achieving weight and CO2 targets," says Michael W Böllhoff, managing partner of the Böllhoff Group.

SFS Achieves Record Results

In a dynamic market environment characterised by high demand, supply chain bottlenecks and the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, SFS Group seized opportunities that arose in each of its segments to boost its sales by 11.0% to CHF 1.89 billion (€1.88 billion) in 2021. All end markets and regions contributed to this good growth. The result was a high level of production capacity utilisation that strengthened profitability and generated net income of CHF 248 million.

The Covid-19 pandemic continued to be the defining theme for the SFS Group in 2021 again. The market environment had already begun showing signs of recovery in the third quarter of 2020 and this recovery continued unabated during the first half of 2021. The first half of the year saw growth of 23.8% compared to the same period of the previous year, which was dominated by the lockdown. In the second half of the year, production slowdowns – yet another of the consequences of the Covid-19 pandemic – increasingly resulted in global supply chain disruptions as well as shortages of semiconductors and other raw materials, some of which also had an impact on call-offs at SFS.



Outlook for 2022

Performance will remain characterised by major uncertainties as a result of smouldering geopolitical developments such as the current war in Ukraine, trade conflicts and sustained disruptions in supply chains. Uncertainties in international supply chains, which should gradually subside as the Covid-19 pandemic abates, are expected to persist until early 2023. In this environment, ensuring the highest possible focus on customers takes top priority. Investments in the selective expansion of our production capacity and thus the implementation of ambitious growth projects will continue.

SFS Completes Transaction with Hoffmann

The transaction between the SFS Group and Hoffmann SE that was announced in December 2021 was completed on 11th May 2022 – meaning that Hoffmann has now been officially incorporated into the SFS organisation. SFS Group explains that the joining of forces with Hoffmann marks a milestone, with the companies' complementary positioning opening up attractive development opportunities for both.



In organisational terms, Hoffmann will operate as an independent division within the Distribution & Logistics segment. Hoffmann's inclusion at various levels of the SFS organisation will create continuity and lay the foundation for the Group's successful future development.

Hoffmann's CEO, Martin Reichenecker, will now join the Group executive board of SFS. In addition, Dr. Peter Bauschatz, chairman of the supervisory board of Hoffmann SE, will now join the board of directors of SFS.



BOSSARD

Proven Productivity

New MD at Bossard Germany

Bossard Deutschland GmbH has announced Dr. Daniel Philippe Stier as managing director, succeeding Florian Beer – who is taking a sabbatical at his own request in order to subsequently face new challenges. Dr Frank Hilgers, the second managing director of Bossard Germany – who also works as area manager/CEO of Bossard North Europe, remains with the company.

After graduating with a degree in business mathematics from the University of Ulm, and doctorate from the University of Hohenheim, Dr. Daniel Philippe Stier first worked for a well-known car manufacturer and then for a management holding company for the Saarland steel industry, most recently as head of risk management. He has held various positions at Dillinger Hütte since 2016, including sole managing director of Dillinger Hütte Vertrieb GmbH and chairman of the supervisory and advisory boards of various sales companies worldwide.

Bossard – Continued Dynamic Sales Growth

Bossard Group has reported an excellent start to the year, with first quarter sales increasing by 19.1% to CHF 291.6 million (2021: CHF 244.8 million), equivalent to 20.6% in local currency. The Group also posted double-digit growth rates in all three market regions. Bossard's favourable business development, which has been ongoing since the fourth quarter of 2020, continued through the first quarter of the current financial year in all three market regions. In the still tense procurement market situation, availability is a key success factor.

“Our consistently high delivery capability is based on the purchasing strategy practiced for years, which is based on multiple procurement sources. The focus on Smart Factory services in times of complex procurement markets and cost increases also paid off,” states Dr Daniel Bossard, CEO of the Bossard Group. "Our focus on product solutions as well as our engineering and logistics services serve to increase the productivity and efficiency of our customers. True to our approach of Proven Productivity we are able to significantly reduce our customers' total costs in C-parts management and assembly. And this is especially the case today, when permanent wage and price increases are affecting our customers' cost base.

