

Entrepreneur and printing ink pioneer Rudolf Epple has died

Neusäß, 26 July 2019

After a short illness, Rudolf Epple has died in Augsburg on 20 July 2019, at the age of 93. As Managing Director of today's Epple Druckfarben AG from 1952, Rudolf Epple played a major role in the rise of the company. Until 2015, the entrepreneur was a member of the supervisory board of Epple Druckfarben AG. Today over 200 employees work worldwide for Epple Druckfarben AG, which is Germany's leading provider of sheetfed offset printing inks, as well as being globally active.

Rudolf Epple was born in Radebeul near Dresden on 08 November 1925, and was the son of factory owner, Carl Epple and his wife Hadwig Epple. During his school time, Rudolf Epple experienced the work carried out in his fathers' ink factory, at first hand. The family fled after the war and ended up in Mittelberg in Allgäu. Rudolf helped his father to set up ink manufacturing in the Bobingen area, close to Augsburg, studied chemistry both in Cologne and in Bonn, and after the death of his father Carl Epple in 1952, took over the management of the Epple printing ink factory together with his sister Karla Berz, (née Epple). The relocation to today's premises followed in 1956. His sister Karla was a great support to Rudolf Epple, as a young widower with two small children, after the early death of his wife.

The chemistry graduate Rudolf Epple, who studied under Professor Burckhardt Helferich in Bonn, acquired numerous patents. One of these was in 1968, for spraying powder that prevents sticking when heavy cardboard sheets are stacked on top of each other. Epple Druckfarben expanded and opened a branch in Hettlingen, Switzerland in 1972. Worldwide internationalisation followed in the Nineties. Rudolf Epple also positively developed Epple Druckfarben AG in terms of products. During his period in

charge of technology, the decision was taken in 1993 to develop and launch the important new mineral oil free and therefore environmentally-friendly printing ink generation on a purely plant based binder combination. As a pioneer in ecological printing, Epple has ever since worked on achieving a very strong market position, which has continued to the present day. His passion for both printing ink production and his father's Company was always to be felt in the factory in Neusäß. In 2002 he handed on the operative management and together with his sister, changed over to the supervisory board, which he in turn left in 2015. Up until his death he continued to participate with great interest in the supervisory board meetings.

Rudolf Epple, who knew every employee by name, encouraged and lived high work discipline standards combined with deep humanity, in the working day. Employees could count on Rudolf Epple when it came to integration or if they had personal problems. He was personally attentive to the concerns of new employees, some of whom came, for example, from Vietnam to Germany. They received help not only with apartment hunting, but also received a personal German course from Mr Epple.

From time to time Rudolf Epple supported his colleagues in unconventional ways. For instance he was always interested in medicine and valued alternative medical practices, and several times he drove pain-suffering employees to an Orthopaedist in Allgäu so they could receive the best possible medical care. Rudolf Epple had discovered yoga in the fifties as a means of influencing his own well-being and enjoyed giving relevant tips to employees with back complaints.

In his private life, Rudolf Epple was a passionate skier and motorist. Living horsepower also counted as one of his passions in his youth. On the company premises in Neusäß, up to three of Rudolf Epple's own horses could be observed grazing. His favourite horse was called Lady, and was a present from his mother for his eighteenth birthday. A lot of colleagues were familiar with a stallion descendent of Lady's called Lotus who was known to the employees as "Bobbi".

Topics, which Rudolf Epple promoted heavily, are even more significant today than in the past: The range of ecological inks from Epple has gained enormously in size and significance recently. A global network, which has been expanded in the past years, is supplying the printing houses quickly and globally with Epple printing inks.

The entrepreneurial family Epple is still operative today, with Dr. Carl Epple as a member of the board, where he is responsible for innovation and development in Epple Druckfarben AG. Together with his board member colleague, Gunther Gerlach, who is responsible for sales, finance and production, he leads Epple Druckfarben AG according to his father's principles, supported by his cousin Michael Berz, who is head of the supervisory board.

The supervisory board, management board, employees and worker's council would like to express their sincerest sympathy to the family.



Rudolf Epple (1925-2019) took over management of today's Epple Druckfarben AG in 1952 and left his position on the supervisory board in 2015. © Epple Druckfarben AG



COMPANY INFORMATION

Epple Druckfarben AG stands for unique perfection in every detail. Since 1870, Epple has embodied permanent further development and the highest of quality demands. As the leading producer of offset printing inks, Epple has demonstrated its power of innovation with early development of mineral oil-free eco-series and special types of ink for very long washing intervals in perfecting printing. This has also been demonstrated in the sector of inks for foodstuff packaging with the patented products BoFood® MU and BoFood® Organic. PRe® is setting new standards as a third technology offset ink system, which completely avoids the use of metal dryers or photo initiators. Both sustainability and flexibility in business are top priorities at the medium sized family-run company. Unlike practically any other company, Epple is in the position to provide tailor made solutions for the individual requirements of their global customers.

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