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XL Edition

2024, Issue 14

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Can installing fences make you rich?

If you ask a fencing installer why he got into the business, you'll get all sorts of different answers. Usually it will be something like, "I wanted to work outdoors," "I like working with heavy-duty tools," or "I really like building things that everyone's going to see for decades to come". And sometimes we hear, "I was too stupid to do anything else," and then we lose it immediately, because you really do need to be smart and skilled to install fences. Smarter than, for example, errr, umm... no, we're not sure either.

Anyway, it's not often that you hear an answer like: "Because I want to be rich." And if you did get that answer, you'd probably laugh at the installer, because no one in their right mind associates installing fences with getting rich.

Coincidentally, the other day we came across a little chart on the big wide internet, showing how rich you have to be to make it into the top 1 per cent of any given country's population. Then we thought: Could you actually get rich putting up fences, if you wanted to?

The chart doesn't list every European country, but in France, Germany and Great Britain the level is slightly above 3 million American dollars, so just for fun let's take 3 million euros and see how many metres you'd have to install for that.

To keep things simple, let's use the example of a self-employed installer who works for fencing installers as a subcontractor. Our installer has his own (paid-off) van and tools. He has no office, no secretary, and no additional expenses. He doesn't need to worry about advertising and sales; the installers he works for take care of that. They also transport the materials to the project for him.

Now, obviously it's slightly dependent on the type of fencing, how much of it you can install in a day, and therefore what a reasonable

installation price would be. In Germany or the UK, where the posts are set in concrete, you can't install as many metres as in the Netherlands, where most fencing is rammed into the ground. And if you live in Belgium or France and have to bury concrete slabs in the ground for almost every fence, it's going to take you even longer.

To consider all these differences would be taking things way too far, so let's just say that our installer only ever installs rigid mesh fencing – with all the posts set in concrete – and is paid 10 euros per metre for his work. So to earn 3 million euros, he would need to install 300,000 metres of fencing.

Is that even possible? Let's say that he started working at 20 and his back has had enough by the time he's 60: that gives him 40 years to get rich putting up fences. 300,000 metres divided by 40 years then divided by 220 working days per year equals 34 metres per day.

That would be doable, wouldn't it? 34 metres a day? Digging 14 holes, installing 14 posts, and hanging 13 wire panels between them, that's doable. Certainly with two men. On good days you might even manage to do more, but we're calculating on the cautious side and also taking into account the days where you have to work on a slope or lug equipment for long distances, and days when the ground is full of stones.

It would mean that the customer is paying 20 euros per metre for labour. Add concrete, travel expenses, and a margin for the fencing contractor who sold the project, and you arrive at an installation price of somewhere between 25 and 30 euros per metre. That seems a bit on the expensive side to us, but we do know fencers whose customers pay them those sorts of prices.

Good, there we are then. It turns out it is possible to earn 3 million euros as a fencing installer. Or are we forgetting something?

Obviously our installer will need something to live on throughout those 40 years. We wanted to have that 3 million euros in the bank at the end of 40 years of hard work, so we can't use it for rent and groceries. The average fencing installer eats three Big Macs a day and drinks six cans of Red Bull; those alone cost him 27 euros a day.

That said, an installer who spends all day putting up fences isn't spending much money apart from that. Let's say he has a monthly salary of 3,000 euros gross; that's enough to rent a little flat, pay his bills, and if our installer doesn't eat too many Big Macs he'll still have money left over for a Brazzers subscription to him get through the hours when he can't put up fences.

At 12 months times 40 years, we will need an extra 1.44 million euros for putting those 300,000 metres into the ground. That's 4 euros and 80 cents per metre. Times that by two installers and it really drives up the labour costs – we're now at almost 30 euros per metre rather than 20.



THE 1% CLUB

Individual net wealth needed to join the top 1% in selected countries and territories, Q4 2023

COUNTRY	WEALTH NEEDED (US \$)
Monaco 🇲🇴	12,883,000
Luxembourg 🇱🇺	10,832,000
Switzerland 🇨🇭	8,509,000
United States 🇺🇸	5,813,000
Singapore 🇸🇬	5,227,000
Sweden 🇸🇪	4,761,000
Australia 🇦🇺	4,673,000
Germany 🇩🇪	3,430,000
France 🇫🇷	3,273,000
United Kingdom 🇬🇧	3,070,000
Italy 🇮🇹	2,548,000
Spain 🇪🇸	2,468,000
Japan 🇯🇵	1,971,000

Source: Knight Frank Research

TAXES PER COUNTRY

COUNTRY	CORPORATE TAX	INCOME TAX	NEEDED FOR € 3 MILLION NET
Austria 🇦🇹	25%	55%	€ 8.89 million
Belgium 🇧🇪	25%	50%	€ 8 million
France 🇫🇷	30%	49%	€ 8.4 million
Germany 🇩🇪	30%	48%	€ 8.16 million
Great Britain 🇬🇧	19%	47%	€ 6.99 million
Ireland 🇮🇪	25%	40%	€ 6.67 million
Luxembourg 🇱🇺	25%	45%	€ 7.27 million
Netherlands 🇳🇱	25%	50%	€ 8 million
Switzerland 🇨🇭	17%	34%	€ 5.44 million

And there was just one more little thing we'd forgotten: our installer can't do all of those 300,000 metres on a Saturday and get the client to pay in cash (although we know of a fencing installer who tried that, and got away with it too); the tax man wants a cut as well. Or make that a thick slice, because even if we only count corporate and income tax (for the sake of convenience), in most countries that will mean you need to bring in (more than) twice as much. That's what 'we' all agreed on.

So where do we end up? If you're able to install 34 metres in a day and want to make enough money from fencing to put you in the richest 1 per cent in your country, you need to be able to sell your skills for more than 25 euros per metre. Seeing



as we know few companies that pay that type of money to subcontractors, we are forced to conclude that as a fencing installer, you're never going to find yourself among the richest 1 per cent in the country. So it's a good thing you didn't become a fencing professional because you wanted to get rich; it would only have ended in disappointment.

While we had the calculator out, we made some reverse calculations. If you can sell your skills as a subcontractor for 10 euros per metre, while you need 4 euros and 80 cents of that to live on, you would need to install 66 metres a day for 40 years to end up with 3 million in the bank. That's almost as big a challenge as selling your labour for 25 euros a metre. But if we make that same calculation at 7.50 a metre, the number of metres you would have to make in a day suddenly shoots up to 126. Twice as many,

while the price is only 25 per cent less. But it would get you straight into the Guinness Book of Records as the installer who got the most metres in the ground, because after 40 years of that you will have installed 1.1 million metres of fencing.

How can such a small difference in the price per metre have such an enormous effect on the number of metres you'd need to install to live it up a bit? In this example, the high number of workdays (40 years times 220 working days per year = 8800) means a large multiplier.

It demonstrates that, in metre price negotiations, it pays to fight for every penny – and to always try to squeeze in that extra metre at the end of the day.

Because if you get an additional euro for every metre you install, then at 34 metres a day you'll have almost 300,000 additional euros in

the bank at the end of 40 years. If you install 40 metres a day, that amount will be 350,000 euros. So even though installing fences might not allow you to join the richest 1 per cent of your country, you certainly don't have to be a pauper. How many metres have you installed in your life so far? ■



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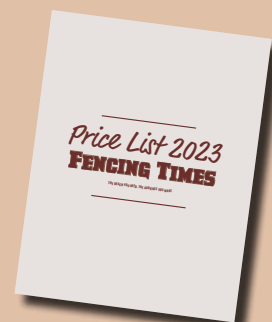
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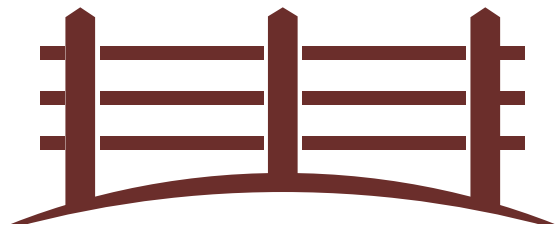
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Motorised dropbolts

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Drahtzaun association get-together in Hanover

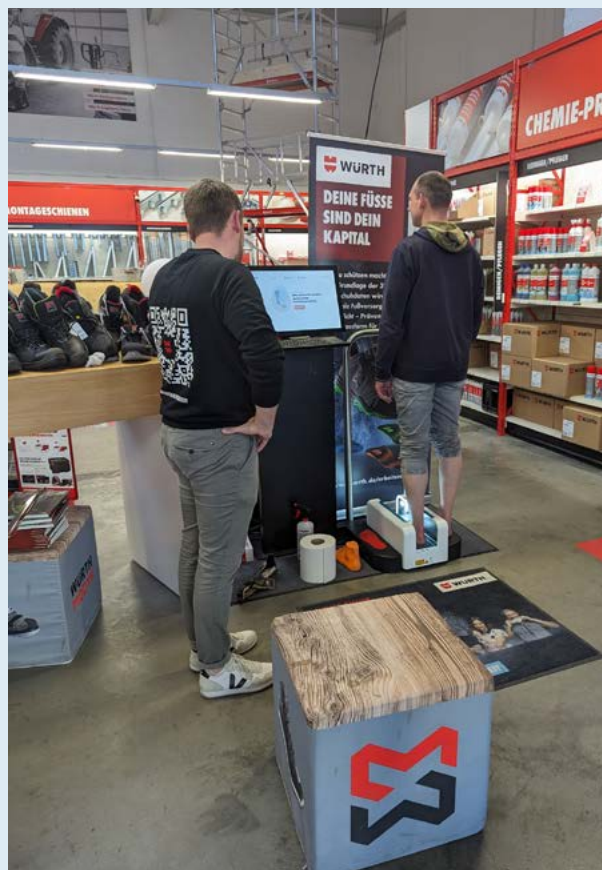


In early April the Fachverband Drahtzaun, a regional trade association for fencing professionals in Northern Germany, gathered in Hanover for its spring 'Stammtisch'. (A Stammtisch is a regular informal get-together.) In addition to socialising and catching up on the latest in the fencing world, there were two company tours on the agenda. First up was a look at the production facilities at Seppeler Galvanising Hanover. Site director Stefan Marschke gave a tour to the assembled members, showing them exactly how everything worked. He also shared a lot of interesting facts about galvanisation in general.

The second tour was at the same industrial park but 400 metres down the road, at the Hanover

branch of industrial fastener manufacturer Würth. Christoph Krieg from the sales team showed the visitors how these days nuts and bolts are not weighed by hand, but instead are dispensed by a fast and super-smart machine. Then the discussion turned to choosing work shoes. It seems that this is also done digitally these days: Würth makes a laser scan of your foot and then knows exactly which workboot is right for you. Krieg also gave an informative presentation on cargo securing – with straps from Würth, of course – but nonetheless very interesting.

"All in all, it was another fun and interesting gathering," association president Markus Vogt said. *"We always learn new things, including from each other. We're already looking forward to the next Stammtisch!"* ■



Intertraffic

Intertraffic took place in Amsterdam from 16 to 19 April. More than 30,000 people from 140 countries gathered to visit the booths of 900 exhibitors, which were spread across all 12 halls of the exhibition complex. The Intertraffic is an expansive

exhibition for everything related to traffic and mobility. From self-driving cars to shared bicycles to bridge construction, street furniture, road safety, parking management and traffic management. The latter two topics may be of particular interest to fence workers and

gate installers, as they overlap in some cases with the demand for perimeter protection. There were providers of bollards, barriers, turnstiles, roadblockers, speed gates and other access control products. The next edition is from 10 to 13 March, 2026. ■



Betafence extends its guarantee

Belgian company Betafence is extending the guarantees it offers. Various products now have a longer warranty period, or are suitable for installation closer to the sea than they were previously. Some products feature an adapted surface treatment, while Betafence has extended the warranty period of others based on past experience.

“For example, last summer we made changes to the powder coating on the Nylofor 3D mesh panels,” product manager Kris Van Waes says. *“Now the pre-galvanised wires are given an epoxy coating first. After that they go through the spray cabin and the oven again to be coated with polyester powder. The name we’ve given to the panels with that double coating is Nylofor 3D Plus. We already had a 10-year warranty on the standard 3D panels, when installed at least 3 kilometres from the coast. The 3D Plus panels come with a 5-year warranty in the zone that’s 1 to 3 kilometres from the coast.”*

Since then, Betafence has been looking to see where it can extend the warranty period even further. *“As part of that, we’ve made changes to the terms of the guarantee on for example the Bekafix posts,”* Van Waes goes on. *“They now have a five-year warranty in the zone 1 to 3 kilometres from the coast as well – although we haven’t made changes to the coating. The quality of the existing zinc and coating is so good – even years after installation – that we’re very confident about extending the guarantee. Other products will be added one by one.”*

Betafence believes it’s important to provide a good guarantee. *“For years that’s been one of the things that makes us stand out,”* Van Waes says. *“It’s one of our strongest selling points; it makes it clear that we stand for quality. We take it very seriously, too: there are plenty of companies that provide a lengthy guarantee, but if you try to make a claim it ends up being rejected, under the guise of ‘you should have cleaned the fence twice a year’ or something along those lines. That’s not how we operate. We don’t receive that many claims anyway – there’s a reason why we’re known for our quality. But if there is an issue, we make a genuine effort to arrive at a good resolution with the customer.”* ■



Farfisa launches new version of Mycom GSM system

Italian intercom manufacturer Farfisa, from Osimo near Ancona, launches a new version of its GSM System. The new Mycom is compatible with the Alba range. It enables owners to speak to visitors and grant them access wireless, via a phone call.

The Mycom system consists of a doorbell with speaker. There's a slot for a 4G SIM card, the complete system works just with this module and a power supply, without any further cables. When a visitor rings the doorbell, the module calls four different phone numbers one by one until it gets an answer. The person who answers the call is able to talk to the visitor and let them in. When the outdoor unit also has a Farfisa keypad module, it can be used the other way round as well: gate users who have an access code can call the module's SIM card and key in the code, enabling them to open the gate without needing to get out of the car.

The Mycom also features an office function that buzzes the gate open as soon as someone picks up, and an alarm function that sends a text message as soon as someone operates one of the gate's other Alba modules. The new GSM System is meant for applications like villas with a long distance between the entry door panel and the building, B&B's where the host can open the door without the need to be present, parkings and so on.

The new Mycom was released in April. ■



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PPG expands CityProtector bollard series

Perimeter Protection Group, a Salzkotten-based manufacturer of speed gates, bollards and road blockers, is expanding its CityProtector bollard series. With two outdoor tables and with illuminated sleeves, the company aims to set new standards to meet the changing demands of urban security.





“We launched the CityProtector series two years ago with the idea of departing from the beaten – and old-fashioned – path in terms of design and use of bollards,” says product manager Yvonne Kolatschek. “The demand for bollards as protection against vehicular attacks has been rising sharply for years, but with it also rises the resistance to seeing a ‘bollard-secured’ cityscape. The CityProtector is a bollard that can be combined with city furniture and thus looks less like a bollard. Architects and city planners now have even more choice with the new modules.”

CITYPROTECTOR

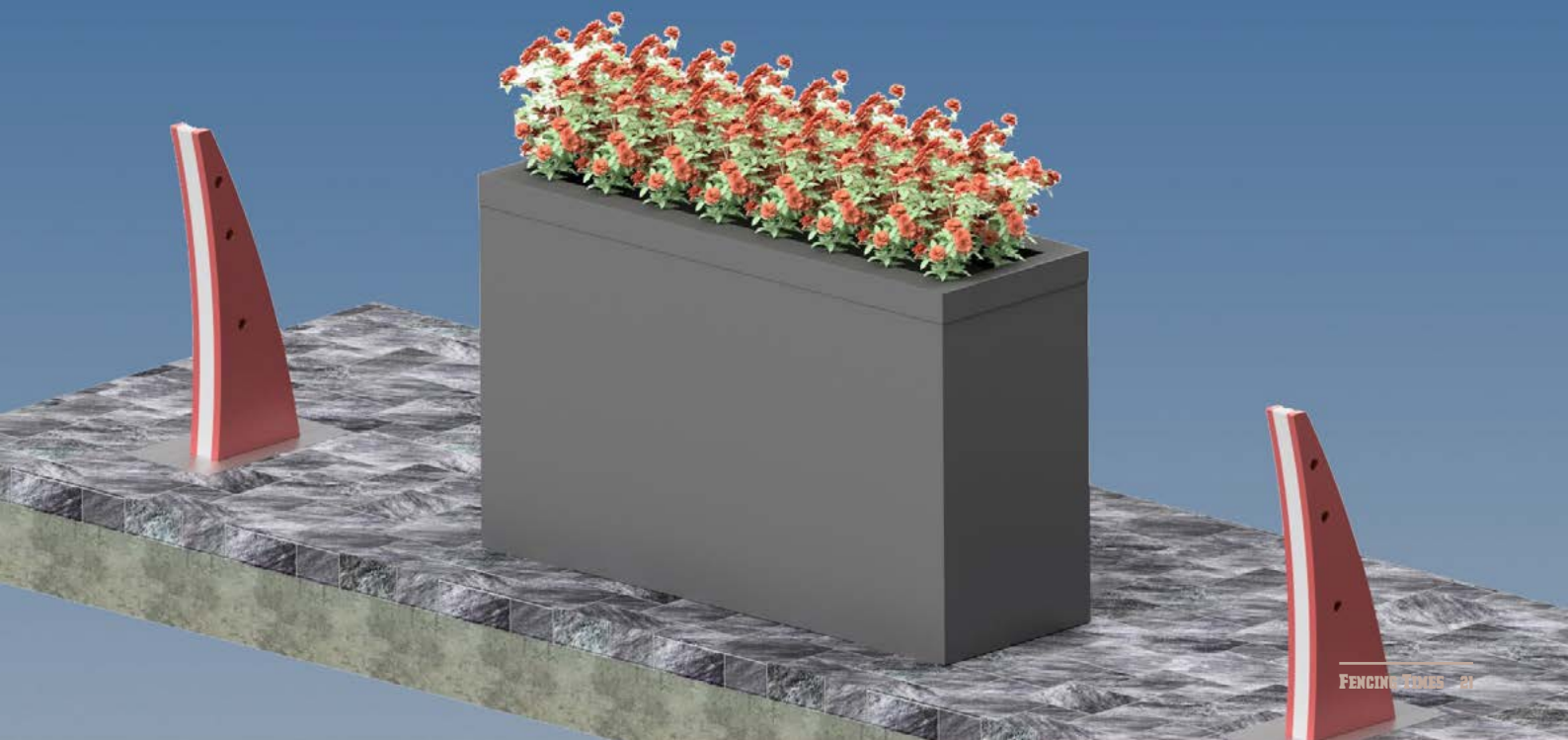
The CityProtector is a bollard consisting of four steel plates bolted together in the shape of a shark fin. “By taking four different plates, the bollard stays portable,” says Kolatschek. “The shape of the shark fin is so sophisticated that first we capture as many kinetic forces as possible with as little material as possible, and second that we can get as many fins as possible out of one steel plate.” The fins are secured in a base which is cast into a foundation. “That base is in turn designed such that the forces are distributed over the entire foundation and directed downward. As a result, that foundation does not have to be deep, which is an advantage in inner cities where there are all kinds of cables and pipes in the ground.”

