

An inventor in the digital age - an interview with Jörn Karthaus

Jörn Karthaus has turned his passion into a profession. His enthusiasm for his craft is so great that the family man from Nümbrecht doesn't rest even after work and realizes himself in various projects. In this interview, the Senior Software Developer takes us into his world.

Mr. Karthaus, you have been with Kampf GmbH for over 25 years. What has your career in the company been like so far?

It's actually been almost 30 years, although I took a short break in between. My time at Kampf began with an apprenticeship as an industrial mechanic. After my apprenticeship, I worked in various positions, for example in assembly, sales and order processing. After a brief interruption, I returned to Kampf in 2000. I then worked there for almost 20 years in IT as a software developer.

I have always been fascinated by technology, but I am also very enthusiastic about the field of IT. That's why I also completed further training to become a technician specializing in technical computer science. When the "Industry 4.0" division started to develop in 2018, I was there from the very beginning. This quickly developed into the "Innovation & Industry 4.0" department and Jagenberg Digital Solutions. The aim is to develop Kampf GmbH from a pure machine manufacturer into a solution provider. The future-oriented software solutions are used for all Jagenberg Group companies.



„This quickly resulted in the creation of the “Innovation & Industry 4.0” department, which played a central role in developing Kampf GmbH from a pure machine manufacturer into a solution provider. The forward-looking software solutions are developed for all companies in the Jagenberg Group.”

Jörn Karthaus

What tasks are you facing in the new department?

We develop software for our machines, i.e. the “digital shell” around the machine. I have been involved in the development of our IIoT platform “the@vanced” from the very beginning, which takes our machines to a new, digital level. It excites me to experience this transition from analogue technology to digitalization and to be a direct part of it. For me as a tinkerer and inventor, this is very exciting!

“Tinkerer and inventor”? Are you working on any other projects outside the company?

Apart from my family, I have two other great passions: Motorcycling and my hobby workshop. There I can combine my job and hobby wonderfully.

What have you been working on recently?

There are quite a few things. As a passionate motorcyclist, I wanted to make the tours in my region more exciting and launched the “MotoQuest.de” project: a kind of geocaching adventure for motorcyclists. I worked with authors to develop the accompanying stories and software, an app and the website.



Another project was the restoration of a rare radio from the 40s. I converted it into a modern streaming device that is now used as an internet radio, NAS station and HiRes audio server.

Before



After

And the third project is also the most complex and is part of another great hobby of mine.

I have been involved in my local village club for over 15 years. We used to work with a traditional voucher system for events, where you buy vouchers and then exchange them for drinks or food. This system was too old-fashioned for me and I was looking for a more digital solution.

As no suitable system could be found that was affordable for a small club, I then developed PosBuddy (“Point-of-Service”) and replaced the paper receipts with an app and a payment card. This not only enabled us to save paper, but also to increase sales at our events. With this project, we are now even taking part in the “Our village has a future” competition, which I am very proud of.

***It's impressive how you manage it all!
What drives you?***

I simply love what I do! As a trained industrial mechanic, I still find it great to work in my workshop even after all these years. In my current job, I sit in front of a screen a lot and my projects in the workshop at home are simply the perfect balance for me. I'm also active on YouTube, in podcasts and at conferences, where I present my projects because I want to inspire others with my passion.

„I simply love what I do!“

Jörn Karthaus



You have definitely succeeded, Mr. Karthaus! Thank you very much for your insights and good luck with all your future projects!