

# chances

The magazine that creates perspectives.



**150 YEARS  
UMDASCH  
GROUP**

**LET'S CELEBRATE**  
*together*

The Umdasch Group:  
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Issue 01/2018



# LET'S CELEBRATE *together*

## **Dear Colleagues, Dear Companions and Partners!**

Our company was born 150 years ago on 19 February 1868. It was on this very day that our great-grandfather Stefan Hopferwieser was granted the concession for his joinery business – and the foundation for the company as it exists today was laid.

It is our explicit wish that we should all celebrate this anniversary together. Because you are also part of this unique history. It is through your commitment, your loyalty and your ideas that we have become what we are today.

That is, on the one hand, a global concern which operates worldwide and that has made a fine name for itself over the decades in its core areas of formwork and shopfitting. But it is more than that. Our attitude and the values according to which we act within our societal, social and economic environment have made us into a reliable partner in many respects.

That is why we are proud to look back on 150 years of history. Proud of partnerships sealed with a handshake. Proud that we have been able to provide jobs for so many people, and that we can continue to do so. And proud that the company is still run according to standards which focus on the people involved.

And that makes us optimistic as we look towards the future. Because we are convinced and we shall do all we can to ensure that these values from the past 150 years will be carried forward and also lived by the generations to come.

We should like to thank you with an anniversary year full of activities. We hope that you will celebrate with us. And that you will continue to accompany us on our journey into the future.

## **Thank you!**

*Hilde & Alfred Part of*  **150 YEARS  
UMDASCH  
GROUP**

Hilde Umdasch and Alfred Umdasch,  
Owner Umdasch Group AG



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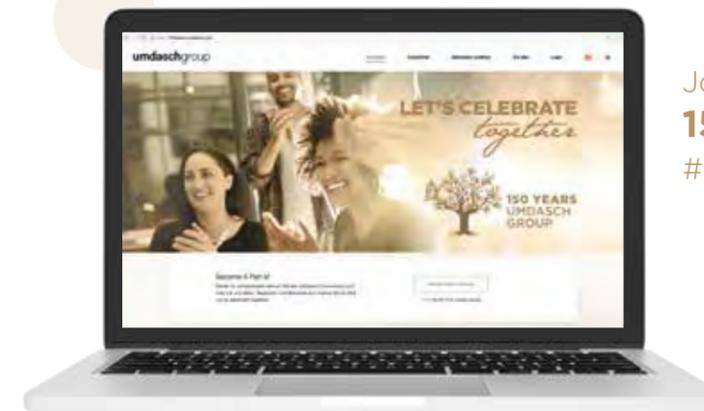
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The Umdasch Foundation is an initiative of Hilde Umdasch and Alfred Umdasch which has been established with the goal of linking together the fields of education, economy and ethics. It supports projects within their companies. And it also supports initiatives which focus on the topics of education and knowledge transfer worldwide. [www.umdachfoundation.com](http://www.umdachfoundation.com)

*chances* magazine presents these projects. On the occasion of the birthday of the Umdasch Group this special edition focuses exclusively on the **150th anniversary**. And it tells the stories of the people who make our company what it is: **yesterday – today – tomorrow**.



Join us on:  
[150years.umdach.com](http://150years.umdach.com)  
[#150yearsUmdaschGroup](https://twitter.com/150yearsUmdaschGroup)



# chances yesterday





Stefan Hopferwieser.

# A feeling for the business.

Our founder Stefan Hopferwieser came from a very poor family and initially entered service as a stable boy. However, he was also very bright and was interested in the processes and developments of his time. And he longed to make more of himself. Since he did not have the financial means before then, it was not until he was nineteen that he entered into an apprenticeship with a master carpenter. In 1868, when he was granted the concession to establish his own business, he moved it first of all to the village of Kollmitzberg.

What was it that made Stefan Hopferwieser decide to move the location of his little firm to Amstetten just one year later? Ultimately we can only hazard a guess. And yet we believe that we can follow his train of thought quite logically.

*“The Kaiserin Elisabeth Westbahn (Editor’s note: today’s ‘Westbahnstrecke’), the railway link between Vienna and Salzburg, had just opened, as had the Rudolfsbahn (Editor’s note: today’s ‘Selzthalbahn’), the southern railway route from Amstetten. And so it was evident that sooner or later the town would become an important traffic hub. And traffic routes have always ensured that businesses could flourish. I had a hunch that there would be a lot of building there over the next years. Of course business was going quite well with the turning of hydraulic rams for water installations. But sometimes you just need to take a risk. And really I saw our future elsewhere. When we added a joinery business to the sawmill and purchased a plot of land as well, there were plenty of people who thought I had taken leave of my senses.”*



1875: The former mill at Oberwörth, the home of the Hopferwieser family and the company's birthplace.

In addition to this spirit of enterprise there was also the element of chance. Not only was Amstetten expanding and needed new buildings; in 1877 a large fire destroyed numerous houses on the marketplace, and Hopferwieser played a decisive role in rebuilding them.

However, Stefan Hopferwieser was not only a businessman; he was also very interested in future new developments – what we would call R&D today. The patents for a mechanical hydraulic ram and a stencil cutter were based on his initiatives.

*“That was really something: a carpenter’s firm from Amstetten at the World Fair in 1873. We country bumpkins among all the big firms, most of which already had a world reputation at that time. There you could find names like Thonet, Lobmeyr and Bösendorfer – and Hopferwieser in the middle. I had applied with my two patents for a mechanical hydraulic ram and a stencil cutter. And I was immediately awarded a medal. We were incredibly proud. And I felt I was strengthened in my decision about the course we were taking.”*

At about the turn of the century Stefan Hopferwieser largely handed over the business to his son Alfred. The borders of the monarchy defined the radius of action of the company. And the extension of the business model was closely linked with the golden age of the Austro-Hungarian empire.