Yvonne
Kolatschek



OUTDOOR OFFICE

The CityProtector is made in such a way that you can easily convert it and adapt it to its location. "The first thing you naturally think of when you think of urban furniture is a bench," says Kolatschek. "A bench comes into its own in any square. Then came the bicycle rack to lock bicycles against." The newest modules in the programme include a laptop table with seat and a so-called meet-and-greet module with two tabletops. Both are welded out of steel plates and then galvanised and coated. "The laptop table is mainly envisaged for gardens around office buildings. The meet-and-greet table can be used in any park or square." Also new are planters made of steel plate, which are slid around two or three bollards at a time. "Customers can design their own logo, city crest or other images for this, which we then laser out of the plate. With the planter, the bollard disappears completely from the street scene; you no longer see anything of it."



LED SLEEVE

In addition to the office furniture and planters, PPG also offers Sleeves with LED lighting. "This transforms bollards into elegant streetlights," Kolatschek says. This involves a square casing made of plain or stainless sheet steel, again with a lasered motif. With this so-called Sleeve, a transparent sheet of acrylic is attached to the inside against the lasered motif, and an LED strip is installed. "As a result, the bollards no longer stand out as being bollards at all, when you see them you think they are luxury street lights."

EVALUATED

None of the existing or new modules affect the resistance to attackers. "The CityProtector is for sale with M40 and M50 qualification according to PAS 68 and IWA 14 standards," says Kolatschek. "That means the bollards stop trucks driving into them at 64 or even 80 kilometres per hour. That

impact is absorbed by the part of the steel plates located in front of the attachment holes of the shark fins. That means that whatever we attach to the bollard behind those holes will not affect the resistance provided by the bollard."

FUTURE

"The bollards are designed so that we can be very flexible with them," said Yvonne Kolatschek in conclusion. "We had a design study done by the Kraków University of Technology, mainly to get ideas from young architects. From that came all kinds of benches, wastebaskets, and bicycle racks, as well as futuristic lamp posts and bus shelters. The possibilities are endless. In the coming years, we therefore plan to definitely expand the CityProtector series even further and make city life even safer and more pleasant with innovative concepts." ■





Berner expands programme with sliding gate ST Live

Berner Torantriebe, a manufacturer of gate drives and gates from Rottenburg am Neckar in southern Germany, a little south of Stuttgart, is expanding its catalogue with an economical version of the sliding gate up to now known as Supeero.

“With the new ST Live, we can hold our own in the private sliding gate market,” says director Frank Kiefer. “Even when compared to international competitors. At the same time, we make as few concessions as possible in terms of quality; the more competitive prices are possible thanks to a sleeker design.”

The leaf of the new ST Live consists of thinner aluminium sections than its more expensive brother. This also makes it possible to make some of the hardware components lighter, such as the load-bearing wheel consoles, run-up shoe and racks. As with the Supeero, the infill sections of the leaf are not welded, but screwed. Furthermore, the new gate is supplied without a pre-assembled guide column, but with separately provided guide and closing posts. Instead, drilling templates are provided so that the installer can position the gate himself at the correct position. Finally, the aluminium sections are not anodised before coating. *“This allows our customers to serve the private market with attractive prices,”* says Kiefer. The new ST Live is available with a passage width of up to 4.5 metres and a height of up to 2.10 metres. Berner’s own sliding gate drive can also be ordered, but it too is not pre-assembled.

Along with the launch of the new ST Live, the existing gates in the range, up-to-now called Supeero, will be renamed to ST Form. The Supeero swing gate will be called DT Live from now on. ■





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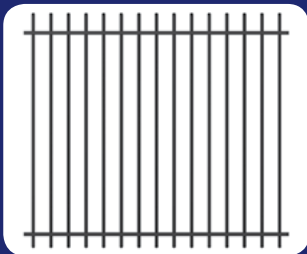
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Legi introduces corner post for R fit system



This spring, German fencing manufacturer Legi released a corner post for its R fit system. Now installers can build stronger and more attractive corners, can create T-crossings, and the system is better suited to use in smaller areas.

“The Legi R System is the only system on the market that doesn't require corner posts, thanks to the strong connections of the overlapping wire panels,” says Mirja Lechtenböhmer (daughter of owner Norbert Lechtenböhmer), who is in charge of business development. “It's the reason why customers have always had good results with the system's special corner connectors, and that's not going to change. All the same, we sometimes had requests for corner posts, because almost all the other systems on the market have them, or – and for us this was the most important reason – because in some cases they are safer, and are more visually appealing. So now we've created a corner post for the R fit system, under the motto 'design meets functionality'.”



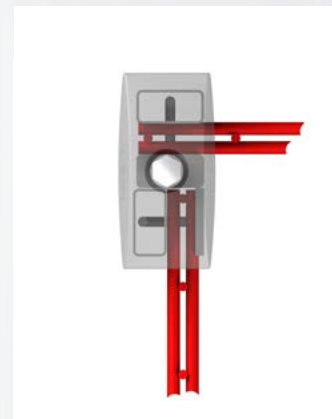


R FIT

"Legi R fit is our calling card, and it's an icon amongst the fencing systems on the market," Lechtenböhrer goes on. "It's also our customers' absolute favourite product, because it's always the perfect choice for every application. Installation is super-quick, with a clamping profile that you secure with a single central bolt. Thanks to its overlapping wire panels it's as strong as can be, and because it has no fixings or sharp edges on the outside, it's safe for children and animals. At the same time, that makes it beautifully smooth as well as tamper-proof. Oh and it has a really long lifespan too, because it doesn't have any plastic parts that become brittle over time – everything is made of steel. You can install it with our standard panels, decorative panels, slope panels and gabions, and there are decorative post caps and safety accessories like barbed wire arms available for it: it's a true all-rounder."

RPE FIT R+K

The new corner post is called RPE fit R+K. "My father Norbert had had several corner post designs and prototypes lying around in a drawer for quite a while," Lechtenböhrer explains. "When we put 'corner post' back on the agenda this winter, he came up with a new idea for the final design. Right from the start we knew that we didn't want to produce a copy of the corner posts already on the market, which have the wire panel screwed to the side of a normal post. It was important to us that the post's design and functionality were in keeping with the time-tested R fit system – both in terms of design, with the same dimensions and appearance as the intermediate post, and in terms of functionality, with the same safety standards in terms of stability and particularly in terms of injuries, because the risk of these is even higher with corner posts than with intermediate posts."



RPE fit R+K stands for R fit, 'Pfoften' (German for post) and 'Ecke' (corner), comprising a Rohrprofil (rectangular profile) and a Klemmrohr (brace clamp).



Mirja
Lechtenböhrer

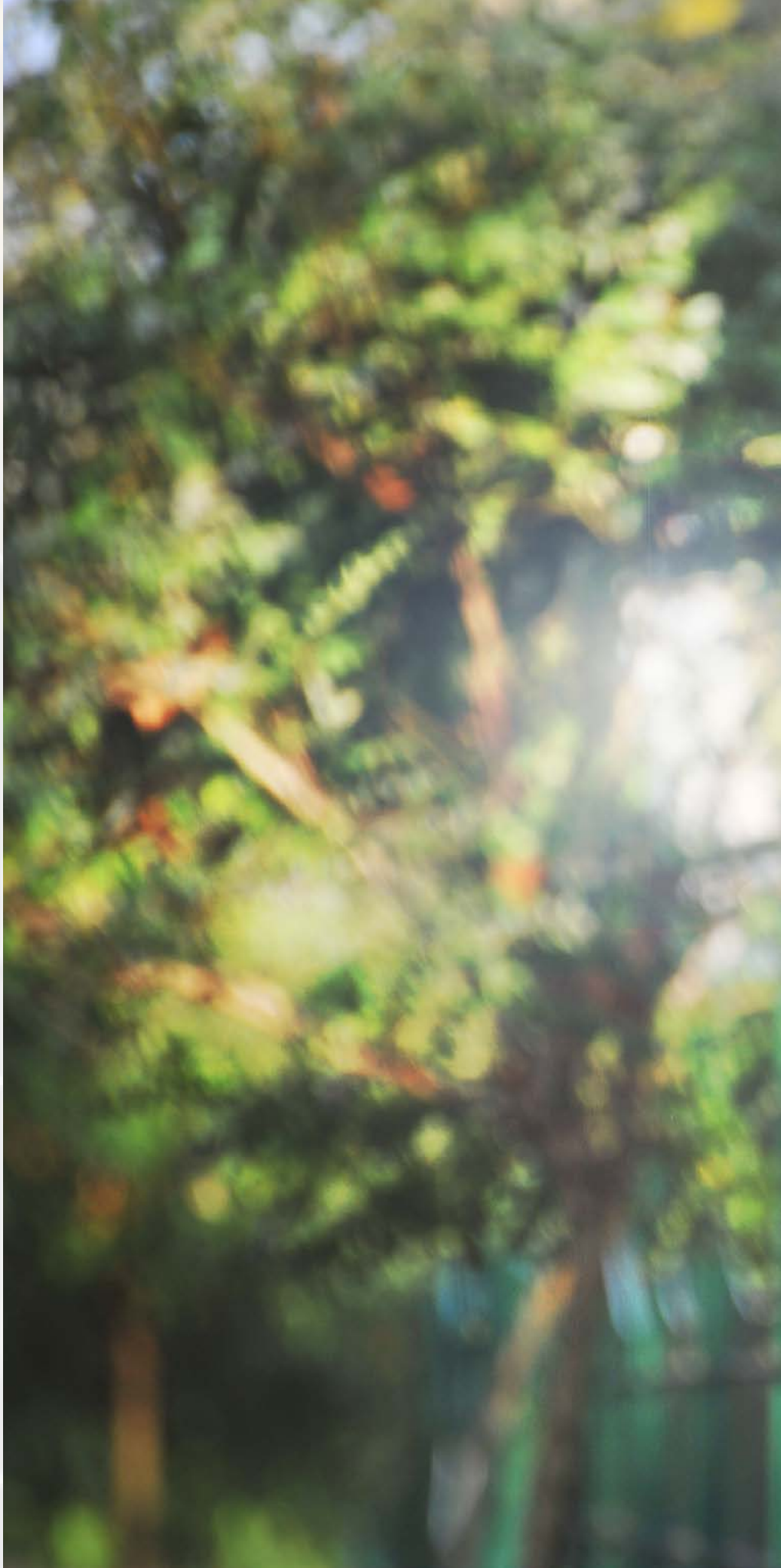


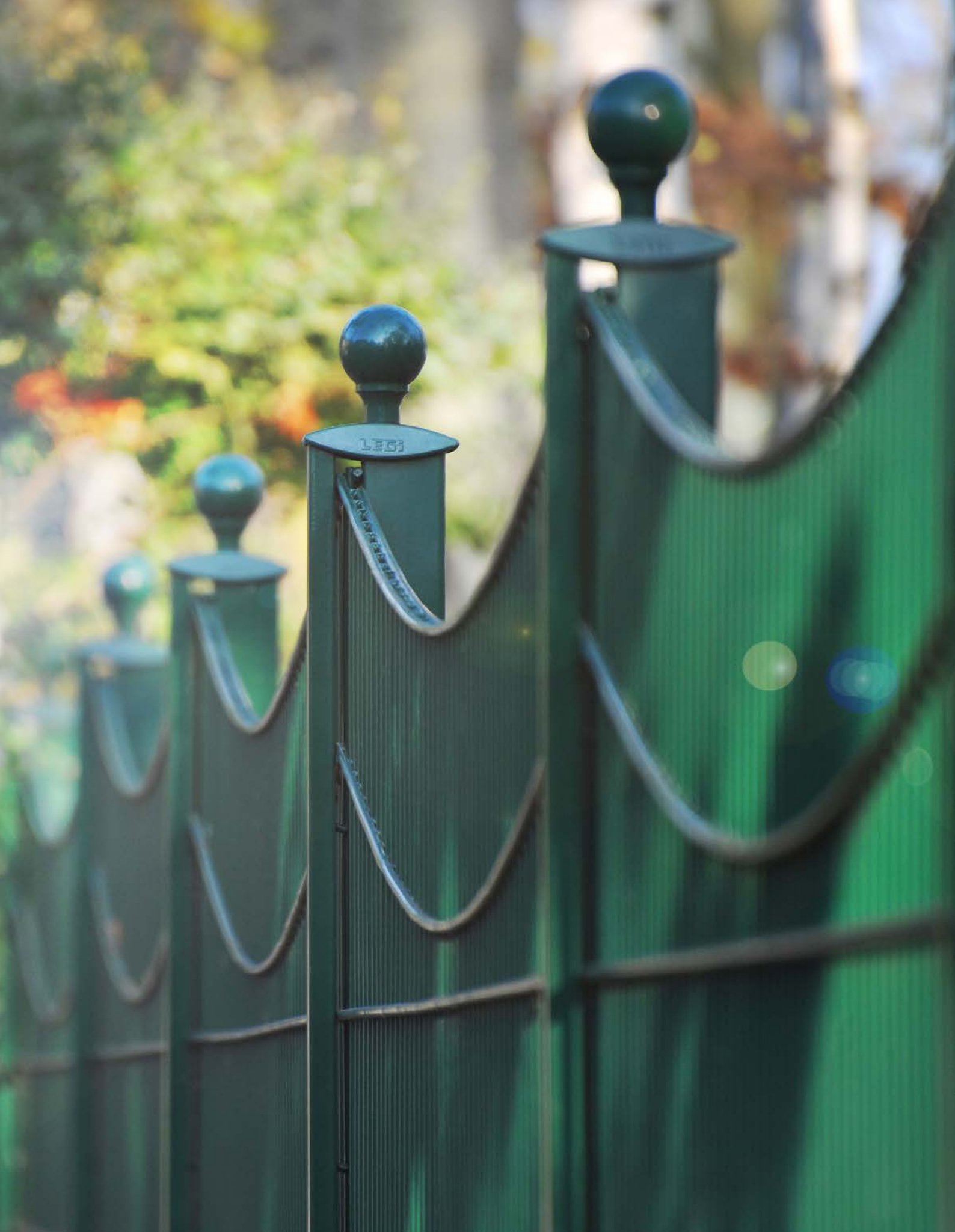
DESIGN

Legi worked to get the post into the company's catalogue and price list for the start of this season – and with success. "The all-new RPE fit R+K post is now the only solution on the market that has been designed as a corner post from the ground up, not as a converted intermediate post," Lechtenböhmer continues. "The outer dimensions are the same, but the post consists of a rectangular profile of 40 by 20 millimetres with a 40-by-5-millimetre strip welded on. The wire panel is attached to the post with 40 by 20 clamping sleeves at the front and the side. This enabled us to ensure that the corner post retained the classic smooth appearance of the R fit system, while having the same appearance and dimensions as the normal intermediate post." The new post is welded from plain steel and then hot-dip galvanised, and optionally powder-coated. It is available in left-hand and right-hand versions.

APPLICATIONS

"As I've said," Lechtenböhmer concludes, "the existing solution with the corner connectors was a good one and will stay in the range. But the new corner post allows you to put extra emphasis on the corner of the fence, or make the corner sturdier in situations where that's needed. The R fit system is ideal for publicly accessible sites such as schools, playgrounds, zoos, and so on, because there are no visible screws and it has a smooth outer surface with no sharp edges. It's also ideal for industrial applications, as the overlapping panels make theft and break-ins much more difficult. And around private gardens, the smooth design again prevents injuries to pets and children. With the new corner post, you can give the fence all the same features on the corners too. It makes the system perfect for fencing small areas now, and you can also create T-crossings. It rounds out the R fit range perfectly." ■





Gardencenter T rebrands as Guardex

Belgian fencing wholesaler Gardencenter T, from Genk near Hasselt, now has a new name. At the start of April the company opened a new showroom and celebrated its 35th anniversary, which was a good opportunity to rename the company something short and snappy: Guardex.

