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Scaling new heights together**STEP-G has enjoyed close ties with Kässbohrer for decades**

Successful collaboration between two companies requires more than just a joint agreement – mutual trust and perfectly aligned expertise, processes and products are essential to achieve optimal results. ST Extruded Products Group (STEP-G) and Kässbohrer Geländefahrzeug AG (Kässbohrer) have relied on a close partnership to create customised solutions since the early 1980s.

STEP-G is one of the world's leading producers of extruded aluminium profiles. With production sites in Germany, Belgium and China, STEP-G is a multinational company that offers an extensive range of aluminium profiles and rods. The automotive industry and its direct suppliers rely on the company's innovative quality, as do its other customers in the aerospace, rail, mechanical and electrical engineering industries as well as the construction sector. Its portfolio also includes various forms of processing as well as component manufacturing. "We are proud of the fact that, over the years, we have evolved from a pure extruded profile producer to a component supplier. This enables us to supply our customers with complete and system solutions as well as semi-finished products, and to meet the constantly growing demand for individual component-based and assembly solutions," explains Stefan Knabben, Director Sales STEP-G. One of STEP-G's major customers is the global market leader Kässbohrer, which has relied on STEP-G's unique, technologically mature track profiles for decades. The two companies jointly developed a special alloy for these aluminium profiles, which is extremely hard but not brittle and therefore ideal for use in snowy and icy conditions. "We place great value on our long-standing and close ties with Kässbohrer and are proud that our aluminium profiles are a key component in the world-renowned PistenBully product," says Jörg Lissberg, Head of Competence Centre Hard Alloys.

The family-owned company Kässbohrer is responsible for the globally renowned and highly sought-after PistenBully product line. Kässbohrer Geländefahrzeug AG is based in Laupheim, Germany, and is a global player. Thanks to innovative technologies combined with passion and creativity, Kässbohrer vehicles master extreme

conditions on mountains and in valleys, and are also used on beaches and for off-road assignments. The PistenBully range is renowned for reliability and pioneering technologies in the field of snow grooming and cross-country skiing. Under the SNOWsat brand, Kässbohrer also offers a range of digital solutions for piste and fleet management. Its PRO ACADEMY provides training that guarantees resource-saving piste management. In addition, the company's BeachTech vehicles ensure clean beaches worldwide. And with its range of PowerBully tracked vehicles, Kässbohrer is also consolidating its strong position in the commercial vehicle market.

The growing popularity of skiing as a sport in the early 1920s quickly created a demand for higher-quality ski slopes – simple snow rollers were soon replaced by motorised equipment. In 1969, the first PistenBully prototype completed its test drive and went into series production shortly afterwards. In five decades, the PistenBully has evolved from a simple snow groomer into a technologically unique vehicle with a cult status that still impresses today thanks to ongoing technical innovations. With more than 23,000 PistenBully vehicles built and sold in over 110 countries, Kässbohrer sets the global standards in this field. What really matters in terms of our success is the overall package”, says Christian Oberwinkler, a board member at Geländefahrzeug AG. “If you want to be successful in the long run, you have to work efficiently and economically. Choosing the right suppliers is just as important as customer satisfaction. In STEP-G, we have had a stable and trustworthy partner at our side for decades that perfectly meets these challenging requirements.” You can only get “better than good” with real passion and a strong team. A passion for engines, machines and technology is synonymous with Kässbohrer Geländefahrzeug AG. “Our success is essentially based on these fundamentals: close collaboration with our customers and suppliers, and simple and fast solutions from a qualified and committed team. We call it: ‘friendship made by Kässbohrer’,” says Oberwinkler with pride.

“Having our finger on the pulse, recognising trends and always being on the lookout for ways to improve – this is especially important when it comes to the PistenBully's ‘footwear’,” says Oberwinkler. To continuously develop and improve a product, there must be seamless cooperation and close coordination between the component supplier and the customer. The high quality of the aluminium profiles that STEP-G produces for Kässbohrer in Germany is strictly monitored and verified in accordance with exacting quality standards. This means that Kässbohrer can always count on receiving extremely robust aluminium track profiles. Its “all-round track” is based on the perfect combination of a lightweight aluminium cleat and a high-strength wear strip – making it the best-selling track type worldwide.

