

FENCING TIMES

UK & Ireland

2024, Issue 18

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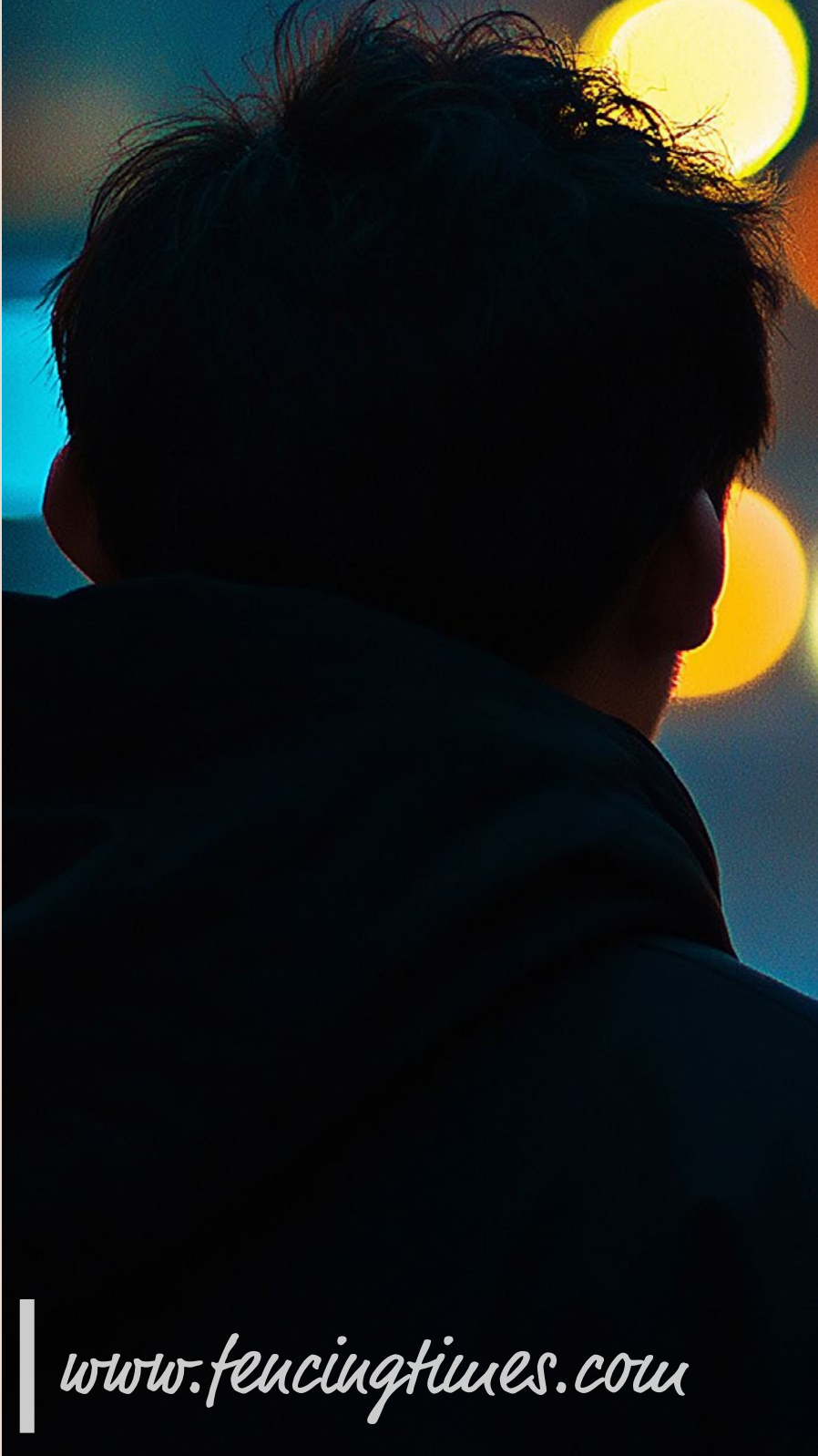
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Fencing Times

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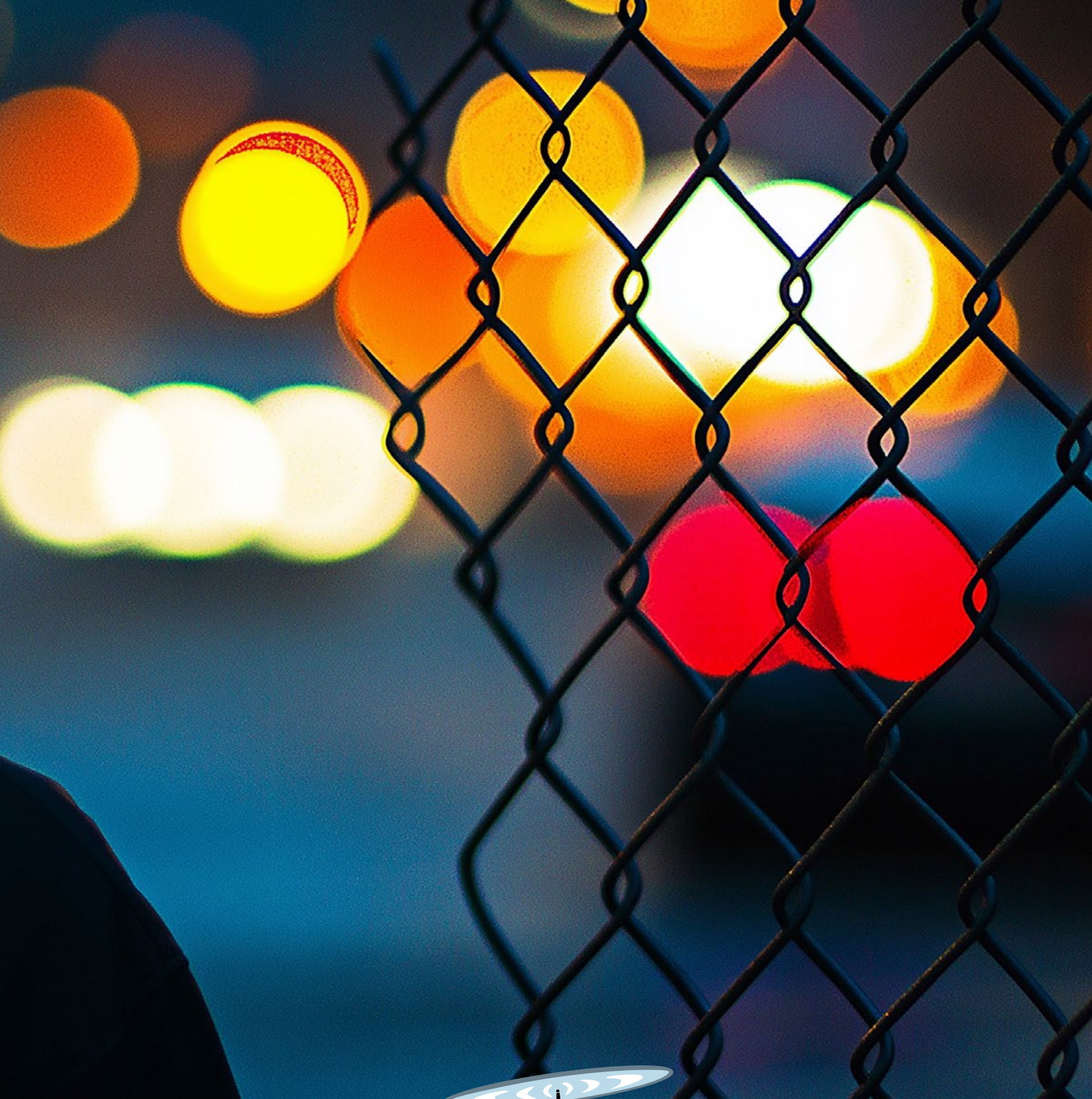
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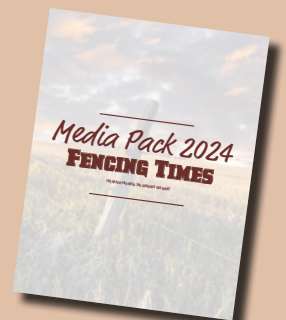
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Eternal love or a different