“As a fencing and gate specialist, the name Gardencenter T was no longer appropriate,” founder and owner Didier Meertens says. “Our 35th anniversary was the perfect time for a rebranding, so we started looking for something straightforward and self-assured. ‘Guardex’ is derived from ‘guard’ and ‘exterior’; we protect the outdoor space. It’s not only a perfect representation of who we are as a company, but also what we stand for.”

XL SHOWROOM

The extra-large showroom is Guardex’s new flagship store. “It’s five times as big as the last one,” Meertens goes on. The new showroom is not only for consumers: “It’s also for our professional clients to discover our extensive range of gates and fences, both indoors and outdoors. We’re now able to show them all the different possibilities in one place, and bring them up to speed on the many options they can offer their customers. Those who would like to can also bring or send their customers here, so the customer can choose a gate for themselves. A lot of end customers prefer to see their fence or gate for themselves before they place an order.”





HONDA

EX
eggers

20



WIŚNIOWSKI

Didier Meertens (left) with his son Giel and father Nico (centre), salesman Sebastian Fabjanowski (right), and Wiśniowski product manager Aneta Kroczek (second from left) and sales director Marcin Burek (second from right).

Guardex WIŚNIEWSKI Biggers

The majority of the showroom is filled with ornamental gates and ornamental fencing from Polish company Wiśniowski, with which Guardex has had a successful partnership for many years now. "Guardex is our biggest dealer in Belgium, and is a real support to us," Wiśniowski sales director Marcin Burek says. "Thanks to them, we've achieved rapid growth in the Belgian market in recent years. They speak the language, give exceptional service, and they know the market. They're so much more than just resellers – for example, the team has a big say in the design of our models for the Benelux market. Their new showroom will allow us to showcase our designer gates to a larger audience, and win over more fencing installers than we'd be able to from Poland. It's an enormous honour to be represented here with so many different models."

INVESTMENT

The showroom forms part of a larger package of investments. "We've invested around 2.5 million euros over the past few years, to prepare the company for the future," Meertens says. "We've got new ERP software, we've optimised the warehouse layout, renewed our fleet – including the trucks and forklifts – and refurbished the office. The new showroom is the cherry on the cupcake." The old shop and offices will be extended further for use as additional warehouse space. "All these efforts put together represent a significant improvement in terms of operational capacity and customer service. They will enable us to respond more quickly to the demand for standard products and replacement parts, and our clients will be given even better support to make their customers happy."



HISTORY

Gardencenter T started out as a plant nursery in Zonhoven. "That's where the 'Gardencenter' in the name comes from," Meertens says. He acquired the nursery in 1989. "We only started adding the gates and fencing in the year 2000. We moved to Genk not long afterwards, because it got off to a roaring start and we needed extra space. We launched our own brand of wire, mesh, and wire panel fencing and the matching gates, and developed an international network of suppliers to provide customers with ornamental fencing, wood composite, industrial swing and sliding gates, stone gabions, and much more besides." In 2017 Didier's son Giel joined the management. "After 35 years, we're determined to continue our tradition of quality and innovation. We believe in ongoing growth and in continually pushing the limits to provide our customers with the best possible products and service. The new showroom and our new name and associated branding are living proof" ■



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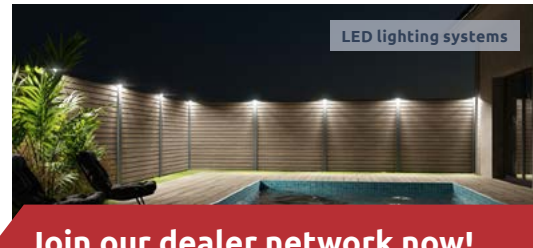
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AOS launches new Vidual plug-in fencing

AOS, a fencing manufacturer from Wetter on the southern edge of the Ruhr region in Germany, is launching its own plug-in fencing line. Called Vidual, it is based on a single type of post into which an infill made of aluminium or wood-polymer composite boards and glass can be installed. The line is distinguished from other systems on the market by its smart post cap that holds the infill in place, as well as the rounded slots that allow to make variable corners at intermediate posts.

“Plug-in fencing is the future,” AOS founder and CEO Oliver Schake asserts. “Twin wire is here to stay, but these days when end customers talk about privacy fencing, they don’t mean panels with plastic woven into them. What they want is a visually appealing fence made of high-quality material. That’s why we’re launching our own line of plug-in fencing.”

VIDUAL

The name ‘Vidual’ brings together the words ‘individual’ and ‘aluminium’. “One of the factors that makes plug-in fencing so popular is the enormous flexibility it gives you,” Schake says. “Customers can combine or alternate different types of infill and completely customise their fence to their own taste. With Vidual we wanted to take that flexibility a step further, so we developed a universal post. Not only can you use it as a corner, end or intermediate post, but it allows you to create corners of up to 35 degrees. We’ve also made adapter profiles for a range of different thicknesses: you can insert 4-millimetre HPL sheets all the way up to 20-millimetre-thick composite boards into the posts.”

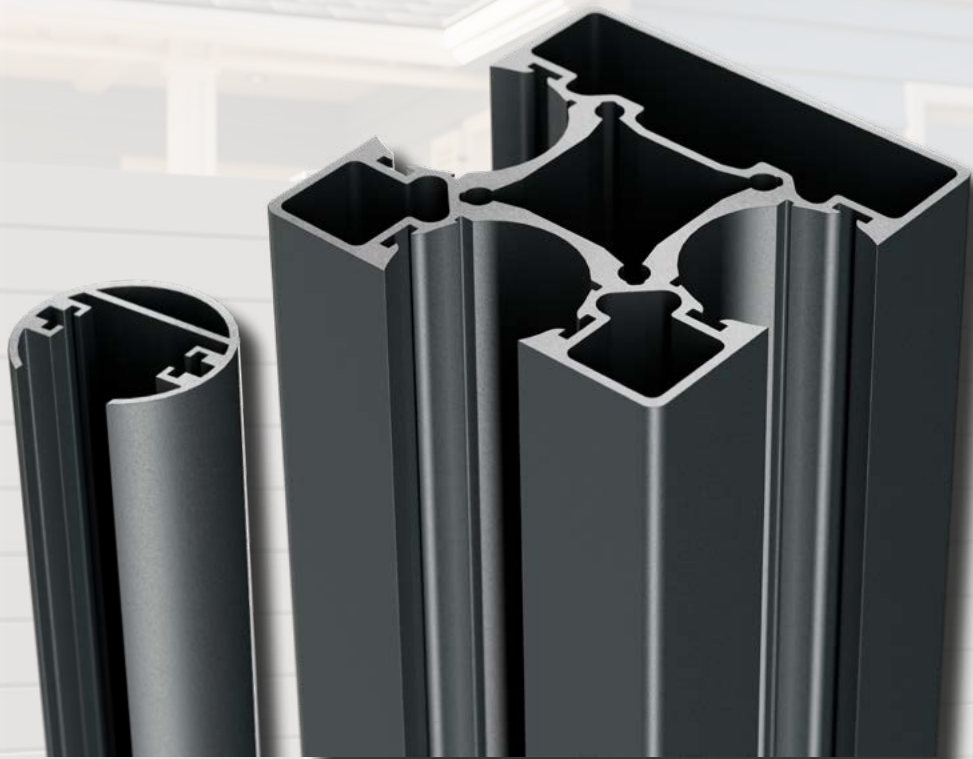




Oliver Schake

PLUG-IN SLOT

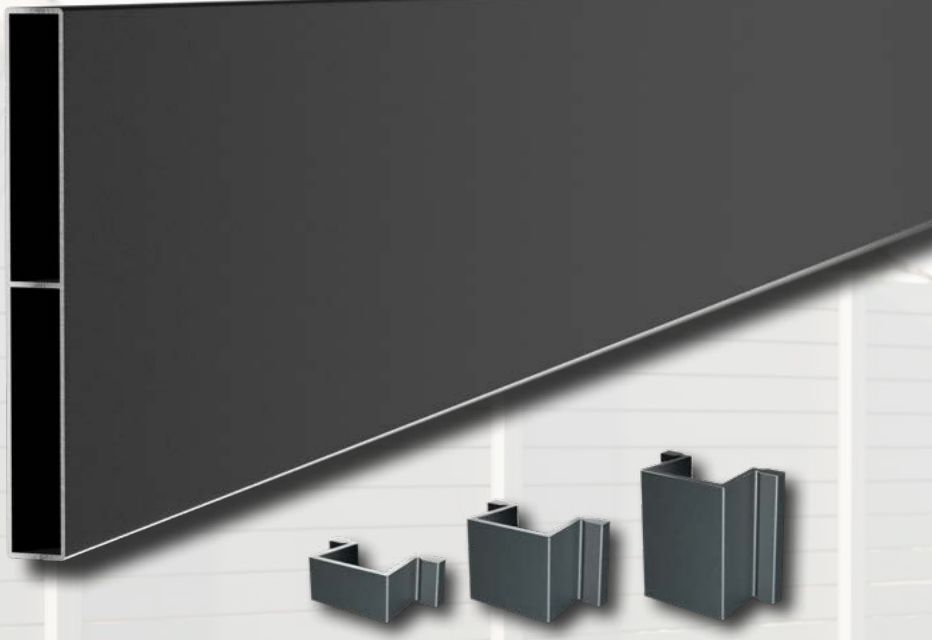
The Vidual post has slots on three sides, so it can be used as an intermediate, corner and end post. The slot has a rounded recess to fit an adapter profile (which is also rounded), with the plug-in slats then being slid into the adapter profile. "The adapters allow you to slide the slats into the post at any angle up to 35 degrees," Schake says. "For example, you can make angles of up to 110 degrees with an intermediate post. With a corner post, you can even create really tight angles as small as 20 degrees. This means that you're always able to adapt the fence to the landscape. The second advantage of the adapter profile is that it encloses the ends of the slats, creating an attractive transition from the infill profiles to the post." Unused slots are closed off with a cover profile.



ALUMINIUM

The range of infills available includes various aluminium options: two rectangular models of 100 and 150 millimetres high respectively, and one rhombus profile. With a rhombus profile, customers can prevent people looking in while still letting as much light through as possible. "Spacers for the rectangular and rhombus profiles are available in a range of heights," Schake says, "so you can adjust the amount of light and tailor the degree of privacy to the situation and the customer's requirements." There are also tongue-and-groove profiles of 70 and 140 millimetres high, which click together to form a single closed privacy wall. All the aluminium sections are powder-coated. In addition to the standard colours of light grey and anthracite, there are five versions with patterns added to the coating using the sublimation process¹.

1) See box



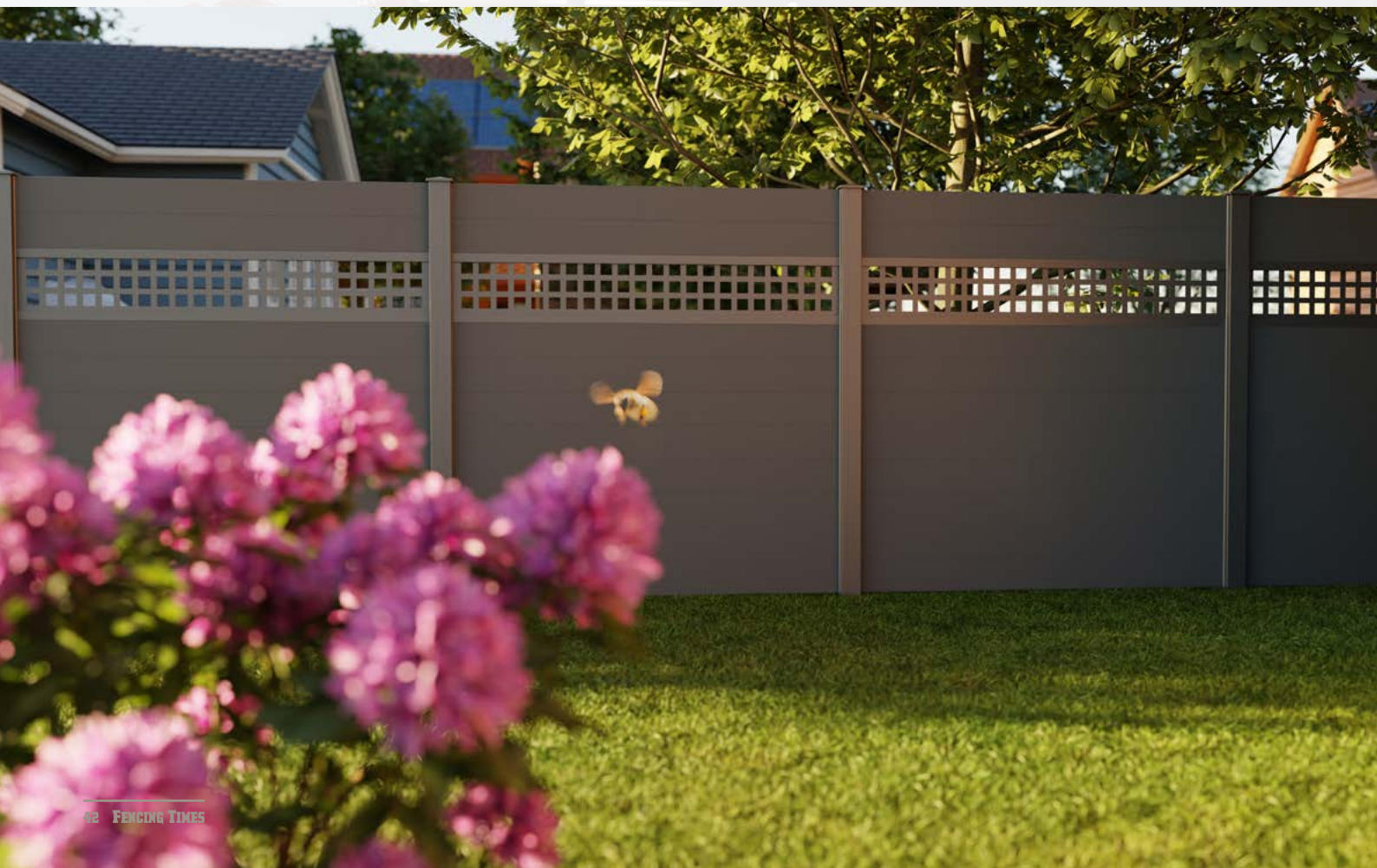
Sublimation

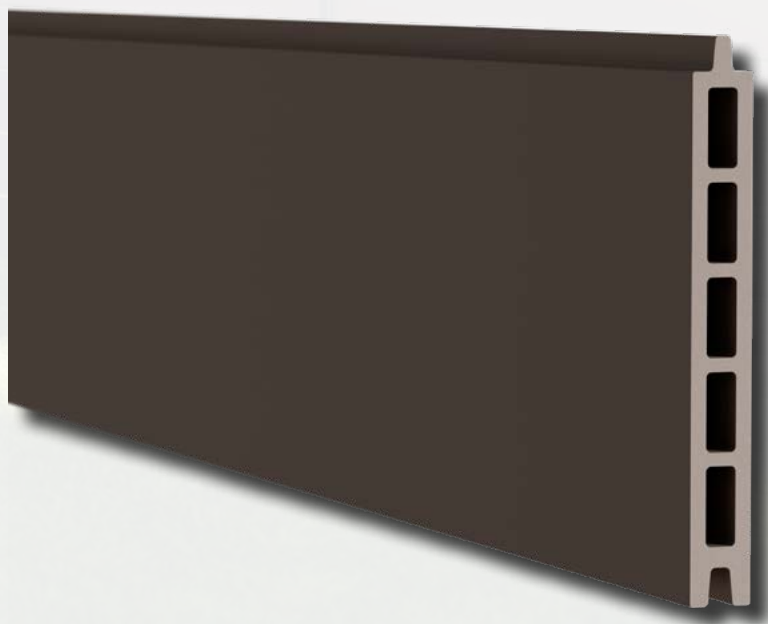
Sublimation is the chemical process by which a solid changes directly into a gas without first becoming a liquid. So when ice turns into water vapour without first becoming water, that's known as sublimation. In the world of powder coating, the term is used for a technique that leaves a powder-coated aluminium or steel product looking as if it's actually wood or marble. As the first step in the process, the material is given a standard coating. Then a film, on which a pattern has been printed with special ink, is applied to the coating. A vacuum is used to remove the air so the film becomes stuck fast to the coating. The film is then heated in a special oven, so rapidly that the dry ink immediately becomes a gas and penetrates deep into the polyester coating. The coating used in this technique is also known as Decoral coating, after the Italian coating company that first applied it on an industrial scale: Viv Decoral, from the town of Arcole near Verona.



GLASS

The second type of infill in the Vidual line consists of glass panels, which are available in various shades and patterns. "Glass is especially popular around the terraces and seating areas people have in their gardens," Schake says. "It blocks the wind without blocking the view. The glass infill can be used to build glass walls or windbreaks, but you can also combine it with the aluminium infill. It's incredibly versatile. There's a separate adapter profile for the 8-millimetre-thick glass panels, which you use to install them onto the posts. Then the glass panel is a separate infill element. You can also add one or more horizontal glass panels to an aluminium infill. We've got special adapters so you can combine them with the tongue-and-groove profiles." The vertical glass panels are one metre wide, and available in heights of 1000 to 1800 millimetres. There are also chamfered transition panels going from 1800 to 1200 or from 1600 to 1000 millimetres. The glass panels are available with photo designs as well: customers can choose from a range of standard options, or provide their own images if they prefer.





