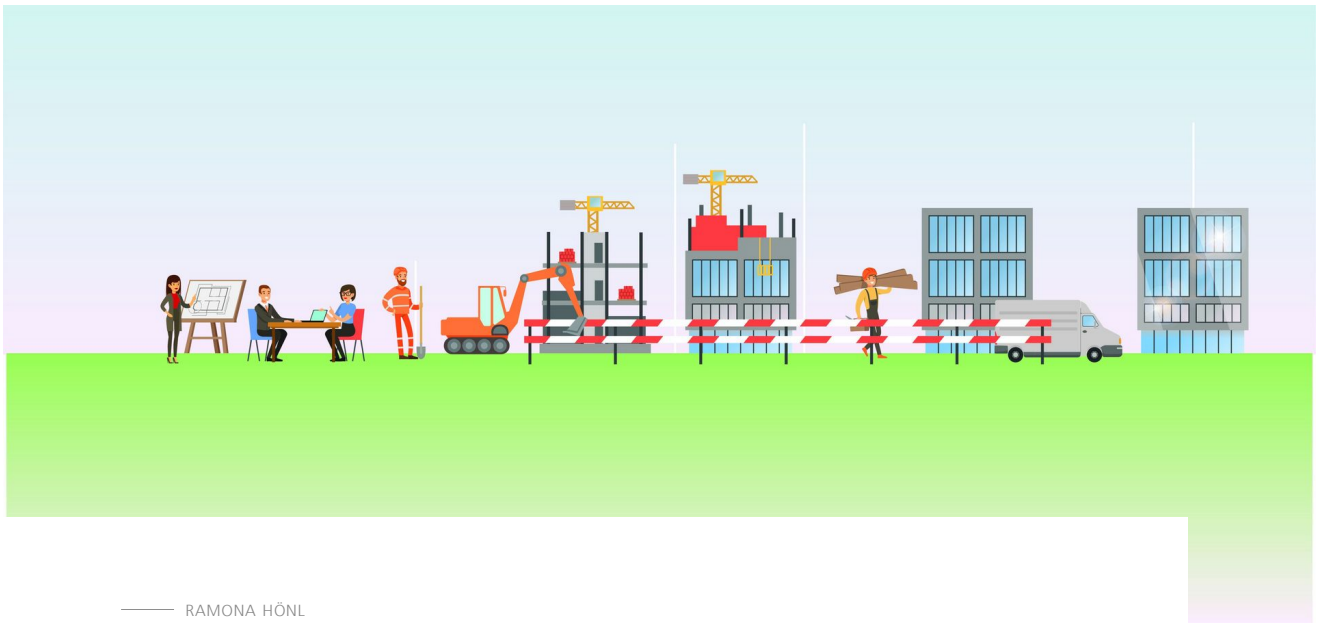

RAMONA HÖNL

"Employees should be able to identify with the building."

Anyone visiting the TRUMPF headquarters in Ditzingen will immediately notice a number of cranes. The new parking garage opened its doors for the first time a few weeks ago. A bridge over Gerlinger Strasse has connected two buildings since last year and the company's own gym is just taking shape. TRUMPF is also more than happy to build internationally, for example when constructing the Smart Factory in Chicago or expanding the new production facility belonging to TRUMPF subsidiary JFY in Yangzhou, China.

TRUMPF buildings have already received many awards for their extraordinary industrial architecture: The Smart Factory in Chicago won the German Steel Construction Award in 2018. Two years earlier, the Ditzingen campus won the 2016 Industry Prize in the category "Urban Planning Facilities". The Association of German Architects (BDA) awarded the company restaurant "Blautopf" the "Nike for Social Commitment" in 2013.

TRUMPF invests heavily in construction projects. This is evident in the current annual report. Construction accounted for 43.2 percent of total capital expenditure in 2017/2018. But why do companies actually build? And what should they bear in mind when doing so? Jürgen Schäfer, Head of Corporate Real Estate Management & Sustainable Business at TRUMPF, explains more.

Mr. Schäfer, what influence do commercial properties have on a company´s success?

There are several aspects to this. On the one hand, our impressive buildings enhance TRUMPF's positive public image. They contribute to brand development with their clear architecture and high-quality design. In addition, we adapt the buildings to our work processes in order to improve the production processes. And importantly, we want our employees to identify with the buildings, so that working in them is a pleasure.

How do you manage to remain within the specifications?

In the case of major public projects, the timeline and budget are often exceeded – but this is not the case with us. In order to complete our projects according to plan, we must know the full scope of the project and plan realistically for the unforeseeable. Who is responsible for what must be clear to everyone and all project participants must coordinate with each

other from the outset. When it comes to major public projects, there are very often interruptions and role changes within the project teams. A large amount of information is lost as a result.

The TRUMPF company restaurant "Blautopf" in Ditzingen is one of Jürgen Schäfer's favorite projects. In 2013, the Association of German Architects (BDA) awarded the building the Architecture Prize.

In 2016, the Ditzingen Campus won the Industry Prize in the category "Urban Planning Facilities". Shown above: The gatehouse.

The ground-breaking ceremony for the new production hall at the TRUMPF site in Hettingen in January 2019. 120 employees are to move into the competence center in two years.

In Chicago, TRUMPF inaugurated a Smart Factory for networked sheet metal processing in 2017.

In May 2018, the TRUMPF subsidiary JFY in Yangzhou opened the Group's largest production site worldwide to date. The production area is 19,000 m².

What was the most rewarding and the least pleasant experience with a construction project for you personally?

My favorite project was the "Blautopf" company restaurant in Ditzingen, because from a technical point of view it presented the biggest challenge. For the wooden roof structure we had to carry out many tests and calculations because the wood used is "alive" compared to building materials such as steel or concrete. I haven't had a bad project so far but during some I could have done without the – literally – sweaty or frosty phases, like when searching for a plot of land in the scorching sun in Mexico or in Chicago at -30° C.

What advice can you give to private house builders?

Always plan in a buffer – both for the move-in date and for the budget. However, this buffer must not be revealed to the architect and the contractors.

Jürgen Schäfer

Jürgen Schäfer is the man for construction at TRUMPF. As Head of Corporate Real Estate Management & Sustainable Business, he knows exactly what matters when it comes to commercial real estate.

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