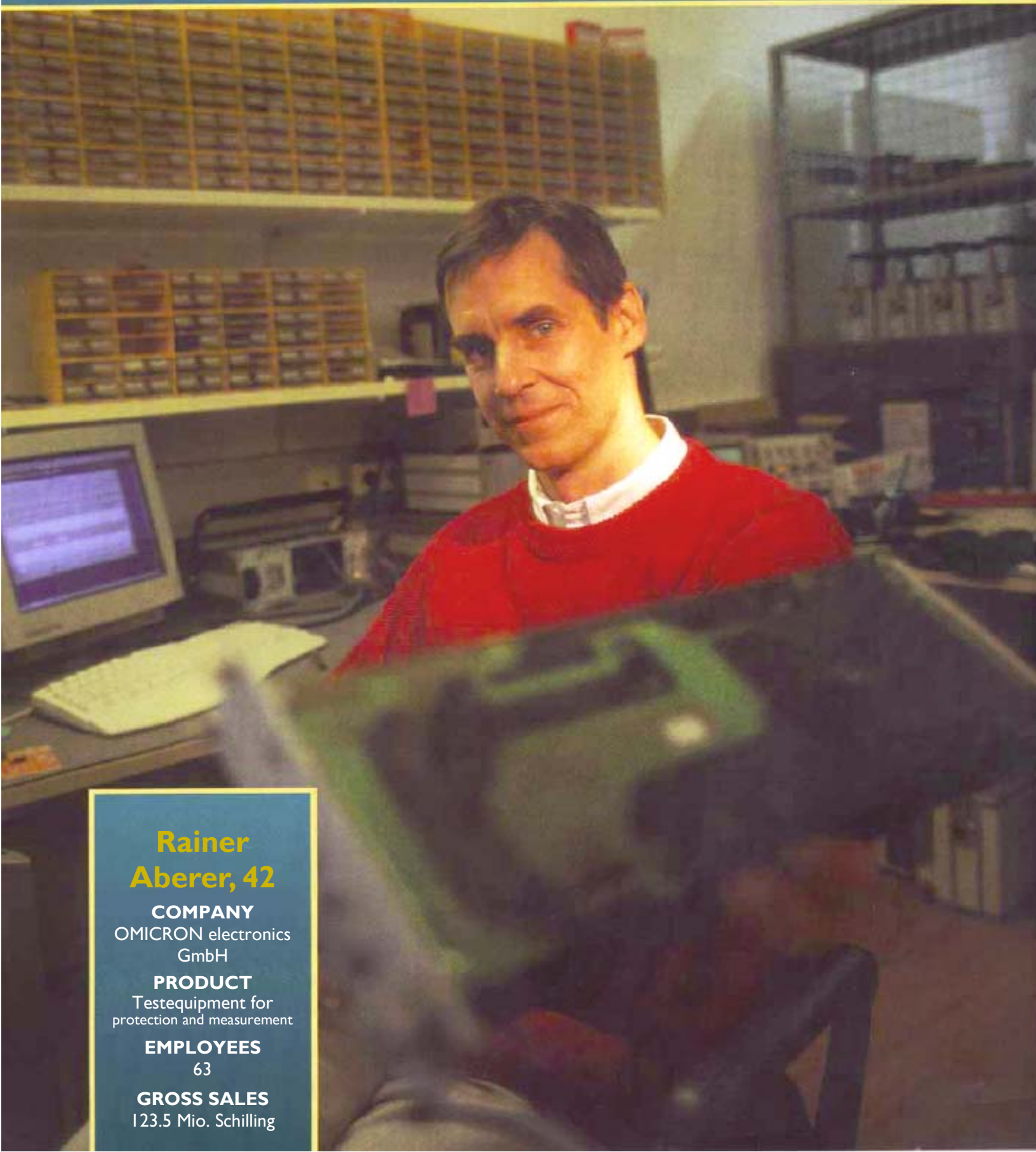


1997
Trio of the Year
Services

1 Aberer Kadaberer



**Rainer
Aberer, 42**

COMPANY

OMICRON electronics
GmbH

PRODUCT

Testequipment for
protection and measurement

EMPLOYEES

63

GROSS SALES

123.5 Mio. Schilling

Rainer Aberer, a TELECOMMUNICATION worker from Vorarlberg, conquers the world with his inventiveness and a good team. Six years ago a „nobody“, today OMICRON GmbH is regarded as the INTERNATIONAL LEADING company in the field of protection.