Broad-based Growth

In Europe, Bossard posted sales growth of 15% to CHF 169.9 million (in local currency +18.9%). Above-average sales growth was achieved in particular in the mechanical engineering, electronics and aerospace industries. Adjusted for acquisitions, growth in local currency was 11.9%. Sales in America increased by 24.4% to CHF 68.4 million (in local currency +21.7%). The positive business development was driven by the ongoing diversification of the customer base in this market region, particularly in the electronics, mechanical engineering and electromobility industrial segments.

The Asia market region grew by 26.6% to CHF 53.3 million (in local currency +25.1%). On the one hand, it benefited on the demand side from a recovery effect from the Covid-19 pandemic, while on the other hand the systematic development of the sales pipeline led to steady customer growth in the focus areas automation, electronics and electromobility. This allowed Bossard's Asia business to post double-digit growth in local currency for the sixth quarter in a row.

New fischer Insulation Fixing TermoZ CS II

fischer's new TermoZ CS II screw fixing anchors ETICS insulation panels made of any kind of material, including fire bars, into any conventional construction material to enable simple, time saving screw mounting with minimal thermal bridges.

fischer points out that the latest addition to its range of ETICS fastenings is multitasking, as it is suitable for fastening insulating panels in any conventional material and thickness on all standard solid and hollow construction materials. The ETICS fixing therefore doesn't need to be replaced if the façade is equipped with various insulating materials, such as a fire bar, which saves additional time.

TermoZ CS II's approval for every building material class (A, B, C, D, E) guarantees its secure application – making it suitable for subsequent insulation on renovated buildings if there is uncertainty about their anchor substrate. Further advantages include the fact that any improper use caused by unsuitable insulation fixings is prevented and users can make do with a single ETICS fixing even if the building has various substrates.

The screw fixing consists of a polypropylene anchor sleeve with a diameter of 8mm, as well as an insulation plate (various diameters) made of glass-fibre reinforced polyamide. The fixing is fastened by inserting the special compound screw made of zinc-plated steel and glass-fibre reinforced polyamide. While the screw is inserted, the anchor sleeve expands to provide a firm anchoring in the substrate. Because the screw is thermally isolated, thermal bridges are minimised so that there is no need for a sealing plug.





NORMA Group Achieves Sales of €1 Billion

NORMA Group has generated sales of €1.091 billion in fiscal year 2021 (2020: €952.2 million), representing a 14.7% increase in organic revenue. At €113.8 million, adjusted earnings before interest and taxes (adjusted EBIT) were well above the figure for the previous year, which was severely impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic (2020: €45.3 million).

The 2021 fiscal year was shaped by varying global developments. One of these was the fact that despite the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, economic conditions improved significantly. In the first half of the year in particular, NORMA Group recorded increased customer demand in all business segments and regions. At the same time, turmoil in global supply chains created an entirely new set of challenges. The resulting material shortages led to a sharp rise in raw material prices, particularly in the second half of the year. This was reflected, among other things, in highly volatile ordering behavior on the part of customers, particularly from the automotive sector.

Development in the Business Regions

In the EMEA region (Europe, Middle East and Africa), sales increased by 12.9% to €462.4 million in 2021 (2020: €409.5 million). In the wake of the Covid-19 related declines in 2020, recovery effects in the Standardised Joining Technology (SJT) business and in the automotive business contributed to the sales increase.

In the America region, sales showed a significant 18.5% increase to €456.8 million (2020: €385.5 million). The positive development was the result of the general economic recovery on the one hand, and the continued very good performance of the US water business on the other. The US water business generated organic growth of 20.9% in fiscal year 2021 (2020: 6.7%).

In the Asia-Pacific region, sales totaled €172.8 million, an increase of 9.9% compared to the previous year (2020: €157.2 million). Increased demand from the Chinese automotive industry in the first half of the year as well as positive development in the SJT area contributed to the growth in sales.



Berner New High-bay Warehouse Goes in Operation

Berner Group has implemented the next important building block in its European logistics offensive, with a new fully automated high-bay warehouse now operation in Braunau am Inn, Austria.

With an investment of almost €6 million in this major project, as well as in further conversion and expansion measures at its Austrian subsidiary, Berner Group has been able to increase the logistics capacity of the site by around 1,000m² of floor space and 5,500 additional pallet storage spaces.