We found ourselves wondering about the reasons why Alfred Hopferwieser, the second-generation entrepreneur, decided to focus on the development of scaffolding.

*“The monarchy was at its zenith. It had become the second-largest empire in Europe, after Russia. However, industrial development was still lagging behind. Things caught up around the turn of the century. That also meant that many traffic routes had to be built or renovated so that trade could flow smoothly. And it all needed to happen quickly. That was when we had the idea about scaffolding for building bridges because these were in a very poor state, especially in the eastern and southern regions. Our initial contracts were followed by others and we quickly made a name for ourselves. That meant that we had to keep on expanding. Our workforce grew at this time to 90 employees.”*



Hopferwieser erected building scaffolding for bridge construction throughout the entire Danube Monarchy, as here in Marburg on the Danube.



Josef Umdasch.

## Thinking outside the box.

Two world wars interrupted the success story several times. The Second World War in particular left its mark on the company. Alfred Hopferwieser’s daughter Mathilde had fallen in love with and married a teacher from Upper Austria; Josef Umdasch was a newcomer to the business when he took over at the helm of the company. With great skill, as it turned out.

We need not speculate about possible discussions as to whether the company should be rebuilt after the bombing attacks during the last months of the war in 1945. In particular, Josef Umdasch’s son Alfred Umdasch, who was born during those years, can remember them clearly.

*“My father often spoke about how he stood literally gazing at the ruins of the company. The railway station in Amstetten was a strategically important supplies station during the war, and it was located directly next to our works. The bombs aimed at this crucial location during the last days of the war also hit our company premises, which was razed to the ground. And then the Russian forces of occupation arrived. Within a short time the company was also financially ruined. When I look back to that time it seems to me to be absolutely understandable that my father should have asked himself whether or not he should go on.”*

Josef Umdasch decided against returning to a secure position as a teacher – thereby choosing the company. The rest is history. The change from a craft firm to an industrial business. The 1960s and 70s were characterised by specialisation in the core areas and the internationalisation of the company. The 1980s were the decade in which the business of large-scale projects really started – both in the construction sector and in shopfitting.

The following era of globalisation from the 1990s was also the era of the fourth generation. After the death of their father Josef Umdasch, Hilde Umdasch and Alfred Umdasch took over the direction of the company.



**2004**

Burj Khalifa - Doka supplies the formwork for the world's tallest building.



**1937**

Josef Umdasch marries Stefan Hopferwieser's granddaughter Mathilde Hopferwieser and joins the management in 1939.



**1873**

The World's Fair in Vienna: Hopferwieser's exhibits win awards.



**150 YEARS  
UMDASCH  
GROUP**

2018

**2001**

The purchase of Assmann Ladenbau leads to the merger of two successful companies - Umdasch Shop-Concept and Assmann Ladenbau.



**1940**

Hopferwieser produces windows, doors, halls and barracks of wood.



**1868**

18 February 1868. The Umdasch Group is born. At the time it was a small joinery. The "Concession to operate a joinery firm" was granted to Stefan Hopferwieser.

# The Milestones

More on [150years.umdach.com](http://150years.umdach.com)



**1955 - 1956**

Two major contracts prompt the specialisation of the two business areas shopfitting and formwork technology (Doka):

- Construction of the Danube Power Station Ybbs/Persenberg (1955)
- Shopfitting for 1,000 self-service shops for the food chain A&O (1956)

**1949**

The company is completely destroyed during the Second World War and then rebuilt from 1949.



**1968**

The Umdasch Group gains a new area of competence with the establishment of the firm's own metalworking section.



**1961**

Germany - founding of the first Doka subsidiary abroad. Shortly after the Bauma takes place in Munich.

**1961**

The company St. & A. Hopferwieser is transformed into Umdasch KG.



**2016**

Founding of Doka Ventures - an important step into the future.



# chances today



# Our companions

The Umdasch Group is more than a corporate history extending back over 150 years, and more than a family business or an internationally successful group of companies. The Umdasch Group is above all the people who are behind this success. It is high time, therefore, to call these companions out from behind the curtain and to ask them what they associate with our company.

“Since the very beginning I have associated good cooperation with the Umdasch Group as well as the many projects we have realised successfully together. During my 31 years at HABAU I have experienced how we have developed in the same direction as regards an international approach and market development. We are family companies – that is something remarkable and is something which links our two firms. As such we have our own culture, a distinct appreciation especially to all our employees. That distinguishes us from other firms. I wish the Umdasch Group every success in the future, and also that it may retain this spirit of enterprise!”



**DIPL.-ING. ANTON KÄRNER**

Technical Director, HABAU Hoch- und Tiefbaugesellschaft (Austria)  
Long-standing customer of Doka Austria

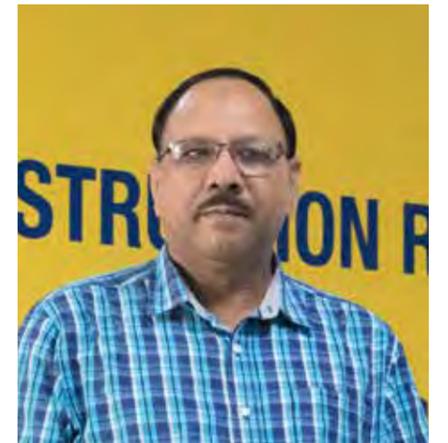


“For RENOLIT the Umdasch Group represents a partnership with a long history. We are proud to be a long-standing partner of the Umdasch Group. The partnership has grown over the years from our joint development of a completely new product. It is based on professionalism which can be found on all levels of the company, and on the far-sightedness of the owners and employees who adopt a pioneering approach in the fields of responsibility.”

