

FENCING TIMES

UK & Ireland

2025, Issue 21

Eleven winners at the
Fencing Awards 2024

Unique Bespoke
celebrates tenth birthday

First Fence launches
Rapid Shield

KÖSEDAG
FRANCE

KÖSEDAG
opens factory in
Vitry-le-François



FENCING TIMES



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The Fencing Times is published in both print and digital editions. More than 17,000 readers in 7000 businesses across Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Ireland, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Switzerland and the UK read the Fencing Times in their own language. An additional English-language digital edition is sent to readers throughout Europe.



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**2025 will
be your**

**Best Year
Ever!**

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“Eh, Rembrandt, are you living on another planet or something?

We are still recovering from the post-COVID slump. During the year-end inventory check over the holidays, we secretly had to overvalue our stock to avoid showing losses in the books. There is still far too little construction going on, and prices are under immense pressure. That is not going to magically change in 2025.”

You are partly right, of course. Economically speaking, the past year was not great. The economic outlook is not very hopeful either. At Volkswagen and Audi, employees are being laid off in droves. The German economy is faltering, and whenever that happens, the rest of Europe tends to follow shortly after. On top of that, Trump has announced a slew of America-First policies, and if you believe what you see on the news, the European economy will suffer greatly because of it.

But at the same time, it is true that the most resilient companies find their strength during challenging economic times. You are now faced with a choice: muddle through another year like the last one, and end the year counting every bolt and screw three times in hopes of finding a few more to keep you out of the red? Or decide that this coming year, you will take some significant steps forward to grow your business.

There are always things you can do to move your business forward. These are the things you should really be doing every year, but often neglect as long as you are not in survival mode. One of the first things to do is: have a big clean-up. Scroll through your bank statements from the past year and see where you have spent your money. Are all those expenses necessary again in the coming year? Or can you eliminate


some of them? Cutting costs can be done on a small scale. If you are still sending invoices by traditional mail, make it a goal this year to switch to email and save on postage costs in 2025. It can also be done on a larger scale, such as with your staff.

It sounds harsh – and it is harsh. Every underperforming colleague has good qualities too. Many colleagues have families to support and other obligations. But at the same time, employees cost a lot of money: wages, social benefits, clothing, cars, phones, and so on. There must be performance to justify those costs because a business is not a social service. Companies need to make a profit. If you are not entirely sure whether a particular colleague is worth their salary, you need to make that clear.

With some colleagues, it is easier to measure productivity than with others. An installer who does not install enough or a salesguy who does not sell enough will stand out more than a planner or a secretary who always seems very busy but is only truly busy when you are watching.

And then there are factors that cannot be measured, like work atmosphere. Sometimes you employ people who do precisely what is expected of them but are full of negative energy, creating a toxic environment for their colleagues – which reduces overall job satisfaction and productivity.

This negativity is hard to measure; you have to trust your instincts. Often, the Kwink analysis helps here. Kwink stands for ‘Knowing What I Now Know’. In other words: with the information you have now, would you make the same decision again? Would you hire that negative colleague again if they applied tomorrow? If not, let them go as soon as possible.



Healthy businesses are as lean as possible. Overhead is dead weight that does not generate revenue but still needs to be carried. (By the way, you can apply the Kwink analysis to many aspects of life, including your personal relationships or marriage.)

Once you have cut everything that can be cut, it is time to look at how you can grow. If the overall market is slightly smaller this year than last, the key is to claim a larger share of the pie for yourself in the coming year. How do you do that? By being better than your competitors.

That might sound a bit cliché. And it is. Those competitors are also fence installers, just like you. If they are not entirely incompetent, they can do the same things you can. But you only need to be slightly better to be more successful. If you can sell just a little better or offer slightly lower prices, you will attract many more jobs.

The little things often make a big difference. This applies in many areas. If you work slightly more efficiently, you can bill for one or two extra jobs each month, which adds up to significantly

more revenue by the end of the year without increasing costs. This can easily double your profits.

There are many areas where you can take that extra step to get ahead. Doing just a bit more marketing can make customers call you first. Treating your employees just a bit better than the roofing company or machine shop down the road can make you the employer of choice for top talent.

We recently met a fence installer who regularly posts fun videos on TikTok (editor's note: we still need to figure out how that works) and Instagram of him joking around with his team on the job. It takes effort, but it attracts job applications – and not from slackers who cannot find work elsewhere, but from motivated workers who go the extra mile compared to the competition.

Being 'just a bit better' often makes all the difference. And if you are just a bit better in as many areas as possible, you will be far ahead overall. Try it. If you succeed, you will look back next year on your best year ever. ■

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FENCE

Have you got a tip for us? Or taken part in something great that you want to share with the market? Spotted a beautiful fence or a beautiful gate? Or perhaps a really ugly fence, which you turned into a great photo? Let us know and share it with your colleagues in the sector.



ROADS



Bling-bling fence

Harold Kijk in De Vegt of Heras was riding a motorbike in the Philippines when he came across this shiny fence. "It's all made out of stainless steel," he writes. "The curved fences between the walls are too, everything's handmade! Bling bling is trending there!" Here on the editorial team we can understand the Filipinos. It's always handy to be able to check your hair in the reflection of your fence before you head out. Thanks for the photo, Harald!

New-fashioned closed fence

Dominik Euting and Robin Schnucklake of E&S Zaun from Bocholt, in western Germany on the Dutch border, installed a privacy fence too. But their customer went for a very modern type: aluminium plug-in fencing. No messing around, no decorations, no laser-cut motifs, just one colour and one type of infill. And it looks great too lads – nice work! Thanks for the photo!

Rail gate

We came across this rail gate ourselves when we visited Lecco, on Lake Como, for a night. Our biggest question was of course: Why? We've seen gates like this before, with an entire base on a double rail, for example from Kopal and Wiśniowski. But those were for gate leaves of 25 metres or longer, at airports or nuclear power stations. Here, some Italian or another has used the double construction for a 9-metre gate. A double guide post would have been more than enough. If you have an idea why this was done, please fill us in at fencepost@fencingtimes.com.



Old-fashioned closed fence

Harry Rainger of The Secure Fencing Company in London sent us this photo of a project in Hornchurch, just north of the Dartford Crossing over the Thames. He and his team installed a fence of the type that has been tried and tested for decades: concrete panels and wood boards. It looks great, Harry! Thanks for the photo!



Clean gate

"Why do all fences always have to be replaced?" Markus Vogt of Stäblein Zaun- und Toranlagen in Hanover wondered. *"You can also clean up the existing ones."* And it's true, fences are often still in perfectly good condition, if you clean off all the bird droppings and algae stains. With a new coat of paint if needed, they can often last for many more years. But obviously we don't want too many people to realise that, or the entire fencing market will collapse. All the same, thanks for the photo Markus!