COMPOSITE

The third type of infill in the Vidual range is wood-polymer composite². *"In terms of price, WPC is in between densely-woven twin wire fencing and aluminium fencing with a luxury look,"* Schake says. *"A large number of customers love it because it looks quite a lot like wood, so naturally composite was an essential addition to the new Vidual range."* The WPC panels are tongue-and-groove profiles, available in heights of 150 and 300 millimetres. They're inserted into the post using their own 21-millimetre adapter profile. A separate aluminium profile is available for covering a chamfered transition from high to low fencing. The composite panels are available in three colours: anthracite, grey, and brown.

²) WPC stands for Wood-Polymer Composite and is the collective name for plastics with a natural fibre added to the granulate before the profile is extruded. This natural fibre is often wood (usually in the form of sawdust or wood flour), which is where the abbreviation WPC comes from, but may also be materials like hemp or jute.



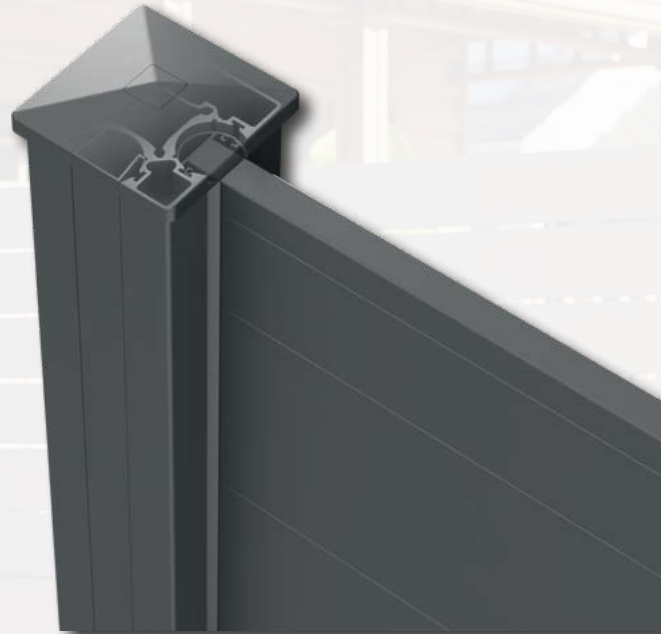
POST

The post for the new Vidual line is an extruded aluminium profile of 90 by 90 millimetres, with multiple chambers. *"The shape of the slots in combination with the design of the chambers provides high stability with a relatively thin wall strength,"* Schake says. *"We've applied for a patent on the post's construction. It weighs just 4.4 kg per metre, which keeps the price down and makes installation easier, yet gets through all static and wind load calculations effortlessly."* There are three different adapter profiles for infill profiles of 8, 17 and 21 millimetres. The end cap is pyramid-shaped, held in place with a special spring and a standard fencing screw³. The cap is designed in such a way that it immediately locks the infill into place. *"We've applied for a patent on that as well. Not only does the end cap prevent the infill being pulled out or dismantled, but it holds it so securely in place that it can't rattle in the wind."* Plug-in base plates are available for the posts; these slide into the innermost chamber of the post. The bolts have deliberately been positioned in such a way that they disappear into a chamber in the extrusion profile too. *"This enabled us to make a base plate that has the same outer dimensions as the post, so you can hardly see it."* A larger footplate is also available, for use in particularly windy regions.

GATE

Alongside posts and infill profiles, the Vidual line includes a pedestrian gate. Or rather, a gate leaf – because you install the leaf using two standard fence posts. The hinges and gate stop are designed to allow you to slide them into one of the post slots and screw them into place. Like the fence posts, the front and hinge stiles of the gate leaf includes a recess for installing infill profiles. *"Then you can put the same infill in the gate as in the fence,"* Schake says. *"If you do it right, all the horizontal lines match up beautifully."*

³ In Germany, a fencing screw is an M8 by 40 bolt with a 5.5-millimetre allen key socket.



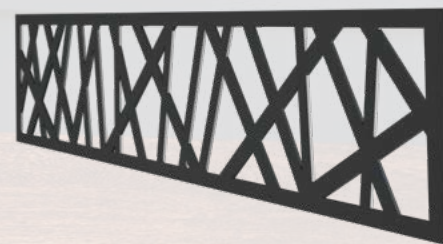


DEVELOPMENT

AOS Stahl designed and developed its new Vidual range entirely in-house. “We attended the Paysalia in Lyon two-and-a-half years ago,” Schake reflects, “and we saw a lot of aluminium fencing. We knew right then and there that we wanted to have that in our range too. And we decided almost immediately to make it a plug-in range, because that allows you to make the biggest number of different versions and combinations. We also knew immediately that we wanted to have our own system, not just to sell someone else’s. First of all because it enables us to respond to current trends right away, and secondly because we wanted to price it at a level that’s affordable for the biggest possible group of customers. That leaves no room for an extra link in the chain.”

IN-HOUSE

“And so we set to work,” Schake says. “Obviously we don’t manufacture the aluminium profiles ourselves, but we drew them all ourselves and designed the moulds. All in all it took us more than two years to create the range, test the first prototypes, and then refine and improve them in all sorts of aspects. After all our hard work, presenting the entire range at the open day in Olpe last month was a euphoric moment. And we’re extremely proud of it – it’s the best and most beautiful fence we’ve ever made. Almost all profiles and other components in the new range are available from stock. Last year we moved almost all our production to our new factory on the other side of the motorway, which left us with an empty hall in Wetter. We now keep almost all our profiles in stock there. We also screw the gates together in that hall, as much as we can. We’re able to deliver orders from the Vidual range within a week or two.” ■





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Zaun Limited launches Picture Perf



Zaun Limited, a British fencing manufacturer from Wolverhampton near Birmingham, is launching a new type of fencing. Picture Perf features an infill made from perforated stainless steel or aluminium sheeting – with the perforations forming a specific image.

“We’ve had customers raise questions about the safety of sheet infill with designs lasered out,” sales and marketing director Stewart Plant explains. “The cutting process can leave sharp edges, which pose a risk of injury to passers-by – particularly children, who are unaware of the danger – so we started looking for a process that could add designs to sheet infill without that sort of risk.”

PICTURE PERF

Zaun has collaborated with Irish metalworker Graepels to make the new Picture Perf fencing. "They perforate the sheeting in a way that keeps the surface smooth and free of sharp edges," Plant says. "By varying the diameter, spacing and shape of the holes, we can essentially print very detailed pictures onto the metal. This makes the fence much more attractive, while also ensuring maximum safety for everyone in the area. Architects can use Picture Perf to customise the fence to match the style of any building, and can integrate the fence into any surroundings, by creating intricate geometric patterns or adding photorealistic images. In terms of design, it exceeds every expectation. The fence is no longer installed as a functional necessity, but as a visually striking design element."

STRONG

As well as looking great, Picture Perf is very strong, Zaun reports. "The perforation process removes only minimal material from the metal sheeting," Plant says, "fully maintaining the structural integrity of the fence. This is in stark contrast to laser-cut graphics – these weaken the sheeting, because large sections of metal are taken out during the cutting process. It means that Picture Perf fencing provides superior resistance to impact, vandalism, and harsh weather conditions. It's worth noting that the biggest holes are only 8 millimetres in diameter, so they give no additional grip whatsoever to someone who might want to climb over. Picture Perf can also be used in locations where the fence needs to provide protection from break-ins."

Picture Perfect

For our readers who are not native English speakers: 'Picture perfect' is an expression to indicate that something is absolutely flawless ('as pretty as a picture'). At the same time, 'perf' here obviously refers to the perforations in the sheeting.







APPLICATIONS

"Because we can perforate every sheet and can add any image at all to the sheeting, the new Picture Perf is suited to all applications," Plant says. "We can add characters to the fence around schools and playgrounds, public buildings can be made more appealing with attractive images, and around businesses and other commercial sites we can display logos, products and applications on the fence. Zoos can fence a portion of each animal enclosure with Picture Perf, with images of the animals that live in the enclosure. The possibilities are endless. Picture Perf can even be used around hospitals and psychiatric treatment centres since patients can't injure themselves on the perforations and the fencing is almost impossible to climb."

SYSTEM

Zaun uses aluminium or stainless steel sheeting for the infill of the new Picture Perf fencing. *"Galvanised steel sheeting could corrode around the edges of the cutouts," Plant says. "If we used untreated steel and galvanised it afterwards, the little holes would just fill up with zinc. Aluminium and stainless steel can be used without any further treatment."* The sheets have a maximum width of 1.5 metres and are screwed onto posts made of rectangular hollow sections. Sections measuring 120 by 60 millimetres are used for fencing heights of up to 2.4 metres; for heights of 3 or 4 metres, Zaun uses sections measuring 180 by 80 millimetres. ■





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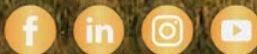
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Lambert markets Lissalu privacy fencing

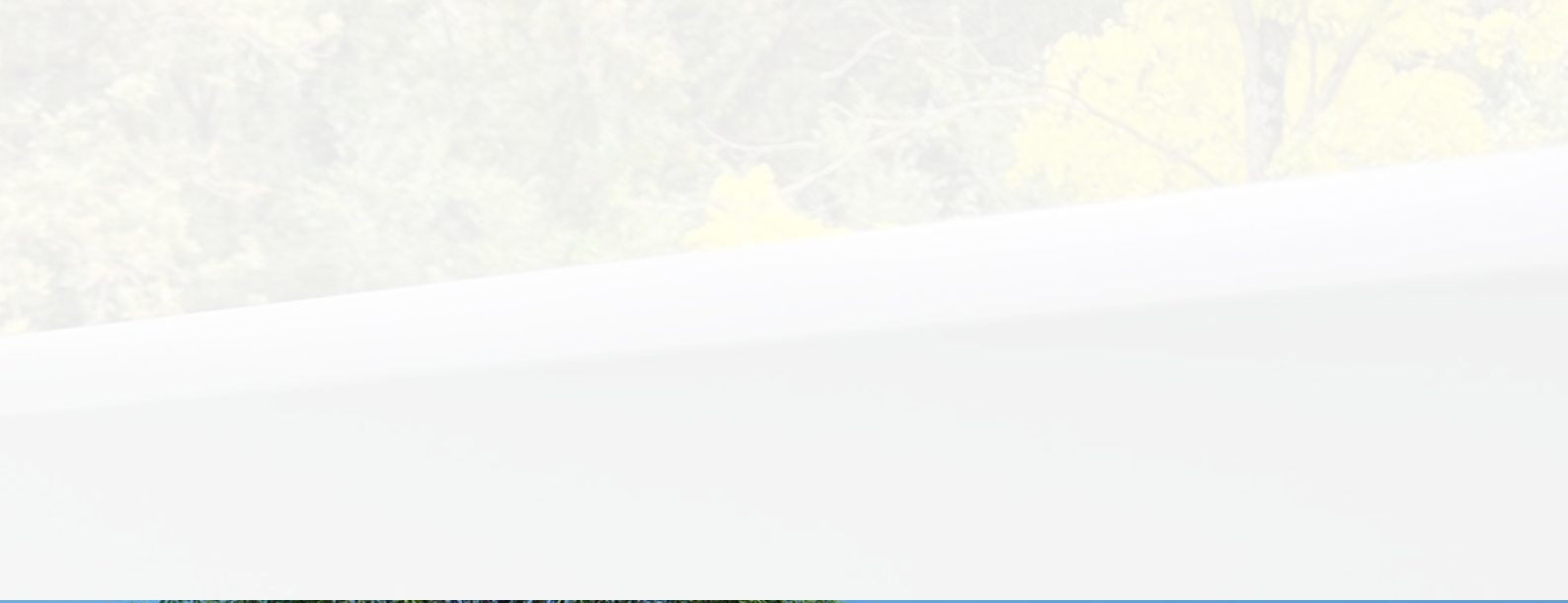
Lambert Clôtures, a fencing supplier based in Nantes, France, is launching its own type of aluminium inserts fence this spring. The new Lissalu allows customers to have an elegant, durable, and robust fence that they can completely customise to their own requirements.

Lambert Clôtures has been designing and developing its own range of products for the fencing market for ten years. "Lissalu is the result of constantly listening to what our customers - with whom we have a solid relationship - want," says Carine Chesneau, managing director of the Lambert Group.

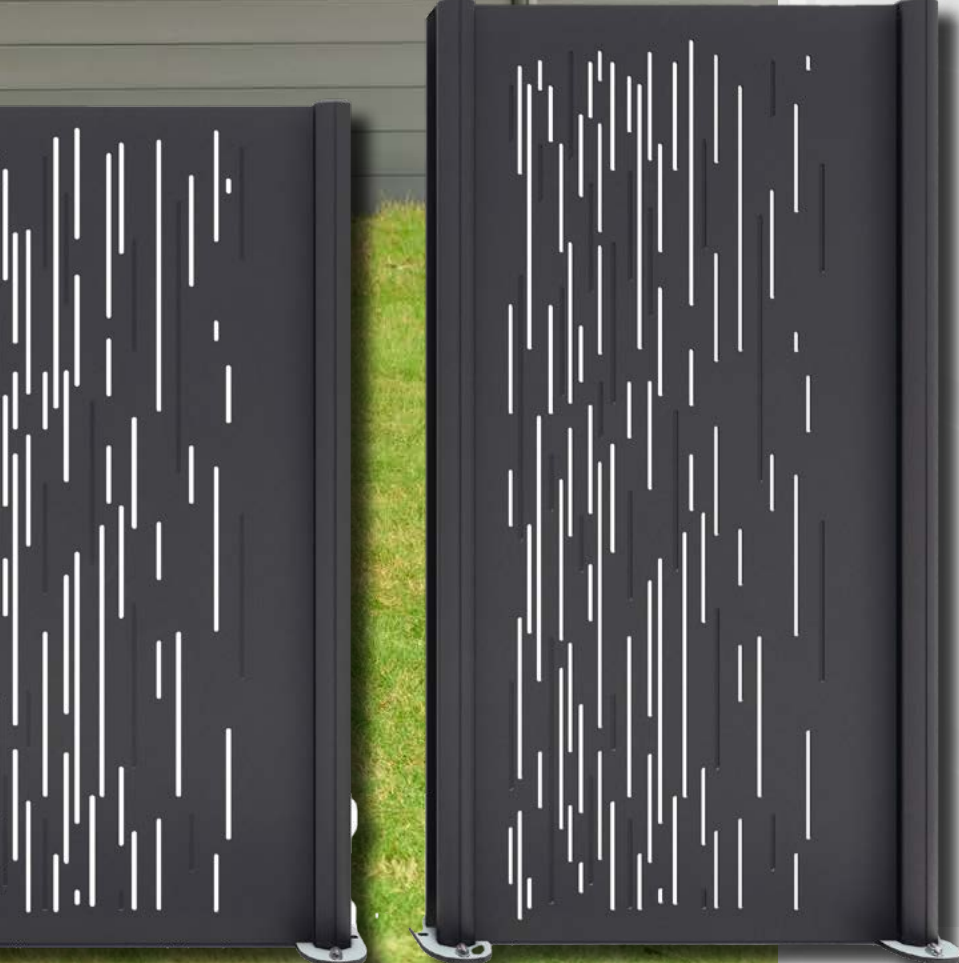
LISSALU

The new Lissalu aluminium fence is a concept of customisation and modularity. The fence adapts to any surface and low walls, while the customers can choose their own style degree of privacy. Lissalu consists of profiled aluminium slats that are inserted into a special post, the Bipatub. Spacers can be inserted between the slats to create a slat effect. This makes the fence slightly less closed and partially allows light and wind in. When the slats are tight together, they form an elegant, robust, and closed panel. With three different post profiles, you can create any angle. "For even more individuality, we also offer infills made of laser-cut aluminium sheet," Chesneau adds. "The smooth, rounded finish of the slats and posts gives this fence a particularly attractive look." Lissalu is available from inventory in fine-textured anthracite, for fence heights of up to 2 metres.









ROBUST

Whereas most other infill boards on the market are around 20 millimetres thick, the thickness of Lissalu slats is 47 millimetres. *“Those wide slats have a number of advantages,”* says Chesneau. *“The main advantage is that the slats can now be longer. Our slats are 2.5 metres long, which means you can combine them with wire panels.”* The thickness of the slot in the post has been chosen such that the slats are clamped into it. They are then secured by sliding thin wire ends into the centre slot of the slat. *“Once those threaded ends are fitted, you no longer see them. They ensure that the slats cannot vibrate in the wind, since they are securely connected to the pole. This also makes sabotage or theft extremely difficult. Furthermore, the infill profiles are slanted at the top with rounded corners. That is unique in the market.”*

BIPATUB

The posts for the Lissalu system are specially designed extrusion profiles. *“Here, too, we chose a profile shape that makes the posts both beautiful and extremely stable at the same time,”* says Chesneau. *“The 47-millimetre-wide slot allows you to mount wooden fence panels – the common size there is 43 millimetres – or 3D wire panels in addition to aluminium slats. You can also install our Bipalis¹ vegetation panels between two Bipatubs with a special adapter. We increasingly get requests to add greenery to the fence. From private customers, but also from local authorities fighting against heat islands and wanting to better support biodiversity development. The great advantage of Lissalu is that you can alternate different fencing types in one fence.”* There are three different versions of the Bipatub: for intermediate posts, for 90-degree corner posts and for various corner posts that allow you to make angles from 170 to 90 degrees. They have an aluminium cap that screws into place. *“Like the post, the cap is powder-coated and hardly noticeable. The invisibility of all fixing materials was an important design criterion for us. The Bipatub posts are ultra-stable – I dare say they are the strongest posts on the market.”*

1) Lambert Clôtures' Bipalis panel is a double-walled wire panel that can accommodate special peat blocks, in which plants can be grown.