Rainer Aberer loves technology and physics. He is fascinated about „technology leaps“ just as about the possibilities which result out of it. Marc Andreas Vogg, his right-hand man in the company, callshim „almost playful“. And perhaps that is exactly his secret – the simple-minded access to the things, as he himself says: „I always try to act as if I would stand in front of a blank, white sheet and start from the beginning every single time. The most important thing is, not to ask how did we solve something in the past, but how would we do it today.“

His ability to „Think-yourself-free“ and his acute feeling for future developments had brought him a long way. Being an unknown newcomer six years ago, the manufacturer of portable, PC-controlled test systems for the energy & industrial sectors succeeded to be a world-class company. In 1991, the company had seven employees and sales of 4 million Schillings. By 1995, the company had 40 employees and the sales per year increased up to more than 83 million Schillings. In the past year, the Altach electronic engineers have done even better: sales rose 50%, compared to the previous year, up to 123.5 million Schillings.

Even in the dynamic field of high-tech, success stories like this one are not commonplace nowadays. The story started in 1984, when the graduate from the Technical School for electronics and telecommunications started to build up a software company together with two schoolmates. Right at that time, IBM launched the first PCs on the market and most of the experts in this field downplayed the small desktop PCs. Rainer Aberer on the other hand saw the beginning of a new computer era and immediately started rewriting the mainframe software for the PC platform. With considerable success: giants like Big Blue himself, Daimler-Benz, ABB, Aerospatiale, Motorola and even the U.S. Air Force bought his PC software.

But the company did not achieve the big breakthrough until a few years later. At the beginning of the nineties, the Burgenland Utilities was looking for a portable test system for measurement devices. The systems found on the market weighed at least 30 kilograms. Rainer Aberer thought the 30 kilograms was much too heavy – „I was always endeavoured to offer more to the customer than what was just available on the market“ – and he gave his technicians the chance to show what they can do. As the result, his technicians developed a PC-controlled system which is user-friendly, versatile and weighed only 10 kilograms.

This lavish development demanded the best from the company, both technically and financially. „Giving up“ however was never a question for the „visionary with common sense“ – says the company speaker, Marc Andreas Vogg, about his boss. But Rainer's perseverance was worth it: the first relay manufacturer who bought the PC software from OMICRON was Siemens. This globally active electronics group turned out to be the ideal sales partner and paved the way to the world market for the OMICRON guys from the Rhine valley. Today, OMICRON supplies international companies like ABB, GEC Alstom and General Electric, utilities like the French EdF and energy-intensive industrial companies like the German Hoechst Chemie or the Taiwanese China Steel Corporation.

98% of the test systems (each one costs approximately 500.000 Shillings) are exported. This is an outstanding performance in exporting for which the Vorarlberg prime company was awarded the Austrian Export Price in the previous year.

Recently, the Omicron boss received the award „Industrie 97“ – a prize for the creation of qualified jobs donated from the Industrial Union. Formal honours like these Rainer Aberer calls „quite nice“ but nothing more. The flashlight attacks from the cameras seem to be nuisance to the father of two children. But one thing he is pleased about: „The public recognition which comes hand in hand with this is good for the selfconfidence and the image of our company - and this helps us find good employees.“

Nothing is more important than having good employees for the head of the company, who is called by everyone in the company by his first name. And therefore it is not surprising that the prize of 100.000 Schillings - received from the President of the Federal Republic, Thomas Klestil – was shared among the entire personnel. Similarly, the money from the Export Prize was used to go together on a 4-day-trip through the Burgenland for the whole company. Other employers might be proud of continually decreasing their costs, but Rainer Aberer's personal ambition is to gather bright talents and keep them happy. If you ask the man from Altach about his biggest success so far, he'll answer the following: „That I succeeded in gathering so many good people at one spot.“

Money, power and respect, all this

„Always start with a clean sheet of paper“

doesn't seem to urge the convinced team worker too much. It's rather the desire for improvement – not just on the technical side. He has reserved one percent of sales for the sponsorship of children all over the world who don't have an opportunity for education. Omicron for example supports the construction of schools in India. Why? Because the only effective way to help is the help to self-help, says Aberer, „and because we should leave this world a bit better than we have found it.“

- Edith Meinhart