FENCE POST

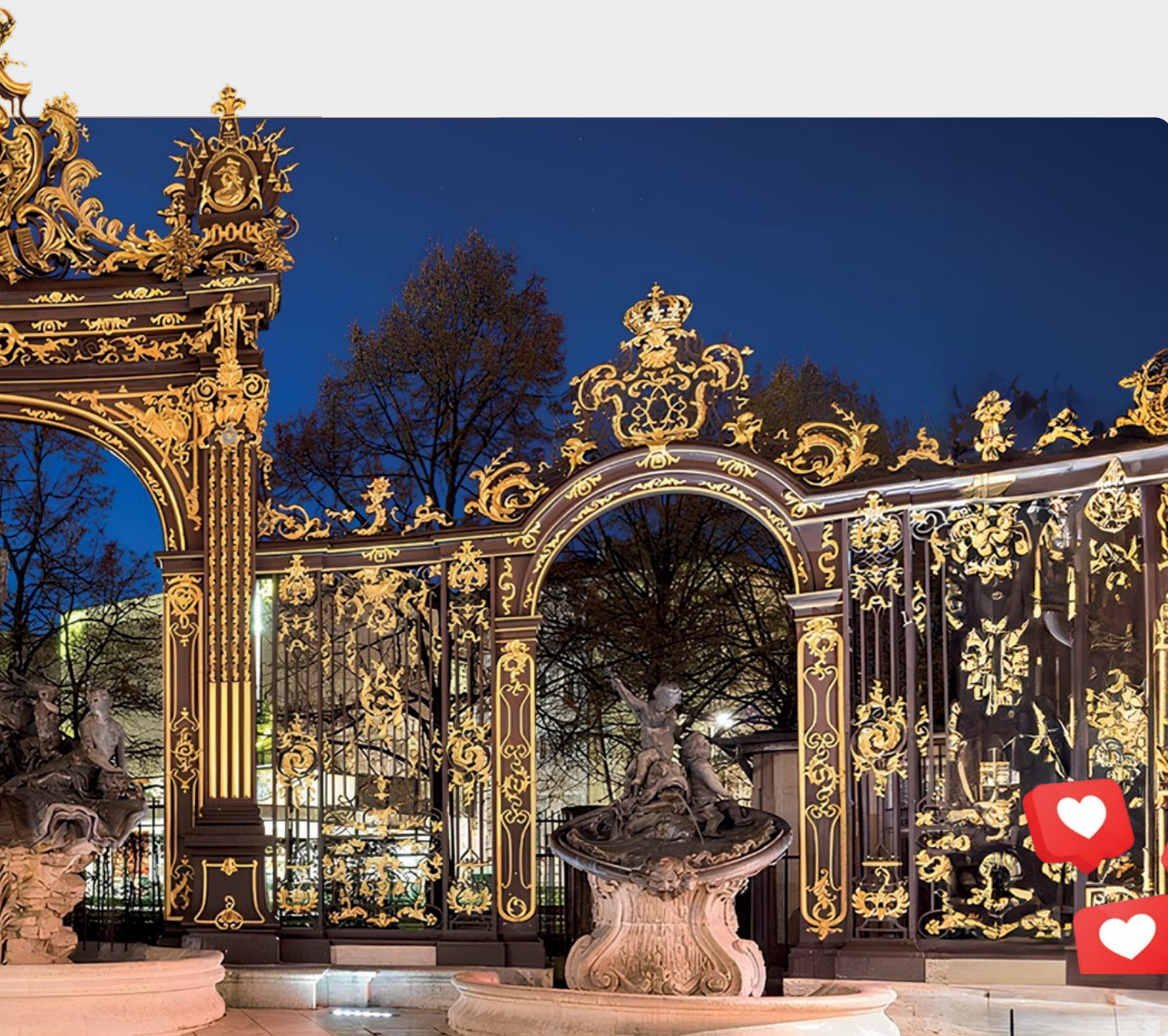


Photo of the Month

Stanisław fence

Not so long ago we wrote, under a photo of a gate at London's Buckingham Palace, that we'd never seen a gate with so many decorative elements and so much gold leaf. We take it all back. Thierry Renaud of Schertz Industrie from Berthelming in France came across this extraordinary 18th-century fence on Place Stanislas in Nancy. We looked into it and that square was one of the most important urban planning measures in Nancy's history. The idea came from Stanisław Leszczyński (or *Stanislas* in French), the Duke of Lorraine and former king of Poland, who

wanted to connect the 10th-century medieval city (in French *vieille ville*, or old town) with the new city (*ville neuve* in French) from the 16th century. The square was christened *Place Royale* in honour of Stanislas' son-in-law Louis XV, who had granted him the Duchy of Lorraine. Construction began in March 1752 and was completed in November 1755. The square and the buildings around it were designed by architect Emmanuel Héré, with the ornate wrought iron on the gates designed by Jean-Baptiste Lamour. Lovely gate and lovely photo, Thierry! This month's Locinox radio will be heading to Alsace.



Would you also like to win a Locinox radio? Send us your most beautiful project! Do not be too modest, do not think your picture will never win anyway. Every project can be beautiful for its own reason, or a source of inspiration for fellow fencers. Send your photo to fencepost@fencingtimes.com



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The novelties of the Perimeter Protection

When this issue is published, Perimeter Protection is in full swing. To give you an impression of what's on display, we've already contacted a selection of exhibitors. If you're unable to attend in person, here's a small sample (in no particular order) of the novelties and special features at this year's Perimeter Protection event. And if you're currently walking around in Nuremberg, you'll know exactly where to stop by. This is not a complete list – there's much more to discover.

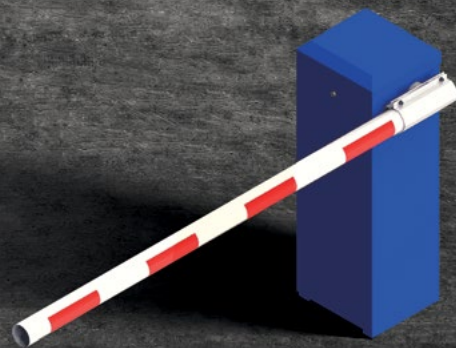
Michael Thomas, the company behind Tomtek Perilux sound barriers made from wood composite, is showcasing a new transparent polycarbonate element that can be integrated into the sound barriers. "We didn't want to use glass," says Noel Thomas, head of the Tomtek division. "Polycarbonate is a hard, transparent plastic that is more robust and higher quality than plexiglass or most other plastics. Plus, we have experience with polycarbonate in some high-security fencing models, so we know how it behaves and how to process it. All elements are custom-made by us before delivery." The plastic sheet is mounted in an aluminum frame and is available in three heights: 14, 28, and 42 centimeters.

POLYCARBONATE WINDOWS FROM TOMTEK PERILUX



The Belgian company Bam Bormet, a manufacturer of barriers and speed gates based in Nieuwerkerken near Hasselt, is sharing a stand with B&G and Halsang, sister companies within the Picot group. Among other things, Bam Bormet is showcasing a new arm barrier, the MOS23. This is the first barrier to be produced in series. "We've incorporated various customer and installer requests, some of which have been around for a long time, into the new barrier," says export manager Kurt Vanleysen. "It consists of easy-to-assemble modules, which makes the barrier more universal and flexible. The series production also makes it cost-effective, without compromising on the trusted high-quality Bam Bormet standard. This allows us to target an entirely new market segment. I can't wait to show it to the market. Be sure to stop by our stand – we've got some great Belgian beer too!" In a future issue, we'll provide a more detailed introduction to this barrier.

ENTRY-LEVEL ARM BARRIER FROM BAM BORMET



MANUFAKTUR FENCING, BIKE PARKING AND PLANT GABION FROM DRAHT MAYR



The German fencing manufacturer Draht Mayr from Dielheim is showcasing new Ranko Manufaktur fencing in Nuremberg. These are custom-made fence panels with individual infill, such as wood or laser-cut sheets. The company has added a model with perforated sheet metal to the range too. *"The Manufaktur fencing combines form and function,"* says Managing Director Kai Baumgärtner. *"It's more visually appealing than regular mesh fencing, but the panels can still be easily combined with twin wire fencing. Your customers can really upgrade their fence with this."*

Draht Mayr is also presenting a mobile version of its Plant Gabion, a gabion with a special substrate that promotes plant growth and comes with an integrated irrigation system. *"The certified noise reduction of up to 38 decibels and the constant evaporation contribute to improving the microclimate in cities,"* says Baumgärtner. *"The gabion was developed with the goal of making gabions more sustainable. It's one of the most eco-friendly solutions for visual and noise barriers on the market."* The new mobile version of this gabion is designed for temporary greening and demarcation at events like city festivals.

Many new features at the Draht Mayr stand can be found in the Bike Parking section. *"Ranko OnStreet is a patented bike parking system that allows up to twenty bikes to be parked in a single parking space meant for one car,"* says Baumgärtner. *"The bikes are vertically hung with gas springs. We introduced this two years ago, and it has been a huge success. This year, we're showing off various developments, such as Ranko OnWall, with rails for wall mounting in garages and bike sheds, and Ranko OnFence, which allows bikes to be parked against a double-bar fence."*

PORTABLE TURNSTILES FROM GERAN



Geran Access Products, a Dutch wholesaler of physical access and security solutions based in Rijssen, is exhibiting turnstiles and a barrier from the South African brand Turnstar. Geran is the European distributor for Turnstar. The barrier stands out with its slim casing, lightning-fast operation, and a range of options and extensions. Geran is also presenting a new mobile buttock-tapping device for outdoor use, specifically developed for events.

At the stand of Belgian gate hardware manufacturer Locinox from Waregem, there's a lot of attention for the Venus, a motorized gate closer for pedestrian gates that the company launched last year. We've written about it before. "The Venus is a revolution," says sales director Lieven Pieters. "It's a compact all-in-one gate drive that can be easily installed on any type of post and combined with any type of hinge, thanks to three different arm types. The motor's operation is not influenced by manual force, and when combined with access control, Venus also acts as an energy-efficient gate opener. It's been incredibly well received in the market."

Also on display is the Vera, a battery-powered digital code lock for Locinox's insert locks: Fortylock, Fiftylock, Sixtylock, and Eightylock. We've also written about that before. "With Vera, you can easily select or change up to 100 pin codes," says Pieters. "Different entry and exit codes, permanent open codes and free exit are possible." The energy-efficient Vera achieves up to 150,000 cycles with one battery pack, in all weather conditions. The code lock has an aluminum housing and an LED-illuminated electronic keypad.

New from Locinox this year is a series of architectural and customizable outdoor lighting called Helios. "The Helios lamps have an aluminum housing that guarantees durability in all weather conditions," says Pieters. "They are designed to be mounted on gate posts to illuminate the passage, but can also be installed on a wall." The housings are available in different shapes, sizes, and colors. There's also a clear version that can be coated in the same color as the gate. Options include 230-volt AC and 12 or 24-volt DC variants.

Also new is Volta, a surface-mounted lock with an external battery-powered keypad. "With Volta, you can effortlessly add access control to your gate," Pieters explains. "This solution combines a surface-mounted lock with a separate keypad, which is invisibly connected to the frame profile of the leaf. The lock fits seamlessly into the standard Locinox hole pattern. Again, you can choose, change, or delete up to 100 pin codes, and we use an energy-efficient battery pack that lasts up to 150,000 cycles in all weather conditions." Volta is available in two configurations: double with two keypads or single with one keypad and free exit.

Finally, Locinox is showing a prototype of Vita, a mechanical code lock for insert locks, which will be launched later this year. "Vita is the mechanical version of Vera," says Pieters. "It works without electricity, in combination with Fortylock, Fiftylock, Sixtylock, and Eightylock. As with Vera, the pin code is easily changed or deleted, and both entry and exit codes can be set separately." Like Vera, Vita is available in two configurations: a double version with a keypad on both sides, or a single version with one keypad and a free exit. "It's always worth stopping by!"

