

111 years of Melitta®

Where we are at home

A close connection between Melitta and Minden for 90 years



For 90 years Melitta has been producing filter paper and Melitta® Original coffee filters in Minden, East Westphalia. ©Melitta Group

An anniversary in two respects: in 2019, the Melitta Group celebrates its 111th birthday - and at the same time 90 years of our close connection to the city of Minden. The company, which was originally founded in Dresden, moved to the East Westphalian city in 1929 and continued to expand its activities from here. Today, the company, which then had 55 employees, has grown into a globally active group of companies with over 5,200 employees and a turnover of around 1.5 billion euros.

“Even though the roots of our company are in Dresden, Minden is of course our home,” says Jero Bentz, member of the Chief Corporate Management and general partner of the Melitta Group. “We therefore identify very closely with the region, take an active part in its further development and are happy to get involved in the economic, political, cultural and sporting initiatives of the city and its people.”

The fact that the Melitta Group now has its headquarters in Minden is due to a coincidence: Melitta and Hugo Bentz discovered the site of a former chocolate factory while passing through on the way from Dresden to Aachen. This location offered ideal conditions for the further growth of the young company, which they had founded in Dresden in 1908.

Tanja Wucherpennig
Head of Internal &
External Communication

Phone +49 571 / 4046 - 281
tanja.wucherpennig@melitta.de



**at home
— wherever
you are.**

www.111yearsmelitta.com

Corporate Communication
& Sustainability
Melitta Group Management
GmbH & Co. KG

Marienstraße 88, D 32425 Minden
Postbox 1126, D 32371 Minden

Phone +49 571 / 4046 - 0
Fax +49 571 / 4046 - 272

pr@melitta.de
www.melitta-group.com



Relocation to Minden: A logistical miracle in four days

Production capacities in Dresden were bursting at the seams. The coffee filter developed by Melitta Bentz revolutionised coffee enjoyment throughout Germany. More and more households wanted to filter their coffee in order to avoid coffee grounds and the sometimes bitter taste in their coffee.

Melitta and Hugo Bentz took on more and more employees to meet the rapidly increasing demand. In the mid-20s, around 80 employees produced the coveted filters in double shifts. When these capacities proved insufficient, the couple decided to move the company - and it was at this time that Melitta and Hugo Bentz made the journey from Dresden to Aachen, stopping in Minden.

After they had acquired the 11,000 square meter premises, they registered the company 'Melitta Bentz' in the commercial register of the city of Minden on March 28, 1929. At the same time, they undertook the relocation of their factory, which demanded an enormous logistic effort: all the machines and equipment as well as the complete inventory were transported in railway wagons to the new factory in Minden. 55 employees moved with them. Production was resumed only four days after the move.

"The move from Dresden to Minden was undoubtedly an outstanding accomplishment on the part of my great grandparents," says Jero Bentz. "In 1929 there was a very severe winter, which repeatedly affected the work. In addition, the stock market crash in October 1929 triggered a severe world economic crisis. At a time like this, to focus on growth and make large investments requires a lot of courage, self-confidence and entrepreneurial skill."

The location grows and grows

Despite all the difficulties, the company continued to expand rapidly at the beginning of the 1930s. Around 450 employees were working for Melitta at that time. Again and again, the company invested in the expansion of capacities, in new machines and buildings.

In 1932 Willy and Horst Bentz, the sons of Melitta and Hugo, took over the management of the company, which was renamed "Melitta Werke AG". New products and additional production facilities were created, which were relocated to Ringstraße after the Second World War.

One of the major investments made by Melitta during the boom years of the young Federal Republic of Germany was the construction of the most modern paper machine in Europe, which went into operation in 1959. It was revolutionary that the paper was sorted and embossed immediately after production. The paper was then transported to the coffee filter department by a conveyor belt. A tunnel under Ringstraße ensured that there was a direct connection from the paper machine through further processing to dispatch.