one every weekend?

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The relationship between fencing installers and their suppliers is often like the relationship between a husband and wife. It starts from the moment they meet. Sometimes at first, there is circling around each other. There are first some winks back and forth, then a dinner and finally something slowly begins to develop. Other times, the relationship starts with a wild night where sparks fly immediately,

If you are a young, start-up fencing installer, you are in for a challenging time. You need strong and dependable suppliers who will provide you with good material at a fair price, so that even as a newcomer, you can at least keep up with the competition. But because

you do not yet know exactly what is available on the market and what you can expect from a good supplier, you also do not want to commit yourself too much yet. Just like a young woman who wants to know what the world has to offer but does not want to lose her good name, you have to be careful not to be labelled. Many suppliers go the extra mile for a good customer – but for a shopper who buys somewhere else every week, they certainly do not.

Once you have built up a large fencing business and need one or two full trucks of material every week, you also face challenges. Then you cannot just drop one supplier for another, even if you

wanted to. Too much depends on it. Because if your new love slams the door shut after four weeks of courtship, your ex might not take you back. And then all six of your shifts will be at a standstill.

Suppliers are also struggling, when hunting for new customers. Some of those customers are open, honest, and present themselves as they are. Others look beautiful on the photo but turn out to consist primarily of silicone and make-up after the first date. Those are the customers who are not at the construction site when you arrive there with your truck. Or who order much less than they promised and really should have received a much smaller discount. Or worse: they do not pay their bills.





It is a mating dance.

Both trying to get in the door as fence installer as well as suppliers. From the uncertain "Will you supply me at all?" through the flirtatious "Can I try you out?" to the blustering "I am the best fencer/supplier you can have as a customer in this region!"

Ending the relationship also comes in diverse ways: one time with explosive arguments, the next time it just slowly bleeds to death.

As with the relationship between husband and wife, effective communication is also incredibly important between companies. From the beginning. What are you both looking for? One is looking for long-term stability, the other would prefer to be gone before breakfast. And once you have started the relationship, do you want to get married as soon as possible? Or would you rather have an enjoyable time and go to a different swingers' party every weekend? And does the other party see it that way as well? What do you expect from each other?

We heard a story the other day from a fencing installer. He received a request for a certain type of fencing, which he does not sell very often. Until then, he always requested it from the same party, but this time he also mailed the request to a colleague supplier. That one immediately turned out to be 9 percent cheaper. He mailed that to his first supplier, asking if he could, as an exception, get a little extra discount for this job. He received an angry email back, terminating the collaboration immediately. The phone was no longer answered, and apology emails were ignored.

Here, both parties clearly had quite different ideas about the status of the relationship. And as is often the case with husband-wife relationships, emotions ran high here. We see that a lot in our industry; this story was no exception.

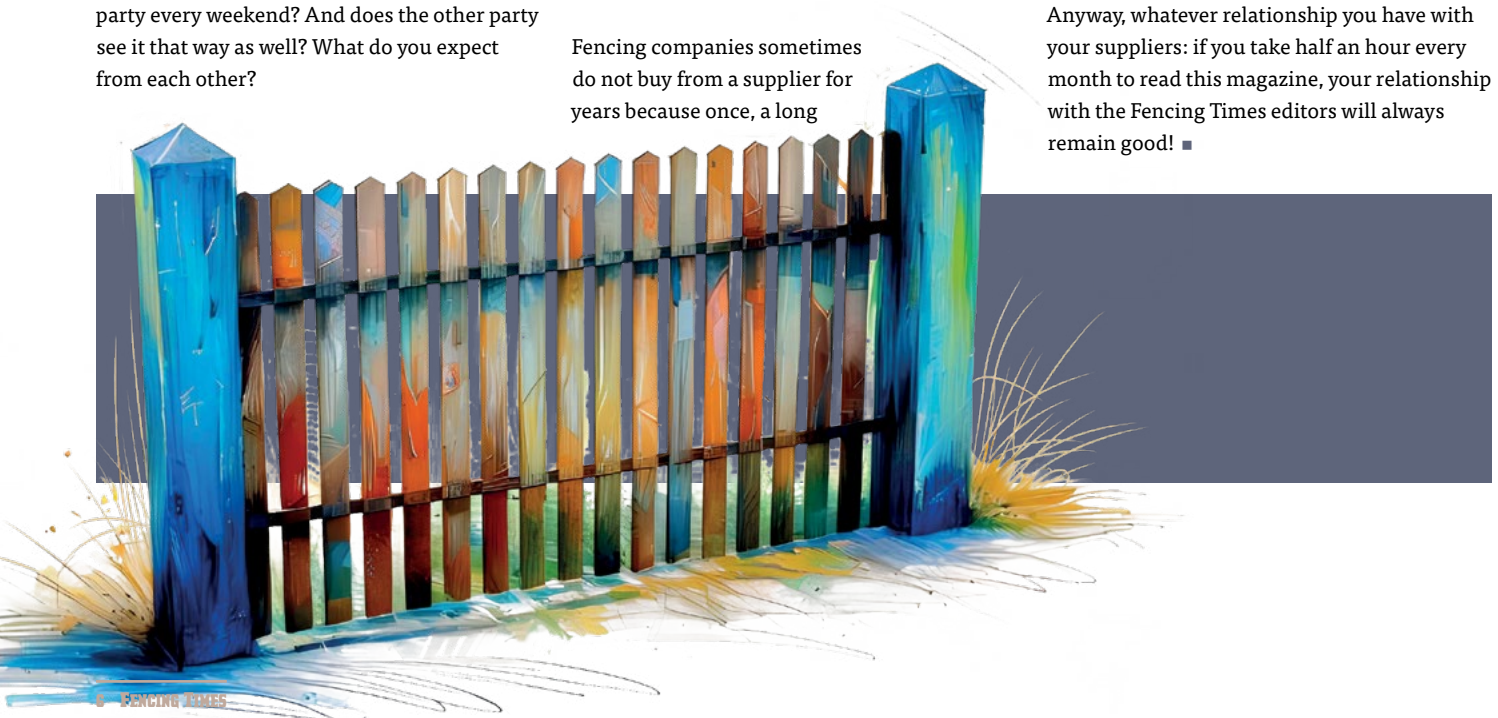
Fencing companies sometimes do not buy from a supplier for years because once, a long

time ago, a representative who has not worked there for a long time, made one stupid remark. Or because that supplier used to supply a competitor, which has long since gone bankrupt. In which case, by the way, it is not a sad thing at all to break up - some couples just do not fit together.