LIGHTING, GATE OPENER, AND CODE LOCKS FROM LOCINOX



DRIVE COLUMN AND PACKAGE BOX FROM HOFFMEISTER



German sliding gate manufacturer Hoffmeister Industrietore from Brakel is making its debut at Perimeter Protection with a stand. The company is officially announcing its cooperation with fellow gate producer Wehrum Zaunanlagen and is showcasing three new products. The first is a new drive column for Premium Gates with 400-volt drives. Additionally, the existing Media column in the range can now also be supplied with a package box, and there's a change in the portal profile of the Automatik Standard line. Finally, Hoffmeister is showing a new online configurator that allows customers to easily generate foundation drawings.

INDUSTRIAL SPEEDGATE BY ZABAG



Zabag International, a manufacturer specializing in high-security speedgates, is showcasing a new industrial folding gate from its Factory line alongside its existing high-security products. "Speedgates are increasingly being considered a serious alternative to 'traditional' swing or sliding gates," says Zabag's sales director, Martin Burgdorf. "This is because customers need to comply with certain regulations, prevent intruders from slipping through, or simply because a folding gate takes up less space. We are addressing these needs with our industrial gate." Zabag's new industrial gate is called the FGZ Factory. We will take a closer look at it at the trade fair and provide a more detailed introduction in an upcoming issue.

The German drive manufacturer Berner Torantriebe is presenting its latest models from the DT Live and ST Live series in Nuremberg: aluminum swing and sliding gates with a luxurious design, which we have previously featured, alongside its standard drive range. New this year are automatic bollards made of galvanized and coated steel or stainless steel. Berner is keeping details under wraps for now. "Come by," says seminar trainer René Hirschka. "We will tell you all about them. You can find us in the center of Hall 1."

ACCESS CONTROL BY BERNER

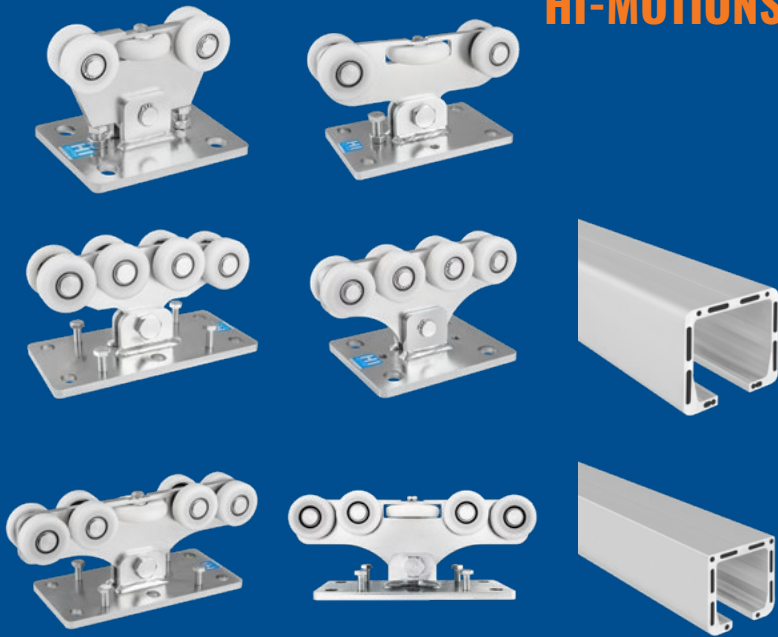


At the German fencing manufacturer AOS-Stahl, a large part of the stand is dedicated to the new Vidual range of aluminum fencing, which we introduced in this magazine last spring. The system consists of posts with rotatable slots, into which boards made of wood composite, aluminum, or glass can be slid at any angle. "Of course, we're also showing some products from our mesh fence program," says marketing manager Nico Schake. "But the focus is on Vidual because we're convinced that this is the fence of the future." A new addition to the Vidual program is a swing gate with leaves that open up to 3.5 meters. "And with a bit of luck, we might also be able to show the first prototype of the Vidual sliding gate. We've been working hard on that over the past six months."

ALUMINUM SWING GATES FROM AOS



TROLLEY SYSTEM BY HI-MOTIONS



Hi-Motions, an Italian gate hardware manufacturer from the Benincà group, is showcasing a new series of trolleys and bottom beams for aluminum sliding gates at Perimeter Protection. “In some markets, such as France, Austria, and Germany, gate builders are increasingly constructing gates from aluminum,” says marketing manager Valentina Ambrosini. “This is due to the lightweight nature of aluminum, its better resistance to weather conditions, and, importantly, its modern appearance. That is why we are now introducing aluminum bottom beams, which gate builders can weld their aluminum wings onto, and a series of trolleys with nylon wheels.” The dimensions of the new sets match those of the trolleys for steel bottom beams, allowing them to also be used with the steel bottom beams from the Hi-Motions program, resulting in quieter opening and closing.

TELESCOPIC SWING GATE DRIVE BY BENINCÀ



The Italian drive manufacturer Benincà, based in Sandrigo, is presenting its latest swing gate drive in Nuremberg: a telescopic linear motor called Tom. “The design of the telescopic cylinder combines the advantages of several other drives in our range,” says Ambrosini. “The Tom takes up very little space. With a width of just 96 millimeters, it is the slimmest drive on the market. All adjustments are made from the top, which is extremely convenient and quick. The cable exits at an angle, so it does not need to be bent. It features built-in mechanical and adjustable limit stops, and the flexible hinges allow for installation on almost any gate. It is an exceptionally versatile drive, and if you are in Nuremberg, you should definitely come and see it.” We will feature the Tom in more detail in a future issue.



CAESAR BOLLARD BY RISE

Rise, an Italian manufacturer of turnstiles and bollards from Velo d’Astico, and part of the Benincà group like Hi-Motions, is bringing a new 24-volt bollard to Nuremberg, primarily designed for residential use. The new bollard is called Caesar, available with a black coating or in stainless steel, and comes in heights of 600 or 800 millimeters.

The Belgian-French fencing manufacturer Gardenode from Mouscron is coming to Nuremberg with a kit of vertical slats made from composite, which can be slid from above into a twin wire panel. *"In France, the market for privacy kits in mesh panels has completely shifted from PE and PVC to WPC over the past five years,"* says director David Deslypper. *"We have been very successful there with our WPC kits for 3D panels. That is why we have now developed a kit for both thick (8-6-8) and thin (6-5-6) double wire panels, targeting countries where these panels are widely used."*

Also new from Gardenode: diagonally mounted horizontal slats for board fences that enable a privacy solution in louvre style. Both new products will be presented in more detail in upcoming issues.

The Dutch speed gate manufacturer HTC Parking & Security, based in Waddinxveen, is showcasing two speedgates at the trade show. The first is the Xentry STS, an industrial gate for business parks or truck parkings. The second is the Xentry 3, a heavy-duty gate for commercial parking garages, which is also available in high-security versions. With resistance classes SR2/RC2, RC3, RC4, RC5, FB4, and FB6 (the latter capable of stopping bullets from a 50-millimeter gun), this gate is also suitable for prisons, courthouses, and critical infrastructure.

New this year from HTC is an interactive traffic light combined with an LED screen that can be ordered with a speed gate. It is integrated into the gate post. *"The new traffic light offers dynamic messages,"* says export manager Marcel van Dijk. *"It provides tailored notifications for passersby, such as instructions to proceed or pull a ticket. We can display real-time updates, from the operational status of the gate to critical warnings like fire alarms. This ensures users are optimally informed and improves traffic flow. I am very excited to present our latest solutions at this special trade fair."*

The Belgian fencing component manufacturer Del Ponti from Hechtel-Eksel is presenting a wide range of fencing components at the trade fair. New in their lineup is a series of additional caps with side hooks. *"We already had a cap with hooks for 60-by-40 posts, where the panels are mounted along the front of the posts,"* says co-owner Luc Witters. *"And one for round-60 posts, for use with long-lip brackets. The caps with hooks are extremely popular because they make a fitter's job much easier and are only slightly more expensive than caps without hooks. Furthermore, they are less prone to vandalism, as they are harder to remove once the panels are mounted. Now, we also have these caps with hooks for intermediate, corner, and end posts, making it even easier for anyone working with long-lip brackets to mount fencing."*

Del Ponti is significantly expanding its long-lip program. *"There is strong demand for it. You can quickly mount panels and remain flexible. And because the panels are mounted between the posts, neighbors never argue about who has to look at the ugly side of the fence."* Del Ponti began this expansion with long-lip brackets made of fiberglass-reinforced plastic, which we covered in a previous issue. These brackets are extremely lightweight and exceptionally strong. They now also include adjustable corner brackets and end brackets. *"In addition to brackets for round-60 posts, we now also have brackets for 60-by-40 and 60-by-60 rectangular posts. For these brackets, we are now also producing caps with side hooks."*

"But of course, we are not just bringing caps and brackets to the fair," Witters adds. *"We have more than a thousand fencing accessories in our catalog. Every fencing professional who visits our stand will undoubtedly find a component they did not know about but will immediately want to add to their inventory. Usually more than one, haha. Be sure to visit us in Hall 1."*

PRIVACY KITS AND LOUVRE SLATS FROM GARDENODE



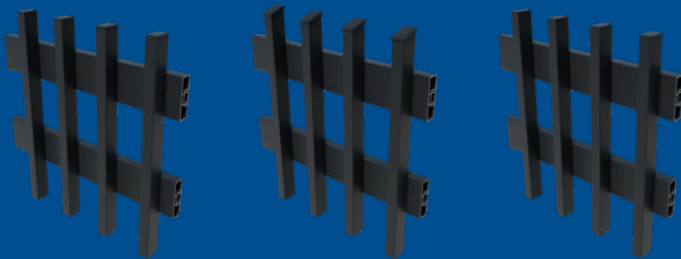
INTERACTIVE TRAFFIC LIGHT FROM HTC



POST CAPS WITH HOOKS FROM DEL PONTI



ALUMINUM FRONT YARD FENCES FROM PROFEX



The German fencing manufacturer Profex is expanding its range of modular fencing with six aluminum front yard fence models: modern decorative fencing made from aluminum, specifically designed for front yards. The new models use the same posts as Profex's aluminum privacy fencing. The panels consist of two horizontal beams, onto which vertical aluminum profiles are screwed like slats. By alternating narrow and wide sections and varying the spacing, a wide variety of models can be created.

