KARL MAYER

At the heart of it all despite the distance

Always up to date – Georg+Otto Friedrich GmbH tests k.management from KM.ON

Fig.: A view of production operations at Georg+Otto Friedrich (© Georg+Otto Friedrich)

In these times of coronavirus-induced travel and contact restrictions, the advantages of innovative digital solutions are becoming apparent, especially for daily working life. For example, leading European warp knitting company Georg+Otto Friedrich uses KM.ON's k.management software to establish the production performance of its machines, regardless of time and place. KARL MAYER's high-performance tricot machines are in operation at its headquarters in Groß-Zimmern, Hesse, and in Limbach- Oberfrohna, Saxony. At the end of last year, Georg+Otto Friedrich used k.ey to network its machines at these two sites with the KM.ON cloud so that staff could access an overview of the factory halls via mobile phone or tablet. k.management has been being trialled at the company since January 2020. "We are now saving a lot of time and have real-time information to assist with our planning and decision-making," says Kai Trippel, responsible for production, of his initial experience with the technology. Previously, it was impossible to get an overall impression of the production situation without daily tours of factory headquarters and

inconvenient phone calls with the extremely busy shift managers at the plant in Saxony. Georg+Otto Friedrich is acting as KM.ON's development partner for the k.management project, thus continuing a long-running tradition. This warp knitted fabric specialist was one of the first customers to KARL MAYER, KM.ON's parent company. The company began business activities in 1950, using KARL MAYER machines. The two long-standing partners are now working together to tackle the challenge of digitalisation.

A fruitful development partnership

In order to optimise k.management for customers, several weekly user workshops were held between March and May 2020. The online video conferences brought Product Manager Marcel Wenzel and UX/UI Designer Pia Keller from KM.ON together with Kai Trippel and those responsible for purchasing, production and technology at Georg+Otto Friedrich, and were extremely successful. The participants were able to use the details they shared on their production practices to draw up important requirements for preparing and presenting performance data. "We were able to quickly prioritise and work out issues such as which key figures are needed in which order at the first click, and which data should lead to deeper menu hierarchies," explains Marcel Wenzel. On the customer side, Kai Trippel welcomes the opportunity to clear up his questions directly and provide suggestions for improvement effectively. "Things are now being fleshed out, and the software solution is getting its final touch before it's ready for practical use," he says. Following the workshop phase, the requirements laid out during the dialogue with Georg+Otto Friedrich will be examined to determine their general validity for the market, and solutions for meeting these requirements will be worked out step by step. "We are taking an interactive and agile approach to the optimisation work," says Marcel Wenzel. Kai Trippel is already looking forward to the next test version, which software developers Hristiyan Petrov and Martin Dederer are currently hard at work on.

Planning using efficiently acquired real-time data

The digital k.management solution delivers a well thought-out dashboard with key figures on the machines used in production. The data ensures that processes are transparent, provides a basis for well-founded decisions, and can be called up easily at any time and from any location. Simply open the KM.ON homepage and log into your personal area using your unique login information. All the machines that are networked via k.ey are listed in this area. The first menu level provides an overview of all the machines. It provides key information on each machine, such as speed, effectiveness and the next upcoming beam change, summarised in a

button-like display area. Clicking on this machine item displays more detailed data on the selected machine. In addition to this, the detailed view shows information such as speed and stop time curves with a choice of monitoring intervals, availability, and the processing status of orders in relation to the planned production time and production duration.

Pushing boundaries during the design process

In addition to k.management, KM.ON's customers also appreciate k.innovation for the range of products offered by the KARL MAYER software start-up – particularly in the age of corona. The web-based design tool for warp knitting helps to shorten the time to market and, to this end, connects all those involved in the design process with appropriate access rights during the development and design of new products. Customers benefit from efficient teamwork and communication – without needing to travel – throughout the online creative process, from brainstorming to the finished fabric. Pattern data is transferred directly from the software to the machine. This saves time and prevents errors.