Although your mind tells you that you should not be so worried and just look at what is best for your business purely in business terms, at the same time we are all human and many decisions are made with the heart.

Fortunately, things often go well too. Then the early flirtation develops into a good marriage. There are occasional disagreements in such a marriage, but never last long. Slips are quickly forgiven and then love passion and mutual understanding for each other prevail again.

Anyway, whatever relationship you have with your suppliers: if you take half an hour every month to read this magazine, your relationship with the Fencing Times editors will always remain good! ■



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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.



FENCEPOST

Photo of the Month

Adrian's Gate Fence

Excellent work of fabric company built the fencing for Adrian's Gate. The work was done in a very short time and the quality was excellent. The fence is now in place and the gate is working perfectly. The fence is a great addition to the property and the gate is a great addition to the driveway.



Send us an email to fencepost@fencingtimes.com or call us on 01234 567890. We will be happy to help you with any of your fencing needs.

PROBES

Himalayan Fence

Marc van Berlo of ABC Hekwerk Zuid-Oost in Lottum, the Netherlands, was busy climbing Mount

Everest when he came across this fence around a sacred stone, at an altitude of 4200 metres. It was nice of you to think of us, Marco, high up there in the Himalayas. It's probably the highest-altitude fence we've ever published a photo of. Are you going to go all the way up to the summit, 8800 metres high? In that case you've still got a fair way to go. If you come across more fences on the way then feel free to send us some photos; you can break your own record.





Aluminium Fence

Francis Mestdagh of Belgian Afsluitingen De Soete in Waregem sent us this photo of a just-not-fully-closed gate with a side panel. Nice gate, Francis! Thanks for the photo.



Port Fence

Jeroen Huisman has been a fencing installer his whole life. He's worked for Dutch fencing company B&G his whole life, and for B&G he's worked at the Port of Antwerp his whole life. At least, it feels like that, because he's been sending us photos regularly for years and they've all come from the port. How many kilometres have you installed there by now, Jeroen? At this rate there won't be any room left for ships soon. But thank you for another great photo. Keep up the good work!



Golden Gate Fence

Marco Jungesblut of mesh factory WDI was on holiday in California. Needless to say, he went to see the Golden Gate Bridge. However, as behoves a fencer, he was more interested in the fence alongside the pavement than in the bridge itself. "Check this out," he writes. "The fence is full of holes! Big sections of the mesh have just been patched up with cable ties. That would be unthinkable in Germany." We used Streetview to examine the fence along the bridge a bit more closely, and came to the conclusion that here in Europe, the fence's entire construction would be unthinkable. The posts have been clamped to the railing of the bridge with some sort of clamping plates, there's just a single slack tension wire, there's no upper tube... it could have been a whole lot better, dear San Franciscan bridge managers. Thanks for the photo, Marco!

FENCE POST

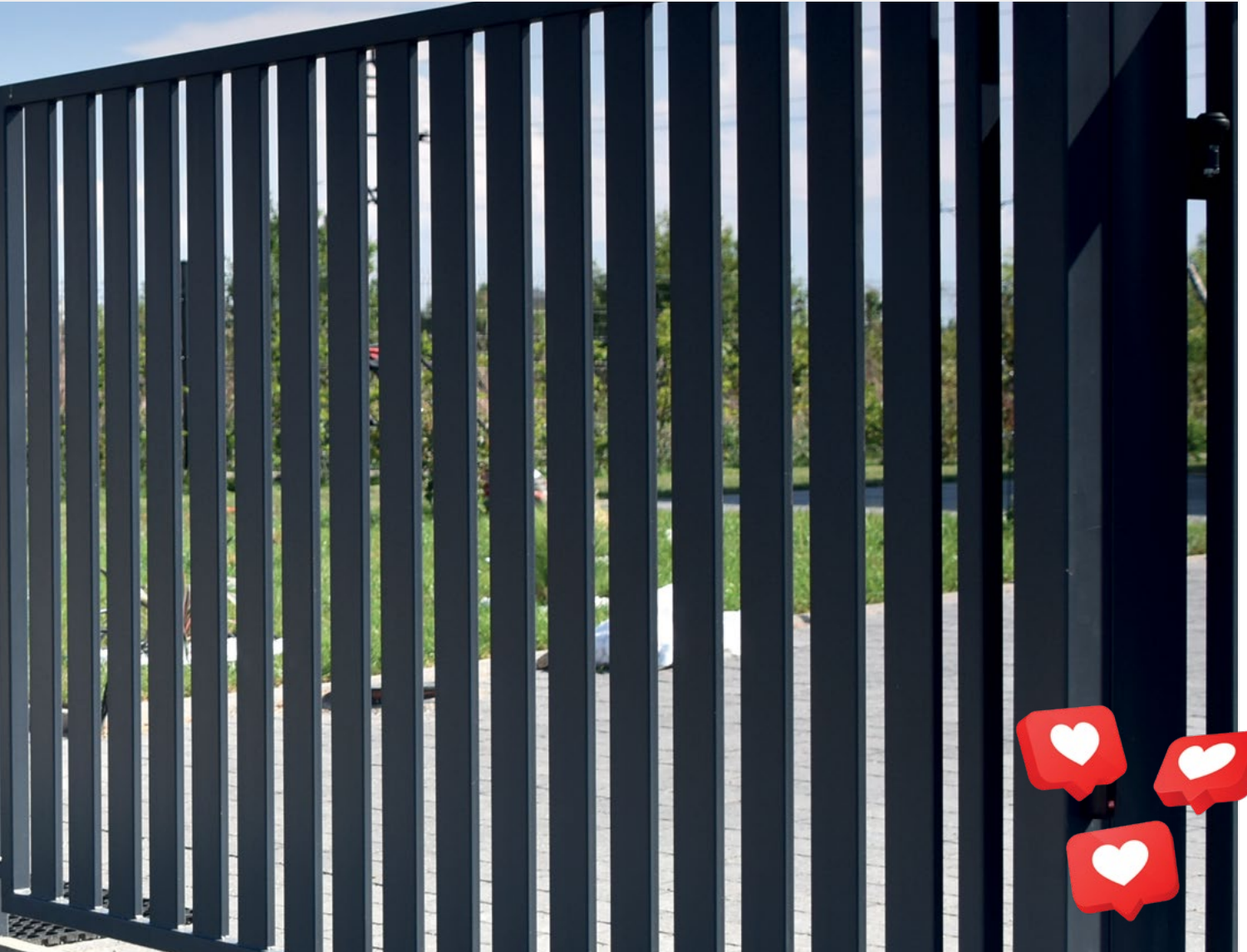


Photo of the Month

Anthracite Grey Fence

Kornel Stańczyk of Polish company Bedo Technology from Świdnica, not far south-west of Wrocław, sent us this photo of an anthracite grey fence, with anthracite grey posts and anthracite grey gate leaves and anthracite grey fencing

elements, but with a red letterbox pillar. We would never have come up with the idea ourselves, but the result is stunning. Thanks for your submission, Kornel! This month's Locinox radio will be heading to Poland.



