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REPRINT | CONCRETE PRODUCTS & CAST STONE

Partnership-based cooperation over decades



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Admittedly,
there are also good moulds
that we don't make.



The almost unlimited options when it comes to mould construction inspire our pioneering spirit. Ever more complex moulds, increasingly delicate structures and surfaces with futuristic appearances? Constant, dynamic new developments are showing the way forward.

Be curious as to what is still ahead. Our innovative drive knows no bounds – sometimes we even surprise ourselves.



Wasa AG, 64293 Darmstadt, Germany

Partnership-based cooperation over decades



■ Alexander Simos, Wasa AG, Germany

FCN Franz Carl Nüdling Basaltwerke GmbH + Co. KG is a medium-sized family business with its headquarters in Fulda, in the state of Hessen, Germany, that can look back on decades of successful cooperation in partnership with Wasa AG from Darmstadt, also in Hessen.

FCN is proud of its company history, which dates back to 1893. The future of the company is also built on this tradition, which has always and readily adapted to specific changes and evolution in general.

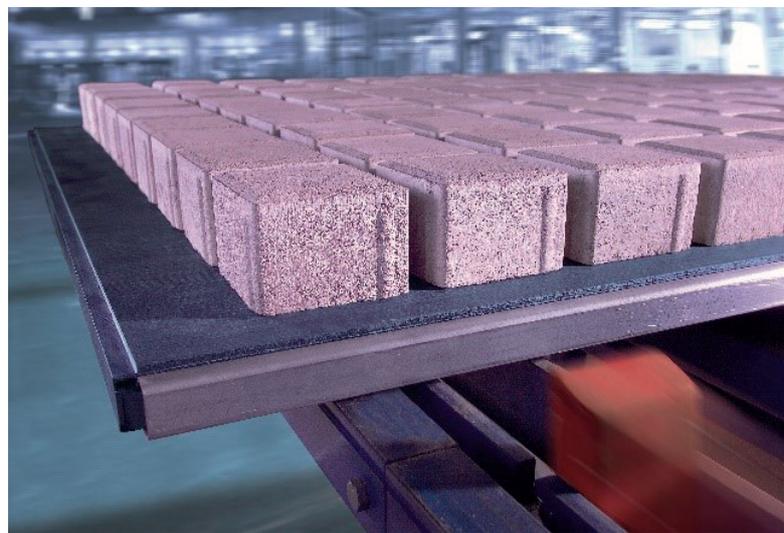
Developing, producing, marketing - all this is only possible with an efficient business structure and well-defined specialisation. FCN recognised this as early as the 1990s, which is why the decision was made as far back as 1994 to divide the company into three business divisions clearly separated from each other. These were spun off into legally independent operating companies in 1999. Today, FCN employs approx. 400 persons in a total of 9 production facilities in Hessen and Thuringia.

Wasa AG, also a medium-sized family business with locations in Darmstadt (Hessen) and Neubrunn (Thuringia), can look back on more than 65 years of experience in manufacturing production boards for the concrete block industry. The production site is located in Neubrunn. Approximately 180,000 production boards are manufactured annually at this location for customers around the globe. Since 1991, plastic boards have been produced from recycled plastic material for the concrete block industry on a total of more than 100,000 m² of factory space. As usual with a new product, production was a big learning process for Wasa. Through continually gaining experience, cooperation with and at its numerous local customers, as well as technical sophistication, Wasa AG has managed to create a product that still enjoys undiminished popularity in the concrete block industry.

