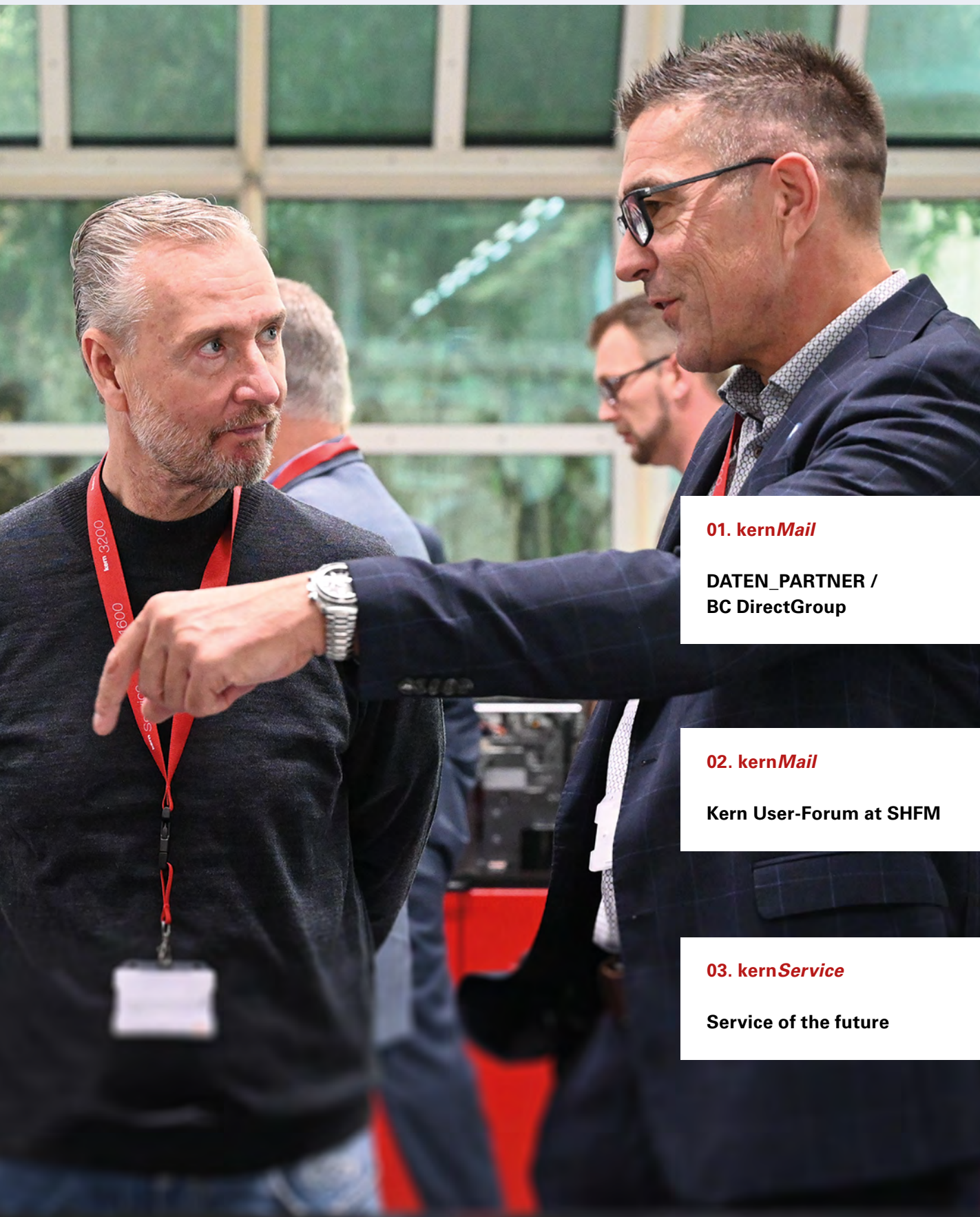


Edition 02/2024

The magazine of the Kern Group

best of kern



01. kernMail

DATEN_PARTNER /
BC DirectGroup

02. kernMail

Kern User-Forum at SHFM

03. kernService

Service of the future

Editorial



Stefan Wüthrich, CEO Kern Group

Dear Readers,

when we look back on the year 2024, we can be very satisfied and grateful: The dialogue with our business partners was very constructive and inspiring.