A new corporate structure

In the 60s, the Melitta range continued to grow. In addition to coffee and tea products, the company also invested in the manufacture of various paper and foil products, porcelain, sweets, juices and even cigars. It was not until a restructuring of the activities at the beginning of the 1980s that the portfolio was again streamlined, and the activities focused on four business segments. Under the management of Jörg, Thomas and later also Stephan Bentz, the sons of Horst Bentz, the company was transferred into the holding structure, which still exists today. As a visible sign of this holding structure, in 1990 a new administrative building for the headquarters was built at 88 Marienstraße.

“We are very proud of our dynamism. Only in this way have we been able to meet the challenges of the market. Today, it is even more important than in the past to be flexible, to identify and respond to trends promptly and to continuously develop innovative ideas. Minden was and still is an important anchor point for us. This is one of the reasons we enjoy living and working in Minden and feel very closely connected to the region”, says Volker Stühmeier, member of the Chief Corporate Management.

Committed to the region in a variety of ways

For decades, the Melitta Group has been promoting and supporting institutions, associations and initiatives in the East Westphalia region. This includes, for example, close and long-standing cooperation with the Child Protection Association: Melitta supports the work of the organisation not only with material and financial resources, but also with ideas, a wide range of activities and volunteer work. In Minden, Melitta also sponsors numerous cultural events, such as the LWL Prussian Museum and the ‘Mindener Stichling’ cabaret prize.

In 2018 Melitta also joined the 'East Westphalia Alliance' as a partner. With its commitment Melitta supports the new start and the future of the soccer club Arminia Bielefeld. In cooperation with other partners, Melitta supports the club financially as well as with material resources and advice.

Since 1964, the group has also maintained an intensive relationship with GWD Minden, where, in addition to the Handball Bundesliga team, other youth teams are also supported. Melitta is also the main sponsor of the Bessel Rowing Club, whose women's team has been competing in the German Rowing League since 2009. The men's team joined the national league in 2016.

Find further information at www.111jahremelitta.de



Image 1: During the move to Minden, the complete inventory of the young company was transported in railway wagons. ©Melitta Group



Image 2: The company expanded at the beginning of the 1930s and invested in new machinery and buildings. ©Melitta Group



Image 3: The company expanded at the beginning of the 1930s and invested in new machinery and buildings. ©Melitta Group



Image 4: In the early days of coffee filter production women folded the filters with the help of templates, the rest was done by the punching machine.
©Melitta Group



Image 5: The aluminium department: here round filter holders, tea grinders and other Melitta® products were made. ©Melitta Group



Image 6: Europe's most modern paper machine is put into operation in 1959. ©Melitta Group



Image 7: In 1958, the new, six-storey administration building - the new heart of the Melitta plant - was opened. ©Melitta Group



Image 8: The administration building at 88 Marienstraße was inaugurated in 1990. ©Melitta Group



Image 9: Melitta® coffee filters have been produced at Ringstraße since 1929. ©Melitta Group



Image 10: Melitta® coffee filters have been produced at Ringstraße since 1929. ©Melitta Group



Image 11: Melitta® coffee filters have been produced at Ringstraße since 1929. ©Melitta Group

All photos are available for download at www.melitta-group.com alternatively Annika von Hollen (annika.von.hollen@melitta.de) and Tanja Wucherpfennig (tanja.wucherpfennig@melitta.de) would be happy to send them to you.

The Melitta Group

Melitta is an internationally active group of companies and is one of the leading independent family businesses in Germany and in other countries. The main activities are the development, manufacture and sale of branded products for coffee enjoyment, for the storage and preparation of food and for household cleanliness. More information is available at www.melitta-group.com.



Contact:

Melitta Group Management GmbH & Co. KG
Corporate Communication and Sustainability
Tanja Wucherpfennig
Head of internal and external communication
Tel: +49 571/4046-281
Email: tanja.wucherpfennig@melitta.de