"We have both classic and modern designs," says Profex director Marcel Aehlig. *"All the models share a minimalist design: horizontal and vertical profiles, that's it. The beams have a narrow groove at the back for screws, which can be covered with a slim profile. This ensures that the screws are not visible."* The fence elements are fully pre-assembled by Profex but the sections can also be ordered in six-meter lengths. The profiles are powder-coated or foil-wrapped. In addition to four modern standard patterns, 56 additional wood and other patterns are available. *"This allows you to combine multiple patterns and colors within one fence element, offering homeowners an individual and unique modern front yard fence. Finally, we have various cast aluminum caps to finish the slats."* We will cover Profex's new front yard fences in greater detail in an upcoming issue.

NEW COLLECTION FROM WMT



WMT Boenen, a metal company based in Boenen near Dortmund, showcased a large collection of fence holders at the last Perimeter Protection event. WMT calls them Eindrehhalterungen, or screw-in holders. These brackets allow you to attach various items, both practical and whimsical, to a fence, ranging from flower boxes (where it all began) to garden hose reels, trash cans, satellite dishes, dog water bowls, and more. There are now over 200 variations, and according to inventor and owner Klaus Reimann, they are ideal impulse purchase items. *"If you hang a few models in your showroom, almost every customer says, 'Oh, that's handy,' and picks one up without needing extensive advice."*

New this year are a handrail for leaning bicycles or drying towels, a holder for solar panels that positions the panel towards the sun, flower box holders in six additional sizes, brackets for hanging ladders on the fence, and several variants for wall boxes. Also new are the first holders for privacy fencing and a mounting support that keeps the fence upright while the concrete sets or prevents it from toppling during a storm.



FENCING TIMES

SHORT NEWS

Littlewood acquired by Network Plus

BATTLE, Great Britain – With more than 80 installation teams, Littlewood Fencing is the UK's biggest fencing company. In September it was acquired by Network Plus, a service provider that primarily works with cables and pipes. Network Plus purchased the shares of Littlewood's owners Ground Control, Jay Verjee, and Nick, Paul and Jon Hobden.

Littlewood Fencing was founded in the town of Battle, East Sussex in 1996, with Mick Hobden and his son Paul running the business together from the family farm. Shortly afterwards, Mick's other sons Nick and later Jon joined the company.

In 2004 Littlewood won its first major contract, installing kilometres of fencing along the high-speed line from London to the Channel Tunnel. "That propelled us into a bigger working arena," says CEO Jon Hobden. "We had appointed Graham Jackson in 2001, who had previously been the CEO of Stenoak Fencing. He brought a huge amount of experience to the team and in the years that followed we were able to grow considerably." Littlewood focused on infrastructure and commercial projects for the next few years before moving into high security fencing in 2007, which became a major part of the business. "We continued to see strong growth. In 2017, to help us strengthen our systems and processes and create a stronger platform for growth, landscaping company Ground Control and an individual called

Jay Verjee invested in the business." Since 2017 the company has seen significant growth, securing major projects on HS2 and working as main contractor for National Highways on the SDF Framework contract. The business continued to develop. Littlewood Fencing kept growing to 250 employees and 47 million pounds Sterling in turnover. "We are excited for the future. The business is formed on strong foundations and we have an excellent team," Hobden says. "With

Network Plus's support we can once again take our business to the next level."

Acquiring Littlewood was an interesting proposition for Network Plus, as it is now able to offer the required fencing on its utility and infrastructure projects. "Littlewood is an outstanding company and will continue to thrive within the Network Plus family," says Network Plus COO Kevin Fowlie. "The expertise of Littlewood's employees will help us deliver even

greater value to our customers, enhancing our service offering to include high-security and other fencing solutions. These essential services are an area of growth in our markets and align strongly with our wider operations, adding value to both our utilities and transport operations."

Network Plus has acquired 100 percent of the shares in the Littlewood Group. All three of the Hobden brothers will continue to head up the business. ■



Rebecca Galley new CEO of Tornado Wire

BIDFORD-UPON-AVON, Great Britain – Tornado Wire, a British wire fencing manufacturer, has named Rebecca Galley as its new Chief Executive Officer. She started in September, succeeding Peter Hogg, who according to the press release laid the groundwork for the company's next phase of growth during his two-year leadership. Tornado Chairman Chris Pullen expressed confidence in Rebecca's vision, stating: "Her commercial expertise makes her an ideal choice to guide Tornado into the future. With a distinguished career in manufacturing and industrial sectors, Rebecca brings extensive expertise in strategic planning, operational excellence and leadership. Previously

servicing as Managing Director at Hydroscaud UK, she is celebrated for driving digital transformation and expanding market reach. Rebecca's appointment reinforces our commitment to quality, innovation, and outstanding customer service." Rebecca Galley sees a bright future in her new role. "I am excited to join Tornado Wire, a company with a proud history and reputation for excellence in British manufacturing," she says. "I look forward to building on the company's success and ensuring we continue to lead in quality, innovation, and sustainability." Under Galley's leadership, the company wants to expand its business both domestically and internationally. ■



Wiśniowski Awarded Superbrand Title in Poland



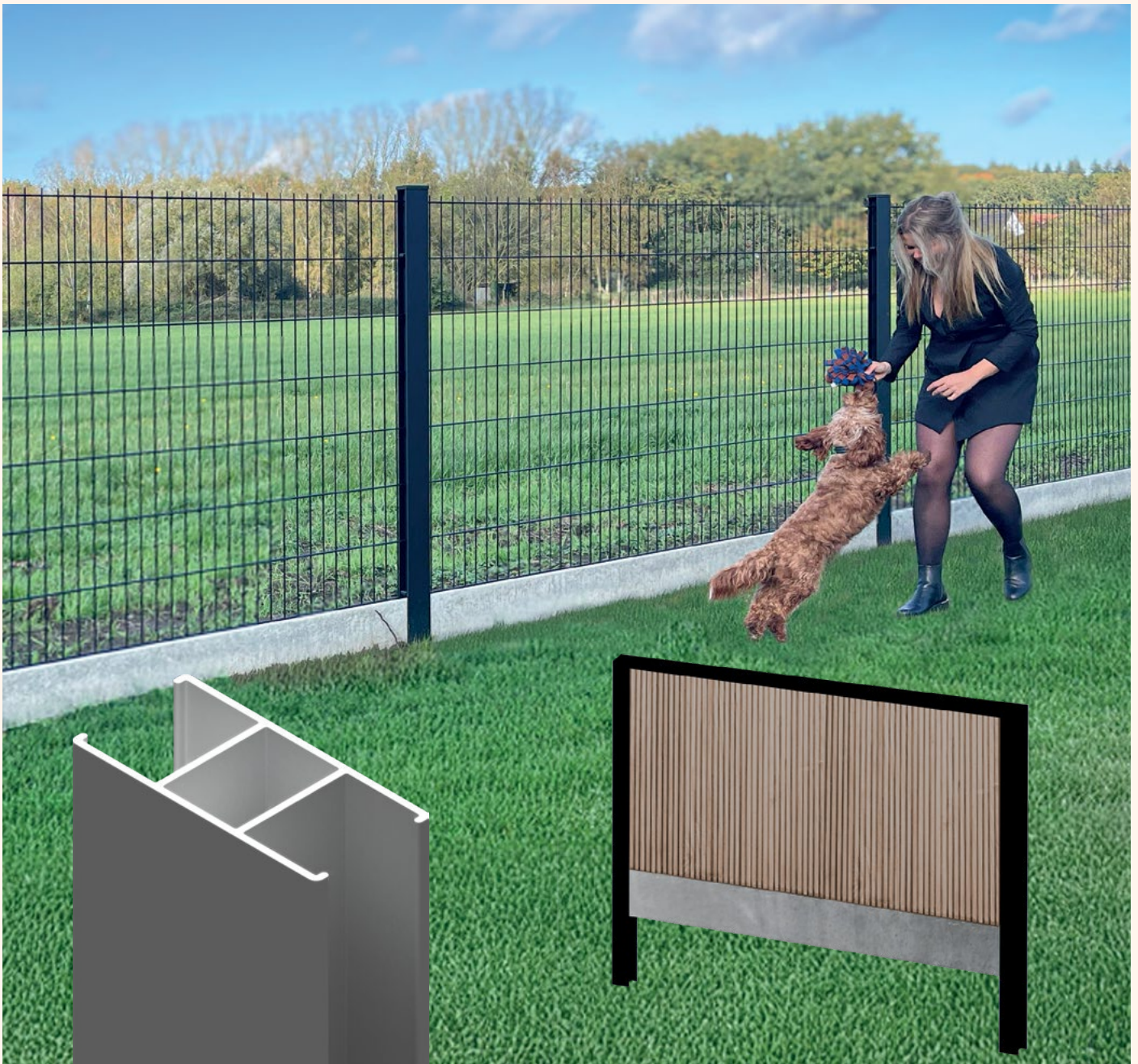
WIELOGŁOWY, Poland – Fencing manufacturer Wiśniowski has been awarded the title of Superbrand 2024 in Poland. Alongside major brands such as Rossmann, Onet and Velvet, the company was recognized for its strong presence in the Polish

market. The award is based on an independent consumer survey of 3500 participants, which analyzed 3000 brands across more than 100 categories. The evaluation was supplemented by a panel of 40 experts in branding, marketing, and public relations. "Strong brands

touch people emotionally," says Nina Kowalewska-Motlik, who represents Superbrands, a globally active organization, in Poland. "Building such brands requires dedication and perseverance." Monika Młynarczyk, Marketing Director at Wiśniowski, is honored

by the recognition. "Our goal is not only to create reliable products but also to build an emotional connection with our customers," she states. "The Superbrands title confirms that we not only deliver products but also provide trust and enrich our customers' lives." ■

