



*SBS now operates four STEIN 300 on two continents: The first system in Schonach was soon joined by a second one and two STEIN 300s are also making their rounds at the production facility in Barrie (Canada).*

## Intelligent manufacturing fully under control on two continents

SBS-Feintechnik relies on transfer technology solutions from STEIN Automation

*In search for a new transfer technology solution, SBS-Feintechnik discovered the systems from STEIN Automation. What began as a simple business relationship quickly turned into a close and trusting cooperation. The company now operates four STEIN 300 systems in its production – and that on two continents.*

SBS-Feintechnik GmbH & Co. KG from Schonach in the Black Forest is part of the BURGER GROUP, a medi-

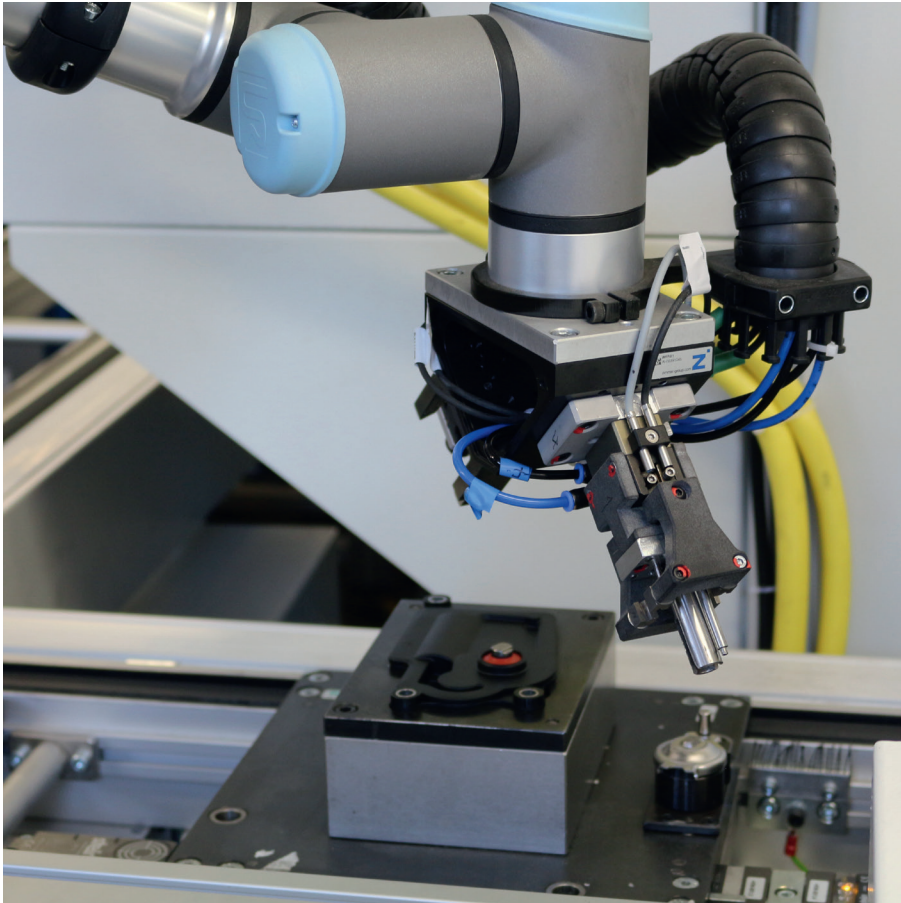


*Thomas Burger looked around the market, compared systems from different suppliers and quickly decided on the STEIN 300 solution from STEIN Automation in nearby Villingen-Schwenningen.*

um-sized family business run by the sixth generation. The system supplier mainly deals with customer-specific drive technology and works for the mobility industry on two and four wheels, but also for customers from the building, household appliance and medical technology industries. In addition, there is mechanical and plant engineering. „In addition, we have a 100 percent market share in mechanical clock movements,” adds Thomas Burger with a wink, who steers the company’s fortunes as mana-

ging partner of the BURGER GROUP. With more than 1,000 employees at eight locations in Europe and North America, the Group creates innovative solutions in metal, plastic, material composites or as a complete mechatronic system for customers all over the world. „We know how to combine innovation and tradition. We use our know-how and our extensive experience in such a way that we can solve even demanding tasks efficiently and economically and deliver high-quality products,” says Burger.