Would you also like the chance to win a Locinox construction radio? Send your photos to us at foto@fencingtimes.com.

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FENCING TIMES

SHORT NEWS

Additional shareholders for HTC



WADDINXVEEN, the Netherlands – Speedgate manufacturer HTC now has two additional shareholders. Since September, investment company Anders Invest from Maarsbergen holds a minority stake in the business.

This is an important step for HTC, which intends to use the funds from Anders Invest to achieve ambitious growth targets. *“When deciding on an investor, I carefully considered which one would be the best fit with our long-term vision,”*

managing director Peter Thun says. *“This collaboration will not only provide us with the necessary financial resources, but also access to valuable knowledge and experience. This knowledge will be essential to the successful implementation of*

our strategic plans for the coming years, as well as to continuing to develop our business.” HTC’s operations director Robert-Jan Karsman has also acquired a stake in the company. ■

Wiśniowski wins Personality of Poland award



WIELOGŁOWY, Poland - Andrzej Wiśniowski, the owner and founder of fencing manufacturer Wiśniowski in south-west Poland, was awarded the 'Personality of 35 Years of Freedom of the Republic of Poland' award in July.

The trophy, presented by the National Federation of Entrepreneurs and Employers', recognises Wiśniowski's exceptional contribution to the Polish economy. The award comes in the year in which the Wiśniowski company celebrates its 35th anniversary. "I'm honoured to receive this prestigious award," Wiśniowski says. "It motivates us to keep working hard to further strengthen our position in the international market." ■

1) In Polish: Ogólnopolską Federację Przedsiębiorców i Pracodawców

Garda Group acquires A/H Låsemontage



HAGAN, Norway - Norway's Garda Group continues to acquire businesses. In September the company purchased A/H Låsemontage, a company that installs perimeter security, access control and locking systems and has four branches across Denmark.

A/H Låsemontage will now be part of Garda Group's existing Danish business, Kibo Sikring. "We are delighted to welcome A/H Låsemontage as they join Garda Group and Kibo," Lars Kramer, Kibo's CEO, says. "Having A/H Låsemontage on the team streng-

thens our competences in the electronic surveillance field, and with it our leading position as a 360-degree provider of security solutions across Denmark." A/H Låsemontage was founded more than 50 years ago and employs around 45 staff at the company's sites in Rødovre,

Kalundborg, Haslev and Frederiksberg. According to the press release, with A/H Låsemontage on board the Garda Group now employs around 2000 people and has a turnover of approximately 400 million euros per annum. ■

Guardi founder Rudi Czapek passes away

VIENNA, Austria – Rudolf Czapek, founder and CEO of Austrian fencing manufacturer Guardi, passed away suddenly in September.

Czapek grew up on a farm in the north-west of Austria, where his uncle taught him, “Whatever you do, do it well!” After training as a mechanical engineer, curiosity led him to travel to the United States for a three-week-long holiday. He ended up staying for several years, first in San Diego and later in New York. Supporting himself by washing dishes and driving taxis, he learned all about art and industrial design. On his return to Austria, he started a factory that manufactured designer lamps

from aluminum. Later, when he needed a fence, he thought: “Well I’ve learned a lot about aluminum, so why don’t I try to design something myself?” When a neighbour saw Czapek’s creation, he wanted one too... and so Guardi was born. In just over 25 years, the little lamp factory grew to become a fencing manufacturer with a big factory in the Polish town of Jasło, almost 40 million euros in turnover, and more than 400 staff across Austria, Germany, Hungary, Poland and Switzerland.

The loss of Czapek came as an enormous shock to those at Guardi. Shortly after his death, the company sent a short message to its customers to tell them that it had lost not only an outstanding

visionary and entrepreneur, but also a unique individual: “Rudi created and built up the company with passion, vision, and dedication. His tireless commitment and extensive industry knowledge enabled us to celebrate so many successes together. He embodied our company’s values and inspired us all to constantly give the best of ourselves.”

Despite deeply mourning Rudi’s loss, that same update stated that the company’s day-to-day operations will continue as usual. “Rudi’s widow Doris, along with a team of experts, will continue Rudi’s life’s work to ensure that the vision and principles that Guardi stands for will go on with the same passion and dedication as always.”



Rudi Czapek was 59 years old. He is survived by his wife Doris and their two young sons. ■

Gallagher Security brings Virtual Classroom to Europe

HAMILTON, New Zealand – Gallagher, a manufacturer of electric animal fencing, detection fencing and access control, is now also making its Virtual Classroom online training programme available to customers in Europe. Virtual Classroom training offers the hands-on product experience

and access to training experts, combined with the convenience of remote training from home or a workstation. Darren Booth, Technical and Training Manager at Gallagher’s facility in Warwick, near Birmingham in the UK, says: “Virtual Classroom is a game-changer for us and our Channel Partners. It enables us

to reach more technicians, answer more questions and offer the same course content as in a traditional classroom

environment. We are very excited to bring this training solution to our partners in the UK and Europe.” ■

Gallagher Virtual Classroom

Bringing our training experts to you

Lippi launches B2B portal

MOUTHIERS-SUR-BOËME, France – French fencing manufacturer Lippi has placed a web portal online for its B2B customers. It is called Monlippi. On it, customers

can place orders and view the status of current orders. Lippi wants to simplify the ordering process with Monlippi and make it more pleasant.



LOCINOX

INTRODUCES DIGITAL CODE LOCK FOR INSERT LOCKS



Lieven Pieters
Sales Director

Locinox, the Belgian gate hardware manufacturer from Waregem, has created a second digital code lock. In addition to the Valentino, for surface-mounted locks, Locinox is launching the Vera for insert locks.

“Insert locks are gaining a bigger and bigger share of the market,” says sales director Lieven Pieters, “especially for residential gates, for which closed infill is increasingly popular. For this reason, we’re manufacturing an insert lock option for almost every product that can be combined with a surface-mounted lock – and certainly for those that are selling well with surface-mounted locks.”



Valentino

“The Valentino is an extremely popular product,” Pieters continues. “It gives the customer a lot of the options that an external keypad offers, but at a fraction of the price as there’s no need for the installer to connect any wiring to the gate. That’s something that can end up costing a lot of money, so this is a very fast and easy way of adding entry controls to a gate. With the Vera, that easy access control is now available for insert locks too.”

