

Press Release
Frankenberg, 27 January 2017

New Thonet GmbH Management Team

Brian Boyd joins the Frankenberg company as the new CEO, Norbert Ruf as Art Director

In connection with the company's international growth strategy, Brian Boyd, born in Ireland and former CEO of the furniture manufacturer Klöber, will assume the position of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Thonet GmbH effective 1 February 2017. He will be supported by Michael Erdelt, Chief Operating Officer (COO), and Norbert Ruf, who joins the company from Dedon in the position of Art Director. Ruf will be responsible for the marketing, communications and product development units.

Brian Boyd has acquired a great deal of both expertise and recognition in the furniture market due to his earlier work with Haworth and Scandinavian Business Seating, and, most recently, with the realignment of Klöber. He is looking forward to the new challenges waiting for him in Frankenberg: "The course that was set over the past two years, the international charisma of this traditional brand with its unique design icons, and a great team of employees are ideal prerequisites for the successful continuation of the course of growth."

Thonet GmbH most recently strengthened its position in the Lounge and Outdoor segments. The expanded and sharpened portfolio ensures that the company can serve numerous needs, especially in direct collaboration with architects and planners. In addition to strengthening the sales team with additional personnel, the realignment of the product portfolio has generated strong international growth for Thonet over the past three years. Motivated by successful new product launches at Orgatec 2016 and imm cologne 2017, the new management team aims to continue on this course with collective strength.

Thonet press contact international

neumann communication
Claudia Neumann, Anne Polch, Hanna Reif
Eigelstein 103-113
50668 Cologne
Germany
Tel. +49 (0) 221 – 91 39 49 0
Fax +49 (0) 221 – 91 39 49 19
E-mail thonet@neumann-communication.de

Thonet GmbH
Susanne Korn
Michael-Thonet-Straße 1
35066 Frankenberg
Germany
Tel. +49 (0) 6451 – 508 160
Fax +49 (0) 6451 – 508 168
E-mail susanne.korn@thonet.de

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Thonet – future-oriented furniture design with a long tradition

The unique success story of Thonet began with the work of master carpenter Michael Thonet. Since establishing his first workshop in Boppard on the River Rhine in 1819, the name Thonet has stood for high-quality, innovative and elegant furniture. The breakthrough came with the iconic chair No. 14, the so-called Vienna Coffee House Chair: the pioneering technique of bending solid beech wood for the first time enabled the mass production of chairs. The second milestone in design history was the tubular steel furniture by the famous Bauhaus architects Mart Stam, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Marcel Breuer in the 1930s. At the time, Thonet was the world's largest producer of these tubular steel furniture designs, which are considered timeless today.

For the company today, the continuous process of innovation stands in the foreground alongside a focus on tradition and fine craftsmanship. Thonet collaborates with renowned national and international designers – in addition, some of the furniture is designed by the in-house Thonet Design Team. All of the furniture is produced in the company-owned manufacturing facility, and, following the motto "Individuality is our standard", custom-tailored solutions are part of everyday life in Frankenberg. Michael Erdelt is the Managing Director of Thonet GmbH at the corporate head offices and production site Frankenberg/Eder (Germany). The descendants of Michael Thonet, the fifth and sixth generations, are actively involved with the company's business as partners and sales managers.