

PROVIDING PRACTICABLE SOLUTIONS

BeerBev guides breweries and distilleries from feasibility to start-up

Three years ago, Publishing House W. Sachon talked to Joachim Gunkel about his newly founded consulting firm BeerBev. This time, BBII talked to him about the development of his company, interesting projects BeerBev realized and strengthening its expertise. Special focus of BeerBev lies upon supporting talented students via the „Young Talents powered by BeerBev“ program, which was founded by Joachim Gunkel in cooperation with Publishing House W. Sachon.

BREWING AND BEVERAGE INDUSTRY INTERNATIONAL:

Mr Gunkel, almost three years ago, we talked about the initial phase of your newly founded technical consulting company BeerBev. What kind of development took place from then till now?

Joachim Gunkel: Growth – growth – growth. This is the keyword describing BeerBev's development in the last three years. Looking back, we made significant improvement in many areas – internally and externally. We expanded in new areas, like distilling, cider etc. We were able to build trusted

long-term relationships with our clients, where we supported from an engineering perspective and continued supporting as a trusted advisor, providing comprehensive project management support, realizing installation and construction work. And we are still acquiring new clients every day.

BBII: *Primarily you've been specialized in the brewing industry. But meanwhile you extended your competence in the spirits sector among others ...*

Gunkel: Yes, indeed. We were able to expand our portfolio, providing our full service in the area of distil-

ling: factory planning – engineering – project management/side management support. Distilling as a brewery is a logical progression, a next step in the creative process, as both – craft brewing and craft distilling – are based on the same creative idea. Our vision for the new Distilling Competence Center is to focus our knowledge in brewing and distilling and support our customer with individual solutions to participate on this steadily increasing, innovative field.

BBII: *With your company growing further and further, the need for additional expertise grows, too. Keyword: Young Talents – what's behind this?*

Gunkel: For me the most important part is to continue developing expertise, building a strong team, that stays abreast of new technology and innovation, providing our clients with innovative, customized solutions, bringing them one step ahead. Accordingly, I decided to continue with the “Young Talents powered by BeerBev” program, which was originally founded in cooperation with Publishing House W. Sachon and myself years ago.

Within this program, talented and dedicated students get the chance to connect to the network in an early state of their education. By attending international events, finding contact to the beverage industry happens more easily. On the other side, companies in the



Met for a sunny meeting in Miami: Andre Gast, Joachim Gunkel, Andreas Benischek, all BeerBev, and Wolfgang Burkart, Managing Director Publishing House W. Sachon (f.l.t.r.)

beverage industry see the potential of these young talents. Our goal is to develop more expertise – as this will lead to more benefit for our clients. “Our experience is your benefit,” that is what BeerBev stands for.

BBII: *Did the craft-beer boom change your business?*

Gunkel: It definitely did. We successfully established ourselves as a trusted advisor for greenfield, brown-field and optimization projects. Starting with factory planning and engineering work, we have done a great job, establishing ourselves as the project management provider of choice when it comes to the realization part of the project. Our holistic view and detailed process, technology and automation know-how is what makes our clients feel confident in having us as project manager for successful project realization.

We understand and know the challenges on both sides of the table, client and supplier. Therefore, we are able to develop reasonable budgets and manage this throughout the project. From a neutral perspective we support the whole tender process, plan, coordinate and control construction work, as well as provide the necessary process know-how with our Site Management support.

With the craft brewer segment we were able to fulfill the whole project timeline.

BBII: *Please tell us something about a few projects you’ve been realizing over the past years.*

Gunkel: We did quite a range of interesting projects, covering smaller craft projects with 20 hectoliters per year as well as large industrial brewery modernization with a capacity of 24 mio. hectoliters. Here we had complete project lead from feasibility, factory planning towards construction project management.

Out of confidentiality reasons we can’t name our clients here. However, I can tell that one of our client success stories is that we just kicked off the third brewery building project with this particular client: this time a brownfield project. Interesting here is the given building space, where the brewery should be placed in. We often have as a starting point e.g. historic buildings where our clients want to build their brewery in. This may be a challenge, but with our team, consisting of process, civil and automation experts we are able to take a holistic view, considering all the interfaces between process and given civil prerequisites.

Another interesting project we are currently working on is the modernization of a 5 mio. hectoliter brewery. Our team has been involved from starting point, developing the entire feasibility study (inclusive ROI calculation) and engineering. Further, we supported the entire tender process, preparing tender documentation defining and coordinating tender process, providing neutral tender evaluation. Most benefit we see herein for our clients is that we understand both sides of the table.

We know what to watch out for from supplier side, like guarantees, pricing, lead times etc. and particularly the fact that we help our clients defining the standards of brands, and makes as well as do the entire technical specs and equipment drawings we have the real insight from process and mechanical aspect. In some parts we even provide manufacturing advice to support on-site suppliers. We just recently kicked off the construction phase, where we are engaged leading the project management till operations start up.

