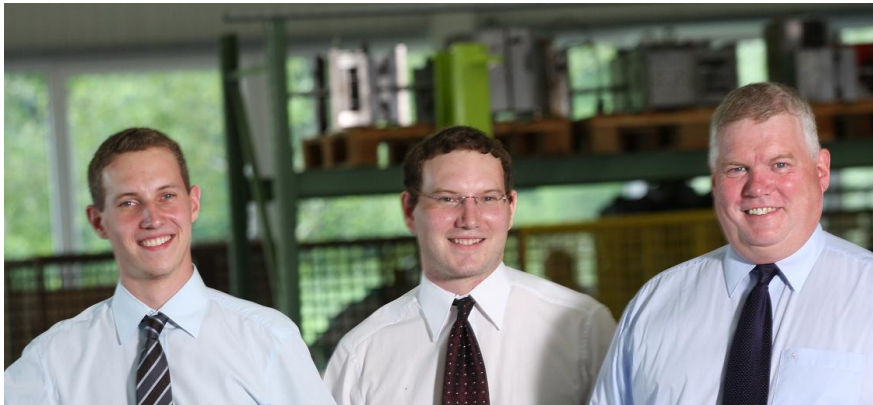


# FRANZ ELKUCH AG: HANDING OVER THE BATON

## **Roland Elkuch hands over the running of the company to the next generation**

Franz Elkuch AG is a family company through and through. The “calling” to manufacture innovative injection-moulded parts runs in the family. The company was founded by Franz Elkuch around fifty years ago, and was steadily developed by his son Roland for thirty years. Now Roland’s own sons Mario and Damian are the third generation of the family to run the company, having taken over in March 2014.

The story began in 1965 with the production of plastic tubes. The company has since developed into a niche manufacturer of sophisticated injection-moulded parts, and its success continues to this day. Franz Elkuch AG is currently the supplier to various well-known companies at home and abroad and has gained an international reputation in the field of flexible cable protection.



Motivated: Damian (29), Mario (32) take over the day-to-day operations, while Roland Elkuch remains as Chairman of the Board of Directors

The handover is a proud moment for Roland Elkuch. His sons have been working in the company for several years now, and it was becoming increasingly evident that they were ready to take over the day-to-day operations and assume managerial responsibility.

The company, which has its roots in Liechtenstein and a manufacturing facility just over the border in Switzerland, has experienced many ups and downs since it was founded. Roland Elkuch remembers: “Full of enthusiasm and commitment, my father built up the business in Schellenberg in the sixties and seventies and soon made a name for himself as a supplier of plastic pipes. After having completed my vocational training with Hilti AG, it was obvious that I would soon join the family firm and take on my first tasks.”

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Even back then in his youth, Roland was full of new ideas for injection moulding. Under the supportive but sometimes sceptical auspices of his father, he developed new kinds of plastic products for protecting cables. Now, in the 21st century, Roland's determination and foresight are bearing fruit: the company's flexible tubing, customised moulded parts and revolutionary microduct have turned Franz Elkuch AG into one of the leading niche manufacturers in the field of cable protection.



Entrepreneur through and through: Roland Elkuch (57)

## Company history

1965 Franz Elkuch AG founded by Franz Elkuch as a sole proprietorship with pipe production and manufacture of injection-moulded parts, based in Schellenberg in the Principality of Liechtenstein

1973 Pipe production is ceased; the firm now makes only injection-moulded parts

1977 Franz's son Roland joins the firm as a toolmaker

1981 Starting capital of CHF 28,000 given to Roland by his father for new product ideas

1983 Change from sole proprietorship to a limited company

1984 Sudden death of Franz Elkuch; company taken over by 27-year-old Roland on 1 May

1989 Loss of permit for night-shift due to new rules

1991 Launch of new product: the flexible bent tubing system

In addition to the company's headquarters and injection-moulding operations in Schellenberg, Liechtenstein (Franz Elkuch AG), a second facility is set up in Vorarlberg in Austria

1990 New premises built in Satteins, Austria (involving an investment of CHF 4 million); founding of Wiroplast GmbH

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### FRANZ ELKUCH AG

1991 Start of pipe production at Wiroplast GmbH

1995 Wiroplast GmbH is sold off

From then on, the focus is on injection-moulded parts only

1994/95 Beginning of the elkuch<sup>®</sup> flexible bent tubing system's success story; investment in machine tools

1996 Loss of 60% of business due to unfair competition and loss of production orders

1997–98 Production in Appenzell, Switzerland; final assembly carried out at home by just Roland Elkuch and his wife Wilma

1999 Final assembly facility relocated within Liechtenstein from Schellenberg to Bendorf; demand increases

2002 Sale of production facility; decision taken to outsource

2003 Gains status of qualified supplier to Deutsche Telekom (and is still a preferred supplier today)

2006 Roland's son Mario joins the company on the administrative side

2007 Production of moulded parts is resumed; new manufacturing facility built in Salez, Switzerland

2007 Roland's son Damian joins the company's technical staff

2009 Further development of total system solutions for cable protection

2011 Company enters the Polish market

2012 Official supplier to the National Stadium in Warsaw (World Cup 2012)

2013 Roland's son Pascal joins the production staff

2013 Company enters the Scandinavian market

2014 Launch of elkuch<sup>®</sup> fibre-line after years of development work; start of a new range of products for fibre-optic technology (microducts and accessories)

2014 Major supplier to numerous telecommunications companies and energy suppliers in Switzerland, Germany and other European countries

2014 Handover of company management to 3<sup>rd</sup> generation "Elkuch"