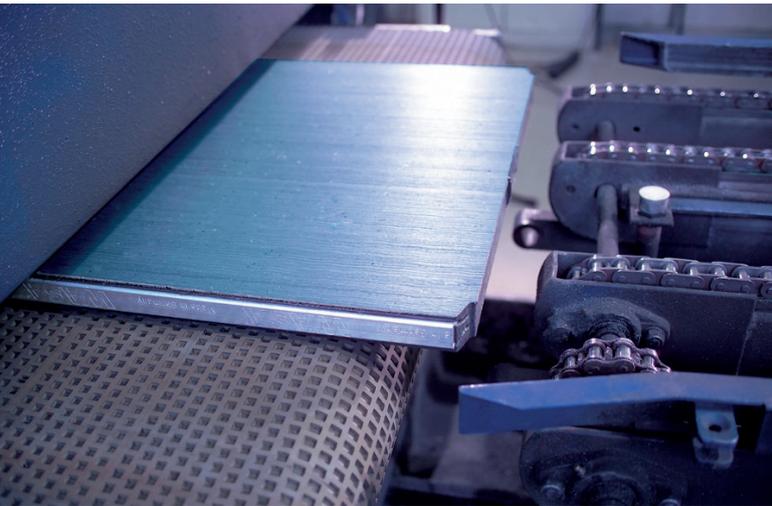
The beginning of this successful cooperation between FCN and Wasa AG in the area of production boards goes back to the 1990s. At that time, FCN decided to utilise the then still new Wasa Uniplast production board, which was made of



FCN is a medium-sized family business



Wasa Uniplast in 1994



Ground surface of the Wasa Uniplast production boards

recycled solid plastic. FCN recognised the board's potential. Major advantages were perceived in the fact that the all-plastic board allows a more uniform and better compaction of products in comparison with conventional wooden boards, as well as in the expected longevity of the production board. Last but not least, the option of grinding the board surface after many years in use and thus obtaining a brand-new surface in perfect condition again convinced FCN completely. For this reason, the production boards were ordered in a somewhat greater thickness at the time than would actually have been necessary.

All the features and advantages anticipated in advance have been confirmed over the years to FCN's full satisfaction. Of course, there were points during the time that had to be improved and adjusted - but here, too, it became clear what makes up a good partnership-based business relationship - solutions were found together.

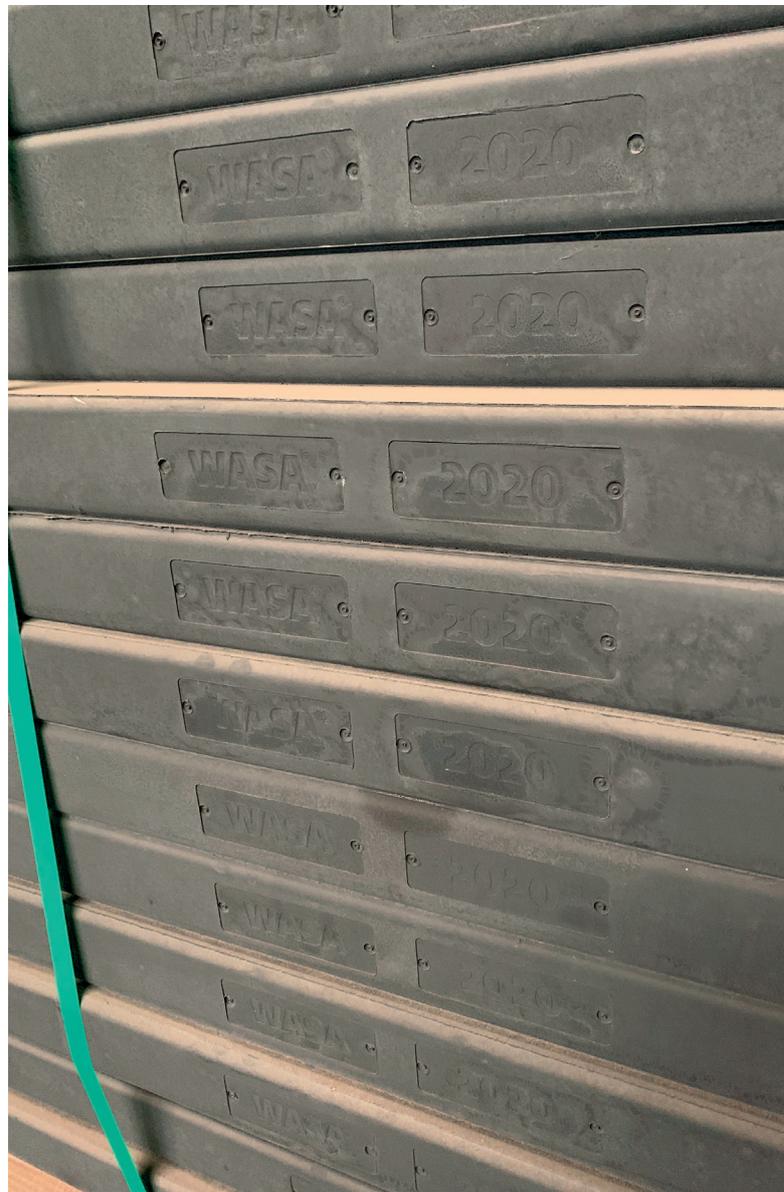
After 12 years of daily use manufacturing concrete products, it was decided in 2010 to regrind the panels for the first time. Wasa itself offers a grinding service for boards, either at the Wasa factory in Neubrunn or directly at the customer's premises. For FCN, Wasa's mobile grinding unit was called into service and the boards were ground on site. The board thickness, which was originally 53 mm, was 48 mm after grinding. Manufacturing operations could be successfully resumed with an as good as new, ground surface finish. The boards' production properties and characteristics remained virtually unchanged after grinding.

