



Obituary Egon König

## WE MOURN FOR EGON KÖNIG.

We say goodbye to an extraordinary entrepreneurial personality

Mr. Egon König, for many years the company owner and Chairman of the Supervisory Board of König + Neurath AG, passed away a few days after his 86th birthday after a serious illness. For over 72 years, Mr. König built up the company with passion, courage and entrepreneurial vision into one of the leading office furniture companies in Germany and Europe, thus playing a decisive role in shaping the office furniture industry.

König + Neurath has lost a wonderful person who had a special, close relationship with his employees, dealer partners, customers and suppliers and was always aware of his social responsibility. Despite his serious illness, he was active in the company until last week as Chairman of the Supervisory Board, by giving future-oriented inspiration. In line with his strategic vision and innovative drive, Mr. König helped to develop the concept for the construction of a new high-bay warehouse at the Karben site last month, thus giving a go ahead for investments in the millions.

Egon König joined his father's company as an apprentice in 1947, became co-owner at the age of 26 and was the sole owner from 1978. Egon König was an early pioneer in rational manufacturing. Through constant new product innovations and investments, he always succeeded in being one step ahead of the

market - in production as well as with the product range. In the market for high-quality office furniture in 1978, it was a small sensation when Egon König completely switched the production process from order-related production to series and mass production, thus clearly distinguishing himself from the competition. The development of new fields of business was a further step towards a continuous increase in market share. In 1986, seat production was established and the portfolio of products and services were expanded to room systems and steel furniture in the following years. When the company became a stock corporation in 1996, he took over the chairmanship of the board.

In 2007, he placed the operative business in the hands of a non-family member Management Board and became Chairman of the Supervisory Board. His ideas about the further development of the company have always been very specific. In recent years, Mr. König has set the course for the sustainable orientation of König + Neurath AG as a family-owned company. The family holding owns 100% of the shares in the AG, in which his four grandchildren in the third generation are members. Today, three of the four grandchildren hold various positions at König + Neurath AG. His long-time companion Otmar Stein has advised the company on the supervisory board since 2005. In recent years, the family-owned company has successfully expanded its position in the German and European markets and increased its turnover to EUR 176 million. With an equity ratio of around 60% and a solid balance and financial structure, the company is sustainably prepared for further positive developments.

Egon König was regarded as an entrepreneur "through and through". Despite or because of his experience with many highs and lows in his professional and private life, he remained down-to-earth and closely connected to his home region, Wetterau. With his sharp sense for market developments, his persistence and affinity for technological innovations, Mr. König was an exceptional entrepreneur who was able to react humorously even in critical situations. On the one hand he was a man with rough edges, on the other he was a very warm person and always a reliable partner. He knew most of his 1,000 employees by name. With his human skills and pragmatism, he was also a highly valued negotiator in negotiations on collective wages. Within the industry he was on the board for many years of today's Industrial Association for the Office and Work Environment - IBA (Industrieverband Büro- und Arbeitswelt e.V.) and played a decisive role in shaping the work of the association. In the same way he committed himself to the Wood + Plastic Federation, Hessen Thuringia at executive committee level for many years.

On behalf of Mr. König's family and the Supervisory Board, we will be paying our last respects to him at the funeral service in our exhibition centre on 24 May 2019 at 1 pm. It was his wish that we bid him together farewell at his place of work.