

Entrepreneur Karl Müller retires as CEO of kybun

Karl Müller has taken one of the biggest steps of his 48-year entrepreneurial career by handing over the management of kybun to a new successor. His successor is Urs Koller and he takes over with immediate effect. Müller himself will in future concentrate on his role as the chair of the board of directors.



Picture: Urs Koller (l.) takes over the management of the Swiss shoe manufacturer kybun in Roggwil TG with a production site in Sennwald. Photo: Ralph Dietsch

The news comes as a surprise: Karl Müller, the successful inventor of the kybun air-cushion shoe and name-giver of the FCSG home stadium «kybunpark», is stepping down. This was announced today by the CEO of kybun you will be 68 this year. «Since I officially became a pensioner three years ago, I have been intending to hand over my responsibilities to the kybun management to someone new», Karl Müller explains his decision. His search for the ideal candidate has now reached a successful conclusion and he can hand over the company into safe hands. His excitement about the new phase of his life is equally big but still a huge step. Karl Müller's entrepreneurial career spans a total of 48 years.

Pioneer of shoes as a medical device

The unconventional thinker, Karl Müller revolutionised the shoe industry by developing soles which instead of stabilising the feet, make them more mobile and in doing so produce a health effect on the human body. The Thurgau native became internationally renowned with the MBT rolling shoe. With this revolutionary sole concept, he turned the thinking of the worldwide shoe industry completely upside down. Karl Müller started his career as an entrepreneur in Korea, where he lived for some 20 years, working as an importer and gastronomy proprietor.

The last shoe factory in Switzerland

In 2007 Karl Müller founded the company kybun AG and started again with the development and industrialisation of a shoe. In the meantime, the health-promoting kybun shoes with the elastic springy soles have been established worldwide. More than one million customers are testimony to the effect. With its production site in Sennwald, kybun is today the last remaining factory to manufacture its shoes industrially in Switzerland.

People are the focal point

Karl Müller's main motivation is not just selling products, but to offer services that help people to be mobile throughout their lives and to be able to walk without pain. For him, the well-being of the person is more important than earning money. A philosophy that the new kybun CEO Urs Koller also embraces: «It fills me with joy and confidence to be part of the kybun company and to be able to continue this customer employee-orientated concept into a secure future». Urs Koller brings with him a wealth of professional experience. For 18 years, as Head of Private Customers Eastern Switzerland at Postfinance, he shaped the development of the Postbank branch network, managed Post Arbon and was responsible for sales promotion at all post offices in the east of Switzerland. During his professional career, he also managed a large nursing home. Urs Koller lives in Frasnacht on the edge of Lake Constance, is married and father of two grown-up children. In his spare time, the 54-year-old has been a passionate rower at the Sailing Club, Arbon, for over forty years.

A clear vision for the future

Both Urs Koller and Karl Müller have clear ideas about their future. While the now-retired kybun CEO wants to become more self-sufficient and spend time with his ten grandchildren, Urs Koller will concentrate on the operational management and further development of the Swiss air-cushion shoe company.

The departing patron Karl Müller will remain active in his strategic role as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the company. This strategy includes a continuation of the close partnership with the local football club FCSG: «kybun is committed to this association despite difficult times. The change in management has no bearing on this».