

## Special Report: Renewable Businesses

### Business is Booming

Just as in the US, government is not the only place where climate action can or is taking place: private industry is also recognizing they have a role to play in the energy revolution and providing solutions to the climate crisis. Many businesses on both sides of the Atlantic also recognize that there is opportunity in moving into this space in addition to it being the right thing to do for the planet and people.

Minnesota and Germany are both home to innovators and leaders in many industries. While Germany may be ahead in the area of acting on climate change, Minnesota has the technical skills and resources to learn from our German partners in industry, who have been very generous in sharing their ideas for merging business and sustainability.



Siegfried Schulte welcomes Senator David Senjem, Commissioner Grace Arnold, and Director Frank Kohlasch to Schulte-Elektrotechnik.



Top: Waste plastic that Schulte-Elektrotechnik will grind up and use to manufacture new products rather than throwing it away.

Bottom: Patrice Bailey, Assistant Commissioner for the Minnesota Department of Agriculture checks out the EVOLine desktop power solutions Schulte-Elektrotechnik offers.

### Deutsche Perspektive

Siegfried Schulte, Founder and Owner of Schulte-Elektrotechnik

**Q:** Today we are visiting your company, Schulte-Elektrotechnik. Why is your company so exciting and innovative?

**A:** First of all, the fact that we have entered virgin territory with this. That is in terms of the electrical power supply, the energy use, and also the economic progress, which we achieve because of the entire electrical system, and also the heat control system and the heat supply system.

**Q:** The IPCC report indicates that we all need to be more ambitious and faster in achieving climate goals. What is your company doing to help with this?

**A:** Well I can only say that the entire design of our operation here focused on energy efficiency. We do not only say so, but we do it. We have translated this into reality. This will initially cost an obscene amount of money. And it would be better for our society, also in the United States, if we could also take into account the deviations and provide a tax break for such investment and that would be better than subsidies from the government.

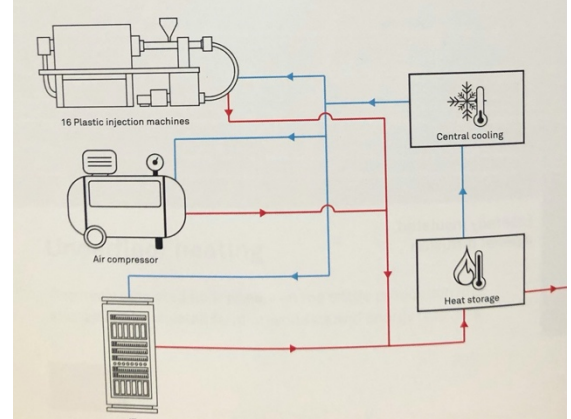
**Q:** What do you like about working with the Minnesotans?

**A:** I have a special weak spot for America. I was born in 1934, and in 1945 my father died in the war. And I would like to thank

the United States for helping us to really eliminate this lot of gangsters. And on the other hand, I also like our ties to Minnesota, because this connection, this cooperation is decentralized and informal and it's not organized at a high political level. Thank you very much indeed.

#### Heat recycling

of more than 80% from the ventilation in the plastic molding shop as well as cooling of the machines and no disturbing air movements.



A visual representation of how Schulte-Elektrotechnik recovers energy from their manufacturing processes and other operations to heat and cool their buildings.



The production floor of Schulte-Elektrotechnik in Lüdenscheid, Germany.

## What is good for business can also be good for the planet

Ken Smith, Chief Executive and President of Ever-Green Energy, on Schulte-Elektrotechnik and environmentally friendly business practices.



Ken Smith

**Q:** You are visiting Schulte-Elektrotechnik. What are you seeing that is impressive and captures your imagination?

**A:** Well, it is very inspirational on how they have integrated the wasted energy from their manufacturing processes into recovering that energy and putting it back into the building,

and that together with renewal energy on the roof of the building was able to essentially achieve net zero for the manufacturing facility. And while this was a new fact that we visited today – that's only 18 months old – this idea, the owner had started in the 70s. I asked him tonight, what inspired him and it was really two things. You had an energy crisis happening in the 70s, but also just his sensitivity towards the environment. So, using those two things, he pushed and figured out a way to do this. And it makes sense for his business, not in the short term, but in the long term because the energy is essentially free. He put in the infrastructure to recapture it and reuse it, and it makes it more competitive in the long run. It is very inspirational and can be done in many, many, many places in industry.

**Q:** What are you learning about this method of energy recovery that you think Minnesota will benefit from?

**A:** This is a method that I've actually talked about for a long time: the idea that we have wasted energy streams in all kinds of industry. Really all throughout our society we have wasted energy streams, we have wasted water streams that are resources that we should be capturing and reusing to the extent that we can reuse them inside of a factory or inside of a campus is good. But beyond that, how we can reuse them in a community is great,

because it can be an economic benefit to that community, it can be an economic benefit to the company, and it can be very much an environmental benefit to all.

**Q:** What is valuable about seeing this operation and being able to talk with Herr Schulte? What would be lost if you could not be here in person?

“...it can be an economic benefit to that community, it can be an economic benefit to the company, and it can be very much an environmental benefit to all.”

- Ken Smith

**A:** Coming in person, together, with the colleagues who are traveling with us, you're able to point out what is possible. These are ideas that are around, but they become tangible when you're able to see them, when you're able to talk to your counterparts who actually have done it. What have they learned about the process? And the Germans are wonderful about telling you “this worked, and we made it better” or “this didn't work. We changed and we've made it better” or “we're not going to do that again.” So, it's a very honest open discussion. Something we can point to and learn from and take back and apply in Minnesota.