"We are proud that we managed a precision landing despite the generally difficult raw material and supply situation on the world market," says Robert Kühl, who as Chief Supply Chain Officer is responsible for the logistics division at the Berner Group. "The modernisation was implemented completely and without delays within the budget plan."

"Thanks to full automation, including order picking and other targeted improvements – such as a more direct connection to the other sections of the logistics centre, the throughput time of the products has been reduced by about 50%, so that we can now store and retrieve almost twice as many pallets per hour," reports Robert.



Fabory Acquires Fastto Nederland

Fabory Group has signed an agreement to acquire Fastto Nederland B.V from founder and owner Guido Voskamp. Fastto is a recognised fastener specialist with a relevant product portfolio and strong customer advocacy.

The Fabory Fastto combination shows a strong strategic fit between two fastener specialists. "Fabory is impressed by the customer intimacy Fastto is known for," states Francisco Terol, CEO Fabory. "The team's enthusiasm and customer focus is inspiring. It is easy to understand how Fastto has managed to build longstanding customer relationships."

Guido Voskamp, owner and founder of Fastto, commented: "I envisioned a fastener specialist like Fabory when I started Fastto, both companies are strongly rooted in the world of fasteners. This is an exciting next step in Fastto's development. The combination will benefit from an extensive product range combined with relevant expertise and a differentiated service mentality to support customers in their needs for fastening solutions. We are convinced that joining forces will open up many new opportunities." Ever since it was founded in 2000, Fastto has been 100% focused on the distribution of fasteners. The company offers a wide and broad assortment of specialised fasteners in combination with strong customer service.





Bufab Acquires TIMCO

Bufab Group has acquired TIMCO (TI Midwood & Co Limited), one of the UK's leading suppliers of essential construction products. Simon Midwood, managing director at TIMCO, will continue to run the business with the senior team. The purchase price paid upon closing of the transaction amounts to GB£54 million (€64.2 million) on a cash free/debt free basis.

TIMCO has been family-owned since its foundation in 1972 by Tim Midwood, and is currently run by Tim's son, Simon Midwood. TIMCO reported a turnover of GB£49.7 million (€59.1 million) in 2020 and is expected to report a turnover of approximately GB£60 million for 2021.

Under Simon's leadership, TIMCO has expanded to become a 'one-stop shop' for over 4,500 independent merchants across the UK and Ireland, supplying essential products that trade professionals rely on every day, such as screws, fasteners and fixings, nails, adhesives and chemicals, power tool accessories, hand tools, building hardware and site protection, security and ironmongery and PPE.

Additionally, Bufab's board of directors has appointed Erik Lundén as the new president and CEO. Currently division manager for parts & services at Sandvik Mining & Rock Solutions in the Netherlands, Erik will assume his role on 15th August 2022.

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Ahlsell Acquires Skånebeslag and Skånesnickeri

Ahlsell has entered into an agreement to purchase all shares in Skånebeslag and Skånesnickeri AB – with the two companies having a combined annual turnover of more than SEK 60 million (€5.7million).

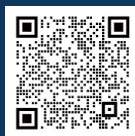
Ahlsell Group has a turnover of approximately SEK 37 billion (€3.56 billion) and has more than 6 000 skilled employees, over 240 stores and three central warehouses. The joint acquisition will enable it to further develop its offering in the field of circular construction and renovation solutions – an important contribution to a more sustainable development of society.

Both Skånebeslag and Skånesnickeri have been active since 1972 and have always had a good relationship with Ahlsell. They are at the forefront when it comes to customised solutions for construction customers, with both constantly developing their range of fittings and fixtures, and have a customer focus that suits Ahlsell's culture.

As they now become part of the Ahlsell Group, synergies and opportunities are created for both companies to learn and develop even more. The acquisition gives Ahlsell access to Skånebeslag's entire expertise and product range, and through the acquisition of Skånesnickerier, the opportunity to learn a new product area with cutting-edge expertise in the areas of reuse, renovation and circularity. ■

宝鸡博泽金属制品有限公司 Baoji Boze Metal Products Co., Ltd.

Main Products: Titanium Fasteners, Titanium Customized Parts, Titanium Motor and Car Accessories, Titanium Bicycle Components, Titanium RC Parts, Titanium Turnbuckles



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