We feel how mutual trust, appreciation and encounters at eye level lead to good results. A look at the sales of our systems confirms this and shows that our platform strategy is paying off in full.

Our Kern User-Forum in Schwäbisch Hall in September was a great success. Schwäbisch Hall Facility Management GmbH was an excellent host and provided the perfect setting for presenting the Kern 1600 and Kern 3200 multi-format inserting systems. We will take the momentum from this event into the future.

I would like to thank all the guests and all those who contributed to the success of this get-together.

We also see very good signs for 2025: In addition to encouraging incoming orders, the dialogue with our customers is very promising and goal-oriented. We are absolutely convinced that the Hunkeler Innovationdays will give us a further boost. You can look forward to our presentation when we demonstrate the strengthening of our product portfolio to a wide audience.

In the area of service, we are presenting new concepts such as remote maintenance, the latest technologies and platforms that will make troubleshooting even easier and more efficient for our customers. With our experienced team, we are ideally positioned worldwide.

We are forecasting the next phase of development in the 'Pack on Time' segment. We will invest significantly, as further innovative products and solutions are planned in this area.

We were able to recruit new employees in order to accelerate further development:

We also want to grow significantly in this area, which is why we already have partnerships with companies that are global leaders in this business area.

Under the leadership of the third generation, the Kern Group has adopted a new vision and values that we live by. Combining tradition and modernity and standing for Swiss principles are all part of our DNA.

This forms the basis for a trusting and long-term co-operation. Because as one of the global market leaders in the field of document and parcel packaging solutions, we recognise our special responsibility.

The pioneering spirit that Kern has stood for since its foundation is both an ambition and an obligation for us.

As you can see: We are firmly at your side with our business fields. With this in mind, you can continue to rely on us in every aspect.

Your Stefan Wüthrich

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Cover photo: Axel Both, Managing Director DATEN_PARTNER and Michael Horch, Kern Area Sales Manager

Innovative products and services of the future

Kern User-Forum: Great interest and many visitors in Schwäbisch Hall



'We are delighted that so many customers and partners have accepted our invitation,' said Rainer Rindfleisch (CEO Kern GmbH), welcoming all guests to the Kern User-Forum 2024 in Schwäbisch Hall. 'I wish you informative and eventful hours,' said Rindfleisch, who also expressed his thanks to the event's host, Schwäbisch Hall Facility Management GmbH.

Stefan Wüthrich, CEO of the Kern Group, spoke about the vision of the family-run company: 'We combine tradition and modernity, stand for reliability and focus on a trusting relationship with our customers,' said Wüthrich, adding: 'You can always rely on the quality of our products and our Kern service'. Wüthrich highlighted the team and networking mentality that is practised at all levels within the

Kern Group. The full focus is on the three business units *kernMail*, *kernService* and *kernPack*. 'We will not forget the company's roots,' said the CEO, referring to the inserting business, which Kern has played a key role in shaping for many decades. 'We are at your disposal and are always ready to support you,' Wüthrich concluded his presentation on the Kern Group's orientation. The overall package is essential,' said

Daniel Wenger, Head of the kern-Mail business unit, pointing out that both the products and the service go hand in hand at Kern. The secret of success is the standardized platform concept that forms the basis for all inserting systems. 'Nevertheless, we always adapt our systems to the customer's demands - we have this flexibility,' emphasized Wenger. 'We look at each project individually.' Wenger presented the Kern 1600 in detail as a highly flexible system that is available in a wide variety of versions, from the basic version with insert feeder only to the multi-channel system.

He described the Kern 3200 as a modular multi-format inserting system with maximum flexibility and reliability. 'This is the best system Kern has ever built,' said Wenger. The Kern 3600 high-performance inserting system is also still in high demand because it impresses with its maximum efficiency and productivity.

Finally, he showcased the newly developed Kern 972 cut sheet feeder, which is designed for medium to large job volumes. The document stitching function was clearly presented in the practical part of

the User-Forum in the afternoon. His presentation ended with a view into the future: 'We are continuously working on selective improvements in terms of accessibility, usability and troubleshooting,' said Wenger.

Raphael Bartz, Head of Sales and Marketing, concluded the theoretical part by presenting the portfolio of Schwäbisch Hall Facility Management GmbH (SHFM).

As a subsidiary of Bausparkasse Schwäbisch Hall AG, SHFM has a large customer base from many industries and manages the business and daily mail of renowned companies, among other things.

