

Fastbolt prepares ground for fresh shoots

After putting its expansion plans on ice in 2008, Fastbolt Germany decided in early January to start the first phase of construction at its Gronau headquarters. We asked Group managing director, Ekkehard Beermann, for a progress report.

Gronau has been home to Fastbolt Schrauben Grosshandels since 1992, when Heinz Storch returned to his native Germany to establish a centre to service the whole European market. In 1995 the current warehouse and group headquarters was custom built, undergoing a major extension in 1999 to bring warehouse capacity to over 8,000 locations.

"Phase 1 of the new construction programme stands for a 1,600 square metre extension of the existing warehouse facility," explains Ekkehard Beermann. "This will enable Fastbolt to increase its own storage capacity in Gronau to about 12,500 pallets." At the same time four additional truck loading docks will be installed and the packaging department will be restructured to provide higher capacity and improve efficiency. The project is due for completion in late June."

"After the quiet year 2009 we thought to have found the right moment to take a first decision to improve our logistics situation here in Gronau," says Beermann. "Our intention was to take a small step and maximise the progress that comes with it. Increasing our storage capacity by almost 50% enables us to stop using an external warehouse for buffer stock and finally gives us enough space to add new product to our range."

Besides expansion within the existing product groups Fastbolt will start selling as of August a sophisticated range of DIN 912 in Grade 8.8 and DIN 7991 in both Grades 8.8 and 10.9. "We are a small company and will always keep our role as a range specialist but we think that DIN 912 and DIN 7991 fit perfectly to what we are already known for today", says Beermann.

Fastbolt is currently preparing its new 2010 catalogue, which it plans to present to the market no later than August. "We feel 2010 will keep us extremely busy," Beermann adds. "Increased raw material prices, currency fluctuations, longer delivery times and rocketing container rates have turned most of 2009's developments around. Product availability will become a real issue, we think, in the upcoming months. 2010 will be challenging and we believe this important phase in our logistics expansion comes at exactly the right time."