The two companies are also on the same page when it comes to sustainability. Both partners are aware that what we do today shapes the world of tomorrow and therefore place a strong emphasis on the use of clean and renewable energy and fuels as well as recycled materials. In addition, they continuously monitor their ecological footprint and endeavour to reduce their CO₂ emissions. “Aluminium is an important pioneer for the green transition. It's highly sustainable in terms of waste management and has a long life span of many decades. Another major advantage of aluminium is that it allows virtually lossless recycling. The recycling process only uses about 6% of the energy required to produce primary aluminium, which makes this material even more sustainable,” says Knabben. According to The International Aluminium Institute, 75% of all the aluminium ever produced is still in

use today. Both companies are excited about the future and are looking forward to building on the close partnership between Kässbohrer and STEP-G by collaborating on yet more innovative and pioneering projects.

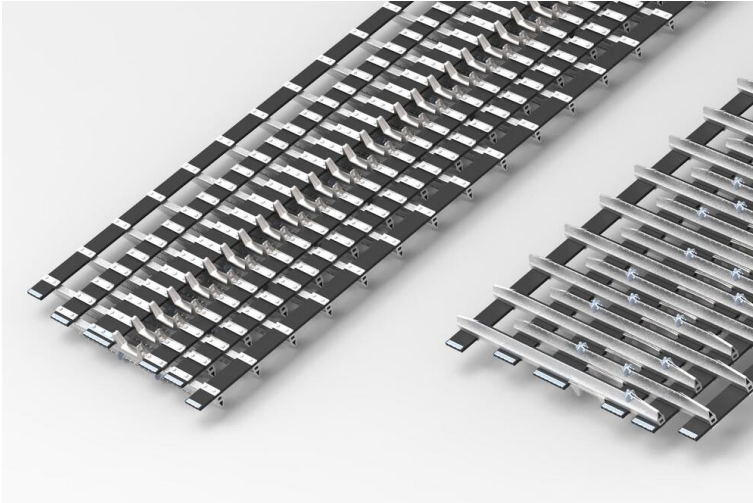
More information is available at www.step-g.com, www.kaessbohrerag.com and www.pistenbully.com.



STEP-G was part of the eventful Kässbohrer Supplier Day on the Zugspitze. // © STEP-G



The PistenBully 400 ParkPro – equipped with a 6-belt KombiPlus Track with STEP-G aluminium profiles. // © Kässbohrer



The 6-belt KombiPlus Track is extremely durable and rugged – it conquers every slope and is easy to steer. // © Kässbohrer

The company at a glance

ST Extruded Products Group, or STEP-G, is one of the world's leading producers of extruded aluminium profiles. With production sites in Germany, Belgium and China, STEP-G is a multinational company. The three German press plants in Bitterfeld, Bonn and Vogt are highly specialised and offer a comprehensive range of extruded profiles and bars. The automotive industry and its direct suppliers rely on the company's innovative quality. Other customers are in the aerospace, rail, and mechanical and electrical engineering industries as well as the construction sector. Completing the portfolio are various forms of processing through to component manufacturing. The foundry in Hettstedt with a comprehensive range of standard and special alloys provides reliable technology and consistent availability from one source.

From the company's foundation to the present day

In 1915, the first German factory was opened in Bitterfeld. It was followed in 1921 by the German plant in Bonn, in 1946 by the plant in Duffel, Belgium, and in 1952 by another German plant in Vogt. In 2000, the Chinese plant in Tianjin was commissioned. In 2006, Aleris International Inc. acquired the plants of Corus Aluminium. On 1 March 2015, the Aleris aluminium extrusion operations transferred to the Japanese company Sankyo Tateyama, Inc., a manufacturer of extruded and cast products. In 2019, the foundry in Hettstedt was incorporated into the STEP-G group.

More information is available at www.step-g.com and www.bug.de.