**FABRIZIO CARELLO**

Managing Director RENOLIT GOR (Italy)  
Long-standing development partner in the field of the Xlife panel

“The family-oriented culture and ethics that our organization exemplifies align with my personal views and beliefs, and I am very proud to be a part of such a company. I have seven children and ten grandchildren, and it makes me very happy to see my son, Jabbar, working for Doka Gulf too. He was recently promoted, and as he enjoys his successful career and growth, I will enjoy my retirement next year. The Umdasch Group will always be a big part of my life.”



**MOHAMMAD RAZZAQ**

Warehouse Supervisor, Doka Gulf (United Arab Emirates)  
Doka employee since the early 1980s



“People and interpersonal relationships are very important in my work as well as in my personal life. Umdasch Group is a company which values people and not only offers many opportunities to its employees, but also supports a lot of charity projects aiming at various disadvantaged people or groups. That’s why I see Umdasch Group as a strong, successful and stable company.”

**MARKÉTA ŠMÍDOVÁ**

Head of Human Resources at Story Design –  
Czech subsidiary company of the Umdasch Shopfitting Group

“Solidarity has always been one of the chief characteristics of Umdasch. You could always be sure that help would be available whenever an employee had problems. That is quite remarkable. You could be proud to have a good job at Umdasch. The company has a good reputation and has developed very well. I enjoyed working for Umdasch and as a member of the pensioners’ club I still have close links to the firm.”



**MARIA ELLBÖCK**

long-standing leading employee  
in the sales department of the Doka Group  
in Amstetten from 1956 - 1986

You will find more stories  
about our companions under:  
[150years.umdasc.com](https://www.150years.umdasc.com)



*“You must  
always find your*

# balance

*culturally.”*

The further you move out of your radius the more you will encounter the unknown. That applies to companies as well: Increasing internationalisation means that there are also more points of contact with foreign cultures. That is a good thing because it makes us open to new experiences and enriches both sides of the exchange. This confronts us with challenges which we can best encounter with sensitivity and tolerance.

*part  
of*



**150 YEARS  
UMDASCH  
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Stephanie Lutz interacts with about 40 nationalities at her workplace. Dubai – which is where the 31 year old has been working for four years with Doka – is a melting-pot of different cultures. *“Communication is an important factor. English is our main language at work, but not everyone speaks it equally fluently, and there are lots of different dialects. In many cases there is also the religious background, but age counts and so does how someone has grown up and above all, what your views are. You often find yourself faced with the question as to how you should behave. In Muslim culture, for example, alcohol is prohibited. People celebrate without it, which is unusual in some cultures. You must always find your balance culturally.”* That becomes easier with time, but often you cannot avoid the frequently-mentioned ‘Culture Clash’, for example, when you offer to shake hands with someone, and your gesture is not returned.

*“The cultural diversity makes day-to-day living incredibly interesting, and you learn something new every day. Contrary to the prejudice which often prevails, women are highly respected in the UAE and are just as successful in their careers as men. That can be seen in a statistic which proves there are even more women in managerial positions than in Germany,”* comments Stephanie.

*“The company’s roots are in Amstetten, but the international influence makes its employees more open for other cultures – even those who work in Austria.”*

Those who fail to understand the common differences between cultures, particularly in their day-to-day lives will struggle when it comes to doing business. This can be seen in numerous examples of large firms who have all given up or who have had to make several attempts, for example in India or China, because they did not take local conditions sufficiently



Stephanie Lutz grew up in Germany and studied in Australia.

into account or thought that the standards which they had determined centrally could be applied to the entire world.

**“The sense of belonging was always there.”**

In answer to the question as to whether and how the social role of the company is in evidence in day-to-day procedures, Stephanie reports that there is a strong sense of responsibility for the employees, who come from all over the world to live in the regions and who find a sort of substitute family in their colleagues. *“We support each other when things are difficult, and we celebrate together on special occasions. The sense of belonging was always there and it becomes more official because of the projects like the one with the Umdasch Foundation.”* (see the following contribution)

**“You just have to abide by the local rules.”**

Stephanie has often experienced herself the extent to which beliefs and prejudices are responsible for misunderstandings and lack of understanding: *“I have been in the region for six years now and my parents are still worried when I as a woman travel to Lebanon.*

*When I am there I notice how open, friendly and helpful the people are. I was also in Saudi Arabia. Although Saudi Arabia is frequently the subject of international criticism because of women’s rights, the people are very helpful and hospitable. You just have to abide by the local rules. For example, women must wear an abaya\*.”* Stephanie’s open approach comes naturally to her. *“I grew up with a multi-cultural background. My mother comes from the Philippines and my father comes from Bavaria. I always spent my holidays in Southeast Asia.”*

**“It is simply too expensive to go to school.”**

During her visits, she noticed how different not only the cultures are, but also the opportunities which people have. Stephanie explains: *“You learn to appreciate the fact that you have a good education and that it is affordable. Some of my friends who grew up only in Germany take that for granted. But my cousins in the Philippines cannot afford to go to university because it is simply too expensive and is not supported by the state.”*

According to a current UNESCO study, over 260 million children worldwide are unable to attend school. In sub-Saharan Africa that

is true of one child in five! The main cause is poverty, followed by long journeys to school. And then there is the inequality of the sexes: If a child is allowed to attend school, it will be the boys in the family who do so – not the girls.

The Umdasch Foundation has adopted this global problem as one of its goals, in that it supports projects aimed at better educational opportunities for children and young people worldwide. Stephanie is responsible for one of these projects.

**“It is moving to see how the employees speak with the young people.”**

This project was adopted by the Umdasch Foundation on the initiative of Doka Middle East & Africa. Firstly, young people from SOS Children’s Villages are supported financially on their journey towards an independent life (see the following contribution). But not only that. Doka employees from the region act as mentors for some of these children and serve as contacts for all the questions which young people are confronted with on their path towards adulthood. Stephanie comments: *“In fact, we have four employees*

*who serve as mentors. They meet the young people, who are between 16 and 19, regularly and talk with them about their careers, motivation and life. At the beginning, they couldn’t imagine how much influence they would have on a young person. They are curious and ask lots of questions.”*

For the Umdasch Foundation, this project is exemplary not only because of its educational focus but also because of the involvement of the local team and their support ending up where it should: directly with the young people.

