

**Source:** Siegener Zeitung (SZ)  
SZ edition of January 06, 2020  
Internet [www.siegener-zeitung.de](http://www.siegener-zeitung.de)  
**Date:** 06.01.2020

## **An investment in the location**

### **Bikar-Metalle turns into the home stretch with its expansion at headquarters**

**"This has meant that we have retained all jobs and can now work three shifts with the same number of employees."**

**Raumland. (vö)** A forward-looking investment by the family-run Bikar Group is entering the home straight in 2020: The company is investing a total of 40 million euros to expand its capacities at its headquarters in the Raumland/Berghausen industrial park. "If we don't invest now, we won't remain competitive in the long term," Bikar marketing manager Jan Saßmannshausen is quoted as saying in the economic report of the Siegen Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK).

The company has continuously developed - and upgraded - the Wittgenstein site in recent years. But that is not the end of the story. The common thread is clearly recognizable, the development speaks for itself - not least in the area of training, where the company's own records have always been "broken" in recent years. Since the fall of 2018, additional halls, a modern high-bay warehouse with a cutting center for bars and profiles, as well as a central and covered loading logistics system have replaced the previously cumbersome storage and optimized the processes at the precious metal specialist. Jan Saßmannshausen: "The expansion of our storage capacities now allows us to purchase larger quantities at consequently better conditions."

And further: "This allows us to act more flexibly and offer our customers faster delivery times and more favorable prices." In the next step, Bikar-Metalle has automated the work processes in many places and at the same time purchased additional saws and milling machines - in order to be able to operate even more efficiently. "This has meant that we have retained all jobs and can now operate in three shifts with the same number of employees. The more efficient production results in higher output volumes and thus helps to safeguard jobs," emphasizes the marketing boss. To close the gap between Plants II and III, Bikar mainly used existing land of its own; for the access road and additional parking spaces behind Plant III, the company purchased adjacent land.

The impressive increase in the workforce (see extra box) also necessitated the construction of a new office building. "Currently, the offices are spread over six locations. The situation is sometimes quite cramped due to the rapid growth," explains

Jan Saßmannshausen. Originally, only two floors had been planned for the project, but already during the planning phase, the project had been expanded to five floors. The new building, which is located behind the production halls as seen from the Landesstrasse 553, provides space for 130 modern office workstations that have been completely refurbished according to ergonomic criteria and supplemented by several communication islands. A well thought-out lighting concept and a pleasant ambience round off the investment. Each floor will also have a spacious kitchen for employees. On the top floor, a customer center with conference rooms will be created, which, in addition to contemporary presentation technology, will offer both an overview of the entire plant and a magnificent view of the natural surroundings.

The declared goal is completion in the course of the year that has just begun. Jan Saßmannshausen: "With the new building, we want to improve internal communication and the overall situation on the one hand. But the management is also concerned with offering attractive jobs and attracting new skilled workers."

In parallel, Bikar is intensively pushing the topic of digitalization. The IT department has expanded from four to 20 employees (the Siegener Zeitung reported). In addition, an outsourced programming office has been established in Siegen. With Dr. Jan Wolf, the management acquired a qualified expert who has good contacts with the University of Siegen and the Center of Excellence for SMEs. The internal IT specialists have developed an enterprise resource planning system tailored to the company's needs as part of joint projects.

Jan Saßmannshausen leaves no doubt about the classification of the 40-million-euro investment at the Wittgenstein site - and the intention of the owner family: "Many people from the immediate vicinity have secure jobs here. That's why we are counting on further growth so that we can look to the future in a good position."

## **Bikar Group now employs 600 people**

The family-run Bikar Group now employs more than 600 people at its two sites in the industrial area in Raumland and Berghausen and at the Korbußen plant in Thuringia. The company, which is one of the most important employers in the region, is the world's leading supplier of plates, sheets, blanks as well as rods, tubes and profiles made of aluminum, copper, brass and other materials.

**By Martin Völkel**