

„Only the Best“

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Only the best brands and the best quality, that is satellite wholesaler Doebis' business strategy. Their customers are exclusively dealers and other wholesalers; not end users. The concentration on quality products is a logical consequence to focusing on dealers: while end users primarily look at price and perhaps not so much at quality, with professionals it is the opposite. Since professional antenna installers are paid by their customers to erect the perfect satellite system, these installers need to use quality parts. In reality, the pros themselves are also looking closely at their costs.

Founded in 1987 by Hilmar Doebis, this company literally started in a garage. This garage eventually became a barn. Hilmar was a satellite enthusiast and was occupied back then with the sale of actuators with which he had great success. His company expanded but after 10 years he reached his personal limits. Since he had accumulated a customer base consisting of more than 1000 domestic and international addresses, his business became very attractive to others. The company Gäfgen saw the potential and acquired Doebis in 1998. Gäfgen is an old-time wholesaler in the electronics installation field; it was founded in 1920.

Since Gäfgen took over, Rainer Werking has been running things. Christoph Goebels

is owner and operator of Doebis. In 2003 Doebis moved to a new location in the business district of the small town of Muendersbach and only 17 km from the main highway to Frankfurt.

The fact that the mother company deals in the electronics installation field can be seen on the building: as soon as it gets dark out, the ceiling lights automatically come on – but only when motion sensors detect that someone has entered the room. Even the warehouses are heated although not with a normal heating system. It is much more ingenious. Rainer Werking explains, "10 holes were drilled that go 70 meters down into the ground. From there the ground water, sitting at a constant temperature of



▲ Rainer Werking modestly refers to himself as "Team Leader" and not General Manager. In reality he manages Doebis. But he really doesn't need a title; he already has one: he is the current German seniors shot-put champion!

14 ° C (57 ° F), is sent via circulating pumps to the heating system installed in the floor." And what is used to heat in the winter is also used to cool in the summer. Gäfgen is always happy to bring visitors to see the



▲ Doebis' facility in Muendersbach. The offices are located towards the front with the warehouses in the rear. A sign on the front door lets everyone know that multiple languages are spoken here: besides English and German, customers can also communicate in Turkish, Russian and French.



These two female employees have no problems working with all of the male employees. Kerstin Kraemer (left) handles all the incoming telephone calls while Jutta Lang (right) handles the media side of the business such as web site design as well as the ads that appear in every TELE-satellite issue. Jutta Lang has quite a bit of work ahead of her: Doebis is planning an online store where registered customers can place their orders.



Here is the technical support team: Dennis Hering (left), Erol Alguel (center) and Claus Ruebesam (right). Claus comments, "We handle all incoming repair contracts on the same day." Nothing is left lying around; it is all part of Doebis' customer service. Every work station has three antenna connections to the antenna farm at the front of the building. There you will find a 1.0-meter motorized antenna, a 1.2-meter motorized antenna, a Toroidal 90 for Turksat, Arabsat, Hotbird, Astra, W3A and Thor, a Maximum E85 Multifocus dish and a 1.0-meter multifeed. A small 60cm antenna with more than a 30-meter cable run serves as a reference point. "This allows us to test whether a reception problem is at the receiver end or at the antenna end", explains Claus.

advantages of the energy saving techniques used at the Doebis facility.

The lighting and heating systems aren't the only thriftiness that can be seen at Doebis; a visitor at the main entrance won't find a main lobby with a receptionist, instead they would walk right into the sales room. "Effective" would have to be the best word to describe the way Doebis operates. In 1998 when Doebis changed hands there were only seven employees; today it is 18. Rainer Werking, who made a point of highlighting the "Team Leader" title on his business card, counted them for us: "We have five technical employees, four office employees plus a Team Leader, five warehouse workers plus supervisor, a media designer and my secretary who also answers the telephone."

Doebis has everything a satellite installer would need, and then a little bit more. What satellite dealer today needs a 4.9-meter antenna? No problem, "we can deliver a dish like that immediately, we have them in stock", explains Rainer Werking as he shows the dish. Sure enough, there it is, a

A look in the shipping department: Maximilian Steiger prepares a package for shipping while warehouse supervisor Wilfried Kleeman looks over the shipping paperwork. The boxes on the pallets in the background have already been packed and are ready to be moved into one of the two shipping containers. There are always two containers sitting on their loading docks. Doebis works with the shipping company GLS; the containers are picked up every day and the boxes are delivered to the customers.



DXer's dream ready to be picked up! Naturally though, the majority of their business comes from other products: "70% of our sales involve receivers", notes Rainer Werking, "10% are from LNBS, 5% from signal analyzers with the rest being from dishes and accessories."

That it is receivers that make up most of the sales is obvious: they are the most expensive products. What about HD receivers? Rainer Werking surprised us: "For 2007 20% of our receivers are HD models, for 2008 we expect this to climb to 40% - of course, with the right kind of HD channels,

A look at the antenna section of the warehouse. Rainer Werking is holding two of the most asked for dishes. On the shelves to the right are mounting rings for the 1.9-meter antennas. Doebis also stocks 3.05 and 3.65-meter mesh antennas!



The Sales Team at work: customer orders find their way here to Karl-Friedrich Morgenthal (left) and Rainer Six (right)...



...and Thorsten Mueller (left) and Peter Michels-Thies (right) who is also project manager.



What do their sales look like geographically? "75% of our sales are domestic with the remaining 25% internationally in Europe", explains Rainer Werking, "we don't expect this ratio to change in the future." An expansion internationally is not being planned at this time. New customers must first go through a very strict set of controls: "Doebis requires proof of who they are, and for international customers, their tax and value-added tax numbers are needed", explains Rainer Werking their strategy to sell only to professional dealers.

What does Doebis see for the future? "Home Multimedia, that is, receivers with network connections", reveals Peter Michels-Thies, project manager. "HD Receivers", suggests Rainer Werking, "Our property is 8000 Sq-meters in size of which 1100 Sq-meters has already been occupied. We could expand 500 Sq-meters any time we want." There is enough room for continuous expansion at Doebis! Focusing on dealers has been a successful strategy, and coupled with rational and effective management, it is possible to offer attractive prices. Doebis is setting itself up very nicely for the future!

it could be even more."

Doebis focuses their efforts on quality brands. "Up until two years ago, some of our products were 'private label'", reflects Rainer Werking, "but we gave that up." It was a good decision; this gave Doebis the freedom to distribute products from quality manufacturers. "We currently have 100 different receiver models", explains Product Manager Karl-Friedrich Morgenthal. Every model from Humax is offered; Doebis is the main distributor for Humax in the German-speaking region. Models from Topfield and Eycos are also offered.

Not much free space can be seen in the warehouse. No problem, an extension can easily be added.

Rainer Werking shows us his favorite picture: "Where there is Unity, there is also Success". He explains that the end-effect looks something like this: "If the warehouse should get very busy, management also gets involved: we roll up our sleeves and work together to make sure that everything is packed for shipment." Teamwork becomes reality.