Kopal introduces Me-Ha aluminium fence post



KORTEMARK, Belgium – Belgian fencing manufacturer Kopal has launched the Me-Ha post, an H-shaped aluminium fence post designed for elegance, strength, and versatility. This post complements the Pluteo gate and fence panels introduced earlier this year.

Pluteo panels are crafted from Thermo Ayous wood, a

fast-growing, durable and weather-resistant material comparable to tropical hardwood. These panels, designed to mimic narrow slats, are assembled with transverse supports and attached to gates and fences. To enhance structural integrity and protect against water ingress, Kopal developed the Me-Ha post, utilizing an H-profile that holds

panels and withstands extreme conditions, including wind up to wind force 12.

The extruded aluminium design ensures strength while remaining lightweight and cost-effective. The Me-Ha post is compatible with Pluteo panels, mesh panels, wood composite boards and standard wooden planks, offering concealed

fixings for a sleek appearance. Accessories include top profiles to prevent water ingress, attachment profiles for wall connections, and options for corner or end finishes.

Available in black and anthracite, the Me-Ha post comes in lengths of 1.85 to 3.5 meters and includes two types of base plates for flexible installation. ■

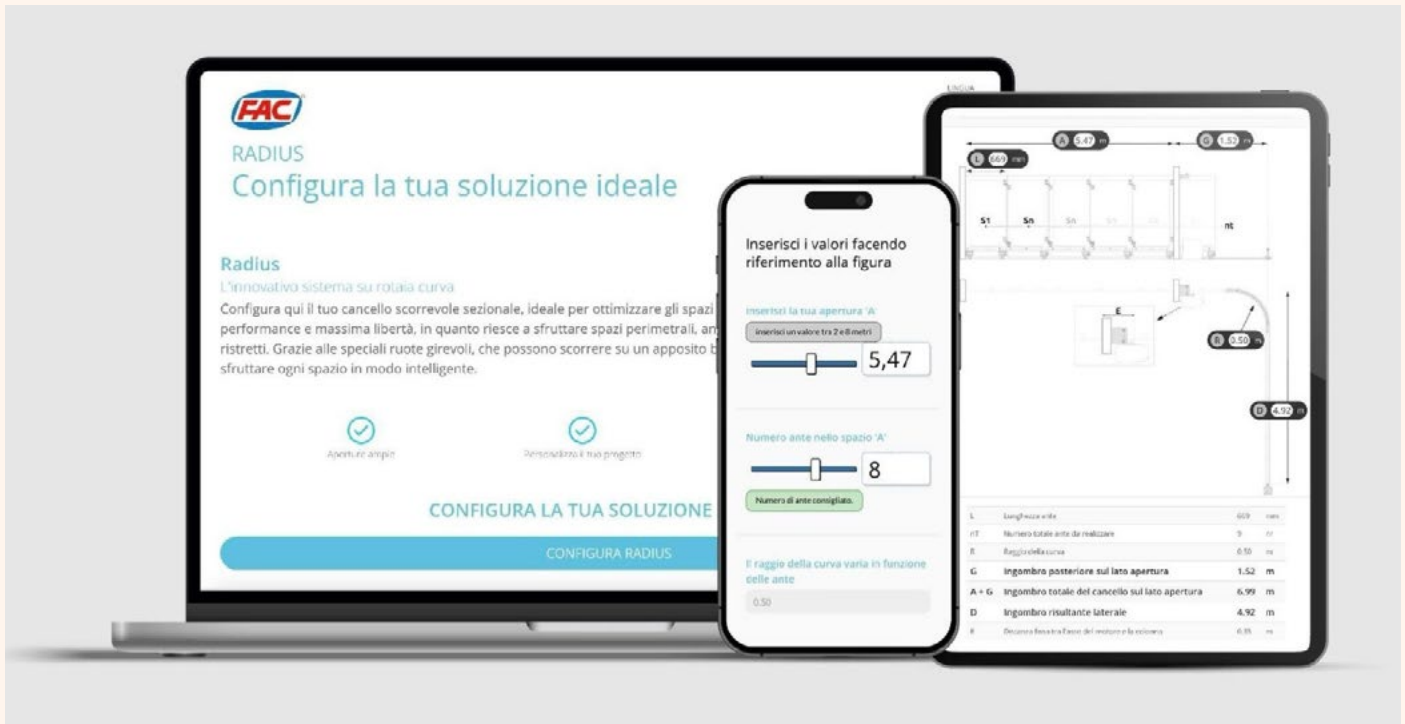
FAC puts Radius kit configurators online

ISOLA VICENTINA, Italy
 - In November, gate hardware manufacturer FAC put configurators for its Radius and Radius Inverso kits online. The kits enable gate installers to construct rail gates; these consist

of a train of short gate leaves that can open around a curve. We've written about the kits in previous issues. Now, with the configurators on FAC's website, planning these types of gates is very easy. All you need to do is

enter the available passage width. The configurator then tells you exactly how many elements your sliding gate will need, how wide these elements should be, and how much usable passage width will be left. You can also see precisely how

much of the customer's driveway the gate will occupy, and exactly what components are included in the kit. Those who want to see the kits in real life can visit Perimeter Protection in Nuremberg, where FAC will have a stand. ■



Single-leaf kits at LiftMaster

SAARBRÜCKEN, Germany
 - LiftMaster, a brand by the US Chamberlain Group, is expanding its product offering for the European market with swing gate kits for single gates. "Our previous kits for double gates were already very successful," explains product manager Grigory Trusov. "With the introduction of the kits for single gates, single gate automation is now even easier and more efficient. When we launched our range of gate drives for Europe, we initially focused on double models to create a solid base. Now we are ready for the next step. Therefore, we now

also offer kits for single-leaf gates. This means our customers have the right kit at their fingertips for both applications." The new kits include a drive, a control unit and two hand transmitters - all in one box. The kits are also pre-programmed for single-wing applications. "Of course, this assortment, like the rest of the available outdoor drives, can also be extended with myQ. MyQ is our smart app in combination with the myQ gateway. And the whole range of accessories offers many possibilities for perfect operation and expansion options." ■



Live crash test and conference at CTS



MÜNSTER, Germany – In September, the second Vehicle Security Barrier Conference was held at CTS Crash Test Service in Münster. CTS is a company that performs crash tests for a large number of gate and bollard manufacturers from our industry, so manufacturers can prove

that their gates are able to stop vehicles of a particular weight and a particular speed. The conference was organised by Brandenburg University of Technology's Cottbus Campus and focused on improving security in public spaces, especially the increasing need for protection from vehicle attacks. The event,

which was attended by more than 100 participants, aimed to introduce local authorities, event organisers and security experts to solutions and technologies – such as vehicle barriers – for securing public spaces and events. Various manufacturers from our industry, including Zabag from Germany,

Fancy Fence from Poland, Mobile Gate Security from Denmark and Tiso from Ukraine, had stands at a small trade show accompanying the conference. As a special highlight, a high-security barrier made by one of the manufacturers underwent a successful live test, alongside a crash test in a ditch. ■

FAC, an Italian manufacturer of gate hardware from Isola Vicentina in northern Italy, has introduced a telescopic kit for cantilever sliding gates. The kit is suitable for openings ranging from 3.5 to 7 meters.

FAC

launches new Cantilever Telescopic Kit

"Cantilever sliding gates are becoming more popular compared to sliding gates on a rail," says CEO Maria De Marchi. "They can be used on uneven terrain, gravel, and are unaffected by fallen leaves or snow. We already offer a wide range of kits for cantilever sliding gates. However, they do have one drawback: they require a lot of lateral space for the opening. That is why we are now launching a telescopic kit, which allows the required lateral footprint to be split between two leaves."



Maria De Marchi with her brother Lorenzo and her sister Anna

A modern building with a glass facade and a cantilevered section. In the foreground, a woman with blonde hair, wearing a black blazer over a white top, is looking towards the camera. The background shows a paved area with a crosswalk, streetlights, and a brick wall with a red and white circular sign and a blue circular sign. The sky is blue with some clouds.