**You can read in the next article ‘Friends for Life’ how the cooperation with SOS Children’s Villages changes the lives of the young people.**

\* An abaya is a traditional Islamic gown. It is a loose-fitting floor-length over-garment with long sleeves.



# Friends for Life



Within the framework of the project the young people from the SOS Children's Villages visited Doka in Beirut.



Somebody must help these young people! Andrea El Khoury, Lama Ayache, Alain Hantouche and Maher Merhi all agreed on that immediately last spring when they first heard about Stephanie Lutz's idea (see page 21) to support young people from SOS Children's Villages on their journey towards independence. But at that stage, the four employees of Doka Lebanon had not yet planned on becoming actively involved as mentors.

*"I didn't know what mentoring was, so I first had to google it,"* remembers Andrea El-Khoury, who took over the project on site. Nonetheless, the determined 27-year-old was full of enthusiasm and inspired her fellow colleagues with her eagerness. The first meeting was organised promptly and the four mentoring couples were set up. *"You cannot imagine how much we all enjoy working with these young people. Our mentees always ask us when we are going to meet up again,"* continues Andrea. All the same, it was a completely new experience for both sides.

*"At the beginning I was nervous; I didn't know what I should say about myself,"* says Hadia\*, who has been meeting Andrea regularly since then. It seems hard to imagine that when you meet the lively eighteen-year-old schoolgirl. She looks relaxed and confident as she gazes into the camera. The words come out in a rush when Stephanie interviews her in a video. *"Now I'm quite relaxed; it's as if I were meeting my sister. I have learned a lot from Andrea about life, not just about my education,"* she comments.

*"The most important thing I try to give her is the message that when she suffers a setback she must pick herself up again and carry on,"* says Andrea. She has experienced directly that "life is not a bed of roses," as she puts it. At the age of 17, she moved alone from a little village to Beirut, a metropolis with over a million inhabitants, in order to study. It was a brave decision, because everything was quite different from at home and her parents were far away. She had to take on casual jobs in order to finance her studies.

Next year Hadia will also leave her home in Abrah, a little mountain village, in order to study in Beirut. For the schoolgirl, it will be an essential first step towards standing on her own feet. She has been living in the SOS Children's Village for 12 years. Here she has found a new family and a home. Andrea will also be supporting her on her journey towards independence. *"I am trying to prepare her to face the challenges which she will encounter in Beirut as a girl living alone. She will find it is a completely new environment,"* she says. Together they have already found suitable study courses for Hadia. *"I originally wanted to become a doctor. I was mainly thinking about the salary, and I wanted people to see me as being somebody important. I have learned from Andrea that I should choose the profession that interests me the most and that it is not important what other people think".* Now she is wondering about studying the humanities, which appeals to her more.

Andrea's colleagues Alain, Lama and Maher also provide their mentees with advice and practical help. During their meetings, the main topic is the future and the education of the young people, but personal factors are also important. The four mentoring couples have been meeting for the past six months. It began as a small pilot project, but today it is an important fixed point in the lives for all eight of them. Nonetheless the mentoring programme is still only in its early stages and needs to be expanded further, however; Andrea and Hadia have already decided that they will remain in contact – because, as both of them point out, they have found in each other "friends for life".

## INFOBOX

The Umdasch Foundation and Doka Lebanon started a mentoring project with SOS Children's Villages in Lebanon. Four employees of Doka Lebanon accompany children from difficult situations on their journey towards independence. Regular meetings and shared activities provide support during their education and at the start of their careers. The Umdasch Foundation provides financial support.

The young people aged between 16 - 19 years live in designated accommodation of SOS Children's Villages, where they are prepared to stand on their own feet. Great emphasis is placed on their education, career advice and the search for a suitable job. The mentoring programme is still in its pilot phase; however the project could be expanded in the future and help more young people. You will find more information and videos with these young people under [150years.umdach.com](https://www.150years.umdach.com)



# Gangnam *Style*

“Op...op...op...oppa Gangnam Style.” These catchy electro-beats catapulted the song “Gangnam Style 2012” into the world charts and into the ears of countless people. “The shopping mile in the Gangnam District is as extravagant as the world-famous hit”, comments Ricarda Rainer, who spent her overseas semester in Seoul.

*What Seoul and the Josef Umdasch Research Prize have in common: Both are stations on the career path of Ricarda Rainer.*

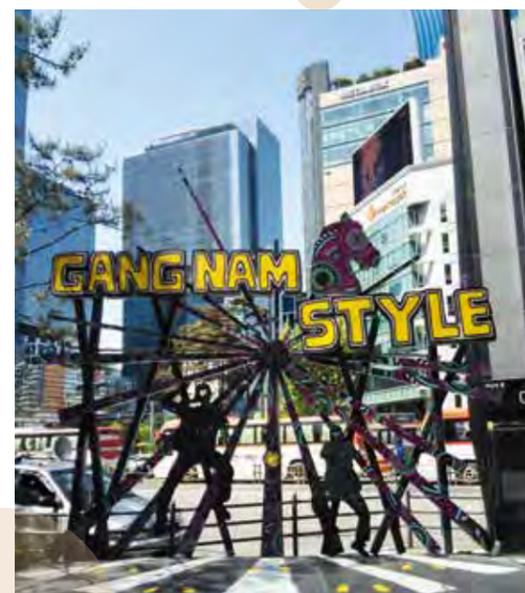
Ricarda Rainer's decision to spend a semester abroad in Seoul in 2015 was a spontaneous one. "When I read the e-mail about the spare university place in Seoul, I didn't give it much thought but just applied immediately. I had only been at the university for a week and hadn't planned it at all – after all, I had only just started to study for my Master's," recalls the 25-year-old student from Vienna. Ten days before the semester began in Seoul she booked her flight and a place in a student's hall of residence in the capital of South Korea. At first sight it is hard to imagine that the elegantly dressed student of Economics, would be capable of such a spontaneous action. The winner of the Josef Umdasch Research Prize 2017 gives the impression of being calm and level-headed. She answers every question very precisely when *chances* meets her for an interview at her home university, the University of Economics and Business in Vienna.

