

High-tech in Tägerwilen



The recently opened High-Tech Center (HTC) in Tägerwilen, Thurgau, is only one of four in Switzerland.

The 30,000 m² of land upon which the first stage of the HTC now stands was originally purchased for a Scandinavian firm in 1988. When that project failed to come to fruition, landowner Dr. Jan Larsson's new idea was to construct a centre focusing on the high-technology industry, a very prominent one in the canton of Thurgau.

Larsson, a dentist by trade, is Chairman of Jasema AG, the company he formed to oversee the planning and development of this project. Together with architects Peter Strasser and Ruedi Bär, he embarked on his voyage.

A budget and plans were drawn up and building began in 1990. It was conceived that the centre be built in

three stages. The first stage (3,700 m²), costing approximately Sfr.7.5 million, was completed last June and several high-tech firms have since moved in; a further 700 square meters can be completed to suit any specifications. Annual rent ranges from Sfr. 167 to 220 per m² and there are in-house production possibilities. Construction on the second stage (3500 m²) will begin in the Summer. It is also possible for foreign high-tech companies to purchase land there and build their own complex.

The building is very modern, and has a bit of a Swedish touch to it (Dr. Larsson is a born Swede), with large windows allowing the rooms to benefit greatly from natural light.

HTC
1 2 3

Centre of Europe

The firms which have chosen to settle in Tägerwilen come from the USA, Sweden, Germany and – of course, Switzerland. What has attracted these companies – some brand new, others already established – to come to the village on Lake Constance?

“This area is the centre of Europe – the bull’s eye. That is the number one reason,” states Larsson. “Being close to the German and Austrian borders and near leading Universities also has major advantages. Zurich Airport can be reached in 50 minutes by train or 45 minutes by car and the N7 highway will be finished in five months to Tägerwilen providing direct links to Stuttgart. Not only is the location convenient, rents for office space as well as private residences are much lower than, say, those in Zurich. And the canton of Thurgau has the third lowest tax rates in Switzerland! The area also has a lot to offer in terms of culture and recreational activities.”

Three man show

The consulting firm, HTC Infra-

Pool AG, was formed early on to help the companies acclimatise. Dr. Ulrich Kennel, lecturer for technology at the University of St. Gallen, founded the company together with Frido Luchsinger, who is Director of Provida Trust in Kreuzlingen. Larsson, Kennel and Luchsinger are the triumvirate behind the HTC and have a large network in the Thurgau area.

HTC Infra-Pool AG offers a multitude of back-up services. In-house secretarial services, conference and training facilities, as well as a cafeteria are provided. The HTC advisory unit offers consultation on questions of technology and technology management, industrial design, data processing, engineering, marketing, law, trust and revision, company creation, public relations – and much more. Questions concerning work and residence permits can also be answered by HTC Infra-Pool. Its two main goals are: to act as long-term consultant in-house firms and advise companies on the outside who have relationships with those in the HTC.

Awards go to two at the HTC

Recently, the HTC had reason to cheer. The Swiss National Technology Fund has a annual competition to chose the 20 best young high-tech enterprises in the country. This year, three of the winners came from Thurgau and two are located in the HTC! The winners were able to exhibit their wares free-of-charge at the Hannover Fair.

The HTC is interested in promoting synergy among the firms in the centre – and so far they have not been disappointed. They will continue to focus exclusively on attracting companies with activities in the various high-tech fields which include: electronics, material science, biological and genetic technology and computer science. With tremendous support from the canton of Thurgau and interest shown from over 200 firms, the HTC is indeed off to a good start.

Elizabeth Stocker-McLane 

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