

DIZ

Doepke-Info-Zeitung

The free customer newsletter from Doepke Schaltgeräte GmbH

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Trade fair highlights 2026

Autumn is just around the corner, which means trade fair and event season is once again upon us. With Light + Building in the spring traditionally showcasing new products and innovative developments, the usual autumn trade fairs provide the opportunity to focus on how products are faring on the market. Hearing directly from users and installers about their opinions and experiences provides us with vital feedback to help us further develop the individual products and the future direction of our portfolio: What is the market demanding? What direction are trends moving in? These conversations often give us valuable inspiration for developing new product ideas.

Doepke's autumn trade fair season begins with Gedatec, formerly known as belekro, which will be held on 13–15 October in Berlin. You will find Doepke in Hall 4.2 at stand 410. Stefan Davids will be speaking at the innovation forum held by trade magazine 'DE' on 14 October at 11:30 on the subject 'Focus on neutral conductors' and on 15 October at 10:30 on the 'Energy transition'.

Just one month later, on 19–21 November, the industry will gather in Hamburg at GET NORD. You will find us in Hall B 5 at Stand 344. You will also be able to meet Max Oevermann there. Few can explain electrical engineering in such an informative,

up-to-date and entertaining way as Max. The electrical educator and influencer posts regularly on YouTube, Instagram and TikTok, providing practical and easy-to-follow information on electrical safety. We are delighted to welcome him back to our stand at GET NORD, following his appearance with us at Light + Building.

We will also be exhibiting at PowerPark, GET NORD's workshop street: Hall B 7 Stand B7.P42. Exhibitors and experts will be on-hand to support trainees and budding professionals, provide valuable tips and help them with practical exercises. ■



Doepke international – our partners all over the world

USA: **Altech Corp.**

Founded: **1984**

Location: **Flemington, New Jersey**

Employees: **around 40**

Our partner Altech Corp. is one of the USA's leading providers of components for industrial automation and has a wide range of products available. Altech places great value on selling products that meet the requirements of UL and international standards, and also offers comprehensive technical advice and dedicated customer service. The employees support their customers from the planning phase through to implementation and work



with them to develop custom solutions for their applications.

Doepke and Altech have been working together for almost 30 years. The collaboration has grown since Doepke began producing

its own miniature circuit-breakers. Altech is extremely well-connected in the industry and has close links to the certification organisation Underwriters Laboratories (UL). For many products – such as miniature circuit-breakers – UL certification is a prerequisite for entering the US market. Altech is therefore far more than a sales agent for Doepke – they're now our main link with UL and customers in the US. Thanks to the efforts of Altech's employees, Doepke products are gaining increasing recognition and significance in the US. Conversely, Doepke is now one of Altech's key suppliers and partners. ■

We have already covered our company anniversary in several issues of DIZ. This time we're focussing entirely on the employees without whom Doepke's success story would not have been possible.

Doepke 70 YEARS

As of this anniversary year, Doepke currently employs more than 600 people worldwide. Many of them have been loyal to the company for 10, 25, 35 or even 40 years, with 30 of them also celebrating a significant service milestone this year.



ELKE BENTS-DE GROOT joined Doepke as an assembly worker in 1991. Today, she is an organiser and central point of contact for employees in technical sales. "My personal highlight was in 1996 when our then-Managing Director, Joachim Hagemann, offered me a new role in the HR department in his charming and boyish manner, with the words 'de Groot, do you want to do the payroll accounting?'" Elke cites the friendly, informal atmosphere as the main reason why she has stayed loyal to Doepke for so many years. In the 1990s, the Norden employees travelled to Bickenriede to get to know their colleagues there better; the trip included a football tournament and the chance to take a Trabant for a drive. The Bickenriede team also came to Norden for a return visit and a hiking tour of the local mudflats. Elke would choose Doepke again, given the chance: "There are lots of positives to working here that you won't necessarily find elsewhere."



GEROLD ROELFS has worked for Doepke for 41 years. When he joined the company, Doepke only had 60 employees, and the Development team consisted of just three people. Today, Gerold is in charge of development and construction with 75 employees, around 50 of whom work in product and system development. He has played a key role in helping shape Doepke's technical development over four decades, developing the first KV and type B residual current circuit-breakers, Building Systems Technology (SI System, Dupline) and many other products. He also introduced SMD technology to the production process. Developing young talent has always been important to Gerold: He developed and expanded the professional training and work/study programmes for the company's technical department. "I've always loved my job, whether building and developing products or leading and expanding the department and the teams," says Gerold. With regard to the company's development, he adds: "Doepke has grown a lot, but has still managed to keep the human touch and sense of mutual appreciation and, ultimately, that's what sets it apart for me."



ANJA BARKHOFF, a trained retail salesperson, has been working for Doepke for 34 years, during which she has spent time in various departments. She currently works in SMD assembly: "We work very independently here and it's varied work. For example, we create the files for the circuit boards that need to be assembled ourselves", says Anja Barkhoff. She enjoys her work and the many different people that she's got to know over the years, and says that she is still in contact with many of her former colleagues today. One special memory of Anja's is the trip the Norden staff took to the 25th anniversary of the production plant in Bickenriede: "That was legendary! However, our barbecue pool challenge that we filmed at the summer party four years ago is not easily forgotten."