But the blond student from Vienna is also very focused and extremely determined. When she spots a chance she takes it up immediately and without hesitation. That was also the case with the application for the Josef Umdasch Research Prize. When she learned of the award during a lecture as part of her study course in Marketing and Strategic Management, she did not hesitate. A short while later she and two fellow-students submitted work on the digitalisation of clothing stores. And she accepted at once when she was offered an internship within the framework of the Josef Umdasch Prize so that she could link her work with practical experience. Since then she has been an intern for Umdasch Digital Retail, which provides digital equipment for the retail sector. "It is really quite something to experience an entire project from the beginning through to implementation,"



she comments on her first impressions and smiles. The most important experience during her internship was, however, to learn about the differences between theory and practice, which are often considerable. "In theory there are no limits. In practice some ideas are simply not feasible, either because they are not economically viable or because the technology is not sophisticated enough," she emphasises.

To this day she can "hardly believe" that she would win the Josef Umdasch Research Prize. "I was completely overwhelmed. You suddenly hear the name of your team being called out. And



then suddenly you are standing on the stage out there, holding your prize in your hands. I immediately sent a selfie to my parents. They were incredibly proud of me," is how she remembers the prize-giving ceremony, beaming.

Gangnam, South Korea's district where the rich and famous live, also made a lasting impression on the young marketing student. The shop of a famous sports article manufacturer was shaped like a football. "I felt I was in a spaceship," explains Ricarda Rainer, who often used to enjoy strolling through town after lectures in Seoul.

Spending a semester so far from home was an enormous challenge for the young woman from Vienna, as she told *chances*. But for Ricarda the opportunity to develop further and gain new experiences outweighed the problems. And that, in a way is the student's motto. She is now almost at the end of her Master's course. "Don't stay rooted to the spot – keep going," is how she tackles things, as she says. She is convinced that renewal is also the source of every innovation.



**THE JOSEF UMDASCH RESEARCH PRIZE 2017**

The logistics process of the future, the profitability of digital signage solutions and the use of media and communications channels in shopfitting investments – these are the questions which the participants in last year's Josef Umdasch Research Prize examined and developed in their Master's dissertations. No sooner said than done – the prize which the winners could look forward to took the form not only of money, but also included the opportunity to make use of their research work within the framework of an internship. The prize was presented by the Umdasch Shopfitting Group. You will find more information on the Josef Umdasch Research Prize 2018 on page 37.



chances  
tomorrow

part of  150 YEARS  
UMDASCH  
GROUP

*Where is the best place to  
celebrate your 150th birthday?*

*Right.*  
**In the Museum.**

Anyone who now thinks “Of course, at that age”, could not be more wrong. Because the museum that the Umdasch Group chose as their representative location for their jubilee was not old and dusty and full of antiques and prehistoric relics. No: the recently opened Weltmuseum Wien in Vienna is precisely the opposite: modern, contemporary and global. At the same time it shows respect in its treatment of tradition and culture. And those are our values exactly. That is why this article – although the title is “In the Museum” – can also be found in the section entitled “Tomorrow”.





You will be impressed as soon as you enter the pillared hall of the Emperor's former guest house, later the Museum of Ethnology and now known as the Weltmuseum, directly on Heldenplatz. Not so much by the magnificence and the marble, and not by the history which the space radiates. You will be surprised instead by the bustle, which you would not expect within such venerable walls. The new concept has transformed this area into a public space. That means that a shop, a café and a bistro invite passers-by to take a break and stop by to meet others.

And you will be no less surprised if you visit the exhibition space on the upper floors. The new media tell exciting stories; the rooms appear clear and modern and accordingly emphasise all the more the value of the exhibits and cultural treasures from every country under the sun.

There are many parallels to the Umdasch Group. We, too, are proud of our history and uphold our traditions and values. At the same time, however, we know all too well: It is not enough to rest on the laurels of the past. This knowledge makes us invest in the future – in the future of building and retailing and in the future into which our society is developing. And another shared characteristic: as a global concern we too are a place of encounter for different people and cultures (see here the report on page 21 "Stephanie Lutz").

**A somewhat different exhibition**

It soon became clear: this is the perfect place to celebrate our jubilee in style. The next question was: how? How do we want to present ourselves there? And what should the people who visit us there think about us? A long, intensive process began. The result



The pillared hall during the opening of the new Weltmuseum.

is worth seeing. And anyone who thinks that it is all about our past is wrong again. In fact, it is mostly about the future. About the future of our world which is closely linked with the future of our company.

The major worldwide trends of our time describe the great global challenges of our time: rapidly increasing urbanisation, digitalisation, the associated changes in the worlds of work, rapidly changing markets, the increasingly acute energy and resource situation – topics which affect us all. The world's most powerful decision-makers and us as a company, but in fact also each and every one of us. We are all affected. And so we are all called upon to work towards their solution.

Our exhibition is dedicated to the role that companies play in the overcoming of these challenges. Two pavilions illuminate this role. One of them – the Pavilion of the Past – tells the milestones in the history of the Umdasch Group from a perspective which focuses

on the conditions under which they took place in each case. The second pavilion is entirely dedicated to the future of humankind and leads us away into the world of tomorrow. The recordings in both pavilions are all multimedia presentations and make use of the latest technologies.

