

Blanco

Continues growth course

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From left to right: Wolfgang Schneider, Technical Director, Rüdiger Böhle, Commercial Director, and Frank Gfrörer, Chairman of the Board of Management. Photo: Blanco

The sink and mixer specialist Blanco remains on course for growth. Headquartered in Oberderdingen in Baden-Wuerttemberg, the company increased its consolidated sales by EUR 15 million to EUR 394 million in the financial year 2018. That corresponds to a growth of 5%.

In Germany, the largest single market, the Blanco Group grew by 10 million euros compared to 2017 and generated 137 million euros last year (+ 7.5%). Sales in markets outside Germany increased to 257 million euros, which corresponds to 65% of total sales. The international markets developed differently. Above all, many European regions and Asia posted above-average growth rates. "2018 was another successful year. We were able to increase our sales both domestically and in many international regions, partly against the market trend ", summarizes CEO Frank Gfrörer on the occasion of the annual press conference.

The water place in the kitchen: multifunctional and smart

"In particular, our Silgranit sinks, which excite our customers worldwide thanks to outstanding material

properties, clever features and contemporary designs, contributed significantly to sales growth," explains Gfrörer. Blanco has further consolidated its leading role in the field of granite sinks in the world markets. For example, lines such as Etagon, which is available in Silgranit PuraDur, stainless steel and ceramics, have contributed to growth: with its integrated level and the ability to efficiently create a third functional level in a single basin, it is one of the bestsellers.

The product areas Kitchen Faucets and Accessories also posted above-average growth. "The future is multifunctional and smart," says Gfrörer. With a new generation of kitchen faucets that offer their users a significant increase in convenience - such as precise measuring cup function, filtered drinking water or thanks to the sensor enable non-contact operation - Blanco ushered in the era of its smart fittings. The premium manufacturer also attaches great importance to a trend-setting service, which is constantly being developed - in sales, in logistics as well as in technical customer service. With new services such as the fitting service for smart fittings or the dimensioning and installation service including training for individually planned SteelArt stainless steel worktops, Blanco offers its trade partners solution-oriented know-how transfer and competent customer support on site.

Blanco is also breaking new ground in communications. In 2018, for example, the company carried out a digital brand campaign for the first time. This made it possible to sensitize consumers at an early stage to the topic of sinks and faucets, thereby promoting targeted demand for Blanco products in retail.

Investments in production capacity of Silgranit sinks

Blanco is committed to further growth and invested 18.9 million euros last year. The international share will be significantly higher in 2018 due to the new silgranite flushing facility in the Czech Republic, which is currently under construction. Important investments were also made in the expansion of plant technologies in the lead factory for silgranite in Sinsheim. In addition, numerous manufacturing processes were designed more efficiently in the stainless steel competence center in Sulzfeld. In the European logistics center in Bruchsal, the consolidation was supplemented by state-of-the-art conveyor technology in favor of even better performance in the future.

Frank Gfrörer expects moderate growth for the current year. Although external factors such as trade conflicts or the Brexit issue could have a dampening effect on the economy, the Blanco boss said. But let's assume a stable consumer climate in Germany and the international regions. Overall, however, volatile markets and very different developments are still to be expected.

"We continue to focus on the consumer - worldwide. We will therefore consistently orient ourselves to the needs of consumers in the relevant markets, offering them orientation as early as possible in the very early phase of the planned kitchen purchase. At the same time, we will do our utmost to provide retailers with high-quality, well thought-out products, holistic systems for sinks, faucets and waste organization, as well as reliable service, in order to provide the best possible support for sales," emphasizes Frank Gfrörer.

With 1,500 employees, including 1,100 at German locations, Blanco wants to implement its ambitious growth targets in 2019 as well. The sink and mixer specialist is one of the best employers in Germany, as confirmed by the latest analysis of the news magazine Focus. A high level of employee orientation and an appreciative approach are rewarded by the employees as well as the attractive work environment and the opportunity to take on responsible tasks at an early stage.

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- [Blanco](#)