Vera

The new digital code lock consists of either two keypads, enabling access control on both sides of the gate, or of a single keypad with a free-exit module on the other side. Both the keypads and the free-exit module are enclosed in stainless steel housing of 40 millimetres wide. Both types of housings are installed on the front stile of the gate leaf, above the insert lock. That means that three holes must be drilled on each side of the profile during installation. Two of the holes are used to bring the wiring from the battery through to the keypad on the other side of the profile.



Code

With two keypads, the Vera can be opened from both inside and outside using a pin code of up to eight digits. While the code lock locks the handle of the insert lock, it's not a replacement for the key cylinder. *"If you don't know the code (or you've forgotten it) but you've got a key, you can still get in,"* Pieters says. *"You can also programme 100 codes into the memory by hand, with no need to connect a laptop or log in. The code lock has all the features of a classic keypad, including a 'fast exit' code that allows you to unlock the gate by pressing a single key, and there's also a 'party code' that keeps the Vera unlocked from when a particular code is entered until that same code is keyed in again... when the party in the garden has finished, haha."*

Battery

The Vera uses the same battery as the Valentino, which Locinox developed in-house: a Lithium Metal battery, with a charge that can open and close the lock up to 150,000 times. *"With average use – opening 40 times a day – the battery lasts for 10 years,"* Pieters says, *"even in extreme weather conditions. That's an extremely long time, but it was a deliberate choice. We spent a long time developing that battery, because if a customer constantly has to change their access control battery, it completely negates all the benefits."*

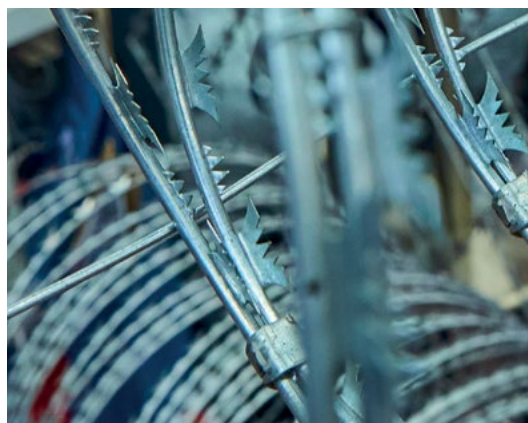
Insert locks

The new Vera code lock is suitable for Locinox's Fortylock, Fiftylock, Sixtylock and Eightylock insert locks. You can have a Vera fitted to a gate during the manufacturing process, but it can also be retrofitted. The new Vera code lock is available in black textured paint and silver anodized aluminium options. ■



Perimeter Protection to grow again in 2025

2025



The upcoming edition of Perimeter Protection, a trade fair for perimeter security, will again be bigger than the previous one. Meanwhile, 7300 square metres of booth space has been booked for the fair, to be held in January in Nuremberg, Germany.

At Perimeter Protection, you will find suppliers of fencing, gates, parts and hardware, drives, access control, video surveillance and – meanwhile for the fourth time – detection and defence systems with drones. The fair was first held in 2010 with eighty exhibitors and a scant 2000 visitors and has grown steadily since then: at the last edition, there were 198 exhibitors and 5389 visitors.

Frontzäune elegant & zeitlos



TRADE FAIR PROGRAMME

If you have been to this fair before, you will see many familiar exhibitors again, but there are also unfamiliar faces. At the beginning of October, we already counted 41 new exhibitors. "The fair is also becoming increasingly international," says Sharin Rögner of organiser NürnbergMesse. "Of the now 163 registered exhibitors, more than 50 percent are not from Germany. In addition to all supplier booths, we also have a specialist forum, where various speakers make presentations. That forum is organised by the Verband für Sicherheitstechnik (VfS) and the Verband für Unbemannte Luftfahrt (UAV Dach). Finally, on Tuesday and Wednesday evening, we again expect booth parties at various booths: fun parties with music and drinks, for visitors who want to chat and network after the fair closes."



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ACCESS

The fair will be held in Halls 1 and 2 of the exhibition halls in Nuremberg, from Tuesday 14 to Thursday 16 January. Perimeter Protection will be open from 9 in the morning to 5 in the afternoon, except on Thursday, when closing is at 4 in the afternoon. Tickets are already available in presale. Readers of the Fencing Times have free entry: to do so, use the

'Redeem Voucher' button in the ticket shop on the fair's website and use the code FencingTimes25. If you want to see where you can find which booth before you leave: this year, for the first time, the fair's website also features an interactive map of the fair halls with all the booths marked on it. We ourselves will of course be there too, see you there! ■

TOPICS ON THE FACHFORUM



- Aerial surveillance of large sites and border control



- Efficiency and automation - Using Drones to combat skilled labour shortage



- Defence with drones - experience at major events



- The overarching Kritis Act and physical security requirements for critical infrastructure



- AI in perimeter security



BTW

launches second fence light

Befestigungstechnik in Westfalen (BTW), a manufacturer of lighting attachment systems from Wetter in the German Ruhr region, is launching a new fence light. It is called Spot and gives twice as much light as the existing Tube light in its product range.

“BTW was created out of a collaboration between FK Poultry and my own metalworking company Buerstätte,” explains director Andreas Müller. “FK Poultry makes the facilities for hen houses. Those houses require much light, for which FK Poultry made its own lighting units. At Buerstätte, we made brackets and clamps to hang the large lighting units. Together, we had devised a very clever and efficient system for that. It worked so well that together we then started a company that makes complete lighting systems for factories, which they can build on railings. We sell those to companies that need to light large industrial sites or manufacturing halls, like VoestAlpine in Austria or the new LNG terminals in northern Germany.”

Idea

“When at Buerstätte we started to plan the new building construction of our company two years ago, lighting came up once again. There is a large outdoor area that we wanted to be able to light up well at night, but no railings to which we could attach our own lighting sets. In addition, the existing sets for factories look very industrial. Then we thought: what we can do for railings on factory sites, we can obviously also do on fences. Fences are everywhere and often along sites, walkways and roads that need to be lit up. Why not make fence lighting? It is much less expensive to screw a tube onto a fence, than to place a streetlight in its own concrete foundation. It also saves space: light posts are always in the way and the fence is there already anyway.”





