



27.-29. APRIL 2016



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**12th Interbrush
27th–29th April 2016, Messe Freiburg**

**Interview with Ulrich Zahoransky about Interbrush:
This is where investment decisions are made**

Ulrich Zahoransky is Chairman of the Board of ZAHORANSKY AG. As the leading manufacturer of blow moulding machines, blister packaging machines, toothbrush production equipment, machines for the production of brushes and brooms, as well as mascara and interdental brushes, his family has been in the brush business since 1902. Ulrich Zahoransky was born in Freiburg in 1954. After earning his degree in industrial engineering from Karlsruhe Technical University, Ulrich Zahoransky joined the family business in 1987. In 1995, he became managing director, and in 2003, following the company's going public, he became a member of the board. Every four years, the leading international trade fair of the brush and broom industry takes place practically on his doorstep. Mr Zahoransky explains the importance of Interbrush for his company and for the industry as a whole.

?: Interbrush is held every four years: What has changed since 2012? What are going to be the hot topics at the 2016 trade fair in Freiburg? What makes Interbrush so important for you, for ZAHORANSKY?

Ulrich Zahoransky: Interbrush is the most important industry trade fair for the brush industry. All machine manufacturers and suppliers of the brush industry will be exhibiting at Interbrush. This gives our customers the opportunity to meet all the suppliers and compare their offers, which serves as an important gauge for the following four years. On top of that, the trade fair allows us to engage in dialogue about both technical and commercial matters with almost all of our customers.



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The merger of Borghi and Boucherie to form the Boucherie Borghi Group has led to fundamental changes in the machine sector of the industry. The industry is looking forward to seeing how the new Group will present itself at the trade fair.

We exhibit at many other trade shows, but these are generally trade fairs for the plastics industry, where only the machine manufacturers Borghi, Boucherie and ZAHORANSKY have their own stands, rather than the entire brush industry.

?: The brush industry is global – so is your company. Which regions of the world are most important for you? Where are you represented?

Zahoransky: First of all, we have to make a distinction here: Many of our smaller customers are brush manufacturers who concentrate on Germany, or on Europe, rather than being global players. On the other hand, multinational companies in the toothbrush business, such as Procter & Gamble, Colgate and Unilever, have an international orientation. Brush machine manufacturers are always international. This has always been the case, not just since the inception of globalisation.

ZAHORANSKY has manufacturing sites in Spain and India, as well as sales and service companies in Hong Kong, China, Japan and the United States. Also, we are currently setting up a company in Brazil. There are a range of other countries, where our sales representatives help us develop the market.

?: Is Interbrush in Freiburg a kind of meeting point, a reunion of sorts, for your industry? What topics are discussed?

Zahoransky: To call the trade fair a reunion is not a suitable description at all. Many customers postpone their investment decisions until after Interbrush, or are expecting to come to a decision during the trade fair. This is why all of our staff at the stand have to work hard to win customers over. While deals are not necessarily signed at the trade fair, the weeks following the



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event often see a lot of deal closures. This makes the trade fair a stressful time for us, because we only have three days to talk to all prospective customers.

?: Laypersons will have likely trouble distinguishing between the various products: Which brushes, brooms or paint rollers are used for what purpose? Which is the largest segment? Do you produce machines and equipment for all of these segments? Could you give us an idea of ZAHORANSKY's size?

Zahoransky: ZAHORANSKY is not active in the area of paint brushes and rollers. In the brush sector, toothbrushes account for the largest share by far, which is reflected in our machines, too. The second largest segments are brooms, followed by household brushes – washing up brushes and toilet brushes. Mascara and interdental brushes are another important sector, as are twisted brushes and technical brushes. ZAHORANSKY works in all of these areas.

In 2015, we generated sales of around 83 million euros, 30 percent of which were in the area of injection moulds. Most of our injection moulds are for our toothbrush customers. We have 716 employees world-wide, of which 63 are apprentices.

?: Originally, the production of brushes was manual work – does manual work still exist in your industry? And if it does – where? Where are the limits to automated production in terms of size, fineness and accuracy?

Zahoransky: The German Brush Manufacturers' Association still trains brush- and broommakers, including in how to make brushes manually. In practice, however, manual brushmaking has disappeared in the industrialised world. In India, you can still find manual brushmakers, although they are also probably bound to disappear.

In automated production, it is above all the natural materials,



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such as coconut, horsehair, goatshair that are difficult to process. This is because the filaments are never entirely even, or they are “dirty”, or because they are extremely thin. Abrasive materials of the type required for many technical applications can also cause problems, because they lead to extremely quick wear to components of the tufting tool.

?: Anyone can picture a paint roller, a paint brush, a carpet brush, a shaving brush or an eyeliner brush. But what are the differences between products in the eyes of the expert? And what about those industry products which would be surprising to a layperson, or even to an expert? Do you have any examples? Who does ZAHORANSKY deliver their machines to?

Zahoransky: First of all, the products can be differentiated by the quality of the injection moulds used, secondly by the method by which the bundles are fastened. Leaving aside a range of less frequently used processes, there are basically three processes: anchoring, looping and overmoulding.

Three examples of possible brush applications: Large brush plates are used for transporting sheet metal, avoiding any scratching from particles produced during processing by allowing these particles to fall into the brush. Other interesting applications include the sealing of wind turbines with strip brushes and the medical swab brushes used by gynaecologists.

As I said, ZAHORANSKY works in all application areas for brushes and delivers machines all over the world. Procter & Gamble, Colgate, Unilever, Trisa, Schiffer and Mink are amongst our most important customers.

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