The full-service partner offers all services relating to preparation, printing, dispatch, mail consolidation and input management. The practical part in the afternoon focused on a Kern 3200 *flash* and

a Kern 1600 *fast*. Both systems were demonstrated in use and impressed the audience with their respective strengths.

Daniel Wenger explained the various functions and applications and emphasised that the degree of customization for all Kern systems is closely coordinated with the customer. 'We see ourselves as partners and will work on a solution until they are satisfied,' explained Wenger.

Over 100 existing customers, potential customers and business partners attended the Kern User-Forum, which was enriched by an exhibition at which a total of ten Kern Group partners presented themselves.

www.shfm.de



DATEN_PARTNER: Into the future with Kern systems

Kern 3600 and Kern 2600 successfully integrated into the workflow

With a Kern 3600 and a Kern 2600, the company 'DATEN_PARTNER', headquartered in Erkrath, has been relying on inserting systems 'Made in Switzerland' since this year.

Managing Director Axel Both explains the reason for the change: 'There were differences of opinion with our long-standing business partner, in particular the service and availability of spare parts no longer met our requirements.' This was followed by a market survey based on defined criteria; in addition to the reliability of the systems, there was a clear preference for a European partner: Both calls this one of the lessons learnt from the corona period, especially when it comes to the rapid procurement of spare parts.

'The direct line to the company's management is also important to me,' Both emphasises. He appreciates the short lines of commu-

nication to those responsible at the Kern Group. 'This allows you to quickly build trust and make binding agreements'. Criteria such as vertical integration, performance and high-quality mechanical engineering were also important. 'These are all factors that convinced me of Kern,' says Both.

The biggest challenge during implementation was integrating the two systems into the existing software and production environment. 'That worked very well,' summarises Axel Both, who takes a look into the future: 'Our goal is to fully rely on Kern for all existing inserting systems.' The service factor also plays a major role in the decision. 'We know that Kern is a leader in this segment,' says Both, who is looking forward to the future with Kern.

The Kern 3600 is the high-performance inserting system for the transactional market with very high processing volumes. It is

characterised by its efficiency and productivity, very high reliability and simple, intuitive operation. The various configuration options make it the ideal system for use in the transaction market. The modular structure allows it to be combined with a wide variety of modules.

The Kern 2600 is simple, modular and flexible for professional use. This universal inserting system is the ideal machine for small to medium production volumes and is characterised by high reliability, simple operation and great flexibility.

DATEN_PARTNER has been one of the leading full-service providers of innovative printing and information technology in Germany for over 40 years. The networking of data management, production, postal consolidation, analogue and digital mailing requires increasingly complex solutions. The company offers complete expertise in the design,



Achim Mollenhauer (Shift Supervisor), Thorsten Wittpoth (Kern Service Technician), Joachim Eirich (Senior Operator), Michael Horch (Kern Area Sales Manager)

development and implementation of end-to-end solutions. The holistic end-to-end support of customers along the entire value chain of physical and digital document processing guarantees a customized solution concept for all transaction channels. Customers include financial service providers and media companies.

Optimum quality throughout the entire document management process. Document management is one of DATEN_PARTNER's core competences. We optimize and automate all document-based processes relating to customers and suppliers. We intelligently control the entire workflow, shortening the runtime, reducing process costs, increas-

ing efficiency and integrating all relevant transaction channels. These can be letters, printouts or forms, but just as easily PDFs, emails, chats or video and voice messaging through to images.

www.daten-partner.de

DATEN PARTNER
We love documents.

Service of the future

New Jira Service Management Software Tool

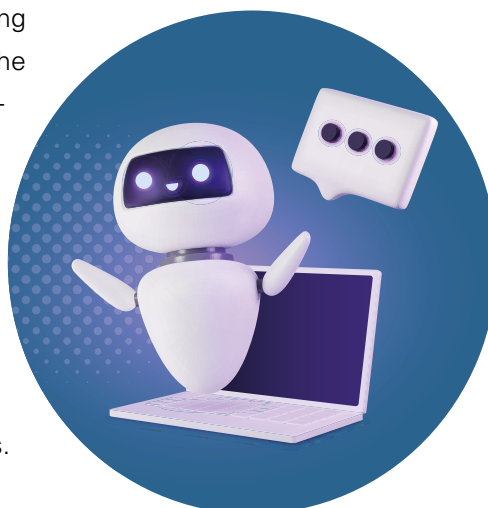


Marius Rump

Ricardo Posocco Malleiro, Manager Service Kern Germany, spoke about kernService during the User-Forum. Under the heading 'Digitalisation and automation', he talked about AI-controlled assistants and explained everything worth knowing about the customised Kern Service. Sustainability and social responsibility play just as important a role in the development of the business environment as flexibility in all areas.