Andreas
Müller

Tube

BTW's first fence light came on the market last year. It consists of a curved tube, with an LED strip inserted in the curved section. The tube is – quite appropriately – called Tube and is mounted on a fence post with specially developed clamps. The light is 3 metres high and can be installed on fencing with a height of 1.2 metres or more. *“The tube is made of aluminium, and it weighs only 7 kilos,”* says Müller. *“The static forces it exerts on the fence are minimal. This is also because the tube is hardly sensitive to wind due to its round shape.”* It comes with a junction box that can be attached to the lower bracket, to which electricians can then bring their power cables. *“The shape of the tube and the inner LED strip also prevents glowing light. You can use it to illuminate a driveway, car park or walkway in a very targeted way, without causing light pollution.”*

Application

With the fence lights, BTW aims primarily at companies with an outdoor area, such as on industrial estates. *“There is almost always a fence present and almost always a need for light,”* says Müller. *“But the lights are also ideal for municipalities. Just last week, someone called from a municipality in the middle of Austria. They accidentally found us on the internet. There, somewhere in the town, was one of those half-way private paths between the houses, where it could be quite dark at night and where pedestrians felt unsafe. Our lights were ideal for this individual, he could easily and quickly light that path. There are tens or perhaps hundreds of thousands of such dark footpaths in Europe. And furthermore, of course, municipalities must regularly light playgrounds, schoolyards and dog walking areas, our fence lights are also perfect for those locations. And finally, the lights are of course also great for use as garden or patio lighting.”*



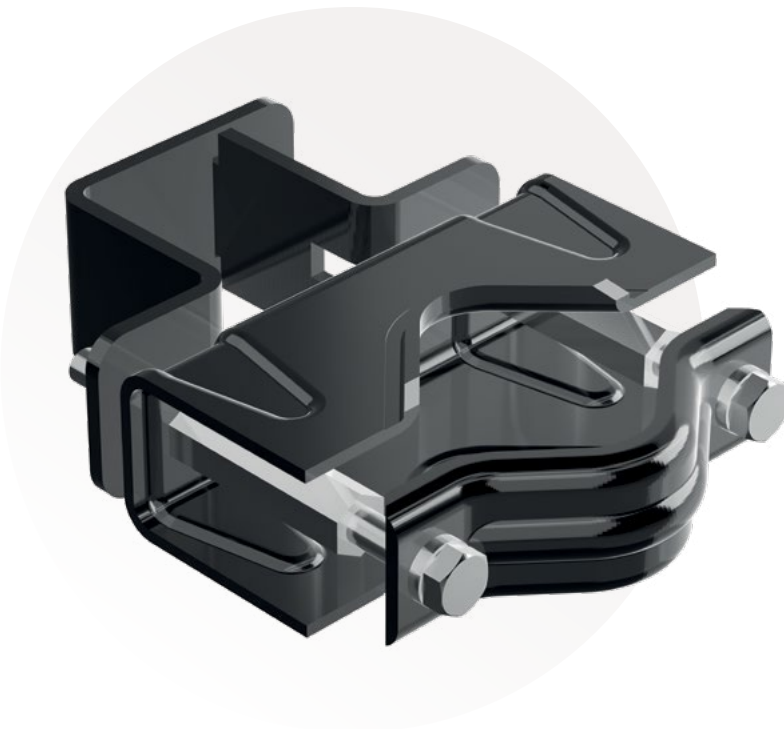
Spot

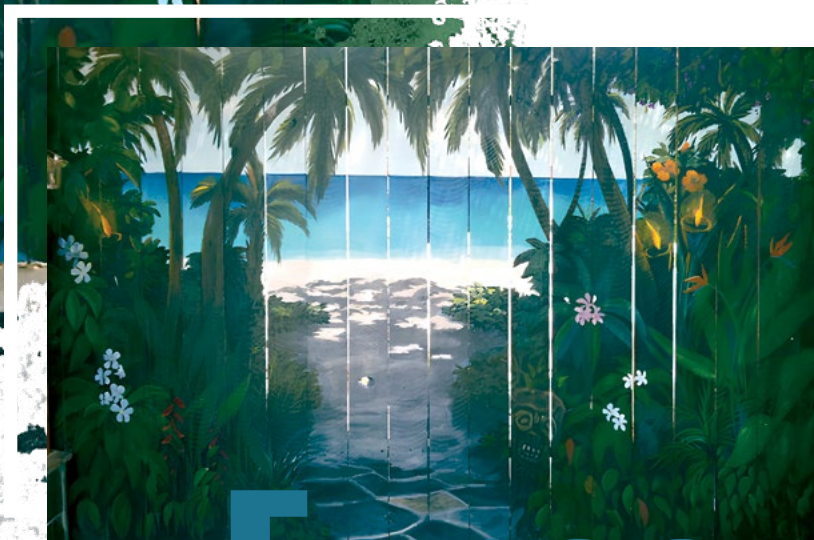
The new Spot is the second light in BTW's lighting programme. *“The Tube gives as much light as an ordinary streetlight,”* says Müller. *“The market accepts it well. But sometimes more light is needed. On storage sites, where forklift trucks drive back and forth, or at soccer fields where youths play games. This is why we added the Spot to the product range. It gives twice as much light – 5350 lumens compared to 2400 lumens for the tube. The Spot also has a few more options: you can dim it at certain times, for example. And it is slightly more robust: the Spot is mounted on a straight tube with a diameter of 60 millimetres, while the Tube is made from a tube of 48 millimetres.”*



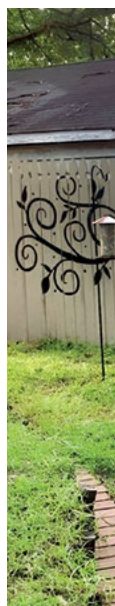
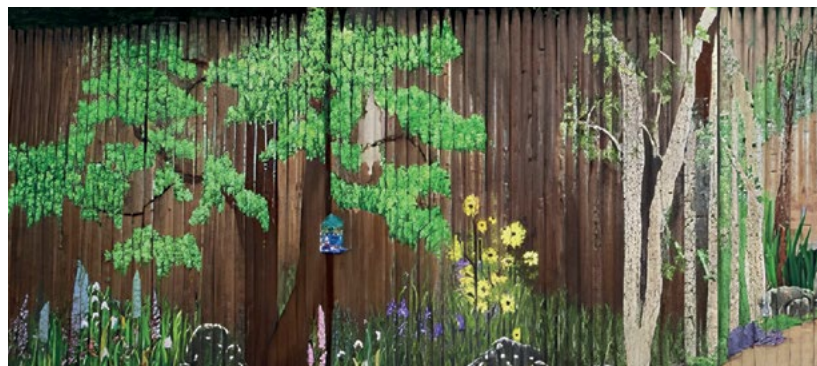
Installation

Both fencing lights come standard with brackets for 60-by-40 and for 80-by-40 millimetre posts. *“This way, they fit on eighty percent of fencing posts,”* says Müller. *“But fencers who want to fit them on posts with other dimensions can feel free to ask us about that. It must be crazy if we cannot make a bracket for that in our metalworking company.”* The lights are powder coated in anthracite grey as standard. *“But from orders of ten or so, we can coat them in any colour the customer requests.”* The new Spot fencing light has been available since early this summer. ■

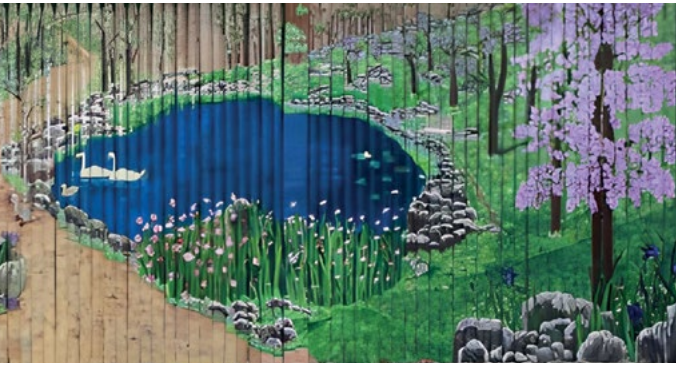




Fence art




Fence art



In a previous issue we showed you some fences with all sorts of different decorations. But you don't have to use accessories to decorate a fence; there are plenty of artists who paint their fences. Here is some of the loveliest artwork we've seen lately.