The multimedia partner is the Ars Electronica Center in Linz together with the Digital Retailers of Umdasch Shopfitting. The design of the exhibition was created by Stefan Umdasch. The implementation was carried out by the shopfitting team at Umdasch Shopfitting.

The exhibition will run from the beginning of March to the end of November 2018 in the Weltmuseum. After that the installation will be on display in the Infocenter Amstetten. For all those who do not want to wait until then, we shall be running a raffle for 200 entry tickets for the Weltmuseum Wien. So why not join in and win. Where? Under [150years.umdach.com](http://150years.umdach.com)



The planned Umdasch exhibition is dedicated to the past and the future.

A portrait of Andreas J. Ludwig, a middle-aged man with dark hair, wearing a dark blue suit, white shirt, and a patterned tie. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

“What is different again at Umdasch is the active social commitment.”

part  
of



*Why we shall be looking into the future with the same respect as into the past during the year of our 150th anniversary; what red Lamborghinis say about corporate culture and what all that has to do with the new Josef Umdasch Research Prize ... We spoke about these topics with Andreas J. Ludwig, the spokesman of the executive board and the project owner for the 150th anniversary.*

## Umdasch: a Hipster with a Bushy Beard

**Ed.:** Andreas Ludwig, you have been at the head of the firm since 2010. How did you see the Umdasch Group before that? And what do you think of us now, almost eight years later?

*AJL:* At that time I had had two kinds of experience. Firstly at Swarovski and Zumtobel. And then a flagrant example, at UBS, the investment bank. There the managers all had their red Lamborghinis delivered directly to the company car park as an incentive for everyone. The message went home. Things were totally different at Swarovski and Zumtobel. Both were run by the owners, and in both firms people acted with restraint and the perspective was set towards a long period of time. And I imagined that Umdasch would be like that too.

**Ed.:** And?

*AJL:* In principle it's exactly the same. But what is different again at Umdasch is the active social commitment. Almost as if it were part of our *raison d'être*. In other firms a certain percentage of the profits is donated to a charitable cause. But we think hard about how we can do good for society as well as for the company.

**Ed.:** Can you give us an example so that we understand exactly what you mean?

*AJL:* I will give you two examples, so that it is even clearer. Take, for example, our employee initiative VITAL. The preventive programme is aimed at the health of our workforce, but we as a company also profit from it because people are not ill so frequently. And the same applies to our commitment to the education of children and young people. Those affected get a better chance of education and we get a better chance of well-educated employees.

**Ed.:** 150 years is a very long time. If the Umdasch Group had a beard – would it be a white bushy beard? Or a hipster beard and therefore a fashionable accessory?

*AJL:* I think we carry both aspects within us. On the one hand we are very aware of tradition, which is why we maintain our values and attitudes. And that is what makes us uncompromising when someone contravenes them. Although I am sure that the employees of a company whose management team communicates its values, know by intuition what is expected from them – or not. But then on the other hand we are very open-minded, generous and ready to invest in things that seem to us to be important and right for our future. But if there is one thing that we definitely are not, it's a fashion accessory. We are not interested in useless trivia;

we have no time for luxury and we don't like having to stand in the limelight. But that is what makes us likable. I hear that repeatedly from outsiders.

**Ed.: To return to the jubilee. Considering that we “don't like having to stand in the limelight” there's really rather a lot going on?**

*AJL: That is correct, but the activities are almost all directed inwards. We want to make the celebration into our celebration, because together we are also responsible for the success. Incidentally, that was the briefing that the owners gave us: we want a celebration for our employees. That is a generous thought which has guided us in our planning.*

**Ed.: Somewhat atypically, a decision was taken beforehand not to produce a commemorative publication. What was the reason for that? Normally producing a chronicle is really seen as being part of any corporate jubilee.**

*AJL: That is quite simple. A chronicle always gazes backwards into the past. And that is precisely what we didn't want. Of course we are concerned to honour our history. But focusing our gaze 150 years into the future is at least as exciting. By doing that we are making a statement. And that is why, for us, the focus also lies on the modern media. The exhibition in the Weltmuseum is just one example. Or there is the platform [150years.umdach.com](http://150years.umdach.com), where we invite the world to join in. And if we are completely honest: all chronicles always end up being consigned to the archives anyway.*

**Ed.: The Josef Umdasch Research Prizes is another project which looks to the future. How does that fit in with the anniversary year?**

*AJL: We have turned the Josef Umdasch Research Prize into a prize where sights are set on the future. And we believe that in this way it also fits in very well with our concept. The very fact that we address start-ups which study the new technologies which we employ within the company is a revolutionary one. The winners implement their ideas in the form of orders directly into our companies. And what I like there of course – and here we are coming full circle – is the*

*win-win situation it creates. We are not only “donating” a prize – no, we are placing an order which itself generates added value, creates jobs, pays taxes and so on.*

**Ed.: Classic entrepreneurship, which operates according to the principles of the prudent businessman – does that still have a future? Doesn't it create a disadvantage compared with companies which shift their profits to tax havens or produce their goods in low-wage countries under repugnant conditions?**

*AJL: I don't see it as a disadvantage at all and I am convinced that it will always pay off to run a business in a prudent and fair manner. In any case I believe that simply in view of the transparency which rules today, these excesses in the short or long term will be abolished or at least will become the exception. Nowadays you cannot conceal anything – sooner or later everything comes out into the open.*

*“We want to make the celebration into our celebration, because together we are also responsible for the success.”*

*And moreover I see a tremendous strength emerging from the middle of our society – a sort of new solidarity. I get the impression that the approach which focuses above all on profits is beginning to take a back seat. New generations are*

*also bringing new ideas of how to behave towards each other into the business sector – such as the Sharing Economy, for example. I believe that we need these counter-currents. Not in order to bring about radical change – but in the interests of a healthy core and a sound measure.*

