



Nikolaj Merkel, Andreas Janzen und Thorben Kalkkuhl (from left to right) developed the robotic system as part of a project of the Technical College in Siegen. (Source: BPW Bergische Achsen KG)

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BPW to use robots in vocational and professional training

- **An industry first in the region: BPW opens a training centre for robotics**
- **Upgrade for vocational training through inclusion of robotics knowledge**
- **Apprentices benefit from leading know-how in transport, IT and mechatronics**

Wiehl, 23.11.2018 --- As one of the innovation leaders of the transport industry, BPW dovetails its know-how in IT and mechatronics closely with its vocational training. As a result, BPW was given the distinction of being one of the “Best Companies for vocational training in Germany” in March. Now the company is taking its vocational training and staff qualifications to the next level by adding a robotics branch.

BPW Bergische Achsen KG has started its own training centre for robotics at its headquarters in Wiehl, Germany. For the first time, apprentices, employees and students can learn about how to operate, maintain and program modern robots in the company’s own training centre under real-life conditions. To enable this, the company installed two 6-axle robots from the company Kuka. They can literally operate hand in hand and will now exclusively serve vocational and professional training purposes.

Although robots come as standard in today’s industrial facilities, the new BPW training centre is unique, even in Germany’s industrial heartland of North-Rhine Westphalia. Only very few companies invest in own robotics training facilities: normally, employees are trained in external training centres belonging to the robots’ manufacturers.

“Having our own training centre gives us the opportunity to significantly enhance our vocational training programme in the field of robotics,” explains Harold Mayer, who was responsible for the project as trainer. “Alongside the technical installation of the robots themselves, we have also developed a corresponding didactic concept. Since spring, our apprentices in the fields of electronics and mechatronics were trained and in the second step, we will introduce the future industrial mechanics to the system”.

BPW employees can also be safely instructed in the operation and maintenance of robots in the training centre. Harold Mayer emphasized that “Safety was paramount when the training system was designed, as industrial robots move extremely quickly and powerfully. Along with students of the Technical College in Siegen, we developed a comprehensive safety concept. It effectively reduces risks and enables the system to be used in near-real operating conditions. We are proud of this system, as it once again proves us to be among the top companies for apprentices in Germany”.

BPW Bergische Achsen KG is the parent company of the BPW Group. With more than 1,600 employees, including around 120 trainees, the family-run company has been developing and producing complete running gear systems for truck trailers and semi-trailers at its headquarters in Wiehl since 1898. BPW's technologies include axle systems, brake technology, suspension and bearings. BPW's trailer axles and running gear systems are in use in millions of vehicles around the world. An extensive range of services also provides vehicle manufacturers and vehicle operators with the opportunity to increase economic efficiency in their production and transport processes. www.bpw.de/en

About the BPW Group

The BPW Group, based in Wiehl, Germany, is a dependable international mobility and system partner for the transport industry, serving as a one-stop shop for innovative solutions. Its portfolio embraces axles, suspension systems and brake technologies (BPW), locking systems and bodywork technology (Hestal), lighting systems (Ermax), composite technologies (HBN-Teknik), and user-friendly telematics applications for trucks and trailers (idem telematics). BPW Group's technologies and services support manufacturers' cost-effective workflows and enable vehicle operators to manage their fleets efficiently by maximising the transparency of loading and transport processes. The owner-managed BPW Group encompasses 70 companies worldwide and employs around 7,000 people. www.bpw.de/e

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