Fancy Fence creates online 3D configurator





Fancy Fence, a Polish vertical gate manufacturer based in Lublin, has created a 3D configurator to enable both fencing installers and end customers to put together their own gates without difficulty.

"Our gates are available in all sorts of different versions," says the gate's creator and company co-owner Jacek Kühnl-Kinell. "As of today, we have more than 17 billion possible combinations. Until now it always took us an enormous amount of time to discuss all the different options with the customer. Putting together a quote also took a lot of time. Now, with the configurator, both of these can be done in a snap."

FANCY FENCE

Fancy Fence gates are manufactured from vertical box profiles or infill panels, which slide up from a concrete compartment under the ground. "Almost everything aspect of the gate can be customised," Kühnl-Kinell says. "The width and depth of the profiles, the spacing, and the materials we use. On top of that, all gates that have a passage width of more than 12 metres are divided up into various segments. All of these factors added up to making manual configuration, and then calculation, into a very time-consuming process."

3D CONFIGURATOR

Jacek's son Mateusz, saw how much time Fancy Fence's sales team was spending on putting each gate together and knew that there had to be a better way. He worked with a friend to create a configurator, which determines all the suitable options and presents them immediately. "Customers have to be able to see what they're choosing," Mateusz says. "Otherwise you still have to explain it to them anyway. That's why the configurator responds right away: if you change one of the parameters, then the screen immediately shows you what that's going to look like in real life."

QUOTATION

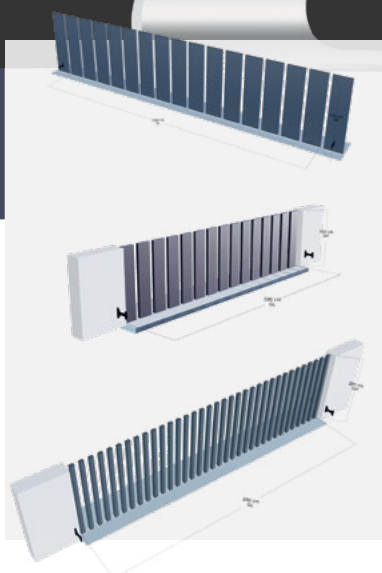
"In order to build the 3D configurator," Mateusz continues, "we needed to know exactly how much material was needed for each variant. Once we knew that, it was just a small step to build the associated calculator that calculates the costs involved in each gate. It means that the sales team is able to issue quotations much more quickly too. All they need to do is add the transport costs and a few other project-specific costs; then they can send off a quote. It saves them 90 percent of their time."

CONVENIENCE

The 3D configurator has proved an important addition for Fancy Fence. "Right from the day we added it to the website, the number of requests doubled," Jacek Kühnl-Kinel says. "If you're able

to show your website visitors what your product will look like in their specific situation, they are evidently immediately more interested, to the point that they want to know right away whether it's going to fit into their budget. And we're getting

positive feedback from all our fencing industry customers: it's now so much easier and faster for them to send their requests. We're extremely happy with the configurator."



Mateusz Kühnl-Kinel and his business partner Jan



Consty

Creating the Fancy Fence 3D configurator gave Mateusz Kühnl-Kinel and his business partner a taste for building configurators and they decided to set up their own company: Consty Studio. "Building the engine was the hardest part," Mateusz says. "That's the underlying software that uses the variables to build the 3D models live. Using that engine as a basis, we're able to offer configurators to a whole lot more companies. And not only gate manufacturers – we've already built demo configurators for yachts, jewellery, furniture and private planes. But obviously we now have lots of experience with fences and gates, so we certainly want to offer our services to the fencing industry too, and build configurators for swing and sliding gates, for ornamental fencing, and for all sorts of other products as well." ■

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Thorsten Repenning & Elisabeth Christens of the Webshop-Team

New web store and configurators from Elka



The North-Frisian drive manufacturer Elka has a new online web store, with built-in configurators for barriers and gate drives. This way, the company aims to make the ordering process easier and more transparent.



“Especially with our barriers, quite a few different configurations are possible,” says Thorsten Repenning. “Some options you can combine, but some you cannot. That made the ordering process very stressful at times in terms of advice. We are changing that with the new configurator.”