DECORS

In addition to the slats, there are also decorative plates made of aluminium sheets on which various motifs have been lasered out. "For the decors, we collaborated with an interior designer," says Chesneau. "At the Paysalia fair, last December, we asked our customers for feedback on a large number of designs. The five motifs we now have in stock are the result of a survey of 100 percent fencers. This was a novel approach for us, but it was very much appreciated by both customers and our own teams." There are both horizontal and vertical motifs.

PROUD

"Aluminium as a raw material is fashionable and durable, light and easy to maintain, so it fits well with our times," Chesneau concludes. "We wanted a fence that is modular and can be adapted to any situation, so it matched the other products in our range. We have been developing innovative technical solutions and products that are easy to install, practical to manage and economical for almost 15 years – Lissalu fits right in. We are immensely proud of it." ■



Carine
Chesneau



NEW

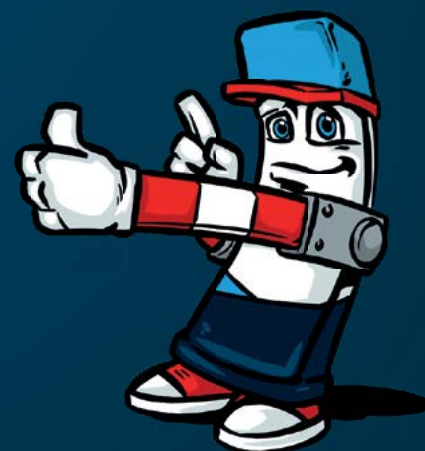
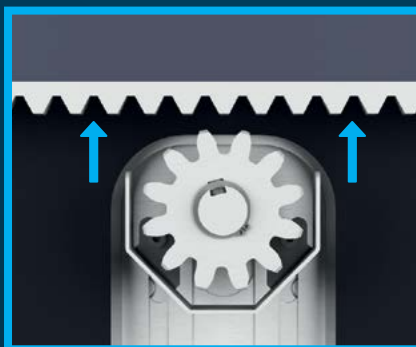
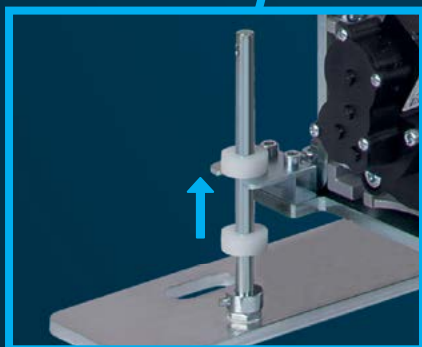
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Min. and max. height of the toothed rack on the slide gate can be determined over the entire gate length during installation. This checks whether the toothed wheel and rack are sufficiently engaged over the entire travel distance. The height difference can be easily read off via the limit indicators and the optimal position of the toothed wheel can be set.



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Fence decorations

We've been in the fencing business for quite some time now, but we still see things that surprise us.

For example, the other day we were on Amazon searching for something completely unrelated when, totally by chance, we came across a plastic chicken intended for use as a fence decoration. Intrigued, we searched for 'fence decorations' and what did we discover? It turns out that all sorts of different online retailers offer a wide range of the most impractical and nonsensical rubbish, intended for use as fence decorations. We've yet to come across them in the showroom of any real-life fencing company whatsoever, but apparently there are customers out there who purchase this sort of high-quality product. Here's a brief summary of the accessories we found, for the aid of those who might wish to tap into this market and stock fence decorations in addition to fences and gates.



ORNAMENTAL CHICKEN
 This chicken is manufactured from synthetic resin. According to the seller, it's waterproof and durable, not especially fragile, and realistically modelled. This very special chicken is yours for 7 euros and 33 cents on Amazon.

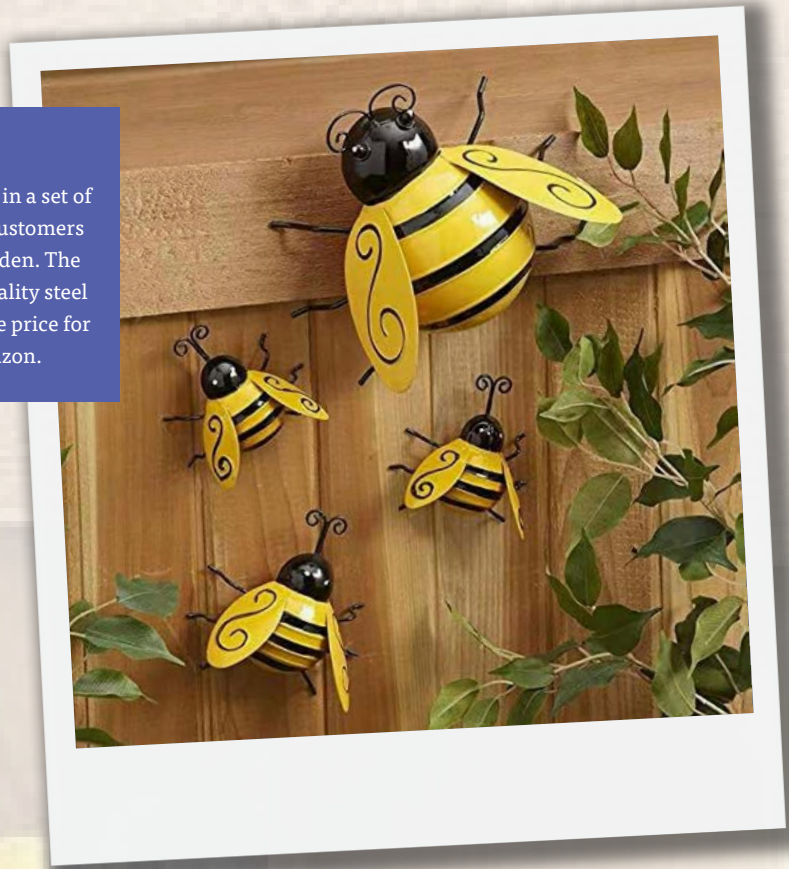


CHEEKY FROG
 This frog is hand-made from tin. He's holding up an umbrella to protect him from the rain - but whether it also protects him from rust, the advert doesn't say. You can find him on Amazon for 12 euros and 90 cents.



METAL BEES

These brightly-coloured bees come in a set of four different-sized bees, helping customers add character and colour to the garden. The seller says they're made of high-quality steel with a special anti-rust coating. The price for all four is 16 euros 49 cents on Amazon.

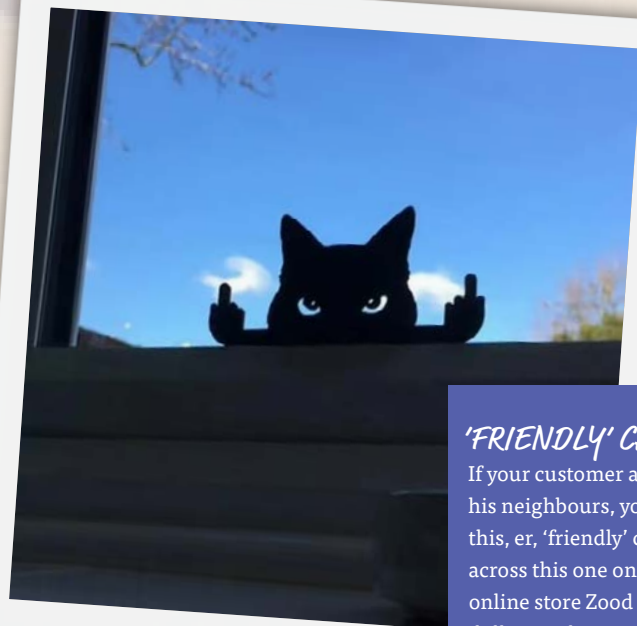


NOSY NEIGHBOUR

The Nosy Neighbour is a fun idea for anyone who wants to harass their neighbours. He's made from painted wood. The Nosy Neighbour is sold out on Amazon, but you can place a bid on him on eBay.

GRUMPY NEIGHBOUR

In New Zealand the neighbour looks somewhat less friendly. You can order him on Fruugo for 30 New Zealand dollars and 95 cents. We haven't checked whether shipping fees to Europe are included.



'FRIENDLY' CAT

If your customer absolutely loathes his neighbours, you can sell him this, er, 'friendly' cat. We came across this one on the Lebanese online store Zood for 5 American dollars and 75 cents.

Installer steals website from another installer

This spring, the website of UK fencing company ABC Fencing from Colney Heath, just outside London, was stolen. Obviously that doesn't mean that someone put the website under their arm and walked off – rather, all of the site's data was copied and then used to create a new website.

The case came to light when the UK's Association of Fencing Industries (AFI) received two phone calls in quick succession – one from a customer and one from a supplier – asking whether the company with the copied website was in fact a legitimate member of the Association. It turned out that in addition to stealing images and text, the thieves had also copied the logos of the associations and organisations that the victim of the theft belongs to.

"When the AFI called me to ask whether I was also the owner of Metro Lane Fencing in central London, I couldn't believe it," says ABC Fencing's director and owner Alan Cunningham. "The website was almost identical to mine, right down to all the details like the AFI logo."

"We're receiving more and more calls from customers, main contractors, utility companies and suppliers, asking whether fencing installers that use the AFI logo really are members," says AFI managing director Pete Clark. "More than, say, a year ago. In our view, this development shows that customers across the board are more aware that they want their fence to be installed correctly, by a reliable fencing contractor with an industry association to fall back on in the event that something goes wrong."

AFI chairman Chris Hackett adds: *"We're generating the recognition the fencing industry needs. The invisible lobbying work carried out has resulted in, for example, fencing remaining exempt from the CITB levy"*¹ that's mandatory throughout the rest of the construction industry, more fencing subsidy schemes from the Department for the Environment, having expert witnesses available now, the winning of lawsuits against bad contractors, members being defended in complaints from customers who refuse to accept good work that's been delivered, and the fact that the apprenticeship subsidy was increased again for 2024. In addition, the AFI puts the industry in the spotlight with the UK Fencing Awards and Best Practice Days, and the fact that we're getting more and more calls from end users shows that all our hard work is paying off: our organisation's profile is rising steadily, as we become known to an ever-widening audience and for all sorts of different types of fencing."

¹) CITB stands for Construction Industry Training Board and, as the name suggests, is the training board for the UK construction industry.

The AFI is now actively investigating the websites of former members. Those that are found to still be using the Association's logo or name are being warned to remove these to avoid misleading end users. Conversely, Association members are urged to put the AFI logo on their sites if they have not already done so. As Clark puts it, *"It shows that you're a professional organisation that shares our values of moving the industry forward and promoting health and safety at work – and that you're working with us to ensure that fencing installation is recognised as being the highly-skilled profession that it is."* ■



Fence workers do not like barbecuing

In two previous editions, we asked you to help us get photographs of fence workers – in other words, of you yourselves – reading this great magazine. Because right now, every time we want to advertise our magazine, we have to take a boring stock photo and photoshop a cover of this magazine onto it, and that looks rather dull.

So far, we received all of three photographs. So it is immediately obvious who our biggest fans are. Well, we know it has been lousy weather these past few weeks. And just when the sun was shining, and your hair was looking good, and your work clothes were washed clean, you did not have a magazine with you. We totally get that, of course. We do not blame anyone. But we cannot organise a competition with three photographs.

But we are persistent. We keep asking. If you happen to know a nice place to read this magazine, have someone take a picture of it.



In Eric's case, the whole team is fan of the Fencing Times. He has to sit on the other side of the fence to be able to read undisturbed. Well done, Eric!

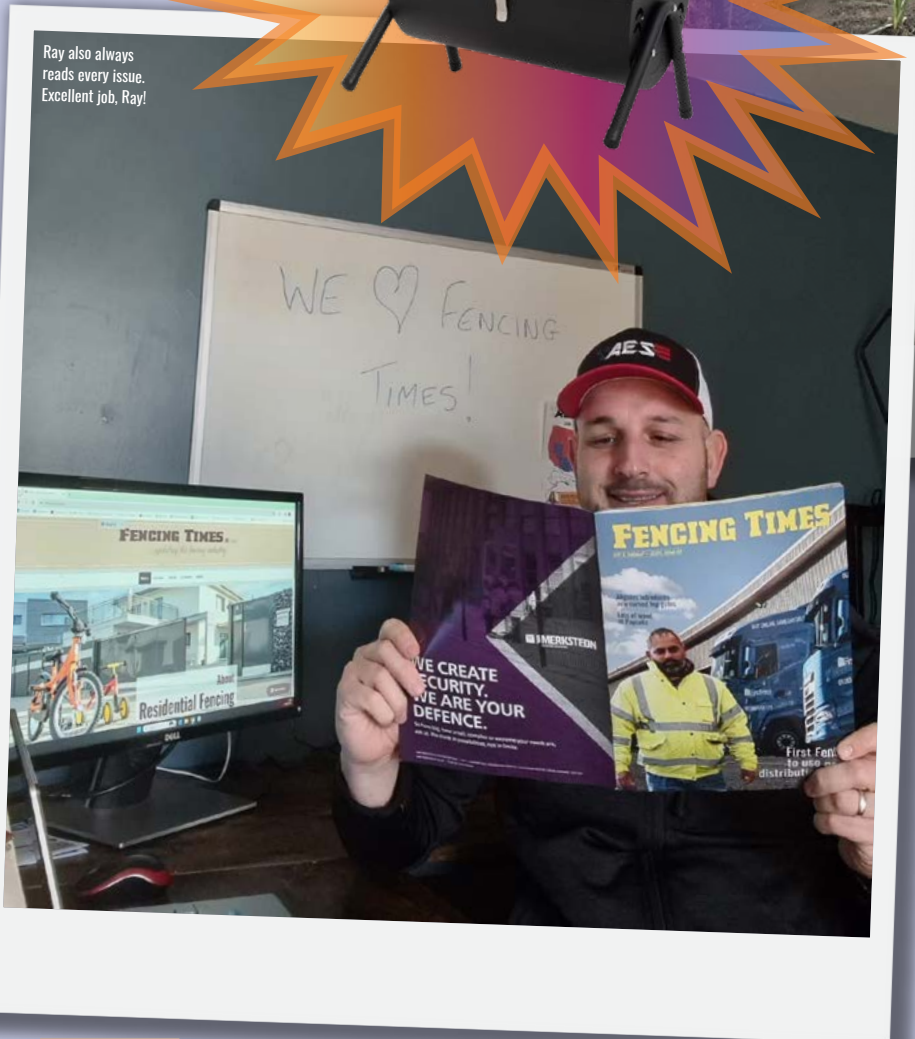


At your desk, in the warehouse among the nuts and bolts, outside on the forklift, stretched out on some rolls of wire netting, sprawled out against a fence or in the back of a pickup truck, the more creative the better. Outside the workplace is also fine of course: on a French campsite or an Austrian ski slope, in a Hawaiian hammock or on the terrace of your water villa in the Maldives, we accept everything.

Take a fun photo and win a barbecue!



Ray also always reads every issue. Excellent job, Ray!



Tim reads while driving posts. Excellent job Tim, you have your priorities in the right order.

Join us! Send your photo to:
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Calculate and get rich

In a column in the front of this issue, we wrote that an extra euro or two in your calculation can sometimes mean the difference between rich and poor. Being curious types, we started asking around a bit on Facebook about how people in the industry make their calculations. And what did we find? A lot of installers don't do calculations at all. That is, they do calculate the amount of materials they'll need, but then they slap a percentage on top of that that's more or less based on gut feeling... and is sometimes completely arbitrary. The same goes for the installation charge.

We have to say that we don't have anything against gut feelings. Your gut feeling is your subconscious whispering to you, and the subconscious part of your brain is the part

that stores all your past experiences. So your gut feeling ensures that you'll always earn enough to survive, even if it's sometimes only barely.

But your gut feeling doesn't take your goals into account. If they're more ambitious than what you've achieved to date, your gut feeling has no experience of them. And if you've never gone through a serious crisis or a truly major setback, your gut feeling doesn't plan for that either. In other words: if you rely purely on your gut feeling, your margins are always going to be too tight.

So let's take a closer look at calculating. Coincidentally, earlier this year we attended a meeting of the UK trade association AFI in Plumpton in the south of England, where CEO

Pete Clark gave an interesting presentation on the various items that should be included in a good estimate of costs.

We've created a sample calculation based on the items from the example he gave, purely as an example of how to do it – and why. It really is just an example, with the amounts chosen completely at random – obviously you'll need to adapt these to your own business.

For our example, we have used a completely fictitious company with a single owner who is also responsible for sales. This owner employs one office manager, one planner who is also responsible for purchasing, and four installers. The owner wants to take on a job involving 100 metres of fencing. What should his calculation include?





FIXED COSTS

In order to draw up an accurate calculation, you need to have a good overview of your fixed and variable costs. Fixed costs are those expenses that don't change; expenses that remain the same whether you sell a lot or just a little, and whether you install a lot or just a little. Your rent or mortgage repayment, your staff, insurance costs, the accountant. The easiest way to make a list of your fixed costs is to go through last year's bank statements. You'll see that the list is longer than you thought.

