



KARL KÜFNER

A star of the **screen**

Karl Kufner KG's filter screens are adapted to any customer requirement. And this individuality starts with the making of the mould.

The patented V-filter from Kufner achieves minimal flow resistance combined with an extremely high filtration rate.

The strength and ease of installation of this clip filter developed by Kufner are impressive.



When Karl Kufner KG was founded in 1951, production was focused on weaving reeds. A short while later, the product range was extended to include filter screens and strainers – products whose applications can be found in a huge spectrum of industries, ranging from automotive engineering and machine manufacture to medical technology. The company in Albstadt has remained true to these two product groups through to the present day and consistently built on its expertise in the development, design and construction of tailor-made solutions – a wealth of experience that benefits well over 500 customers worldwide. With an extremely high manufacturing depth, Kufner ensures that this experience stays within the company. The best example of this is mouldmaking and special-purpose machine construction where the screen, strainer and filter experts rely on advanced wire-cutting technology from Mitsubishi Electric.

Weaving reeds on the one hand, and filter screens on the other – Karl Kufner KG unites two product groups that appear to have little in common at first glance. A second glance, however, reveals a close relationship, as the weaving reeds are used in the production of the metal meshes required for the manufacture of high-grade filter screens. Kufner therefore has a profound understanding of the needs of screen and strainer technology, evolving over the years into one of the technological

More than 500 customers worldwide benefit from the wealth of experience of Karl Kufner KG.



→ leaders on this market. The plastic-over-moulded metal-mesh screens and strainers from the Albstadt firm, for example, are absolutely unmatched.

Focus on all-inclusive customer service

In all areas where filters, screens and strainers are required for liquid and gaseous media, manufacturers can rely on the customer-oriented solutions from Karl Kufner KG. It is therefore almost a logical consequence that the company has become firmly established in many branches of industry with its products and aims to expand its already extremely broad basis. "Whereas no one knows how the automotive industry will develop, growth in medical technology is our assurance of being able to operate more independently of the fluctuations of the business cycle," says Henning Oetjen, head of marketing. It makes no difference which sector customer inquiries come from. "Our products are without exception geared to the particular requirements and are synonymous with top quality."

Kufner is also synonymous with all-inclusive approaches, with its range of tasks extending well beyond the manufacture of a particular product. "We cover all the steps from the original idea via the first trial mouldings through to the ready-to-install filter," says Henning Oetjen, explaining their modus operandi. Their aim is to support the customer to such a degree that in future even the neighbouring technologies, such as measurement and control, will be integrated in filter manufacture. This effort

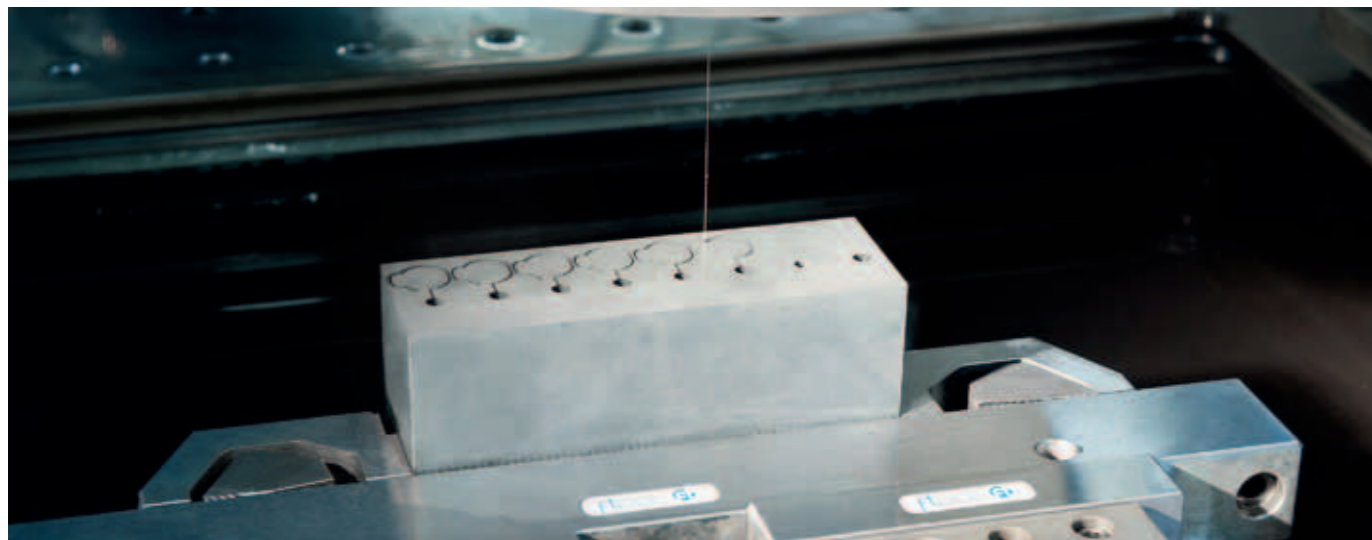
is necessary if the company wants to satisfy its own aspirations in terms of quality and customer orientation. And it also explains the high production volume, as the marketing manager explains: "A single job can amount to over 10 million parts per year. If desired, we can also handle the design and engineering for small and medium-sized series and then ensure the cost-effective production and punctual dispatch of the screens and filters developed specifically for the customer."