CANTILEVER TELESCOPIC KIT

The new Cantilever Telescopic system uses components from the existing Telescopic Kit for sliding gates on a rail, combined with the trolleys used in standard cantilever solutions. *"The telescopic system we use for sliding gates on a rail has proven itself,"* De Marchi explains. *"It is reliable, durable, and easy to install. With this kit, you can save nearly half of the backrun space. This means you are less likely to resort to a swing gate — which often makes a large part of the driveway unusable — and can offer your clients a wider passage when they choose a sliding gate."*

SPECIFICATIONS

The new Cantilever Telescopic kit is available in two versions: the Serie 900, designed for gate widths between 3.5 and 5 meters with a panel weight of up to 350 kilograms, and the Serie 1000, which accommodates widths of 4 to 7 meters and includes trolleys that can handle panels weighing up to 600 kilograms. *"As with our wide range of kit solutions, these kits contain all the components needed to build a complete telescopic cantilever gate,"* says De Marchi. *"You don't need to source the right trolleys separately, for example. Each kit also includes clear drawings and detailed instructions that any gate builder can follow. Additionally, we care about our clients with a support team for assistance."* The new Cantilever Telescopic Kit is making its debut at the Perimeter Protection exhibition in Nuremberg. ■

2000
kg



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Eleven winners at the Fencing Awards 2024

In October, the Fencing Awards were presented for the third time. This year, the event, organized by the Association for Fencing Industries (AFI), was held in Newcastle upon Tyne. In addition to the awards ceremony, attendees enjoyed a celebratory lunch and a tour of the St James' Park football stadium.

The AFI created the UK Fencing Awards three years ago as part of an extensive project to raise the profile of the fencing industry, while making fencers more aware of just how good they really are. "Everyone encounters fencing on a daily basis," says Pete Clark, CEO of the AFI. "But they rarely see the training and skills involved. They think fencers are just a bunch of hole-diggers. With the Fencing Awards, we wanted to encourage fencing installers to do their absolute best work and show it for what it's worth: a piece of craftsmanship."

UK Fencing Awards

Lifetime Achievement Award
John Smith

Sponsored by



2024

COMPETITION

In the runup to the grand final, installers had the opportunity to submit three projects per business to demonstrate their thorough knowledge of the profession. Photos of each project were required, along with a detailed description of what the client expected when commissioning the project – and how these requirements were met. They had to talk about the scope of the work, but also about collaboration with other contractors on the site, about community integration, environmental considerations and much more. Clients' contact details had to be provided too, so that judges could verify that the respective clients really were happy with the work."

NEWCASTLE

It was the first time the event took place in the North of England, after editions at Twickenham Stadium in London and Principality Stadium in Cardiff. "Traditionally most members of the association are in the South," says Clark. "So this time we organised the event in Newcastle, which was, apart from one or two, very well received. It really shows that we represent everyone across the whole of the UK."

EVENT

Many of the round one hundred participants arrived on Wednesday to explore the vibrant nightlife of lively Newcastle in the evening. They either went to the pub with fellow fencing professionals or engaged in team-building activities with their own teams in the local pubs. The awards event began Thursday morning with a glass of sparkling wine, followed by guided tours of St James' Park Stadium in two groups. Afterward, a luxurious lunch was served. In the afternoon, special guest Ray Parlour – a midfielder who played for Arsenal, Middlesbrough, and Hull in the 1990s and 2000s – took the microphone and shared a few anecdotes from his career, after which he presented the awards to their winners, who were announced by Pete Clark.



WINNERS

Eleven awards were presented. The Agricultural & Equine Contractor of the Year Award went to Samson Fencing. Domestic Contractor of the Year was Unique Fencing. The Highways & Railways Contractor of the Year Award was for Saferoad VRS, the Industrial Contractor of the Year Award went to Knight Fencing. The Security Contractor of the Year Award was for Crime and Fire Defence Systems and the Sports & Education Contractor of the Year Award went to Boundary Fencing & Gate Services. Then there was a Temporary & Hoarding Contractor of the Year Award, that went to City Hoardings. Littlewood Fencing won two Awards: the Project of the Year Award and the Gates & Barriers Contractor of the Year Award. In addition to contractor awards, the ceremony also recognized individual achievements. Benjamin Budgen of Cousins Fencing was named Apprentice of the Year, and John Smith received the Lifetime Achievement Award for his significant contributions to the industry.





All winners

AWARDS

All winners received a physical award, which they can proudly display. Winners were also provided with a special logo to use on their websites, social media channels, and stationery to demonstrate their excellence to clients. The AFI plans to present the Fencing Awards again in 2025. However, this will not take place during the third weekend of October, as it did in 2024, to avoid overlapping with the fencing trade fair Fencex. "Fencex has been held biennially in mid-October for over twenty years," says Clark. "That will remain the case, with this year's edition scheduled for October 15. For the 2025 Awards, we still need to set a date, but I think it will be sometime in November. The venue is also still a surprise." ■



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Congratulations!

UNIQUE BESPOKE CELEBRATES TENTH BIRTHDAY

Unique Bespoke are an Outdoor Joinery company, primarily focusing on wooden gates. The company is based in a barn in the heart of the Essex countryside, in the village of Terling. The owners, Rob Ingram and Michael Weston celebrate a decade in business this year: they crafted their first wooden gate back in the winter of 2015.

"We worked for a heavy side timber and fencing supplier," Ingram says. "Mike worked in the yard and warehouse and I took care of sales and developing new business for the branch. I often felt constrained in my sales role. There were lots of orders that I couldn't accept, because the management we had at the time was only interested in selling standard sizes and using their set suppliers. Customers who needed tailor-made items were out of luck. A couple of times I suggested setting up a small workshop for making these bespoke items, where we could manufacture products to our customers' requirements, but the answer was always a firm 'no!' At a certain point, when I had yet again found myself unable to help a good customer, I said to Mike: 'I have had enough of this, I'm going to set up my own joinery shop, do you want in?' Having a background in construction and being a time served carpenter, I had always dreamed of having my own joinery company."





In secret

Ingram and Weston then set about finding a premises to set up the dream from. They found a fifteenth century Essex barn with a traditional thatched roof, with a yard set to the front and didn't look back. "We were a little bit secretive about it in the first year," Ingram laughs. "We did the work during evenings alongside our day jobs. Naturally we made sure that we didn't take business from our employer. In retrospect I think that was actually an enormous plus for our employers' business within our day jobs – it enabled our customers to order all their materials from a single contact person, so they never needed to go anywhere else and they were extremely happy with the service. Since taking the plunge and going full time our old employer has now become a good customer of ours."



Rob Ingram
& Mike
Weston with
co-worker Tom



Range

What started out with basic gates and fencing with non-standard measurements, developed into an entire range of outdoor joinery. "Pedestrian gates, courtyard gates, gates for farm fields, entrance gates, and of course expanded the fencing side to suit – we make everything a fencing installer needs," Ingram says. "And sometimes even more; we've manufactured solid oak bridges, hardwood planters and pergolas, a park bench made from the tailboard of a Volkswagen pickup, we've even made tree houses, a summerhouse and birdhouses. But right from the beginning, our primary business has been fences and gates. All models, all sizes. From a standard farm gate to a pair of courtyard gates to fit a 7 metre opening. To have to replicate exactly a 120-year-old gate that needs to fit into a wall precisely, and everything in between."

Customer service

Ingram believes that he and Weston owe their decade of success to the way that they treat their customers. "What you see is what you get," he says. "We're no-nonsense, down-to-earth guys. I try to do a lot of the deliveries myself. Then if there are any particular requirements or issues I hear about them right away, and we can act on them immediately. Most of our customers treat us like friends. Here, this note on my desk is a good example. Could I phone Billy: apparently he gave us the wrong measurements for an order and he's asked if we could help him. At another company the customers would say that you were the one who made an error. Then you spend the first hour figuring out what happened and after that another hour discussing

who's going to foot the bill for the mistake. That's not how we operate. Customers can be honest with us, because they know that we'll help them. And another thing that helps: our work is really fun. If someone asks if we can make them a miniature door for a chihuahua, we'll do it. Because – you've guessed it – we have done that already too."

Efficient

Unique Bespoke has grown and continues to. "It doesn't seem like much, but when people see and hear the numbers we produce, they simply can't believe it," Ingram says. "But because the way we work is so efficient, we're still able to handle large orders. Just yesterday we loaded up 300 gates, all for one customer. We're really good at bundling orders so we can manufacture in series. We've even put together a whole line of tools, accessories and templates to allow us to manufacture gates quickly. And we're still based on the farm where we started out ten years ago, surrounded by nature and far away from everything and everyone else. There are hardly any distractions here. We switch on the radio, put our heads down, and don't stop until another series is finished. By now we supply a large number of merchants and major fencing companies in the South East of England, and we still have some capacity so we're looking into expanding that to the Midlands and the northern counties." Rob Ingram and Mike Weston don't have any plans for a big party as yet. "It's not really us, we will of course be personally thanking each and everyone who has helped us on our journey to get to a decade in business, something nice and understated – just how we like it." ■

