

Celebrating Dr. Harald Marquardt's 25 years of service

A passionate family business entrepreneur and innovator

- Has resolutely driven forward the Marquardt Group's internationalization strategy and positioned the company ready for the mobility sector's turnaround ahead of time
- Cultural and social engagement has been a top priority from the outset
- His call to politicians: Reestablish Germany's competitive position – collaborate more effectively on an international level

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Rietheim-Weilheim, Germany, June 29, 2021 – He is a passionate family business entrepreneur, has developed his company into one of the leading global experts in mechatronics and has also always championed the interests of domestic industry. Dr. Harald Marquardt has steered the Marquardt Group's fortunes since 1996, which means the CEO will celebrate 25 years of service on July 1, 2021.

“I see it as a privilege to be able to help shape the future.”

There is no sign of professional fatigue to be seen in the Trossingen native, who celebrated his 60th birthday with a small circle of family and friends back in May, “I’m extremely lucky to work with people who want to make a difference, who are entrepreneurial thinkers themselves and are passionate about what they do. Business is even more enjoyable now than on my first day thanks to our fantastic team in Germany and abroad,” says Dr. Harald Marquardt. The Doctor of Economics considers it a privilege that Marquardt is involved in shaping key future-oriented developments, “It’s incredibly exciting to be working on innovations that will reach the mass market in just a few years from now. These include developments for future vehicle interiors, components for electric and hydro-powered vehicles and smart products for the home.”

A driver of internationalization and creator of thousands of jobs

The married father of twins began his professional career outside of the family business. After qualifying as a banker and studying business management at the Ludwig Maximilian University in Munich, he first worked at Osram GmbH, where he was, for example, the financial director of the company's English subsidiary in London. He then joined the Marquardt Management Board in 1996 as a third-generation representative of the family.

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Over the past 25 years, Dr. Harald Marquardt has been instrumental in developing the Rietheim-based company, which was founded in 1925, from a medium-sized enterprise into one of the world's leading mechatronics specialists. Under his leadership, new production, development and sales facilities have been set up in countries including the US, Romania, Mexico, North Macedonia, India and China, as well as at several locations within Germany. Since he started in 1996, the number of employees worldwide has increased to just under 11,000, more than five times the original figure. In the same period of time, the Marquardt Group's sales have risen from an equivalent of 125 million euros to over 1.3 billion euros in 2019, the highest figure to date.

Domestic industry has also substantially profited from the rigorous internationalization strategy spearheaded by Dr. Harald Marquardt; a significant number of well-paid jobs have been retained and new ones created. In order to secure the company's competitiveness and future viability, Marquardt has made numerous investments at its sites that reflect the company's commitment to its industrial location. These include a production plant for automotive systems at its headquarters in Rietheim-Weilheim (2001), a logistics center (2012) and the Development and Innovation Center, which opened in June 2019.

Prepared company for mobility sector turnaround ahead of time

Each year, Marquardt invests around ten percent of its revenues in research & development. The CEO was quick to utilize this to set the company's strategic course, positioning it well for the mobility turnaround. "We thought about what we could offer to meet the transport needs of tomorrow long before the automotive industry started facing pressure. Thanks to our decades of experience in developing power tool switches, we had plenty of battery-related know-how and were able to use this to develop battery management systems for electric vehicles. The fact that we have continued to focus on automotive interiors has also served us well; as autonomous cars continue to advance, vehicle interiors will undergo significant upgrading. As a mechatronics expert, we supply a number of premium-quality control elements, but we also offer vehicle access and drive authorization systems that offer maximum protection against theft," says Dr. Harald Marquardt.

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Commitment to developing a positive economic framework

In addition to his company's focus on sustainability, Dr. Harald Marquardt has always been committed to creating a positive economic framework in Germany for companies as well as employees. To this end, he has for many years been the Vice Chairman of the Board at Südwestmetall, the association of the metal and electrical industry in Baden-Württemberg, where he has campaigned for constructive collaboration between social partners and negotiated a number of pilot agreements with the trade union IG Metall through collective bargaining. As well as this, he is also Vice President of the Schwarzwald-Baar-Heuberg Chamber of Industry and Commerce where he advocates the interests of numerous companies in the region, such as the development of an improved digital infrastructure and an ambitious foreign trade policy.

A variety of social and cultural commitments

For the family business entrepreneur, success has always gone hand in hand with social responsibility and cultural commitment.

Marquardt supports a number of social organizations, including Lebenshilfe Tuttlingen, Hospizstiftung Spaichingen and Weissen Ring e.V. Together with shareholders, Dr. Harald Marquardt has also invested in the construction of a new sports facility in Rietheim-Weilheim where the company is based, which is set to open in 2021.

In addition to this, Dr. Harald Marquardt is a passionate supporter of the arts and is patron of the Iris Marquardt Foundation, named after his mother who passed away in 1996. Since 1997, the foundation has annually awarded the Iris Marquardt Prize to talented young musicians at the Trossingen School of Music. This is one of the most generously funded music prizes in Baden-Württemberg.

His call to politicians: “Reestablish Germany's competitive position – and collaborate more effectively on a European and global level”

Dr. Harald Marquardt looks forward to leading the Marquardt Group into the future with continued success and sees his company as part of a greater whole. “Family businesses like ours can be a stabilizing presence, especially in these times of uncertainty. As the Covid pandemic eases, they will also assume their social responsibilities, make a genuine contribution to recovery and utilize the opportunities brought by change.”

The entrepreneur also has a message for politicians as he celebrates his service anniversary. “Germany has lost competitiveness as an industrial location in recent years, and quite dramatically so in some sectors. Conditions have deteriorated, particularly for family businesses – the backbone of the German economy. We are still lagging behind in terms of digitalization and infrastructure. The state is also faced with excessive costs at all levels, and the tax and contributions paid by companies and their employees are much too high by international standards. Politicians therefore need to act quickly, decisively and across party lines, and not weaken industry, one of the country's most significant sources

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of prosperity, through unfulfillable requirements and excessive demands.”

As a staunch European, Dr. Marquardt also emphasizes that, “Strengthening Germany's economic position must go hand in hand with a confidence-building narrative centered around trust and cooperation. It would be a mistake to revert to national narrow-mindedness in response to the pandemic and to turn back the clock on globalization. If there is one thing to be learned from the Covid pandemic, it is that we need to collaborate much more effectively on a European as well as a global level.”

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Press photos:



Marquardt_Press_Photo_Dr._Harald_Marquardt: 25 years of service: Dr. Harald Marquardt, CEO of the Marquardt Group.

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Marquardt_Press_Photo_Dr._Harald_Marquardt_Interview:
Dr. Harald Marquardt, “Germany's competitive position needs to be reestablished.”

About Marquardt

Marquardt, a family-run company founded in 1925 and based in Rietheim-Weilheim, Germany, is one of the world's leading manufacturers of electromechanical and electronic switches and switching systems. The products of the mechatronics expert are used by many well-known customers in the automotive industry and include operating components, vehicle access, driver authorization systems and battery management systems. The company's systems are also used in household appliances, industrial applications and power tools. Marquardt Group employs approximately 10,600 members of staff worldwide at 20 locations in four continents. The company generated 1.2 billion euros sales revenue in the fiscal year 2020. Each year, Marquardt invests around ten percent of its revenues in research & development.

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