Many thanks to Anja Barkhoff, Elke Bents-de Groot and Gerold Roelfs for their personal insights and also to all current and former employees for their commitment and dedication, and for helping to make Doepke the company it is today. ■

A shocking discovery on Ascension Day

This year, we introduced our mains conductor monitoring solutions DFS NU and DHS NU/NUS to our product portfolio. Fittingly, our colleague Ralf Schüler recently experienced first-hand exactly what can happen when a neutral conductor is interrupted:

While visiting his parents on Ascension Day, they told him how they had upgraded an under-cabinet luminaire above their kitchen sink from fluorescent to LED tubes the previous week. However, the tubes seemed to be faulty. They showed him how the tubes dimmed to half their brightness whenever they switched on the kettle. They also mentioned in passing that the microwave had started making strange noises recently and that the oven fan was no longer working. When they showed Ralf how the LED ceiling light got brighter when the kettle was switched on, alarm bells started ringing: N-conductor interruption!

He continues:

My parents had a multimeter, which confirmed my suspicions:

L1: 237 V, L2: 227 V, L3: 245 V

Kettle on:

L1: 175 V, L2: 267 V, L3: 277 V

In the distribution board, from 1979, all sockets in the house are protected by just one MCB on L1, with only the dishwasher and dryer protected on L2.



I called the municipal utilities' emergency service and they sent out an on-call technician. He confirmed my measurements with a voltage tester.

He removed the NH fuses and called in his colleagues from civil engineering as the situation posed an immediate danger. He said that it was the worst fault that an energy provider could encounter.

from the house to the blue line (L2) as the sealing compound had discoloured it green. The green-yellow PEN was on the underside and could only be seen with a mirror. Fortunately, the NH fuses had been removed and no-one was in the house!

The street was isolated again after 10 minutes and a new cable joint fitted and tested. At around 22:00 it was finally sealed.



Once a corroded N had been ruled out as a cause and I had ascertained that the problem was not only restricted to the kitchen, I suspected an interruption to the equipotential bonding bar or to the service box.

After removing the sealed cover, I was able to tighten many of the terminals, but the problem still remained, i. e. the cause appeared to actually be outside the house. The foundation earth electrode only seemed to be partially functional.



The old cable joint from 1979 was exposed at around 20:30 and part of the street had to do without power for around an hour, right during prime TV time. The joint was filled with a viscous sealing compound, but water was also leaking out. While the cables were being cleaned, the corroded PEN simply fell off.

Once the new joint had been connected, the technician from the utilities service found the following during the test measurement at the service box: 230 V on the PEN! The civil engineer had accidentally connected the PEN



By 23:00 the pavement had been re-paved and the Ascension Day hero was back on-call.

Incidentally, the house's distribution box from 1979 will soon be upgraded to the state of the art due to the installation of a heat pump.

For more information on neutral conductor interruption and neutral point displacement, go to <https://www.doepke.de/en/new-neutral-conductor-in-focus>. ■

Our electrical finds

Be it a mess of cables, a strange installation or even 'chindogu', the electrical curiosities we come across have one thing in common: they are unusual and eye-catching. Chindogu, by the way, is a Japanese word that means 'strange device' – in other words, inventions that the world doesn't really need, but laughs at instead.

We want to make you marvel, shake your head or laugh out loud by sharing our favourite electrical finds with you in this regular feature.



"That'll hold!" must have been what the person who did a quick fix on this short-circuit was thinking at the time. However, the system remained in operation for years after that – luckily without any further damage. Many thanks to Martina Rybakowski, from the von Spreckelsen electrical team, for sending in this photo and for the professional repairs.

Do you have an entertaining electrical find to show us? If so, please take a photo of it and send it to us at:

kommunikation@doepke.de

Important: We can only consider photos that you have taken yourself.

Work before pleasure?

Before Eddie tells us about his next trip, he has been given an important task to do. He has now been appointed 'guardian of the keys'. But let's start from the beginning:



The bicycle is a popular mode of transport at Doepke. This may be down to our proximity to the Netherlands or, perhaps, the lack of hills in East Frisia. But bicycles are not only used by employees commuting to work; there are also company and cargo bikes available on site for journeys between buildings. Since bicycle keys are notoriously small and often look alike, Eddie has now been put in charge of Doepke's bicycle keys and will be accompanying anyone running errands on the company bikes! ■

Qualified status secured!

Warmest congratulations to Tammo Christians, Eike Berndt, Finn Ole Martens, Lucas Fleetjer (from left to right) and Derk Weers (not pictured) for successfully completing their apprenticeship! We are delighted that you will be staying with Doepke and bringing your skills to our plastics injection moulding, building services, IT and tool-making teams. We also had the pleasure of



welcoming four apprentices to our headquarters in Norden and one to our production plant in Bickenriede. We wish everyone much success in the future! ■



Webinar with Max Oevermann

Few can communicate about electrical engineering in such an informative and entertaining way as Max Oevermann. The electrical educator and influencer will be a guest of the Doepke Academy on 8 October. Our colleagues Folkert Daniels and Lars Meyer will be speaking

to Max Oevermann about the causes and consequences of surges caused by neutral point displacement and our new switching devices with mains monitoring. We'd love to see you there. Register now: www.akademie.doepke.de (webinar in German). ■

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QUOTE OF THE QUARTER

*"Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep
your balance,
you must keep moving."*

*Albert Einstein (1879–1955),
theoretical physicist, Nobel laureate and
scientific icon*

DATES/NOTES

Online: Doepke Academy special
with Max Oevermann
8 October, 15:00 – 16:00

gedatec (Belektro) 2026, Berlin
13–15 October, Hall 4.2, Stand 410

GET NORD, Hamburg
19–21 November, Hall B 5, Stand 344

Jahrestagung Elektrosicherheit 2026,
Niedernhausen

25 November, Stefan Davids will be speaking