**Ed.: The Umdasch Group will be turning 150 years old. The company is inviting us all to join in the celebration. What is your birthday present going to be?**

*AJL: I'm sure you're hoping for something spectacular (laughs). That is still a secret which I shall reveal on our platform (Editor's note: [150years.umdach.com](http://150years.umdach.com)) round about the birthday itself. It will be a surprise.*

*But apart from that, I have a personal wish: I would be pleased if each and every one of us were to take part in one activity or another at least once during the course of the year. Even if it is only a posting or a comment on [150years.umdach.com](http://150years.umdach.com). I think the birthday child deserves that each of us wishes it “all the best” in our own particular way.*



Josef  
Umdasch  
Research Prize

in cooperation with **WSA**  
WORLD SUMMIT AWARDS

Josef Umdasch  
Research Prize 2018



*everything new – everything different*

To mark the anniversary year we have chosen a completely new approach for the prestigious prize. We have agreed to cooperate with the World Summit Awards. Every year they select the world's best start-up companies. In 2018 the important Awards Ceremony will take place in Vienna. In autumn 2017 questions were developed by our subsidiary companies and put to the young companies. Prizes will be awarded within the framework of the World Summit Awards in March. The main prize in each case will be an order for implementation. The awards ceremony will be held in the Weltmuseum Wien. Anyone who would like to take part in the event should send us an e-mail on [150years@umdach.com](mailto:150years@umdach.com). Updates and informations regarding the Josef Umdasch Research Prize will be regularly updated and can be found at [150years.umdach.com](http://150years.umdach.com).



# The employees of tomorrow

The future is starting today. Because today's children are the employees of tomorrow. They are the ones who will rewrite company histories like that of the Umdasch Group. But what do children and young people imagine their professional lives will be like? What will be different in the future? The editorial team of *chances* asked eight children of employees of the Umdasch Group from four continents and received answers which in some cases were very surprising ...



**Charlie Froggatt (4)**  
Ranches Primary, Dubai, V.A.E.

*"When I grow up I want to be a project manager just like my dad."*



**Emaan Shahin (8)**  
3th Grade at The Indian International School, Dubai, V.A.E.

*"I want to become an architect when I grow up because I love designing houses and buildings. If I become an architect I would design something which will be one among the seven wonders of the world. I would also build houses for poor people free of cost. In the future it may be possible to move permanent houses from one place to another. We should also construct eco-friendly buildings."*



**The Özatay twins (11)**

6th grade at Bilfen College, Istanbul, Turkey



**Zeynep Duru Özatay**

*"In the future, I want to be a doctor to help people and make their health better. I think doctors are very important for the world. I think medicines will change when I grow up because technology changes all the time. In the future, robots can help us at surgeries and the risk of the operations will be less."*

**Naz Özatay**

*"When I grow up I would like to be a lawyer, but as a lawyer I will always continue playing tennis because playing tennis makes me stronger, healthier and teaches me to lose and win. When I will be a lawyer, I would like to bring more justice to my country. In the future lawyers can work from home and see clients in internet without going office. But I don't think tennis will change much."*



**Petra Šubat Kardum (12)**

6th Grade at Primary School,  
Zagreb, Croatia

*"I want to be an actress, 'cause I really love acting and I'm pretty good at it. I'm actually a member of Film Club and Drama Group in our school and I act in Forum theatre also. I would love to act in some movie with Vin Diesel (he'll probably be too old but who cares? Not me lol). Oh and I love cars so it would be kind of cool to be in a movie with cars, something like 'Fast and Furious', 'Overdrive' or 'Born to race' ..."*

PETRA, 12 YEARS OLD, FRAN GALOVIC PRIMARY SCHOOL IN ZAGREB (6th grade)

I want to be an actress, 'cause I really love acting and I'm pretty good at it. I'm actually a member of Film Club and Drama Group in our school and I act in Forum theatre also.

I would love to act in some movie with Vin Diesel (he'll probably be too old but who cares? Not me lol).

Oh and I love cars so it would be kind of cool to be in a movie with cars, something like 'Fast and Furious', 'Overdrive' or 'Born to race'...



**Jakob Vomela (18)**

Technical College  
Waidhofen/Ybbs, Austria

*"When I was a child I wanted to become an astronaut. Today after I have passed my Matura\* I should like to work as a constructor in metal technology. I think it would be especially exciting to work in the automobile industry. In future the programs will provide more opportunities to construct and calculate more complex components."*

\*The Austrian matriculation examination



Lim Xin Way, 10 years old, student at Taylor's International School, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

My ambition is to become a lawyer. Becoming a lawyer sounds really cool, I would learn about the laws and fight for a person's rights, I would also be helping people who are bullied or accused. I could imagine that in the future, I wouldn't be carrying a thick book of laws, instead I would have a robot to carry all of my information about the laws.

**Lim Xin Way (10)**

Pupil at the Taylor International School,  
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

*"My ambition is to become a lawyer. Becoming a lawyer sounds really cool. I would learn about the laws and fight a person's rights. I would also be helping people who are bullied or accused. I could imagine that in the future, I wouldn't be carrying a thick book of laws, instead I would have a robot to carry all of my information about the laws."*



**Jimena Alejandra (5)**

Pupil at the Oxford School,  
Panama City, Panama

*"I want to be a doctor to take care of my family. My Clinic will be called 'Nice People'. At my clinic good persons will help people with illnesses."*



The picture shows Jimena Alejandra, who is treating a patient in front of her hospital.