COST ITEM	€ PER YEAR
PREMISES	
- Rent	24,000.00
- Utilities	4,800.00
- Insurance	500.00
- Council tax	2,000.00
- Waste collection	2,000.00
STAFF	
- Salaries	175,200.00
- Social security contributions	40,800.00
- Pension schemes	9,000.00
VEHICLES	
- Leasing	19,200.00
- Fuel	7,200.00
- Insurance	4,000.00
- Repairs & Maintenance	6,000.00
- Forklift depreciation	3,000.00
INSTALLATION	
- Earth auger depreciation	500.00
- Compressor depreciation	400.00
- Workwear and shoes	1,000.00
OFFICE	
- Software	1,800.00
- Computer depreciation	1,500.00
- Call charges	3,000.00
- Mobile phone depreciation	1,500.00
FINANCE	
- Interest on loans	1,500.00
- General insurance	1,200.00
- Banking fees	720.00
SALES & MARKETING	
- Website	1,000.00
- Sponsoring	3,000.00
- Advertisements	3,000.00
ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS	
- Accountant	3,500.00
MEMBERSHIPS	
- Business owners' association	800.00
- Trade association	1,500.00
DEVELOPMENT	
- Courses and seminars	2,000.00
TEAM BUILDING	
- Go-karting	2,000.00
- Summer BBQ	1,000.00
CONTINGENCIES	
Fencing Times VIP subscription	150.00
TOTAL:	340,000.00

Depreciation

The monthly recurring costs, for example rent and phone bills, are easy. Costs for things you only need once every few years are a bit harder; you need to include depreciation in your calculations. Depreciation is more important than you might think; it ensures that you have money ready for a new forklift in the event that yours gives up the ghost.

But how long is your current forklift going to last? Perhaps after three years you're going to need 12,000 euros for a new(er) one; perhaps it won't be for another six years. In the first case you'd need to allow for 4,000 euros in depreciation every year, while in the second case you'd only need 2,000 euros. Here, again, the motto is: keep your estimates on the safe side. The faster you write things off, the better. But don't go over the top, as that will drive up the price.

Stock

If you always have 2 truckloads of materials in stock, that's costing you money. You're keeping 50,000 euros tied up in inventory. If you'd been able to invest those funds, they could have earned you money. If you had to borrow 50,000 euros, you'd have to pay interest on it and that interest would need to go in the calculation.

24

5690
+ 236

5926
- 129

5797

WED THU FRI SAT
3 4 5 6
10 11 12 13
17 18 19 20

Now that we know the fixed costs we're incurring each year, we need to find a way to include them in the calculation for a project. The easiest way to do this is by dividing the cost items by the number of installation days per year and by the number of teams you have.

There are 260 working days in a year. Obviously holiday days are the first thing to subtract from that. On top of that, the average employee misses 6 or so days a year due to illness. And then, of course, there are the days when it's too rainy or cold to install fencing. In

the end you're left with between 200 and 220 installation days per year. We'll use 200 days for this calculation; it's on the safe side and is also an easy number to work with.

And voilà: 340,000 euros in fixed costs, divided by 200 days, divided by 2 teams, gives a fixed cost of 850 euros per installation team per day. That's the amount that each team costs, every day.

14,000
+ 1,440

15,440

COUNTRY	TOTAL DAYS OFF	PUBLIC HOLIDAYS	STATUTORY HOLIDAYS
Finland 🇫🇮	39	15	24
France 🇫🇷	36	11	25
Sweden 🇸🇪	36	11	25
Denmark 🇩🇰	36	11	25
Spain 🇪🇸	36	14	22
Great-Brittain 🇬🇧	36	8	28
Luxembourg 🇱🇺	35	10	25
Greece 🇬🇷	32	12	20
Italy 🇮🇹	31	11	20
Portugal 🇵🇹	30	10	20
Belgium 🇧🇪	30	10	20
Germany 🇩🇪	29	9	20
Ireland 🇮🇪	29	9	20
The Netherlands 🇳🇱	28	8	20

Holidays

Every country sets a different number of holiday days for employees. The Finns have the most in Europe, while the Dutch have the least.

TUE WED THU FRI

Total: 33

VARIABLE COSTS

Once you've calculated the fixed costs, you've got the hardest part out of the way. The variable costs are those costs that are different for each job. In this example we planned to install 100 metres of fencing. The fence consists of posts and panels, with the panels being 2.5 metres long. Each post will have its own concrete foundation. The ground is normal and will be easy to dig out. The

fenceline can easily be accessed with the van. You know that your team can install 40 metres of this type of fencing per day. This gives you the following calculation:

COST ITEM	NUMBER	PRICE (€)	LINE TOTAL (€)
MATERIALS			
- panels	40.00 units	80.00	3,200.00
- posts	41.00 units	35.00	1,435.00
- fixings	123.00 units	3.60	442.80
INSTALLATION			
- man-hours	2.50 team days	850.00	2,125.00
- concrete	2.00 m ³	125.00	250.00
- diesel	5.00 litres	1.70	8.50
- grinding disc	1.00 units	50.00	50.00
CONTINGENCIES			
			300.00
		TOTAL:	7,811.30

Contingencies

If you're smart, you'll include a line item for contingencies in every calculation. Something unexpected comes up on every job. Perhaps the project site turns out not to be as easily accessible as thought, and your installers have to slip 50 euros to a forklift driver from a company up the road in exchange for his help with unloading the materials. Or the gate manufacturer accidentally supplies green mortice plates instead of black ones, and you decide to just repaint them yourself so you can move on to the next job.

On a big job, make the contingency cost item a little larger, on a small job a little smaller. It doesn't matter if it's a bit on the high side. In this example you quite possibly won't need anything close to the full 300 euros, but the leftover amount can be popped into your piggy bank ready for that one time you accidentally cut a fibre-optic cable in two and get landed with an 8,000 euro repair bill.

If you want the complete picture, write down every single cost, no matter how small. On every job you use a couple of litres of diesel for the aggregate, and a few bits from the cordless drill get lost in the grass. They're small costs that you hardly notice at the time... but if you don't write them down here, then at the end of the year they'll be deducted from your profit.

PROFIT

And that immediately brings us to the next important item in the calculation, so important that it should actually be at the top: profit. After all, this is where you figure out just what you're doing it all for. This is where you determine whether the new car you buy in three years' time is going to be a Porsche or a Golf. Whether you'll be able to buy a holiday home on the French Riviera ten years from now, or whether it will be a caravan on the Welsh coast.

In his presentation, Pete Clark said, "*Profit is not a dirty word*," and we can only agree with him. In leftist circles in particular, people still sometimes judge you for making a profit. Those who want to make a profit are seen as greedy and anti-social, or even as gifters. This leads a lot of business owners to have the tendency to keep their profits (too) small. They feel too embarrassed to add a hefty percentage.

But they make things very difficult for themselves. Every business needs to turn a profit. It helps you to grow, and ensures that you have money to invest. A business that makes a profit is (more) saleable, should you ever wanted to dispose of it. Profits mean that the bank considers you creditworthy, should you ever need money.

And most importantly (this one is also from Pete): profit helps you to sleep at night. You don't need to be afraid of setbacks (or in any case you can be much less afraid of them), because you know you can always earn the money back.

But what is a healthy profit? Opinions on this issue are very much divided. The definition of a healthy profit greatly depends on the industry, the size and the structure of your business. One thing that most business advisers do agree on is that once it drops below 10 percent, the

situation becomes critical. If you're not making at least 10 percent profit then while you might survive, you won't have a healthy business. That only applies at around 15 to 20 percent and up. And please note: 20 percent profit here means that you retain 20 percent of your turnover. That means that you'll need to add a 25 percent margin to start with.

Obviously this is just a guideline – you can always make it higher. Apple turned a profit of 114 billion dollars last year on takings of 383 billion dollars. That's 30 percent. That means they added 42 percent to the cost price of your iPhone.

The table below demonstrates the differences between low profit and high profit.



TOTAL COST: € 7,811.30

ADDED MARGIN

11.00	%	859.24	€
15.00	%	1,171.70	€
25.00	%	1,952.83	€
42.00	%	3,280.75	€

PRICE PAID BY THE CUSTOMER:

€ 8,670.54
€ 8,983.00
€ 9,764.13
€ 11,092.05

Tax

For the sake of completeness: this amount is your operating profit, from which tax is still to be deducted. Depending on the country you live in, this begins with 20 to 30 percent in corporate tax. You can then invest the remaining funds in a new forklift or pay them out to yourself. If you pay them out, dividend tax or income tax will be deducted depending on the structure of your company. It means that for every euro you want to put into your piggy bank for that holiday to the Maldives, you'll need to add two euros to the sale price.

IMPOSSIBLE

If you start doing calculations like this, with a decent number of inbuilt contingency items and a healthy profit margin, chances are that your prices will increase (considerably). "That's all well and good," you'll be thinking, "but then I won't sell anything. I'll be far too expensive! You editors are crazy." You might be right about the last part; we are indeed slightly unhinged. But we're not just jotting down whatever comes into our heads.

To start with, a lot of customers have absolutely no idea what a fence actually costs. The main person who needs to get used to the new price is you. It doesn't matter whether your fencing price is 89 or 97 euros per metre; the customer is going to be shocked anyway, because he was expecting it to be 50. He's also had quotes of 72 euros per metre. Blah, blah, blah. All the arguments you used to convince customers to buy at your previous price of 89 euros will remain the same... and he'll often end up placing the order anyway. The only difference is that at 97 euros you have an extra 8 euros in your pocket and you're building a healthy business.

Secondly, the higher price in your calculation doesn't have to be set in stone. You can still offer a lower price if you particularly want a job. But the big difference is that you now have a good overview of what's going on. You can change all sorts of details in the spreadsheet and see immediately what that will mean for your bottom line, or what you'll need to do to achieve your financial goals.

You can give your installers a kick up the bum and get them to install 50 metres in a day instead of 40. Then you'll only have to put two team days into the calculation instead of two and a half, and the price for the customer will drop by 500 euros while the profit stays (almost) the same. Obviously you can't do that on every job (unless you want your installers to run away swiftly without looking back) but it's okay to ask them to go the extra mile now and again. Working for a healthy business is a better thing for them as well.

You can also divide your fixed costs by 220 working days instead of 200. You'll have to hope it doesn't rain too much in the coming year, and you might need to work the odd Saturday to make up for a lost day, but it will take 240 euros off the price. We've added a new column to the fixed costs table below, giving the price per team day for each cost item.

COST ITEM	€ PER YEAR	€ PER TEAM DAY
PREMISES		
- Rent	24,000.00	60.00
- Utilities	4,800.00	12.00
- Insurance	500.00	1.25
- Council tax	2,000.00	5.00
- Waste collection	2,000.00	5.00
STAFF		
- Salaries	175,200.00	438.00
- Social security contributions	40,800.00	102.00
- Pension schemes	9,000.00	22.50
VEHICLES		
- Leasing	19,200.00	48.00
- Fuel	7,200.00	18.00
- Insurance	4,000.00	10.00
- Repairs & Maintenance	6,000.00	15.00
- Forklift depreciation	3,000.00	7.50
INSTALLATION		
- Earth auger depreciation	500.00	1.25
- Compressor depreciation	400.00	1.00
- Workwear and shoes	1,000.00	2.50
OFFICE		
- Software	1,800.00	4.50
- Computer depreciation	1,500.00	3.75
- Call charges	3,000.00	7.50
- Mobile phone depreciation	1,500.00	3.75
FINANCE		
- Interest on loans	1,500.00	3.75
- General insurance	1,200.00	3.00
- Banking fees	720.00	1.80
- Holding stock	3,000.00	7.50
SALES & MARKETING		
- Website	1,000.00	2.50
- Sponsoring	3,000.00	7.50
- Advertisements	3,000.00	7.50
ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS		
- Accountant	3,500.00	8.75
MEMBERSHIPS		
- Business owners' association	800.00	2.00
- Trade association	1,500.00	3.75
DEVELOPMENT		
- Courses and seminars	2,000.00	5.00
TEAMBUILDING		
- Go-karting	2,000.00	5.00
- Summer BBQ	1,000.00	2.50
CONTINGENCIES	8,230.00	20.58
- Subscription to Fencing Times	150.00	0.38
TOTAL:	340,000.00	850.00



Does the price still need to come down quite a bit? Then you can delete the contingency item. That will immediately shave 20 euros from the daily rate. But if you do that, be aware that you'll be able to absorb fewer setbacks this year than you might have liked. If that's still not enough, you could also scrap teambuilding. That will save another 7.50. Just have a barbecue a week later.

Every price cut is going to cost you something. If you scrap the forklift depreciation on this job, then you'll have to push back buying a newer one – even if it isn't scheduled until 2026 – by 2.5 days. If the mechanic who's just been round for routine maintenance says you've got a great forklift that can keep going for years, then you could go ahead. If he looks doubtful, then better not.

STEERING

Our point is: once you have a clear picture of your costs, then you know what you're doing and can steer your business and make decisions in a much more targeted way. That job you took on last week for an absolute rock-bottom price, because you didn't want your competitor to install a fence at that location with huge nameplates on it? That job that your gut feeling said you should probably charge more for? Now you know how much it cost you. And you don't need to feel sick about it, because now you can put those expenses into the fixed costs spreadsheet under the heading of 'marketing' and recoup them in other projects.



And finally, if you find that you simply can't sell at the healthy prices from the calculation on an ongoing basis, then you'll know you need to improve in other areas. For example by improving your sales skills (the course costs for this fit nicely into the 'Development' category of the spreadsheet).

Or, of course, you could slash back your costs. That's always a good idea; you should do it once a year in any case. With the clear overview you've created, you now know exactly what you're spending and where. You probably got quite a fright (or two) while making the list

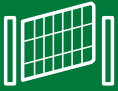
when you saw just how high a particular cost item actually was. You can also see at a glance where you'll achieve the fastest results when you start cutting back. In this example, it would be better to look for a cheaper accountant than a cheaper bank.

Some people are handy with an Excel spreadsheet, while others prefer to do their sums on the back of a beer mat. It doesn't really matter how you do it. It doesn't need to be a work of art, either; it's something you do for yourself, not for the Supervisory Board. The point is that you do it (or have it done). Drawing

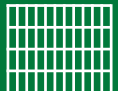
up a full list of all your costs and making a good estimate for each project and for each type of fencing gives you a broad overview and a whole range of options; we've never met anyone who regretted doing it. ■



Sliding Gates



Swing Gates



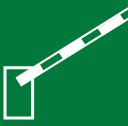
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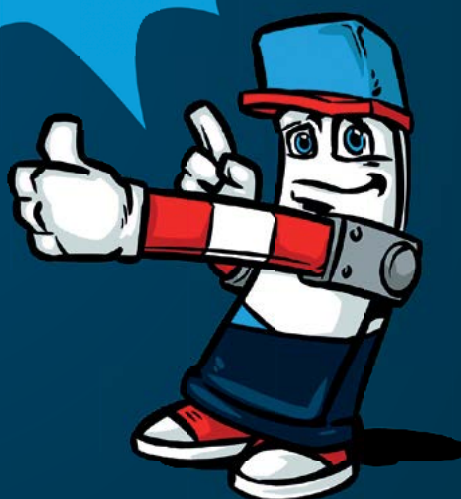
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LET'S GO HIGH-TECH

How do you use detection to create security for a car dealership?

Mercedes-Benz



raijmond@fencingtimes.com

Raijuoud Roudeel

Raijmond Roudeel has worked in perimeter security for many years. For Fencing Times, he writes about securing outdoor areas with detection systems. Do you have questions? Or a practical example - and are curious what Raijmond would have offered here? Send him an email at raijmond@fencingtimes.com

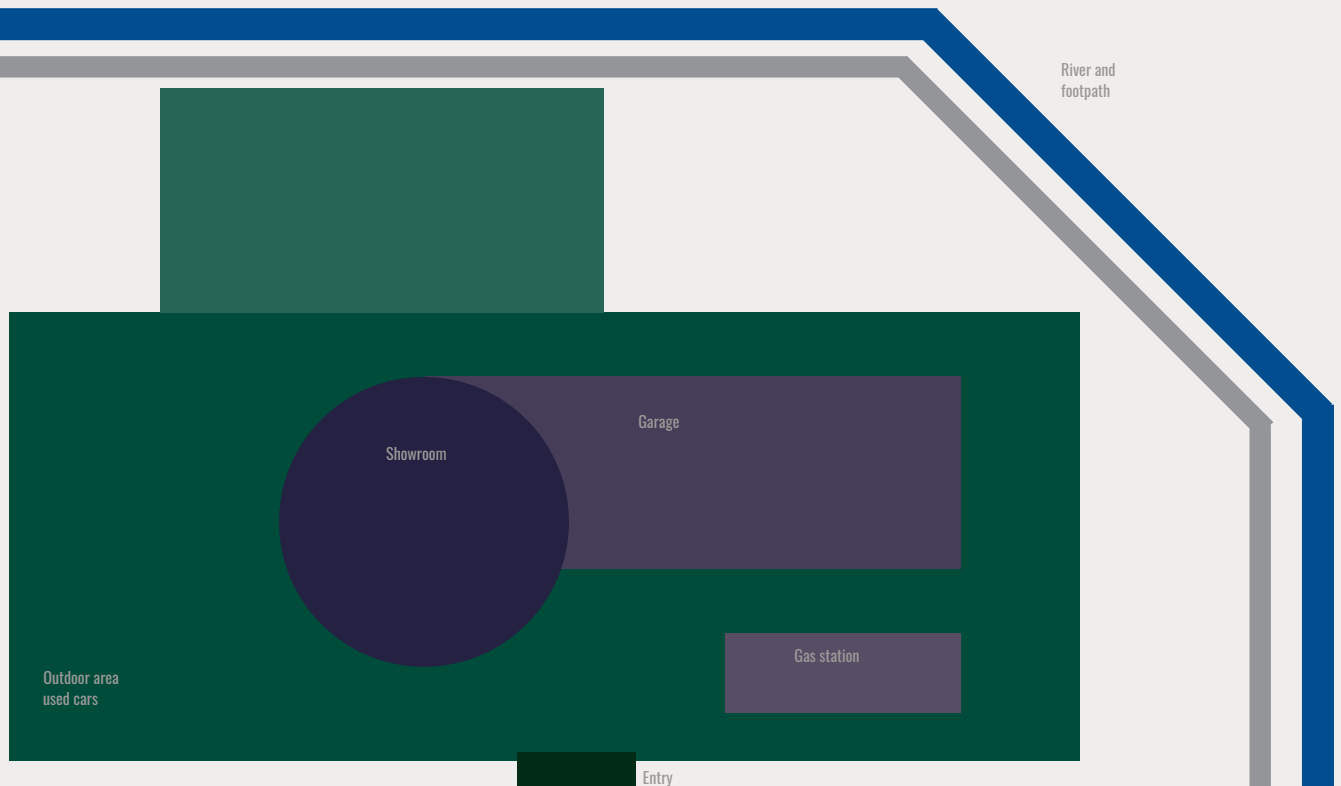
*For certain, perimeter detection
is always made to measure
and never 'off the peg'.*

There are many kinds of differing forms of perimeter security with detection systems. Each of these has its particular pros and cons. But in practical terms how do you deploy all these systems? When do you propose which system? The only answer is that there is no standard answer. For certain, perimeter detection is always made to measure and never 'off the peg'. To provide you with more insight into this area, different example projects will be presented in forthcoming editions. I'll take you step-by-step through all the considerations and aspects that are involved in a perimeter detection project.

