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# Brennstoffspiegel + Mineralölrundschau

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special print

**Schmierstoffe:** Branche bleibt zuverlässig auch in schwierigen Zeiten



More than 20 percent of Siebert's employees work in research and development.

# Innovative partner for the mineral oil industry

A wide range of high-performance coolants and lubricating greases, comprehensive service, and storage and logistics tailored to the specific requirements of trade partners. In the course of its history dating back more than 140 years, Siebert, the medium-sized lubricant company based in Mönchengladbach, has established itself as a key market player.

**A**lubricant company operating in the private label sector must meet very specific requirements. "Siebert is an exclusive partner for the trade sector and supports around 200 companies around the world – from large international companies to small regional businesses," says Meinhard Kiehl, Director of Marketing and Product Management. As he describes it, this not only involves being a product supplier but also a service and development partner. He sees

great potential in the latter and intends to build on this in the years to come.

The partnership has multiple facets. It comprises the product range as well as the observation of diverse legal changes, such as GHS and REACH registrations, UFI (unique formula identifier) information and other services.

## Complete package

"Customer-specific solutions are one area," says Reinhard Sommer, who

is Sales Manager for North Germany at Siebert. "Sometimes the customer wants a grease in one specific colour. On other occasions, it is about optimising formulations for very specific applications." Three parties often work together in this scenario: the Siebert experts, the trade partner and the industrial customer, for example a supplier to the automotive industry.

These collaborative product development processes also highlight



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the high level of complexity that Siebert has to contend with. "As a private label specialist, we have to manage a wide array of brands and labelling as well as various types of packaging along with a range of different compositions," says Head of Marketing Thomas Genz, describing the specific nature of the company. "Thanks to our long tradition, we have learned how to handle this, organise our processes accordingly and be flexible. The key to delivering quickly is to have the right quantity available at the right time," he says. This also applies in exceptional circumstances such as the coronavirus crisis.

Siebert's service also includes providing its customers with specialist advice and support on site. "Our trade partners often provide a wide range of lubricants. In addition to Siebert's special lubricants, these also include lubricants such as gear oils, hydraulic oils and complementary products, such as tools and production accessories. This often makes it difficult for our partners to acquire in-depth specialist knowledge of every product," explains Kiehl. Siebert therefore offers training and advice as well as operational support at the end customer's premises. Siebert specialists are always available to assist their partners, especially with the marketing of new products such as GTL-based coolants. "Partnership is something we live by. And it is something we continuously build on because we see that it offers great opportunities for market development," says the Head of Marketing.

"Our trade partners have high expectations of us. These include acting with foresight in the interest of customers and swiftly adjusting to new market conditions. For example, they expect that we proactively inform them of new legal regulations or approvals," says Sommer.

The company has observed some important product trends:

- In the coolant sector, the performance requirements placed on processing agents are becoming more and more stringent. Siebert has developed GTL-based oils to meet these.
- It is also beneficial for market placement if the products do not have to carry any hazard pictograms or labels in accordance with the European CLP Regulation. Many of Siebert's lubricating greases are not subject to any labelling requirements.
- Lubricants for the food industry that have what is known as an NSF H1 registration as well as Halal or kosher certification are also in demand.

Besides specialist products, all-rounders suitable for many different work processes and materials sell particularly well. "However, specialisation is certainly not an issue for Siebert, as demonstrated by applications in CFRP processing," says Genz.

## Lithium-free greases

Another trend is the heightened demand for lithium-free greases. The price of the basic substance requi-

red for battery production has shot up over the past two years. Generally speaking, the price of lithium fluctuates greatly on the world market. The price of lithium is less noteworthy in the cost calculation for a car than for a lubricant. This has driven the development of calcium-based lubricating greases, which can have properties that are similar to those of lithium greases.

With a view to establishing itself as an innovative partner, Siebert has invested more than €1 million in laboratory capacities such as personnel and testing equipment in recent years and significantly increased its R&D budget. "More than 20 percent of Siebert's employees work in research and development," says Genz. The company also works closely with universities and research institutions and maintains long-term development partnerships with market leaders in the industry.

## GTL-based products

This has paved the way for another Siebert speciality: GTL-based coolants. By using synthetic base oils produced by means of gas-to-liquid technology, Siebert is now able to offer machining fluids with significantly improved properties. "These non water-miscible coolants have a higher flash point at 200 °C. The application processes are more stable, the oil can be subjected to greater loads thanks to its lower evaporation losses and foam build-up is also reduced," says Kiehl, summarising the benefits. For users, the result is that more parts can be produced per time unit and the grinding processes run better with less foam because air does not lubricate and consumption drops in the higher temperature range. Better flushing properties also increase the service life of the oil.

Siebert is a partner for the mineral oil industry, placing a special focus on a well-rounded service package designed to provide the trader with qualified assistance in all areas, in addition to offering an innovative product portfolio. ◀

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