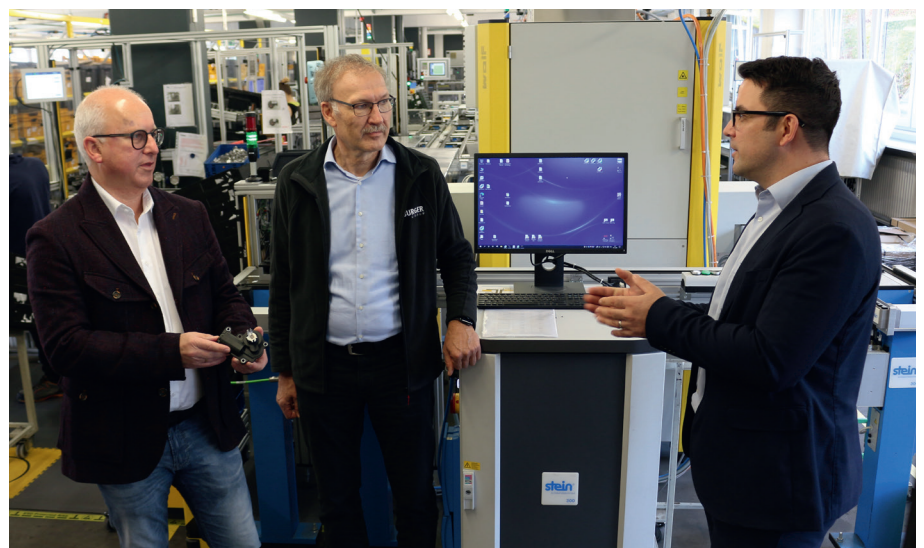


*SBS uses the STEIN systems exclusively for the production of parts for the automotive industry – matter of fact 24/7. Here, SBS manufactures chaotically, i.e. with different products that run simultaneously on the same system, but require different production steps.*

## 24/7 Availability

The company also pursues this claim in the transfer technology used. „We had already installed a belt conveyor system in the 1950s. This was followed a few years later by a workpiece carrier system,” says Burger. „Although this was innovative for its time, at some point it no longer met our requirements, and so in 2016 it was time for something new.“ Burger looked around the market, compared systems from different suppliers and quickly decided on the solution from STEIN Automation from nearby Villingen-Schwenningen. „On the one hand, the system itself spoke and speaks for the STEIN 300 with logistics control and data storage. Their modular design gives us the flexibility we need and allows us to react quickly and easily to changes. Thanks to SOFTMOVE, which prevents the hard collision of the work

piece carriers, we also transport our components gently, quietly and energy-efficiently between the individual workstations,” explains Helmut



*A well balanced team (from left): Managing Partner Thomas Burger and Helmut Obergfell, Assistant to the Managing Director of Technology (both BURGER GROUP) and Jürgen Noailles, Managing Director of STEIN Automation.*

Obergfell, Assistant to the Technology Management of the BURGER GROUP. „Not to be underestimated is also the near proximity, the fast reaction time and the close and trusting cooperation on eye to eye level,” adds Burger. „At STEIN Automation, we are not just another customer with a number, but a strategic partner.“ How well the cooperation works was also shown when in the beginning individual solution concepts had to be developed for the first STEIN 300. „We sat down with STEIN and together we looked at what a possible solution could look like and worked it out in cooperation in a timely manner,” explains Obergfell.

SBS now operates four STEIN 300 on two continents: The first system in Schonach was soon joined by a second one and two STEIN 300s are also making their rounds at the production facility in Barrie (Canada). „We use the STEIN systems exclusively for the production of parts for the automotive industry – matter of fact 24/7,” explains Obergfell. „In addition to the high level of system availability, flexibility is particularly important here. We manufacture chaotically, i.e. with different products that run simultaneously on the same system, but require different production steps.“ The STEIN 300 uses an RFID chip on the workpiece carrier to determine which steps are for which product.

STEIN Automation continuously supports SBS in the optimization of the systems, supports the company with advice and tricks and sometimes takes unconventional and new paths. For example, during the commissioning of the second STEIN 300 in Barrie in autumn 2020: „We commissioned the system from Germany. That was an exciting and challenging experience,” says Jürgen Noailles, Managing Director of STEIN Automation. „In 18 hours of Facetime, it was a done deal. If we had flown over, it would have taken a similar amount of time and would have additionally polluted the environment.“ Stein and SBS not only have done something for their green footprint with the remote commissioning, but have also gained many new and important insights. „Since we were able to access the right digital equipment at SBS and in-house, the endeavor went smoothly,” says Noailles. „Everyone involved learned a lot – and we also had fun doing it.“



„At STEIN Automation, we are not just a customer with a number, but a strategic partner,” says Thomas Burger, Managing Partner of the BURGER GROUP.



STEIN Automation and SBS Feintechnik work closely together eye to eye. If problems arise, Jürgen Noailles, Managing Director of STEIN Automation, Thomas Burger, Managing Partner of the BURGER GROUP and Helmut Obergfell, Assistant to the Managing Director Technology of the BURGER GROUP (from left) sit down together and develop a solution.

## Counteracting the shortage of skilled trade

„I think the fact that we have now purchased three more STEIN 300 clearly shows that we are more than satisfied with the transport solutions and the cooperation with STEIN,” Burger says in a nutshell. In the summer of 2021, even a fifth system was added. However, this is not located in Schonach or in Barrie, but in the Trade School of Donaueschingen and is used in the training of plastics technologists. „This is a project with regional partners in which schools, industry and politics work closely together to do something about the shortage of skilled workers,” explains Burger. „We want to show that working in the commercial or technical sector offers interesting jobs and is more than ‚bathing in oil‘. In this way,

we are trying to get young people and increasingly women interested in an apprenticeship in this area.“ Fewer and fewer school graduates opted for an apprenticeship and preferred to go to university. The BURGER GROUP can also feel this. „It’s getting harder and harder to find people,” Burger says. „Of course, working in shifts and the great flexibility required from the employees does not make the work any more attractive.“ That’s why SBS is already in talks with the automation specialists about the next STEIN system for their production „And since people are becoming increasingly rare in production, we have to rely even more on robots or cobots,” says Burger, looking to the near future.

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