Given that no two projects are ever the same, you should almost never omit going to view a project yourself before making an offer because on-site you'll see things that are not apparent on a drawing or photo. During such a visit, look in particular for the weak spots through the eyes of an intruder. As I was a bit of a bad boy myself during my teenage years, me and my friends visited many an outdoor location in the local industrial

estate to see if there was anything fun to get up to, what we called 'having an adventure', and this background has proved rather handy in this profession. Part of the sport was being able to get into the location without being seen. This was back in the 70s, long before electronic perimeter alarm systems came on the scene. I don't think we'd dare to do the same in today's world, and for the record we never stole anything, just messed around.

CAR DEALERSHIP TOP VIEW



CAR DEALERSHIP

Today we're going to secure an exclusive car dealership on the edge of an industrial park. Located next to a passing motorway, the business is highly accessible. That makes for good advertising since every one who passes sees the cars there. There is a lovely looking building with a glass façade that serves as the showroom in which are displayed all the shiny new and exclusive models. Outside, neatly lined up, are all the nearly new pre-owned models. There are additional parking places for the employees, customers and for cars that are in for service. The site also features a petrol station and car wash. The owner has leased this part to a tenant. The station's opening hours are restricted to between 07:00 and 22:00. This is because people coming to fill up with petrol have to cross our dealership's premises and the dealership prefers not to have strangers on the premises at night. It means that during the day the outside area will be open as usual, allowing customers to get petrol and view pre-owned cars even outside of the dealership's opening hours. There is a separate parking area behind the premises for the new cars awaiting collection. No one can be allowed to enter this area without being seen. Not by car nor on foot. The back of this area represents a particular challenge since there is a stream here that runs past the property and the banks of this stream are frequented not only by many walkers but also by the mischievous teenagers I just mentioned. The site also features a workshop and a warehouse, but we'll leave the security of the inside and the petrol station for the moment as these are clearly subject to a different approach. We'll limit ourselves to the outside security of the car dealership's site.

COMPLEX

This car dealership example is a complex situation in fact. We need to make it as unattractive as possible to thieves intent on stealing. At the same time the site needs to be attractive and accessible to customers who come to look at pre-owned models or to purchase fuel. In other words, one part of the site needs to be hermetically sealed while the other part needs to be quite open. Moreover, we need to take into account two kinds of thieves: Those who come to just steal airbags and petrol from cars and those looking to steal complete cars. When it comes to the luxury car segment, thieves are often not afraid to deploy extra resources such as tow trucks. The high-visibility location on a busy road is also a factor here: not only does it draw in customers but it also increases the appeal to thieves. They view the busy road as a great escape route. As our famous footballer Johann Cruiff always said: *"Every advantage has its disadvantage."*



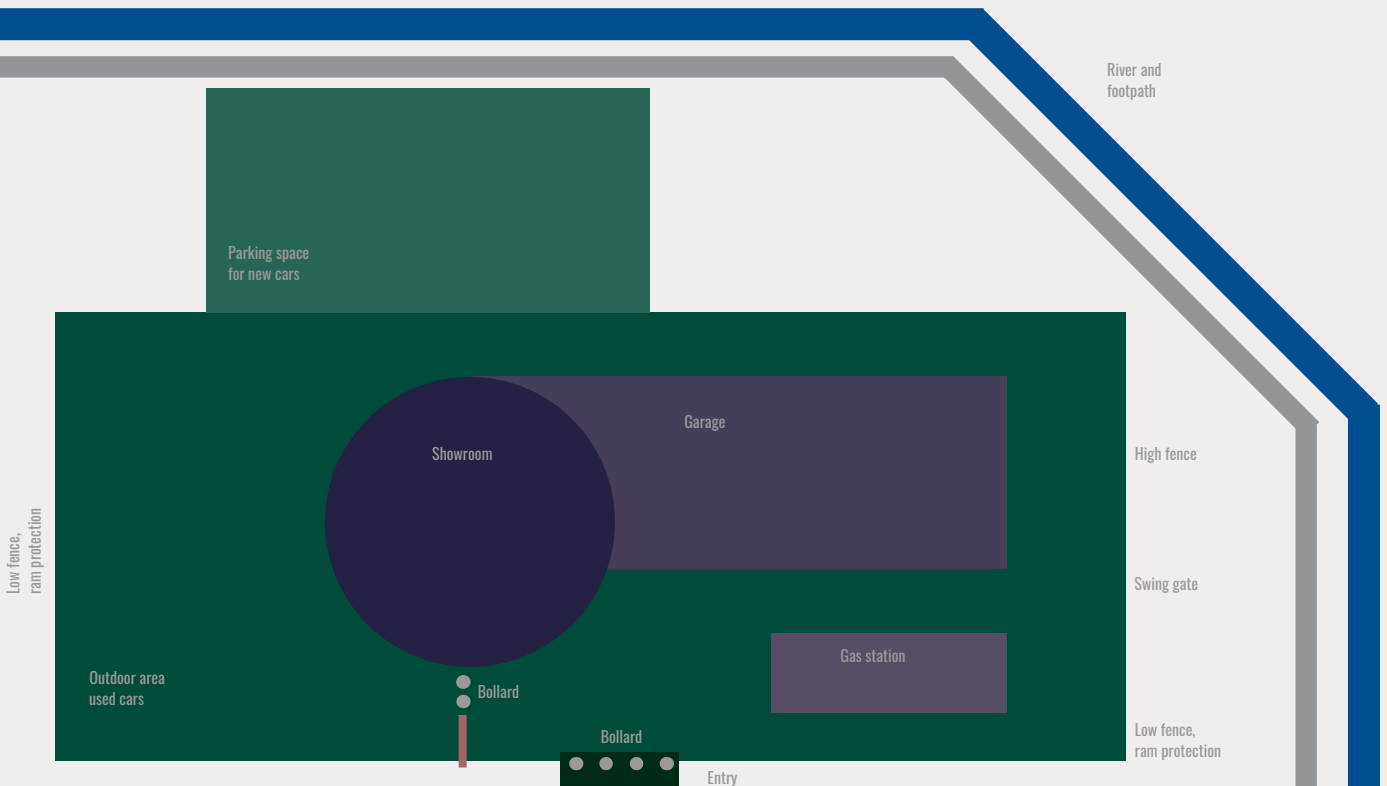
REQUIREMENTS

Let's first consider the mechanical side of things, namely fences and gates. Something you know more about than me. Our dealership doesn't want a high fence at the front as it wants to keep its lovely premises visible. It can accept a low anti-ram barrier. This will at least stop rapid break-ins with heavy (tow) trucks. A sliding gate at the turning to the street is also acceptable as long as it is kept low. At least this will enable us to force thieves to park their car at night either next to the busy main road where it will stand out, or a long way off thus preventing them from enjoying a quick getaway. We're allowed to erect a high fence in the area behind the workshop and the parking area where the factory comes to drop off new cars. Additionally, the petrol station should be accessible to vehicles from 7 am to 10 pm, but for the pre-owned car area such accessibility by car isn't desirable. If visitors are able to park their cars at the front - in sight of the petrol station owner - and then go and inspect the pre-owned cars on foot, this is satisfactory. Thus we still need a second sliding gate or something similar that screens the pre-owned car area from the large filling station area, which also has parking spaces for visitors.

ACCESS

The Achilles heel of the mechanical protection are the access areas. That low anti-ram barrier with its extra solid foundation does its job well. But how do we properly close off the entrances to a site with a low fence? A normal sliding gate isn't going to be sturdy enough. A sliding gate with an extra heavy bottom beam, preferably with the narrowest possible opening, might do the job. I always recommend manually operated ones in the case of low gates, sliding or not. From a legal standpoint, every electric gate should be capable of manual operation, with an emergency release. This is usually located in the control cabinet. These cabinets are often fitted with a simple lock, which is very easy to break open. For a low gate in particular, one which you just step over, an electric gate then becomes pointless. If the gate still has to be electric per se, you could fit the control cabinet with a contact linked through to security. Straight away then, I would put a contact on the gate as well, so you know for sure that it's closed. Bear this in mind in any case. Retractable bollards may also be a good alternative. The sliding gate (or bollards) that closes off the pre-owned car section from the parking area stays open during the day to give visitors easy and quick access.

CAR DEALERSHIP TOP VIEW



Once the car dealership closes at 6 pm, this is shut. Then only the parking and petrol station parts remain open until 10 pm. But as anyone interested can still come on foot to look at the pre-owned cars, no detection can yet take place. Only after 10 pm when the petrol station manager closes the sliding gate to the street can we switch on detection for the pre-owned area. But how are we going to detect intruders here?

SECURITY FACTOR

I discussed the security factor before. This has to be greater than 1 for there to be good security. You derive the security factor by dividing the resistance time by the response time. The resistance time is the time an intruder needs to get past the mechanical barrier, calculated from the moment he is detected by you. The response time is the time security personnel need to receive the alarm, verify it and arrive at the scene. Putting it simply: the sooner you detect an intruder, the better because it gives you more time to react.

DIFFICULTY

The problem we have with our dealership is that as regards the pre-owned section, there is in principle no resistance time. This area is freely accessible. The only thing in the way is the low anti-ram barrier to prevent vehicles from being towed away but the air-bag or petrol thief can just step over it and go looking for his spoils at leisure. The resistance time is extremely short, virtually zero. What this means is that we also have to detect intruders immediately, just as soon as they step over the low barrier, in order to still achieve a security factor of 1. The response must then be to immediately engage the control room, which will then speak remotely to the intruders and scare them off. There is simply insufficient time to arrive at the scene in a hurry due to the lack of a barrier. This also means creating remote eyes that can track any intruders' movements. Thus, cameras that can be operated by the security guards in the control room.



DETECTION

The electronic security and detection of people at the pre-owned section is further highly dependent on how the cars are positioned. It is generally the case with field-detection systems that cost space, that they almost never come to fruition. Space is expensive. If you tell a dealer that he can display ten fewer cars outside, or that everything has to be set three metres away from the perimeter because you want to install a microwave detector or radar system, or laser scanners or infrared pillars up to a certain height, he immediately starts to splutter. Fencing detection systems don't need such space because they are fitted to the fence. But clearly we can't make use of those here either because you can simply step over the low anti-ram fence. All this means we are basically left with only two systems for securing the pre-owned section. Either a camera system with integrated detection or a ground detection system. Both have their own advantages and disadvantages. It is, of course, possible to combine them.



BALANCING ACT

For an existing situation, the camera system is the more attractive solution because the installation costs will be far lower than with the ground detection system. For a new car dealership that has yet to be built and which will necessarily involve a lot of street works and ground works, ground detection could be a fine alternative. An added advantage of the camera system is its highly preventive nature. Every visitor cannot help but notice the presence of cameras. The owner can also use the footage during the day to ascertain which employee's driving was responsible for which dent in which car. But the camera system has the disadvantage that its detection reliability in the dark and in bad weather leaves a lot to be desired.

FALSE ALARM

This can result in both too many reports or too few of them. In practice, both come at the expense of the response time, which was already small due to the absence of a mechanical barrier. You may have agreed informally with a control room that if on a chilly autumn night the camera has already generated a few superfluous reports, the next one will probably be unnecessary too, am I right? In the end, it's the people in the control room who verify the alarm images and who take the decision to respond or not. It doesn't help if there have already been several superfluous reports that night. You could solve this through the use of thermal cameras. Even in complete darkness or bad weather, they can still reliably trigger an alarm. These cameras are more expensive of course and you can only use them for detection. Their images are of no use during the daytime since you cannot recognise anyone from them.



They are good for detection though. Especially if you also make use of line crossing. This means drawing a virtual line in the image and the camera then checks that no persons or objects that radiate heat cross this line. The inherent disadvantage is that the dealership will have to take this virtual line into account when arranging its cars.

GROUND DETECTION

This works differently for passive ground detection systems. It's a system with two cables. It doesn't involve any loss of space. The parked cars can be on top of it without affecting the system's functionality. Furthermore, this type of system delivers unmatched detection reliability. It always functions well, even in complete darkness or on that chilly autumn night. The detection probability is virtually 100 per cent and the false alarm ratio (VAR) virtually zero. That means no superfluous alarms. You can really depend on it. When the guards in the control room get an alert from this system, they will immediately go into response mode. They can switch the light on, bring up the camera image onto the big monitor and set up a voice connection with the loudspeakers at the site as there is certain to be someone walking or creeping in between the cars. Each alarm is a genuine hit.

COMBINATION

If money is no object, which may be the case with high-end luxury brands, the best way to secure the pre-owned section would be to combine both systems. You mount standard cameras at strategic spots. You then need fewer cameras because they aren't being used for detection.

Then during the day you will also have instant good images of intruders who come to reconnoitre beforehand, and you can use the images for all sorts of other things. This also has a decent preventive effect. For detection, you can completely depend on the ground detection system. When detection occurs in the dark, you can switch on additional lighting. This will enable the cameras to capture good footage and you can have that footage reported to a control room for verification, if necessary. The control room will then respond quickly by directing some cleverly positioned controllable cameras towards the intruders and setting up a voice connection. There are even movable cameras that can aim a type of laser beam at intruders and actually track them automatically. Intruders will then have to be very sure of themselves if they still intend to carry out their evil designs under these conditions.

PERFECT

To my mind, this is the perfect situation. You harness the advantages of both systems while minimising their disadvantages. If the dealership opts for a one-sided option then in the case of existing construction, it will often be the camera system, in which case permanent good lighting is essential for reliable detection. Unless you deploy thermal cameras. The dealership will then economise on the cost of the ground detection system but will have to put up with lower detection reliability and up to a factor of 10 in additional false alarms.