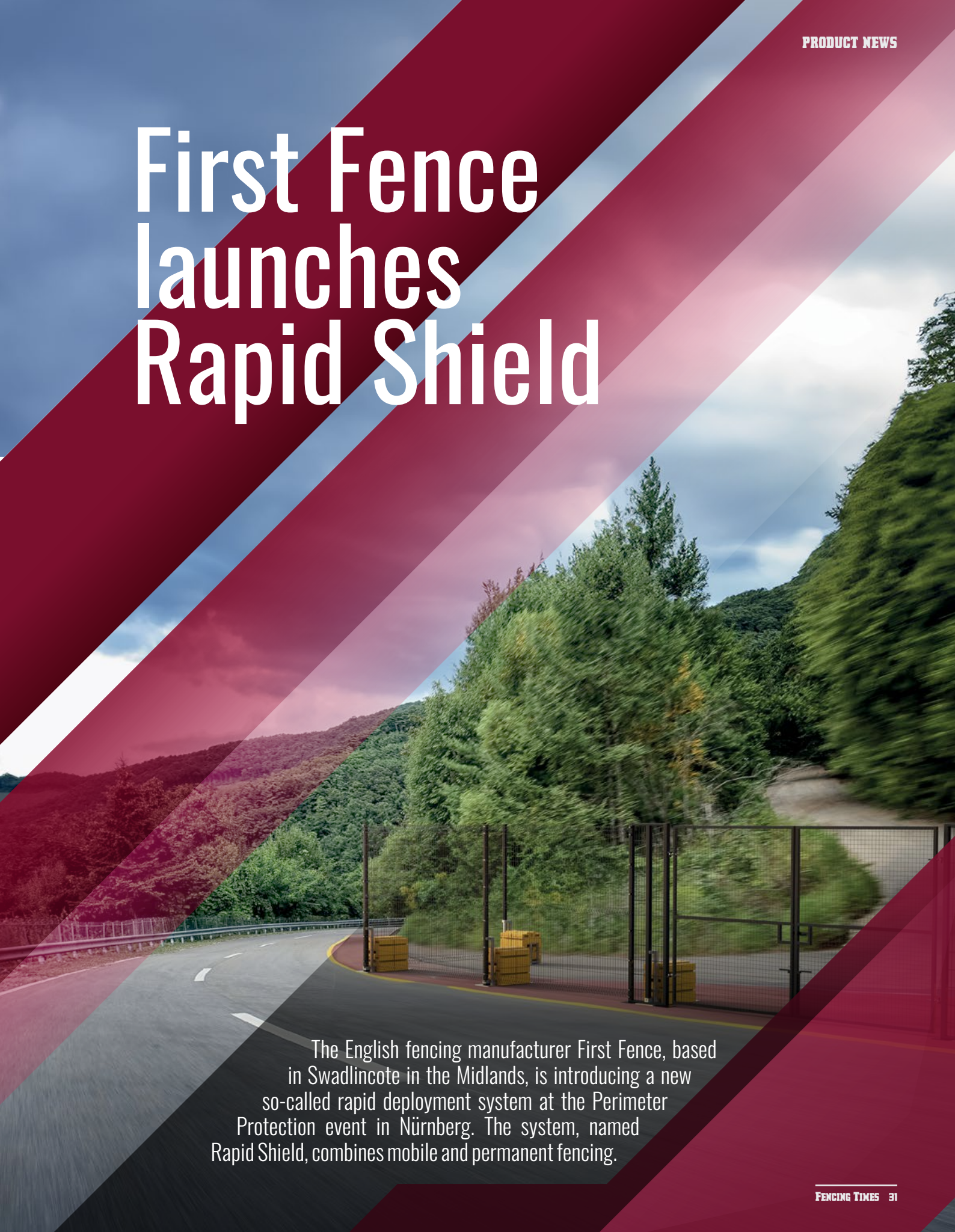


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First Fence launches Rapid Shield



The English fencing manufacturer First Fence, based in Swadlincote in the Midlands, is introducing a new so-called rapid deployment system at the Perimeter Protection event in Nürnberg. The system, named Rapid Shield, combines mobile and permanent fencing.



“Alongside manufacturing and trading in permanent fencing, we are a reasonably large player in the temporary fencing market in the UK,” explains marketing manager Toby Roberts-Davies. “One of our biggest customers was looking for a rapid deployment system: a system that could be set up as quickly as temporary fencing but offers the safety and robustness of permanent fencing. We did not yet have that in our product range, so we developed it.”

RAPID SHIELD

First Fence’s new Rapid Shield consists of a custom-designed steel foldable base to which a standard fence post can be attached. Standard mesh panels, normally used in permanent fencing, can then be secured to the posts. The base is stabilized by four Durablocks: concrete-filled plastic bases from First Fence’s temporary fencing range. These are stacked on the inside of the fence onto the base. When dismantled, the bases can be folded to save space during transport.

Toby Roberts-Davies



MOBILE

"In rapid deployment systems, one factor outweighs all others combined," says Roberts-Davies, "and that is assembly speed. Otherwise, they would be called slow deployment systems, haha. When designing the range, we focused extensively on the portability of the components and the ease of assembling and dismantling them into a single system. This is why we opted for Durablocks. They can easily be moved manually, which means you can bring them to any location a forklift or other vehicle can not reach. Each block weighs 50 kilograms, so two workers can lift one together. We have a special carrying handle for that."

EASE OF USE

"For the same reason, we also use only one type of screw," Roberts-Davies continues. "You can secure the posts to the foldable bases with the same screws used to attach the panels to the posts. You never need to figure out which screws to use, and you will never accidentally carry the wrong ones for hundreds of meters. You just grab the first box of screws you see, and they will fit. The entire system is designed this way: we have kept everything as simple as possible. The foldable bases, that we applied for a patent, follow the same principle – they are designed for speed. Setting them up and folding them down is extremely quick, thanks to a click-in system. Moving them manually is also easy: we laser cut a lifting hole in them."



