

FROM VISION TO ACTION: KUENZ'S LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY JOURNEY





Dom Magli, Staff Reporter,
Port Technology International, interviewing
Dietmar Nußbaumer, Head of Technical Sales, Kuenz

Can you elaborate on how Kuenz provides the highest level of innovation and efficiency?

As an established family business with over 90 years of experience, it is in our DNA to promote innovation internally. Our company vision gives us the goal to be technical frontrunners and market leaders in our core industries and areas. The focus is always on the resulting customer benefit. Our flat hierarchies and uncomplicated idea processes within the company perfectly align with fast but sustainable innovations. Being very close to the customer and knowing their needs and processes is essential here.

Can you discuss the capabilities of your electric cranes?

Kuenz is active in the container handling, mining, wood handling, recycling and bulk, and hydro industries. In container handling, we are engaged in the port and intermodal sectors with Rail-mounted gantry (RMG), Rubber-Tyred gantry (RTG), and Automated stacking cranes (ASC) cranes. Most of the equipment is equipped with semi- or fully-automatic functions.

Since the beginning, our products have been electrically-driven. For this purpose, we used the latest technologies in drive engineering, which continuously increased the efficiency of the product. Furthermore, we have partially patented solutions that reduce the weight and optimised wind surface (saving the required power up to 34 per cent). Again, our development always emphasizes reducing ongoing operating and maintenance costs.

RIGHT
Electric hybrid battery



How does Kuenz ensure their cranes are environmentally friendly?

We have always focused on the environment and sustainability in developing our cranes and solutions. For this reason, we have decided not to include any cranes with pure diesel drive in our product portfolio. We made this decision a long time ago, and it shows that we are consistent in this area and think long-term. But the most important thing is

that sustainability and commercial customer benefits are not mutually exclusive - on the contrary.

How does Kuenz help its customers reach their emissions target?

With our innovative products and solutions. On the other hand, we are working with our Internet of Things (IoT) system [Kuenz Information System](#) (KIS), launched in 2017, to optimise the customer's operations using data. While in the

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beginning, it was still dashboards in which we could show the customer the potential for improving performance or reducing energy consumption, this will be possible based on Artificial Intelligence (AI). Furthermore, with our retrofit team, we can keep cranes always on the latest state of the art and thus extend the lifetime of the cranes.

Does Kuenz employ any alternative energy solutions such as solar or wind for its products?

We are working with research institutes to develop alternative ways of feeding energy into or from the grid and storing it. Furthermore, there are already solutions that enable solar energy on the crane. To operate a crane, however, more than the space on the crane is required by far, and there are efforts by the operators to solve

this for the entire terminal. Our existing solutions in energy battery storage on the crane already enable such an application.

How do you include your staff in your sustainability efforts?

We are fortunate to live in a beautiful part of the world, surrounded by unique flora and fauna, at our headquarters in Hard, Austria. The preservation of the environment and the economical use of resources so that we can pass on this natural jewel to future generations is close to the hearts of our employees.

This theme is also reflected in the curricula of our schools and universities. In line with our slogan, "innovative solutions for a sustainable future," we naturally also support this as a company and have an internal ideas competition in which the best ideas are awarded prizes and then implemented in the

ABOVE Cable reel and battery

company. To give this topic even more focus, we decided this year to appoint a sustainability manager in the organisation - who reports directly to the management.

Does Kuenz have plans to partner with any environmental organisations?

We are currently working with local providers in certifications for our manufacturing plants. In principle, we are interested in cooperation with an environmental organisation, but there is still little experience of the organisations in the industrial environment to carry out a constructive exchange.

What sustainability targets have been reached so far in 2023?

As mentioned above, we have an extensive range of products that go in the direction of sustainability.

This year's goal was to improve the production process, particularly energy consumption and carbon emissions. For this purpose, we have installed a photovoltaic system in the production plant in Hard, with which 75 per cent of the required energy can be covered in the final construction. Furthermore, we have initiated several process improvements in production process optimisation, which have significantly reduced energy and CO2 emissions.

What are your green targets for 2024?

In principle, of course, we want to continue along the path we have taken. Many of the goals already mentioned are long-term goals, and therefore, the focus will also be on production and the supply chain in 2024.

In terms of products, we expect some news in storage technologies, and, the possibility of AI in our KIS software will be another milestone for our customers to run their operations even more efficiently.

What is your long-term goal for sustainability?

We have committed ourselves internally to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations. Following these goals, we are working on action plans and their implementation. However, an important focus is the customer and employee benefits aforementioned. We want to continue to actively contribute to our planet's sustainable development, even if this contribution is only tiny in the overall context of the problem.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

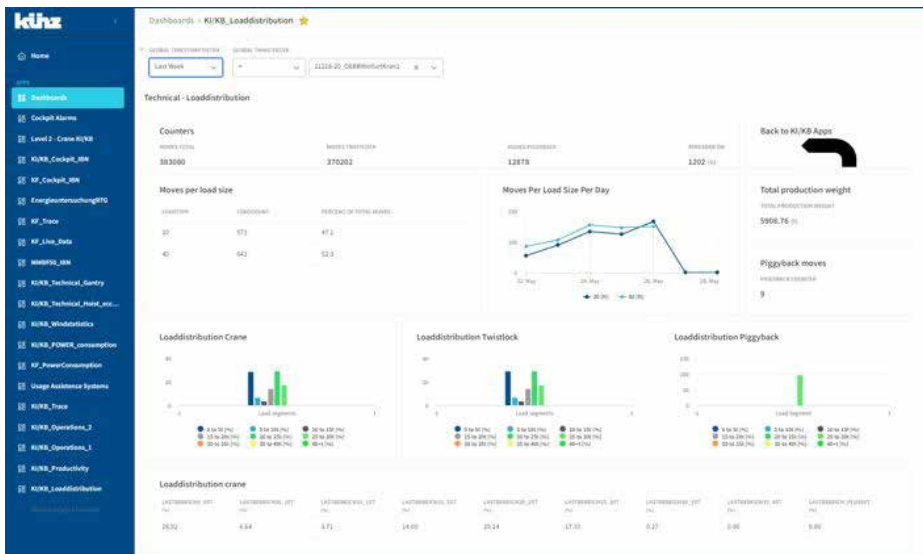
Dietmar Nußbaumer is in charge of technical Sales and Member of Board at Kuenz. Previously, he was Technical Manager in a machine construction company and has a background in R&D and Project Management for automated machinery. He attended the higher technical school for electrical engineering in Bregenz and subsequently completed the "CSA" diploma in the commercial field.

ABOUT THE COMPANY:

Kuenz, founded in 1932, is one of the oldest mechanical engineering companies in Western Austria. As one of the leading innovators in crane construction, the company has established itself as the market leader in Europe and North America. Besides its headquarters in Hard, Austria, Kuenz employs around 500 people at six other locations in Austria, Slovakia, Italy, Belgium and North America.

BELOW

Kuenz Information IoT System



"WE HAVE INITIATED SEVERAL PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS IN PRODUCTION PROCESS OPTIMISATION, WHICH HAVE SIGNIFICANTLY REDUCED ENERGY AND CO2 EMISSIONS."