

Himolla

Celebrates 70th anniversary

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Himolla is one of the largest upholstered furniture manufacturers in Europe. Photo: Himolla

"We make upholstered furniture for people. Only the designs that stand up to our name and claim 'heavenly, chubby, pleasant' are produced," says Karl Sommermeyer (70) about his company. Since 1995 he has been managing director of the Upper Bavarian upholstery manufacturer Himolla. At the end of the year he would like to say goodbye to the well-deserved retirement after a total of 42 years in the Welle Group. But until that happens, there are good reasons for the Ostwestfalen and its 3,200 employees to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Himolla.

Himolla was founded in 1948. Today, the company of the Welle Group is one of the largest and most successful upholstered furniture manufacturers in Europe. When Karl Sommermeyer took over the management at the end of 1995, Himolla was close to bankruptcy. "All the necessary skills were there, but they had to be awakened again," recalls the then 47-year-old. Rather than making a makeshift effort to refurbish the existing assortment, he prefers to focus fundamentally on the increasing customizability of new system furniture - and with success.

Today, Himolla customers can put together their own custom upholstered furniture from 64 million

options. Turnover has quadrupled since 1996. "It speaks for the company that we have moved from a very difficult situation to where we are today. While the upholstery industry is increasingly emigrating elsewhere, we still employ 1,100 people here at our Taufkirchen / Vils site. The region participates in the company and is proud to have such a significant local employer ", says the managing director, for whom the training of own specialists is a central topic.

Even without support from overseas, Himolla is no longer involved today - especially in the field of sewing, which accounts for a large proportion of the still very artisan upholstered furniture industry. "We need a cost mix to be competitive and stay," says Sommermeyer, who employs a total of 2,100 people at six foreign locations in Hungary, Slovakia, Romania and Poland. "These are 100 percent owned companies, where each workplace exactly meets the local standard. Because we attach great importance to a consistently high quality and productivity. "

On the occasion of the 70th anniversary of Himolla, the company invites to an in-house open house, which takes place from 24th September to 3rd October 2018 in Taufkirchen / Vils. "As a thank you to our customers, there will also be an exclusive anniversary model," announces Karl Sommermeyer. And how does it continue for him personally? "I'm retiring at the end of the year and then we'll see." He will then no longer be attending the next trade fairs in Cologne, Milan and Brussels that are important for Himolla - at least not as managing director of the upholstered furniture manufacturer. His successor will be Ralph Bestgen.

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