Ricardo Posocco Malleiro introduced the experienced team behind Kern Service, which guarantees high quality with fast response times across the board.

He took a detailed look at the service of the future, introducing



remote service, augmented reality and omnichannel communication. Marius Rump from Kern

GmbH Product Support talked about the support ticket system: Our customer care support was expanded this year with the Jira service management software. The web-based application offers customers the opportunity to contact the Kern service very quickly and easily 24/7 and to keep a constant eye on the processing status.

Marius Rump illustrated in detail the workflow of the new system, which is already being used in practice by 20 customers and is to be comprehensively established in the future.

Three questions for...

...Daniel Wenger, Head of Business Unit kernMail



Daniel Wenger

1 The Kern inserting systems are particularly successful because...

...our platform concept excels with a universally compatible machine concept and also combines the 'Kern' virtues of durability, flexibility and reliability. In combination with our 'Best in Class' service, this results in an all-round carefree package for the customer.

2 What is the biggest challenge for customers from the manufacturer's point of view?

To realize every day that we must always consider the customer's overall process in order to offer them a solution that is perfectly tailored to their individual needs.

3 In your opinion, what are the strengths of the Kern Service?

That we are a modern, third-generation family business which, thanks to its flat hierarchical structure, is able to adapt quickly to new market requirements and those of our customers.

'Personally, I am very much looking forward to welcoming our customers at the Hunkeler Innovationdays (24 - 27 Feb. 2025) in Lucerne (Switzerland) in February 2025 and exchanging ideas with them,' Daniel Wenger concludes the interview.



www.innovationdays.com

BC DirectGroup impressed by the Kern 1600 *flex*

Successful search for a flexible solution in the inserting business



Elke Bethge, Guido Bethge (both executive management), Florian Rose (Project developer), Jens Hartmann (Kern Project Manager)

'We had a detailed look at the system and it was a good decision,' says Florian Rose, Project Developer at Berlin-based BC DirectGroup, summarising the decision to opt for a Kern 1600 *flex*. The search was on for a 'flexible solution in the inserting business', as Rose describes the requirement profile.

The first encounter with the multi-format inserting system was at the Hunkeler Innovation-days 2023, and just a few weeks later the decision in favour of Kern had already been made. The system has been working successfully since this year. In addition to the technical components, the decision-makers at BC Direct-

Group were also won over by the 'professional and personalised advice', as Rose puts it. 'The quick changeover from C6/5 to C4, the extremely smooth running of the entire system and the clarity of the operating elements and controls are simply unbeatable. Another plus is the very good direct availability of the service techni-

cians,' emphasizes Rose and adds: 'You can really tell that service is Kern's top priority. Everything that needed to be made possible was made possible. It all went perfectly.' Detailed questions were clarified quickly and individual customisations were implemented promptly.

BC DirectGroup's customer base includes large and small companies from various sectors, many of which operate in the housing industry or capital management. For customers, it is essential that all services are handled un-

der one roof, from consulting and IT to printing and enveloping. The diverse documents, which are sent by an average of 1,200 different customers or contributors per month, are optimized for web printing by 5 p.m. on the same day and then summarized and prepared for the subsequent enveloping process.

The output management system was developed in-house, customized to the customer's needs and continuously developed further. The Kern project management team provided support above

all with the integration of the data matrix codes on the sheets to be read, which were also to be processed by other inserting machines, without having to decide before printing which inserting system the items should be inserted on. The bottom line: 'It's a good thing we bought the Kern, because it works.'

