

**Hildesheim, June 24th, 2016:
KSM Castings is among the TOP 100**



**Extra,
not ordinary.**

The company from Hildesheim belongs to Germany's innovation elite/honor by TOP 100-mentor Ranga Yogeshwar

Hildesheim – The TOP 100 companies, the most innovative companies of the German SMEs, will be awarded for the 23rd time. For the 3rd time, the KSM Castings Group GmbH belongs to this innovative elite. Prior to this, the company from Hildesheim took part in a challenging scientific selection process. Management innovation was analyzed as well as innovation success. The mentor of the innovation contest, Ranga Yogeshwar, honors the top-innovator in the course of the Deutschen Mittelstands-Summits on 24. Juni in Essen.

The KSM Castings Group GmbH, with headquarters in Hildesheim, was awarded with the TOP 100 logo. KSM is a supplier of aluminum cast and machined components for the automotive industry. KSM also has its own material development which is really unique within this industrial sector, and, thus, a good example for the innovative force of the company. „We encourage the out-of-the-box-thinking and initialize innovations for the future – that is an essential part of our success“, explained Dr. Stefan Geisler, KSM Innovation Management. The results are very impressive. Recently the company achieved 70% of its turnover with market innovations and improvements that were launched prior to its competitors. To achieve ground-breaking innovations, a fruitful climate for innovation is necessary. KSM Castings offers a comprehensive program to further educate its more than 1.900 employees in Germany. Employees can spend up to 25% of their working hours for the development of their own ideas.

This year, the top-innovator founded in 1947 is among the TOP 100 for the third time in a row. One of the reasons for this is the innovative force of the KSM Castings Group as well as the marketing. „In order to be successful in the global competition, innovative products and processes are a basic requirement. In doing so, we are and will be competitive in Germany and also distinguish ourselves from our international competition, commented CEO Franz Friedrich Butz who manages the company together with Markus Kloke (CSO) and Christoph Salentin (CFO). For the sales and promotion of new products, the marketing department which was outstanding in the assessment works closely together

with internal teams, including employees from the development department. Furthermore, the top innovator regularly takes a look into the future together with its customers. Future requirements are predicted and possibilities, for e.g. electromobility, are discussed in workshops with the global KSM team and specialists from the customers' side.

This year, more than 4.000 companies participated in the TOP 100. 366 of them reached the qualifying round. 284 of them reached the final round. 238 made it to the TOP 100 (maximum 100 in each of the three classes of company sizes). Once again, the assessment was done by Prof. Dr. Nikolaus Franke and his team from the Chair of Entrepreneurship and Innovation of the Vienna University of Economics. They evaluated more than 100 parameters in five assessment categories: „Innovation promoting top management“, „innovation climate“, „innovative processes and organization“, „innovation marketing/external orientation“ and „innovation success“.

The TOP 100 are among the pacesetters within their industrial branches. This is proven by the numbers of the assessment: 97 national market leaders and 32 global market leaders are among the companies. On average, they achieve 40% of their turnover with market innovations and product improvements that are launched prior to their competitors. Their sales growth was 28% above average compared to the corresponding industrial sector. Altogether, the SMEs applied for 2.292 national and international patents in the last three years. This innovative effort also pays off in new jobs: The TOP 100 plan to employ about 9.500 new employees within the next three years.

The TOP 100 mentor, science journalist and TV-moderator Ranga Yogeshwar is impressed by the quality of the companies and hopes for a signal effect: „The method used by the TOP 100 to generate new ideas and groundbreaking products and services is in the truest sense of the word remarkable. I am really happy that the award visualizes these qualities. Hopefully, their success encourages other companies to follow suit. In the future, this innovative culture will become more and more important for all companies“

TOP 100: The competition

Since 1993, compamedia awards the TOP 100 logo to SMEs for exceptional innovative force and innovation successes above-average. Since 2002, the scientific leadership lies in the hands of Prof. Dr. Nikolaus Franke from the Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation of the Vienna University of Economics. The mentor of TOP 100 is the scientific journalist and TV moderator Ranga Yogeshwar. Partners of the project are the Fraunhofer-Gesellschaft zur Förderung der angewandten Forschung (Fraunhofer Society for the Promotion of Applied Research) and the BVMW (German Association for Small and Medium-sized Businesses). From media side, the manager magazin accompanies the comparison of the companies. More information under www.top100.de.

Background: The KSM Castings Group is a leading producer of automotive lightweight components for chassis, transmissions, engines and steering. Specialized in aluminum and magnesium components, KSM strives for the top position in both technology and quality. As an important supplier to the global automotive industry, the company is already among the top employers. Reliable partnerships, customer orientation and cost effectiveness are essential key points of the company's strategy. The basis, however, are first-class employees.



KSM operates 8 production plants in Germany, Czech Republic, USA and China with a total of approximately 3,300 employees. Among its customers are the major automotive producers and automotive suppliers like Volkswagen, Daimler, ZF, Benteler and Bosch. In 2015, the company group achieved a turnover of approximately 520 million EUR.

Further information about the KSM Castings Group can be taken from our website www.ksmcastings.com.

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