# chances report

*part of*  **150 YEARS  
UMDASCH  
GROUP**



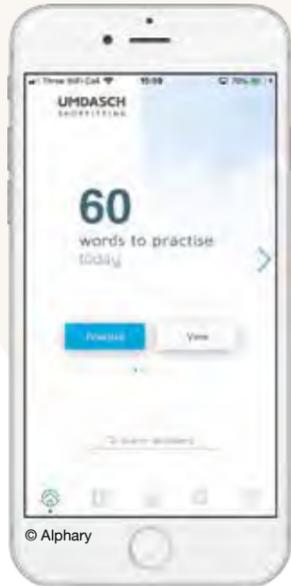
## Education helps

Tunari is a village nearby Bucharest, where Doka Romania HQ is located. Some of the inhabitants live there that lack the basic necessities of life: running water, hot meal, clean clothing. Education helps: With this approach the Romanian aid organisation ROTAS offers them a way out of poverty. The NGO provides schoolchildren with clothing, meals and extra tuition. In future it will be assisted by employees of Doka Romania, who will support ROTAS as volunteers – for example as coaches. Financial support is also provided by the Umdasch Foundation.

# Corporate Social Responsibility: *Project Flashes*



*A propos ... aid which is catching on*  
In early years Umdasch employees also used to support educational projects in order to provide people with the necessary tools for a better future. Otto Preißler, for example. A trained carpenter, he went to Papua New Guinea in the 1970s as a development worker. There he trained the native population in woodworking in a school and also taught them basic economics.



## App in the classroom

Classroom 4.0. In order to arouse the interest of young people in learning English, the Umdasch Foundation supports the English app “FeeBu”. Pupils at selected technical colleges in Austria can use the app free of charge during and outside lessons in order to improve their vocabulary with their mobile phones. It is an important contribution to professional development – after all, nowadays a good knowledge of English is a valuable qualification on the job market.

### *A propos ... Teaching with the latest technology*

In the past the Umdasch Group also provided schools with the latest technology for teaching in line with the latest trends. Even back in 1993: In those days a donation permitted the purchase of new EDP equipment and software for the students of the Höhere Lehranstalt für Umwelt und Wirtschaft Yspertal (Technical College of the Environment and Business Yspertal).



## Focus on employees

Not 150 years, but the longest-serving employees of the Umdasch Group have worked for the company for between a quarter of a century and up to 45 years. In our fast-paced times that is hardly a matter of course. It is a tradition in the Umdasch Group that many employees stay with the company for many years. It is a result of the special corporate culture. In order to encourage it there is a wide range of further training opportunities. But the numerous benefits at the firm's headquarters included the company's own sports and health courses, subsidised lunches in the canteen and works buses which carry employees from remote areas to work and home again.



### *A propos ... Staff anniversary from the earliest years*

The Umdasch Group has a tradition of showing its appreciation for long years of service. The first ceremonies honouring company jubilarians took place back in 1965. From the fleet of works buses to a company doctor, the firm's own library and the works association which still organises sports and cultural events today, the employees in those days were also offered additional amenities.



## Committed!

Instead of going to work, young trainees of Doka Germany spend one day in a social institution. From serving meals to homeless people or playing board games with the residents of a home for the elderly to reading stories to children in a cancer ward – the young volunteers join in and help for a day on a voluntary basis during their work. Through this campaign Doka Germany supports aid organisations in the region and the social commitment of their staff.

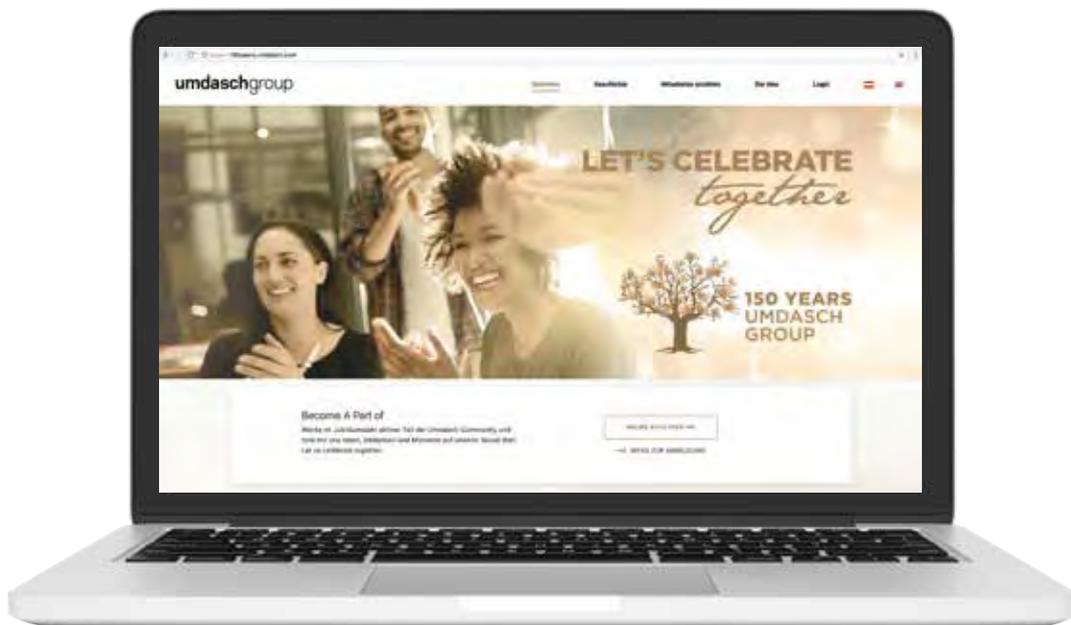


### *A propos ... Lending a hand*

Even during the early years, employees of the Umdasch Group lent a hand to help people in need. Following the severe earthquake in Friuli in Italy in 1976 an aid campaign was initiated and blankets were collected for the victims of the catastrophe. It is a commitment that continues to this day. In September 2017, when an earthquake convulsed Mexico, engineers from Doka México volunteered to help on the spot to determine which buildings were in danger of collapsing. The employees also brought in supports and pillars to secure the houses in the region.



# LET'S CELEBRATE *together*



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