Mouldmaking with hypermodern wire erosion

The large pool of customers combined with the high standard of customisation necessitates a flexible response from Kufner. The share of internally produced items is consequently high. This becomes particularly obvious in mouldmaking and special-purpose machine construction where everything has to be just right. This is where those tools and moulds are produced that in the ongo-

Left The machine's high speed and reliability are two decisive factors for the high output of the FA20-S.

Bottom With wire diameters down to 0.1 millimetres, the FA20-S achieves super-fine cuts and radii.



All our products are individually tailored to the demanded requirements and exhibit superlative quality

ing production process are decisive for the quality of the numerous products. "The department's work is dominated by the constant confrontation with new challenges," says Henning Oetjen, summing up the day-to-day experience of the employees in mouldmaking and special-purpose machine construction.

The high manufacturing depth at Kufner also strongly suggests that nothing in mouldmaking is left to chance. They resort to all conceivable manufacturing technologies, which are put to use where they are most effective. This also applies to wire EDM when it comes to high-precision components with top-notch surface quality. Mitsubishi Electric has been the preferred supplier here since 2007. There were many reasons for the purchase of the FA20-S. "An investment in a machine is always initially an economic consideration. It was

here that Mitsubishi impressed us with the best price/performance ratio," says Henning Oetjen, looking back.

» A single job can amount to over 10 million parts per year. «

The FA20-S is indeed a high-power overall package. Running fast and dependably, it achieves precision to the nearest 2–3 µm and surface quality in the 2 µm range. Henning Oetjen sees in this machine the perfect basis for the overall process: "The machine's precision is deci-

sive for all the downstream production steps and its dependability is a sine qua non for continuous workflow." Long machining times are by no means rare in wire cutting. It is therefore all the more important that the FA20-S is also capable of running unmanned. Reliable automatic wire threading is an important feature, and the intuitive control and tools for monitoring also play their part.

The machine's reliability is exceptionally high. However, should a malfunction ever occur, help from Mitsubishi Electric is naturally called for. Kufner is more than satisfied: "The service team provides super-fast assistance either via the hotline or by sending out technicians," Henning Oetjen confirms. This positive experience with the technology and service have contributed to Kufner remaining faithful to the Japanese manufacturer this year and purchasing another machine from Mitsubishi Electric, this time in the sinker EDM field, an EA12-V Advance.

Extending its expertise

Kufner has plotted a clear course for the future. Both in mouldmaking and special-purpose machine manufacture as well as in other links in the process chain, the company is committed to quality and expertise so that customers in all sectors will continue to receive top-flight and tight-fitting screen, strainer and filter solutions.

www.kuefner.com

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Name and place of company:

Karl Kufner KG, Albstadt-Tailfingen,
Germany

Founding year:

1951

Managing director:

Bernd Kufner

Number of employees:

Over 300

Core business:

Manufacture of weaving reeds and
filter screens

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**Professionals in
Profile:
Henning Oetjen**



Please describe in a sentence what Karl Kufner KG does!

We supply customer-specific screen and filter solutions for gases and liquids, from the idea through to mass production.

How did you earn your first money?

With the production of weaving reeds.

What motivates you?

The goal of being the industry leader with customised solutions.

What's different about how you do things now, compared to five years ago?

We've raised our standard of quality considerably, e.g. with automated image processing, and can adapt our production extremely closely to the needs of our customers.

Where do you see your company in five years?

Measurement and control technology will be increasingly integrated in our screen and filter solutions, and we shall focus increasingly on engineering and design for customised solutions.

What was your biggest business success?

We are the technology leader with hybrid solutions, i.e. plastic over-moulded screens and filters with metal mesh.

What's your favourite way to relax?

Many of our employees find the area ideal for mountainbiking and other mountain pursuits.

What attributes do you value most in other people?

Dependability and precision.