PARKING AREA

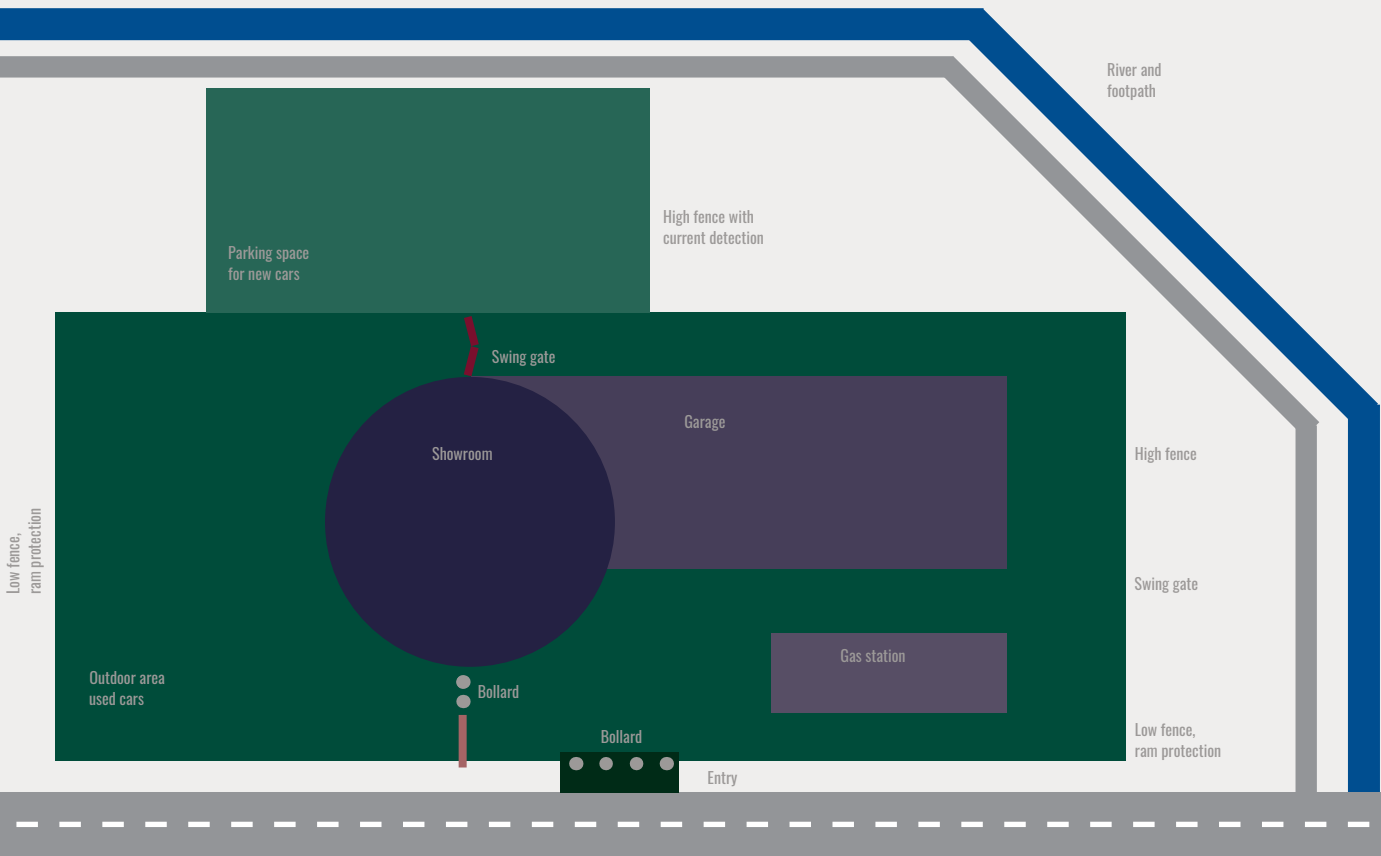
The starting principles for the parking area where new cars are dropped off are completely different. The dealer doesn't want anyone to be invisible in that area at any point in time. But this area isn't adjacent to the street so a high fence is not an issue. This means we can install a good, highly resistant barrier there. For example, a fence using twin wire panels or railing panels that are at least 2 metres in height. If it's a nice rectangular site with enough space, perhaps we could cover the inside with a field detection system such as a microwave detector or infrared pillars. In that case the cars will have to be parked some 3 metres away from the fencing. But if we detect on the inside, there is detection only once the intruder has already scaled the fence. The same goes for the use of ground detection. This is often unacceptable to the owner. Gangs exist that break open new cars and remove everything of value

in no time at all, often to order. If you only detect such criminals once they're already inside, you're too late. They will have flown before the security guards or police get there.

FENCE DETECTION

What we need here is the fastest possible detection and that is usually a fence detection system. This is attached either to or on the fence and it detects any attempt to overcome this barrier. No faster way exists. It could, for example, be a microphone cable system or an induction system. A good alternative is thermal cameras with line crossing technology aligned on the fence. With fence detection you do need to make sure that the fence is high enough. If an intruder is able to park his van next to the fence and use its roof for jumping over the fence, neither the fence nor the associated detection are much help.

CAR DEALERSHIP TOP VIEW





GATE

We also need to think carefully about what is the Achilles' heel here, namely site access. In this regard, we're actually facing the self-same problem as previously with the low anti-ram barrier. If we consider an electric swing gate or sliding gate, an intruder could probably gain easy access to the emergency release with a decent crowbar. So a manually operated gate is preferred. But whether you install an electrically operated gate or a manual one - neither is that suitable for securing with a cable fence detection system. Certainly not in the case of a railing gate. Moreover, the gate portals can be readily used as support for climbing over the gate. This means we still need additional detection behind the gate, provided by an infrared pillar, radar or an additional thermal camera. The gate is often the problem child of this protected space.

ELECTRIC FENCE

This is the reason why - especially in the Netherlands, but in Belgium and England too, I am increasingly seeing a so-called high-voltage electric fence system being used for these kinds of situations. Strung between pylons placed on the inside of the fence are electrified wires carrying 8000 volts. These wires simultaneously provide deterrence and detection. They also increase the height of the fence to at least 2.5 metres and almost all systems can also be installed on gates. This makes climbing over rather difficult and

as for climbing over undetected, that's now pretty much impossible. This also means that the gate can now also be an electric one. The preventive effect of this kind of high-voltage system is enormous. It's hugely intimidating and would-be thieves would rather go next door where they don't have this kind of system. They'll think twice. Such systems have clearly shown their worth in the Netherlands. Go and look around an average industrial estate where the big dealerships are. The preventive effect of this kind of system turns out to be so huge that car thieves simply don't try it any more - and that is worth gold to the car dealers. But it does have one downside: the site quickly starts to resemble a prison. This isn't so much of a problem in the parking area for the new cars at our dealership because it's a long way from the street and out of sight. In areas where you need to tempt customers in, you cannot always deploy these systems.

ROME

As you can see, there are several options in each sub-area and each option involves a different set of trade-offs. Often, there simply isn't a perfect solution and several roads lead to Rome, as it were. The art lies in applying whichever system features the fewest disadvantages or the most advantages and that also fits the customer's wants and budget. When weighing everything up, above all you should never forget to be honest. If something

won't work, just tell the client it won't. With an electric fence system, for example, it's vital that the fence is well maintained and that the underneath in particular is kept free of weeds, long grass and suchlike. Ideally, a clean, paved and weed-free surface. If during your inspection you see that the weeds are half a metre high, simply forget it. The system will soon cease to function because tall and wet weeds or grass will cause short circuits between the high-voltage wires, which will lead to superfluous notifications and an unworkable system. Don't be afraid to say 'no, that won't work' to your client - it can be one of the most important answers. If you apply a system because you don't want to disappoint the customer or are scared you may not secure the order, it could cause you a world of pain later on - and just like a boomerang it always comes back to haunt you. ■

Fencing calendar

This overview lists all trade shows and events that we think might be of interest to fencing professionals, which is why we have included events that only partially overlap with our industry (such as construction, security and infrastructure trade shows). NB: not all events are free of charge, and events may be cancelled, moved or rescheduled at the last minute. Check all information on the relevant event's website before making travel arrangements.

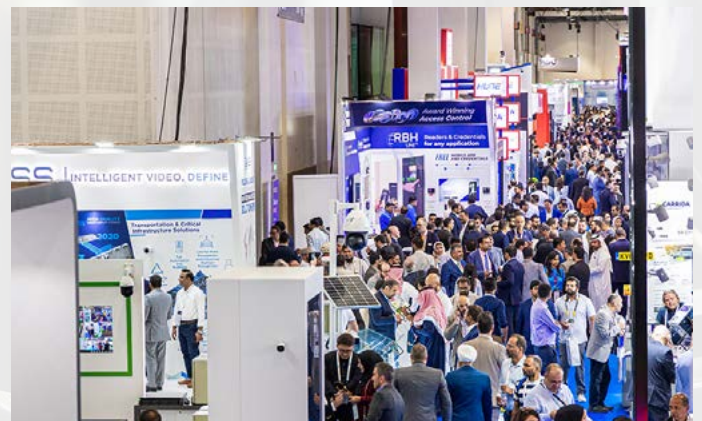


**SAVE
the
DATE**

Event	Begins	Ends	Location	Category
Fence Installation Championships	7 September	8 September	Wenschdorf bei Miltenberg	Fencing
The Fence Show	11 September	13 September	Las Vegas, South Point Hotel & Casino	Fencing
Galabau	11 September	14 September	Nuremberg Exhibition Centre	Landscaping
Security Essen	17 September	20 September	Essen Exhibition Centre	Security
International Security Expo	24 September	25 September	Olympia London	Security
Batimat	30 September	3 October	Paris Expo Porte de Versailles	Building & Construction
Saie	9 October	12 October	Bologna Exhibition Centre	Building & Construction
AFI Fencing Awards	17 October		Newcastle upon Tyne, St James' Park	Fencing
MZT General Assembly & Convention	17 October	19 October	Bamberg	Fencing
Bau	13 January	17 January	Munich Exhibition Centre	Building & Construction

Perimeter Protection	14 January	16 January	Nuremberg Exhibition Centre	Fencing
Intersec	14 January	16 January	Dubai World Trade Centre	Security
Night of the Fencing Installer	15 January		Nuremberg	Fencing
Budma	12 February	15 February	MTP Poznań Expo	Building & Construction
Fencetech	24 February	28 February	Salt Lake City, Salt Palace Convention Center	Fencing

If you're aware of an event that isn't listed here, or if you are organising an event that will be open to all fencing professionals, please be sure to let us know by emailing team@fencingtimes.com



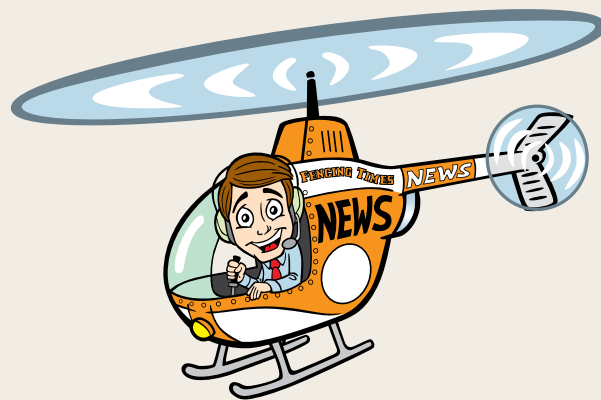


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FENCES IN THE NEWS



22 MAY 2024

Sunak protects mansion in North Yorkshire with wooden fence



Uninvited guests created nuisance for British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak last summer. Burglars from Greenpeace climbed onto the roof of his North Yorkshire mansion and hung the house full of black cloths to protest against oil drilling. Sunak then applied for a permit to put a fence around his garden, but

this proved to rub a neighbour the wrong way. The latter feared the fence would ruin the view and made an elaborate plea to stop the building of a fence in a landscape that has been open for hundreds of years. "Sunak lives in London, his children are at school in London, and he has already indicated his intention to move to America after his time

in office. Those few times he uses this house, I am sure the police can protect him better," she said. "Moreover, he would do better to ensure stricter legislation that prevents these climate protesters from disrupting everyone's lives." The latter would actually be more useful than the fence Sunak had built: a wooden lean-to fence 1.20 metres high

with three crossbars. According to the permit application, a simple visual and modest barrier to discourage intrusion into the residential area - in our opinion, a money-wasting and pointless measure that future Greenpeace intruders won't care one bit about. Nevertheless, we think Sunak is a great guy: thanks for the fencing, Rishi! ■

Baseball player plays baseball in own yard and you will never guess what his neighbours think of it



In Chandler, a suburb of Phoenix in Arizona, lives former professional baseball player James Jerry Hardy, JJ to friends. At 41, Hardy is too young to put out to pasture and, since he no longer plays in Major League Baseball (MLB), must somehow manage to pass the time. So he already had a swimming pool, a tennis court and a golf green created in the garden of his villa, but a baseball player obviously

gets only moderate pleasure out of tennis, golf, and swimming. So what did our JJ do? He had a baseball field built in his own garden this spring. Complete with a 6-metre high ball stop fence to stop the flying baseballs. The neighbours do not like it at all. Of course not the view of the high fence anyway, but they are also afraid that the ball stop fence will be followed by light poles and that the neighbourhood

will be treated to regular and noisy baseball games. We can somewhat understand that about those light poles: we once visited Phoenix, Arizona ourselves and from April to November, everyone there runs from air-conditioner to air-conditioner during the day because it is too hot outside to do just about anything, let alone sports. So if JJ wants to actually use his ballpark, it will be mostly in the late evening and early

morning. But on the other hand: the plots of land in the residential area where JJ lives are large, and the neighbours can look in many directions without seeing the fence. Moreover, the field is not at all ready yet and nobody knows yet how often it will be used for play. Maybe JJ only wants to play baseball there occasionally on Sunday afternoons with some friends and family. For now, we are team JJ. ■

Farmhand injured by airborne fence post

In New Zealand, the press release does not say exactly where, a farmhand was injured when his head was hit by a fence post. He was working with a colleague to upgrade an existing agricultural fence

with five barbed wires to 10 barbed wires. While tensioning one of the extra barbed wires, a tension post broke off a little below ground and was catapulted straight into the farmhand's face. The farmhand subsequently had to go to the

hospital for 'urgent medical attention'. Safer Farms, an association dedicated to work safety in the agricultural industry, has now issued a so-called Safety Alert, warning other farmers who are members of the association to

always check how much force a tensioning post can take and where its weaknesses are before you start pulling wires under tension. We have another tip for farmers setting fences themselves: next time, just have a fencing worker come. ■



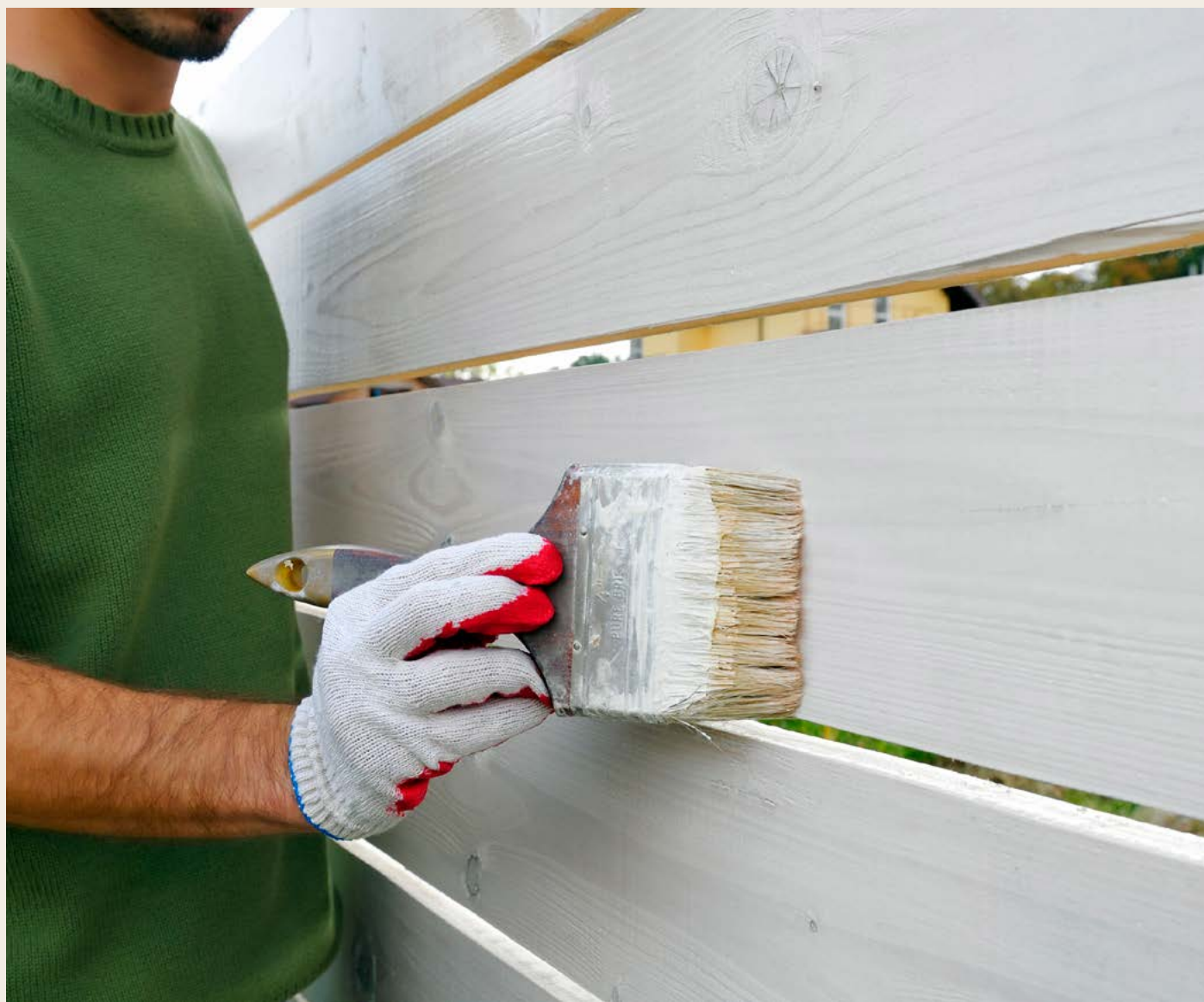
Neighbours steal pretty side of fence

The smartest neighbours in the world: they live somewhere in England. The story that follows dates back to 2022, but we had briefly missed it then and it is too good to pass up. An Englishman, who complained anonymously on internet forum Reddit, had his garden renovated for 9,000 British pounds. Part of the work involved refurbishing the wooden fence around that garden. Green mold deposits were

removed, sanding and brushing was done and then the whole fence was painted in two coats. There was just one small matter: the fence did not belong to him, but to the back neighbours. And what then happened you will never guess: three days later, he came home from shopping to find that the back neighbours had simply turned around all 19 fence sections. Once again, he was looking at an ugly fence full of green mold

deposits. The neighbours now had the pretty side. It is a story so absurd, we could not have made it up ourselves, but it gets even better: the first neighbour came to Reddit, to express his frustration and hoped for a bit of acclaim but was just barely not laughed at. Other Reddit users called the back neighbour genius, the situation hilarious and then explained to the man that legally he has no leg to stand on, since it was the neighbour's

fence. He then showed great sportsmanship and took a case of beer to the back neighbour to apologise for working on their fence without asking. The neighbour grumbled some more – because it turned out that he had turned around the fence panels precisely out of frustration about this – but eventually showed sportsmanship and allowed the panels to be turned around again. He even helped. All is well that ends well. ■



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