

” OUR OBJECTIVE: MANAGEABLE HYDRAULICS

Jörg Sturm has not been CEO of Stauff Germany for that long. He wants to give the company a more international direction, without giving up its proven identity. He regards Stauff’s partnership role as being central to this. In an interview with the German O+P Fluidtechnik magazine, he explains which technological innovations will be important for Stauff and what role Africa could play in this.

Mr Sturm, you have been Managing Director of Stauff Germany since the start of this year. You have degrees from RWTH Aachen University, studied Business Administration, and speak seven languages. Where do your language skills come from?

I attended a bilingual school and so was intensively exposed to foreign languages at an early age. Over the years, I added more languages out of pure curiosity. Languages open doors to other cultures, and I have always had the desire to think

outside of the box. This interest in learning and in people was also a reason for my further training as a systemic and agile coach. Much of this helps me in my new role today, especially when it comes to bringing together different points of view.

You have been in the hydraulic sector since 2003 and have worked for some very well-known companies. What fascinates you about this branch of industry?

Even although my background was originally in electrical engineering, I was fascinated by hydraulics from the very outset. On closer inspection, there are many parallels: both sectors work with clear physical principles, both are based on reliability, precision and a deep understanding of systems. I find the transformation that our industry is currently undergoing particularly exciting. Traditional industrial hydraulics remains a key foundation, but the fields of application are

becoming more diverse and demanding. Applications in wind energy, in the offshore sector or with new energy sources, such as hydrogen, pose different requirements, at the same time opening up massive opportunities. This mix of technological depth, practical uses and continuous development is what makes our industry so attractive. We are always working on solutions that make a difference, both visibly and tangibly. That motivates me time and time again.

You have now been with Stauff for around 100 days. What challenges will the company have to overcome in the medium term? And how will Stauff do that?

We are a company that has always maintained strong regional roots, which is of great value to me. However, our commitment to our German sites also brings challenges, including high energy costs and a tight labor market. We have little influence over energy costs, but we can consistently align our own actions: increasing energy efficiency, modernizing processes and investing where it makes us more independent. We are very conscious of the issues that

we can actively influence. We are training personnel, and working closely with student employees and universities. We are addressing the shortage of skilled workers with a mix of qualification, early retention and an attractive corporate culture. This is a long-term process and goes hand in hand with our identity. At the same time, we are developing our international positioning. However, in doing so we will not lose our roots. Our regional base remains the foundation on



Jörg Sturm, Managing Director,
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which we will grow. We will complement it with structures that will enable us to operate globally. This balance between local responsibility and global outlook is central to me. Our culture is not just something we have put down on paper, it is

defined by our actions. It will have to evolve because markets are changing and because we are changing. But at the same time it remains the basis on which we can successfully implement our strategy.

What technological developments do you regard as being crucial for the next generation of hydraulic systems, and where do you see Stauff in this environment?

Higher energy efficiency, intelligent sensor technology and close integration with electronics and software will play an increasingly important role in addition to increasing power densities, higher pressures and increasingly demanding operating conditions as innovation drivers. We are investing in smart components, condition monitoring solutions and technologies that will enable our customers to operate their systems more reliably and in a more resource-efficient manner. Stauff is clearly positioning itself as a partner. We are systematically complementing our product business with digital services, training and knowledge programmes. Our aim is to make hydraulics comprehensible and manageable so that systems can be operated safely and efficiently. Our proximity to our customers is also an important factor against the background of the rise in the customisation of hydraulic systems for specific applications. Standardisation remains important, but our ability to offer a customised

solution is often decisive. Ultimately, we are observing a shift in focus in all application sectors from the individual component to the complete system. Efficiency, safety, and availability are now systemic rather than being isolated concepts. Stauff took this development into account over ten years ago and, with its Stauff Line, positioned itself as a system partner along the entire line system. We will continue to pursue this successful course. At the same time, we are reinforcing our international positioning. In India, we are currently expanding our production and development capacities, as there is tangible expertise and dynamism in the Indian market. In the medium term, Africa will also play a more important role – both as a growing market, but also as a region where new applications are emerging that can give us technological stimulus.

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