If we look on the “automation” side, we are facing a huge demand. This becomes more and more important, a rising star within the craft brewer segment as well as for the macro breweries. For example, we are currently conducting a full automation upgrade for a 24 mio. hectoliter brewery.

Summarized we do:

- Feasibility study (ROI, cost versus effort)
- Factory planning (concept design till detailed engineering)
- Tender support & evaluation
- Full end project & site management

BBII: *At which trade fairs do you participate as exhibitor?*

Gunkel: As exhibitor we annually attend the Craft Brewers Conference & BrewExpo America. Subsequently we will attend the exhibition in Washington, D.C., in 2017.

It’s amazing how this show has grown steadily in recent years – in space as well as in terms of the number of visitors. Here we can establish good contacts regularly in the craft beer scene and convince craft brewers of our profession.

In 2017 we will also be present at the drinktec in Munich. There, at the world’s leading exhibition for the brewing and beverage industry, the audience is more international. Benefit for us on both ends, meeting new potential clients as well as meeting new trends and opportunities.



What a stunning view: palm trees and the blue sky outside the office of BeerBev in Miami



Don't worry or „Our Experience – Your Benefit“ – the BeerBev-Team around CEO Joachim Gunkel radiates confidence. From left: Oliver Wesseloh, consultant; Dr.-Ing. Stefan Castritius, head of the Distilling Competence Center; Joachim Gunkel, CEO; Andreas Benischek, COO; with Peter Krämer at this years CBC in Philadelphia.

BBII: You've always been well linked to your target group of customers. Do you think the globalization trend makes such strong networking harder, meaning to have to deal with the management rather than the holders?

Gunkel: I wouldn't say so. What we see though, is a more cost sensitive leadership. Cost savings, cost optimization are the key topics on a CEO's agenda today. Good for us and the clients we work for. Because with our innovative value engineering approach and third party objectivity we realize in average 25 to 30 percent in capex cost.

BBII: What kind of customers do you serve by now? Are more global players among your clients or more likely the "rising craft stars"?

Gunkel: That's 50:50 I'd say. And we shouldn't forget that even the global players are starting

to enter the craft brewer segment or considering diversifying in other beverage segments.

BBII: You're not the only consulting company in the world. Therefore what is the USP of BeerBev? What advantages do the clients have working with you?

Gunkel: Expertise – practicable approach – holistic view – neutral and innovative customized solutions. Most of all I would say, and what we hear from our clients, is our practicable approach. Besides many consulting firms our solutions are well thought through and realizable. We provide practicable solutions, as it is our pretention to provide the required level of detail so that the project can be realized by any third party.

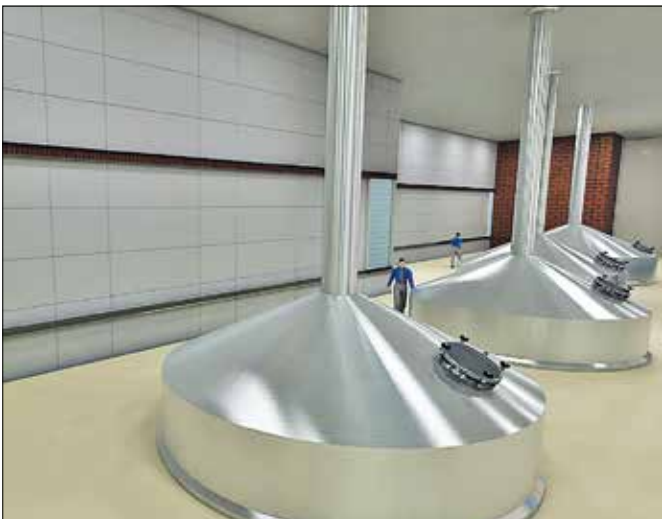
This requires of course that all interphases are considered, which again requires a holistic view and the expertise of all sequences and

dependencies between process, technology, civil work and so on. Going even further, providing neutral and objective advice enables our client to select from best in class, realizing a milestone project.

BBII: Five years ahead from now: What targets do you want to have realized with BeerBev by then? And what changes might be necessary to achieve these goals?

Gunkel: Our vision is to become the industry leading trusted advisor for all greenfield, brownfield and optimization projects. Accompany our clients from feasibility, to engineering, towards construction till start-up. Help our clients to develop and realize their future vision, help them identify and realize new potential – expansion, diversification, modernization.

BBII: Mr Gunkel, many thanks for this interview. (BM) ☐



At BeerBev breweries are planned in 3D to get a clue of the final look for example of a future brewhouse ...



... or even of a whole brewery with its own trucks.