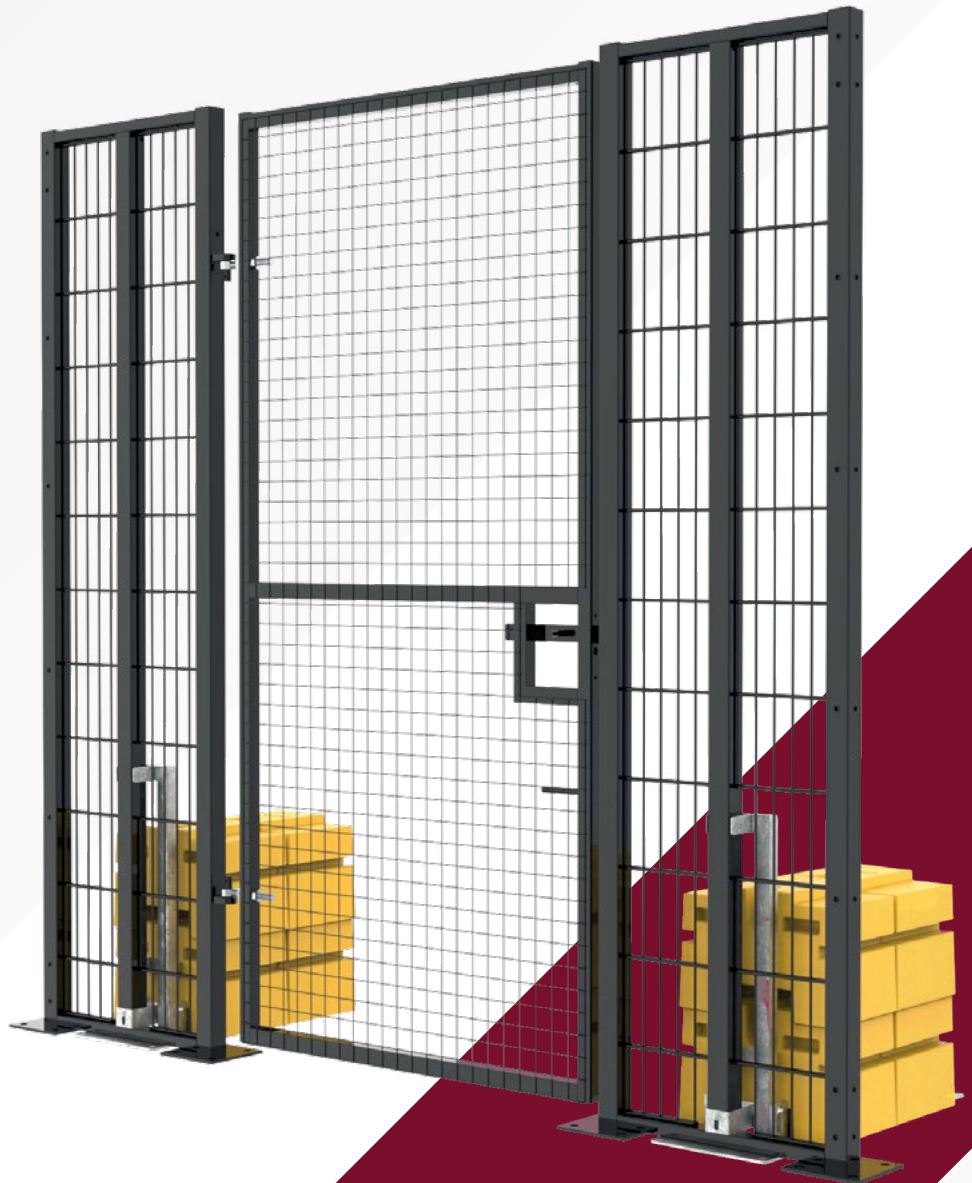
APPLICATIONS

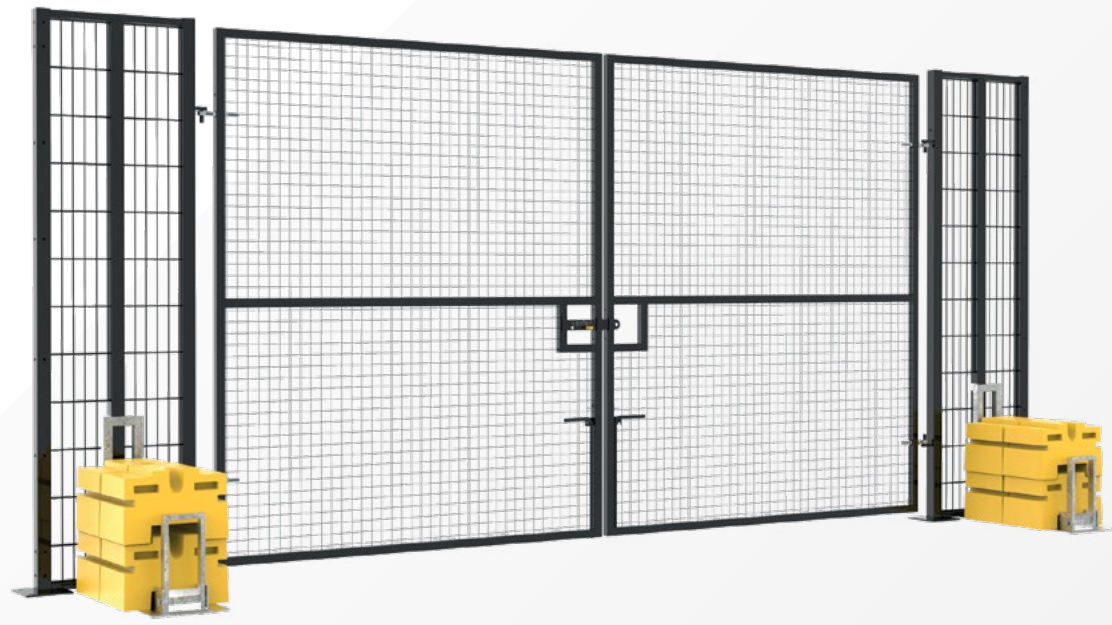
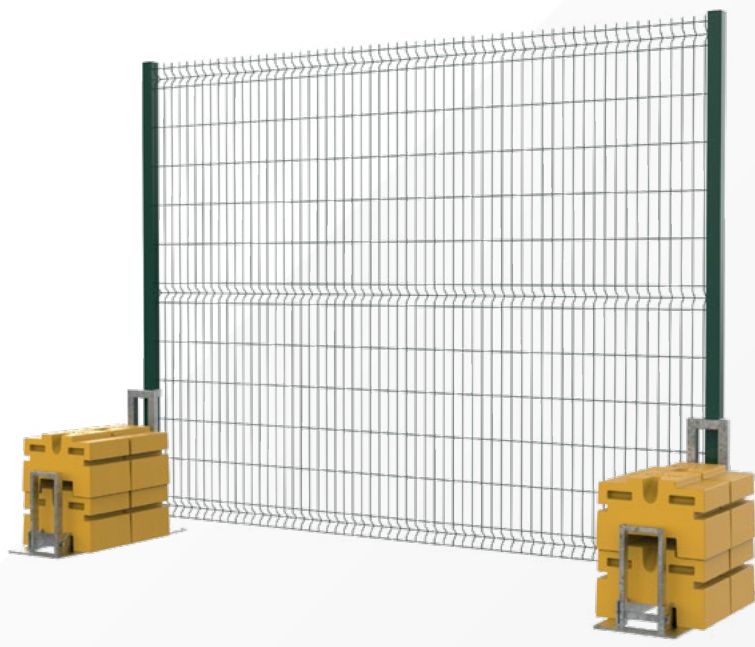
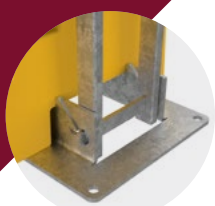
RapidShield is specially designed for two market segments that are not fully satisfied with the traditional temporary fence style panel, according to Roberts-Davies.

“The first one is events, that attract a lot of people, or that have high entry fees,” he says. “Traditional temporary fence panels can be uncoupled or climbed over and under too easily, to make them useful. And the same goes for some construction sites, where large sites of critical infrastructure need higher security due to the risk of protest or theft, the Rapid Shield is a better combination of threat deterrent compared to traditional temporary panels.”

SPECIFICATIONS

The new Rapid Shield is available in heights of 1.8 meters, 2 meters, 2.4 meters, and 3 meters. Customers can choose the panels they want to use depending on the application: V-mesh panels measuring 3 meters in length, or standard twin-wire or prison mesh. The posts are First Fence’s standard 60-by-60 hollow section posts for mesh fencing, with the length adjusted and two side rivets added to lock the post into position. The posts come with clips to secure all types of panels. Corners are created using standard corner posts with base plates. *“We have tried to be lean in our component approach by using the bolt down corner post from our existing standard bolt down fence systems,”* says Roberts-Davies. *“They are freestanding. We use them only for connecting the panels at corners. The stability comes from two extra intermediate posts with ballast.”* Lastly, there are swing gates: a 1.2 meter pedestrian gate and a 4 meter double leaf vehicle gate.





RIGID

First Fence have developed a full set of structural wind loading calculations for all heights and infills based on the average windspeeds in the United Kingdom. "We're very sure the system is more than rigid and strong enough for the applications I mentioned before: events and construction sites," says Roberts-Davies. "Our in-house engineering team can also

produce temporary works designs for site specific requirements, including accommodations for different infill types and signage." The new range is available from stock in black and green. "For other colours, should purchasers like to colour match the fencing to their brand identity, we need a lead time of about two weeks." Rapid Shield can be ordered from January. ■

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KÖSEDAĞ OPENS FACTORY IN VITRY-LE- FRANÇOIS

Fencing panels, posts and gates now 'Made in France'

Turkish fencing manufacturer Köseadağ, based in Istanbul, has opened a new factory in Vitry-le-François, in northern France. With this new facility, the company aims to expand its production capacity, broaden its product range, and provide better service to its customers.

"Our factory in Turkey has been operating at full capacity for several years," says founder Ali Köseadağ. "Since a significant portion of our business comes from Europe, and we want to continue growing in that market, we decided to expand our manufacturing operations by building an entirely new factory in France."

Ali Köseadağ



KÖSE

K Ü S E D A Ğ

A large industrial building with a sign that reads "KOSEDAG FRANCE". The building has a white facade with a red vertical stripe. The sky is a mix of blue and orange, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. There are trees in the foreground and background.

KOSEDAG
FRANCE

MADE IN FRANCE

Kösedag chose Vitry-le-François, in the Champagne area, for its central location in Europe. "From here, we can reach large parts of France, the United Kingdom, Germany, and the entire Benelux region within a single day by truck," says Kösedag. "London, Paris, Amsterdam, the Ruhr area, Frankfurt, Stuttgart, Dijon, and Lyon are all about four to five hours away. This offers major logistical advantages and allows us to serve customers in

Europe much faster than we ever could from Istanbul. And as a bonus, we can now label our high quality products as 'Made in France.'" The factory has been gradually brought into operation over the past year.





ADVANCED MACHINERY

The new factory is equipped with state-of-the-art machinery, including several welding machines for mesh panels, a rolling mill for posts, welding robots for gate production, a tube laser and sheet laser, a press brake, a coating facility, a welding workshop, a quality control laboratory and robots for automated truck loading. "The factory is an engineer's dream," says Köseadağ. "Everything is brand new; we use the most advanced techniques and the best machines. For instance, the welding machines for the mesh panels are from the German company Ideal, and the coating line is a 275-meter-long, fully automated system with nano-coating technology from the Swiss company Gema."



RENOVATED SITE

Kösedag acquired an existing hall complex on a 4.5-hectare site in Vitry-le-François. "It's spacious enough to allow for significant growth in the coming years," says Kösedag. "We have ample room to maintain a large stock of both finished products and raw materials, such as coils of wire and steel strips." The complex underwent extensive renovations. "We spent nearly a year on it. We upgraded both the hall complex and the

outdoor areas, ensuring everything meets the latest standards. The office building used to be a school; you wouldn't recognize it now, haha." Kösedag also prioritized sustainability. "We made sure the factory runs very environmentally friendly."

before & after



EXTENSIVE RANGE

Kösedag's product range includes mesh panels, posts, swing gates, sliding gates and various other types of fencing. "In France, we continue to offer our extensive range of fencing systems," says Kösedag. "This includes profiled mesh panels (3D), twin wire mesh (2D) and 358 mesh up to 6 meters in height. We also have our own high-security panel combining wires with flat strips or 10 millimetre wire and a decorative panel with an arch and ornaments. On the rolling line, we can produce both tubes and rectangular hollow sections as well as the uniquely French profiled posts – which we named multi-fix post – with slots for hooking in mesh panels. For swing and sliding gates, customers can choose from a wide range of infill options – the range is very comprehensive."



BESPOKE

Next to the standard range, Kösedag is used to making specific solutions for specific projects. "We often support fencing contractors that are targeting big projects," Kösedag adds. "We have 47 years of experience and an in-house R&D center that allows us to design and manufacture tailored high-security fencing systems with a unique set of requirements for projects on international borders, at nuclear plants, at data centers, prisons, ports and airports, along railways and for other critical infrastructure. Fencing professionals will find everything they need with us – and we can help them win many projects." The new factory currently employs around thirty people. ■



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