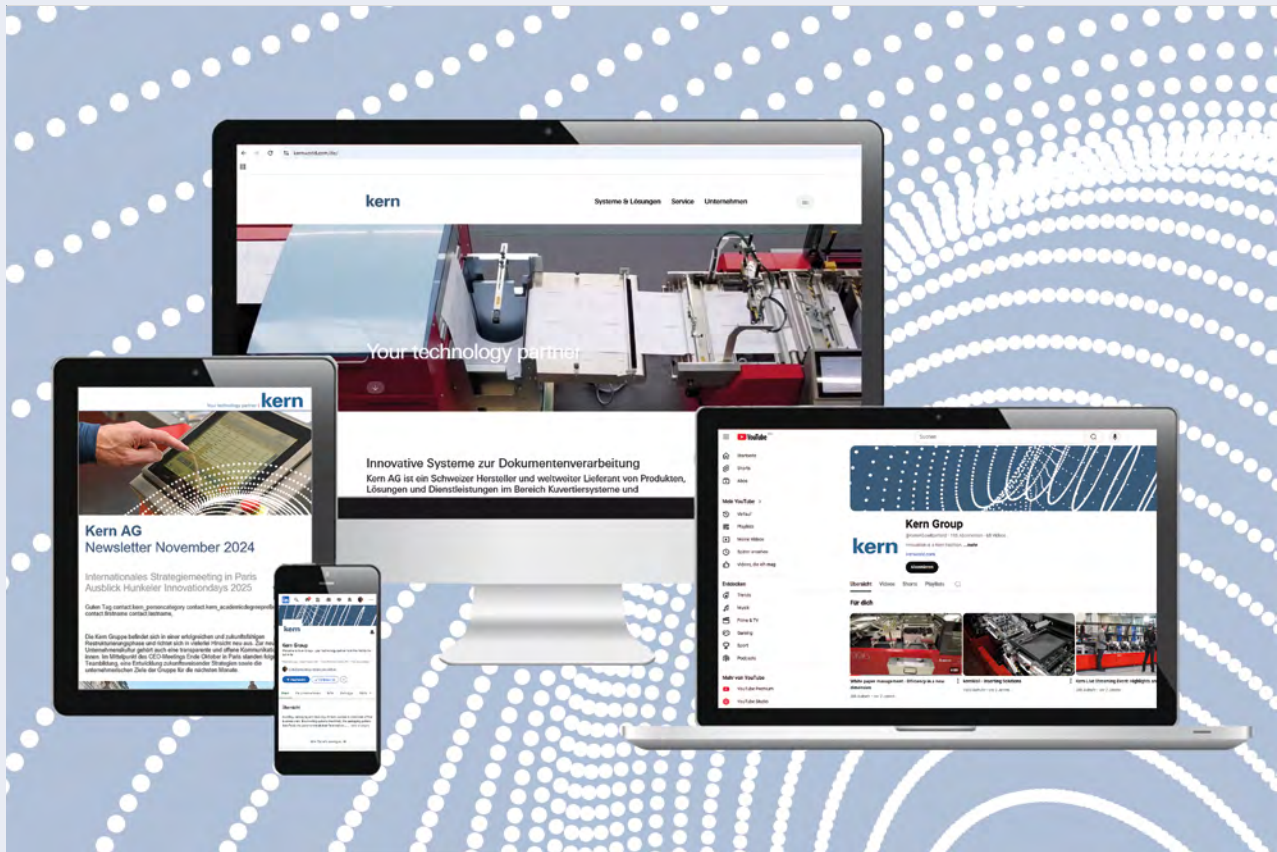
About BC DirectGroup

BC DirectGroup was founded in 2009 by Elke and Guido Bethge as a traditional service provider for direct mail projects and manual packing activities. Over the past ten years, the company has developed into a professional document processor with extensive IT and pro-

ject development capabilities. The transformation process from lettershop to a successful document outer is based on the guiding principle of offering DirectMail and transactional printing in equal measure, as both service areas share the same resources.



<https://bc-directroup.de>



Stay in contact with us!

The new Kern website: Fresher, lighter and properly organised.

The Kern Group is in a successful and sustainable restructuring phase and is realigning itself in many respects. We are combining this spirit of optimism with a complete relaunch of our existing website.

The management of the Kern Group and the CEOs of the subsidiaries have developed shared visions and values. These are

also reflected in the website. The website is now online. We look forward to your visit.

Kern Newsletter, lots of information every month

In the monthly Kern newsletter you can find out all about current installations, deliveries, trade fairs, events and internal news. Interested? Then simply register here!

marketing.switzerland@kernworld.com

Stay up to date via social media

Always up to date! Find out what's going on at the Kern Group on our social media platforms LinkedIn, Instagram, X and YouTube. There you will find interesting articles and videos about Kern systems and the Kern Group.

Feel free to click in.



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