Six years later, in 2016, FCN again decided to grind the surface of their solid plastic boards. The material property of these all-plastic boards allows the surface to be ground a second time unproblematically. However, it was important to ensure that the thinner 44 mm board thickness would still meet production requirements. A major part of the boards could

be ground a second time after having successfully completed tests and computations.

FCN then successfully manufactured concrete products in great quantities for another 4 years with the twice surface-ground Wasa Uniplast all-plastic first generation boards from 1997.

In 2020, the decision was made to replace the existing boards after 23 years of service and to upgrade to the latest generation of Wasa Uniplast Ultra all-plastic boards. Furthermore, it was decided to equip the production boards with an RFID chip. This is also possible at Wasa and presents no problems. FCN is now well prepared for future requirements and challenges.



Newly supplied Wasa Uniplast Ultra

The development of Wasa's all-plastic board has been and continues to be advanced still further. Today, a completely homogeneous glass-fibre plastic mix is employed. The new Wasa Uniplast Ultra features a very homogeneous composite board that offers customers excellent vibration properties at every point on the board and is very much in line with the ever-increasing market demands of the concrete block industry and its customers.

Production boards differ not only in their durability, but also in their vibration transmission capabilities. Quality has long been the focus of attention due to the constantly growing demands placed on concrete products. With this Uniplast Ultra board, Wasa has provided its customers with a well-proven and continuously reliable product.

In another FCN production facility, Wasa Woodplast polyurethane-coated wooden boards were selected. Conditions in this factory necessitate a lower board dead weight. At the same time, they wanted to raise quality standards by favouring a jointless surface and more durable board. The Wasa Woodplast fitted perfectly into the portfolio there.

Since 2010, also at their site in Thuringia, Wasa has been manufacturing production boards made of a softwood core with a very impact-resistant and shatter-proof polyurethane layer. Additional C-profiles on the end faces provide effective protection against damage in a board storage unit.

At Wasa, this product is viewed as a very cost-effective solution between the all-plastic Wasa Uniplast Ultra board and the Wasa Softwood as a classic softwood board.

FCN and Wasa are a prime example of both sides benefiting from good cooperation in a spirit of partnership. It is a great advantage that Wasa, as a full-range supplier, can offer each customer the board that is best suited for each individual case - from conventional wooden boards through coated wooden boards to solid plastic boards reinforced with glass fibre. ■

FURTHER INFORMATION



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Wasa Woodplast