



PRESS RELEASE

SAACKE is tackling digital transformation in cooperation with researchers and is initiating best practice dialog

Industry 4.0: On the way to the digital future, SAACKE is relying on communication with other companies and is focusing on its customers and resource efficiency

Bremen, April 26, 2018 – SAACKE GmbH, a specialist in thermal processes and applications, is relying on exemplary cooperation with scientists for its digital transformation. Together with the University of Bremen's BIBA (Bremer Institute for Production and Logistic), the medium-sized company is successfully integrating current Industry 4.0 developments into its products. The cooperation kicked off with a multi-day workshop: the SAACKE team and the BIBA researchers jointly created analyses, defined goals, and developed strategies and methods for implementing the new technology. Together with the researchers, SAACKE is also initiating a best practice dialog with other innovative companies in order to compare notes on the subject of digitization.

A wealth of options: real-time remote services, 3D printing and virtual reality

From predictive maintenance and optimization based on real-time remote plant and operational data (remote services), to 3D printing in production, to virtual reality goggles for assisting service staff with maintenance or repair work – at SAACKE there's no lack of ideas for smart services and new applications. "The new developments in information and communication as well as sensor technology and materials science offer a virtually incalculable wealth of possibilities for the creative development of our company. They are opening up a wealth of options and thus opportunities for differentiation", says SAACKE CEO Bernd Hetterscheidt. "We want to continue to set the tone in international competition and implement the digital transformation in the company in a timely, successful and sustainable manner." According to Hetterscheidt, SAACKE has found an internationally renowned research institute and knowledge transfer expert in BIBA that will help realize this goal.

Results from pilot projects serve as a blueprint

Initially, SAACKE is pressing ahead with the digital transformation on the basis of defined project outlines and in close cooperation with the customer instead of implementing many small measures throughout the company. "This allows us to get results quickly, to limit effort and costs, and to reduce the risk. This approach will ensure a high probability of success", says Hetterscheidt with confidence. "With these pilot projects, we are creating a blueprint for further projects, locations and customers."

New services and increased efficiency for customers

SAACKE has been heading towards Industry 4.0 for some time. "This means we are well prepared for the challenges posed by the digital transformation", says Hetterscheidt. He declared digitization to be a top priority and set up the digital team early on. It was to be efficient and effective. Accordingly, it consists of representatives from various departments as well as business units and from different hierarchical levels, including the works council and Hetterscheidt himself. Norbert Kriete, Head of Electrical Engineering at SAACKE, appreciates the "strong sense of togetherness" and the high degree of motivation in the team. Commenting on the workshop with the scientists, he said, "it has sharpened our understanding of SAACKE's digital future, identified opportunities and needs, and demonstrated our great potential – especially with a view to providing new services to our customers." Here he is referring among other things to the improvement of services using new technologies and increasing resource and plant efficiency. SAACKE is ideally positioned here with its 4.0-capable se@vis process control.

Best practice dialog – network platform for SMEs

The best practice dialog will kick off in May: SAACKE and BIBA are inviting other innovative companies to discuss experiences, problems and solutions in the area of digitization based on current SAACKE activities and more. "We want to create a win-win situation for all those involved", says Hetterscheidt. He is hoping for open discussions and a lively discourse in which everyone can receive valuable stimuli. "We are participating in the dialog and expect it to provide ideas for our future research", confirms BIBA scientist and project manager Stefan A. Wiesner. "Working with such networks helps us identify trends and future needs."

"An exemplary approach"

"Even making better use of the existing potential already represents a major benefit and an essential first step towards digitization", says Wiesner. "Many companies, like SAACKE, often already have extensive data required for digital transformation, such as from development, design and production. Some of the data is used by controlling units, others only in production or procurement, others in turn by maintenance. In many cases there are no uniform standards and data interfaces between the individual units. That is one reason why many processes in companies still run in isolation today", he explains. However, Industry 4.0 requires holistic considerations, i.e. across different processes, disciplines and institutions. This is the only way to successfully generate new services such as smart services and new business models. The researcher considers SAACKE's approach to be exemplary – from the establishment of a competent digital team to the definition of delimited pilot projects in the initial phase through to best practice dialog: "This way, it is possible to overcome the hurdles of digitization with manageable risks. This already leads to initial successes in the short term and paves the way for further Industry 4.0 projects."



Caption: At SAACKE, the digital transformation has long since begun: Stephan Röhl, the company's Product Line Manager, monitors a combustion plant via the so-called se@vis control on the touch display. Remote access can also be used to check and adjust customer systems remotely and in real time using the system.

Photo: SAACKE GmbH

SAACKE GmbH specializes in thermal processes and plants in the industrial and maritime energy management sector and is one of the world market leaders in this field. The medium-sized family business was founded in 1931 and employs a total of about 1,200 people, including more than 450 engineers and technicians. It has production sites in Bremen, Croatia, China and Argentina as well as a worldwide service and sales network. Head office, main production as well as research and development are located in Bremen.

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