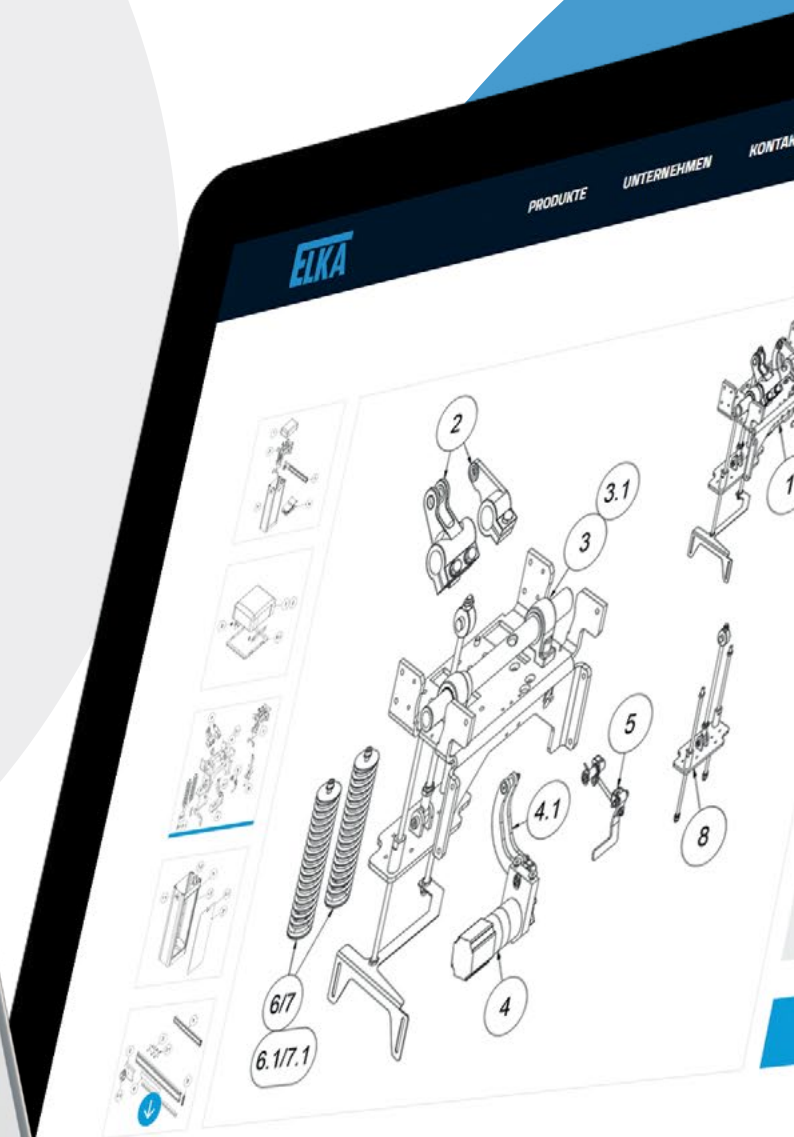
CONFIGURATOR

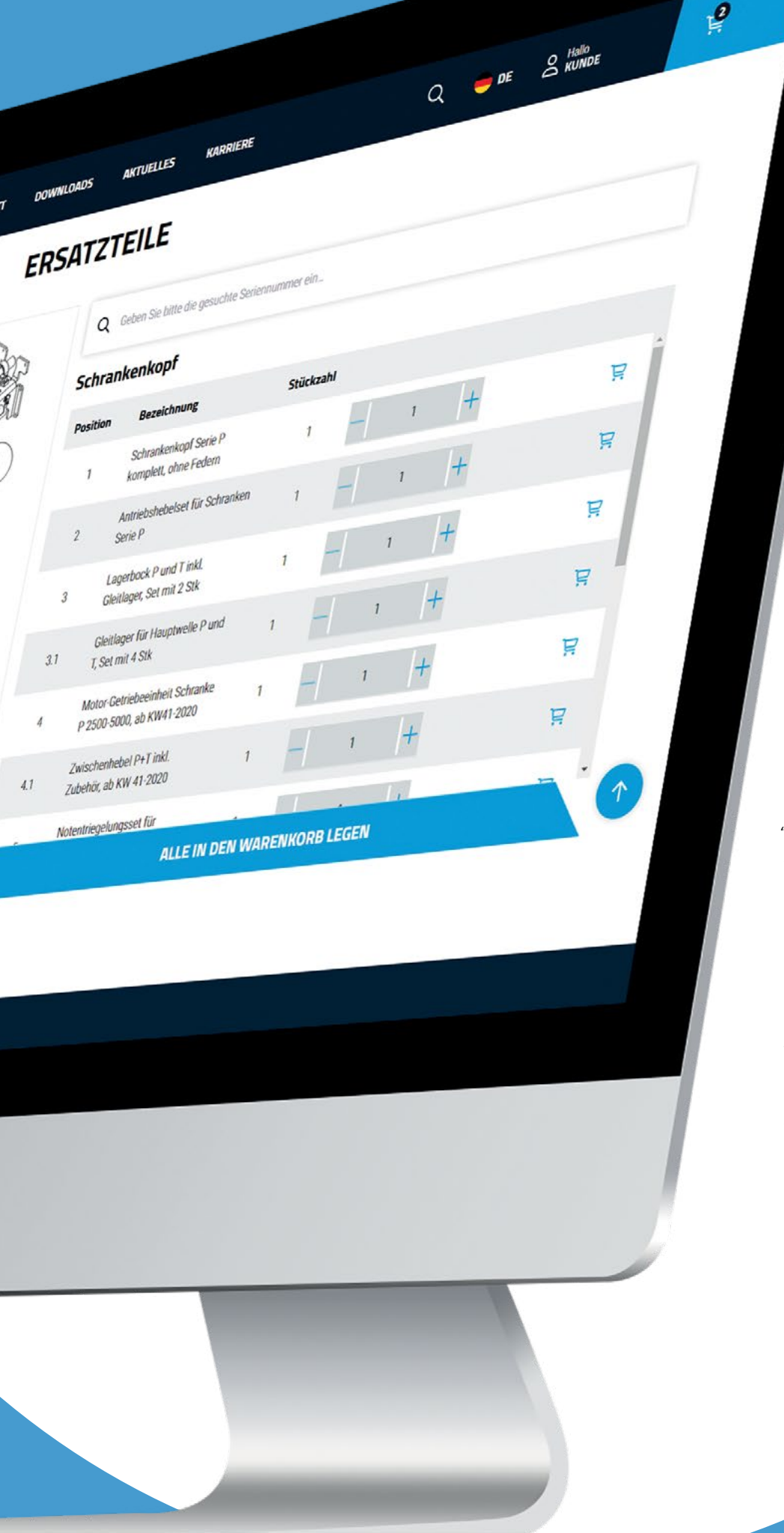
“Do you need a straight or an articulated gate arm?” asks Repenning as an example. “With an articulated gate arm, you need to divide the two halves of the arm in such a way that you have as much barrier width as possible, without the arm banging against the roof of the car park. Then there is the lighting: do you want built-in LED spots, an LED strip in the arm or an LED ring in the cabinet? Or a combination of the three? Do you want a catch pole with it? Should it be adjustable in height? Or have a magnetic lock? All these questions meant that customers often had to call our sales team first, before they could order, to ask whether the configuration they wanted was at all possible. Or they ordered so many consumers that the maximum power capacity was exceeded. In that case, you need an additional power supply to provide sufficient power to all the accessories. We have a department within sales, which technically checks all incoming orders and calls the customer if there is something wrong with the configuration. However, this always means a delay in the order for the customer. In the new configurator, all those kinds of things are asked in advance as much as possible. You are guided through it step by step and can only click on options, which are also technically possible. In the example of the extra power supply: it is added automatically as soon as the accessories require more power than the standard power supply can provide. It gives you a quick overview of the configuration possibilities.”



SHOP

The configurator - or rather configurators, as Elka has them for all barriers and for almost all gate drives - are part of a new web shop, which is linked to Elka's order processing software. "Our partners can log in and then immediately see their net price for each product and option," says Repenning. "They can click on additional built-in devices such as emergency stop switches and choose the location, which side of the cabinet they should be on. And if you want to install an intercom or card reader in a car pillar yourself, for example, you can choose the location for that as well and specify the dimensions of the opening. Our milling machine will then make that opening. This way, customers no longer have to wait for a quotation from us but can immediately see all prices in the web store. Even on Saturday mornings or regional holidays. For us, it means that the processing is now much faster."





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3	Lagerbock P und T inkl. Gleitlager, Set mit 2 Stk	1	+ - +
3.1	Gleitlager für Hauptwelle P und T, Set mit 4 Stk	1	+ - +
4	Motor-Getriebeeinheit Schranke P 2500-5000, ab KW41-2020	1	+ - +
4.1	Zwischenhebel P+T inkl. Zubehör, ab KW 41-2020	1	+ - +
	Notenriegelungsset für	1	+ - +

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ORDERING

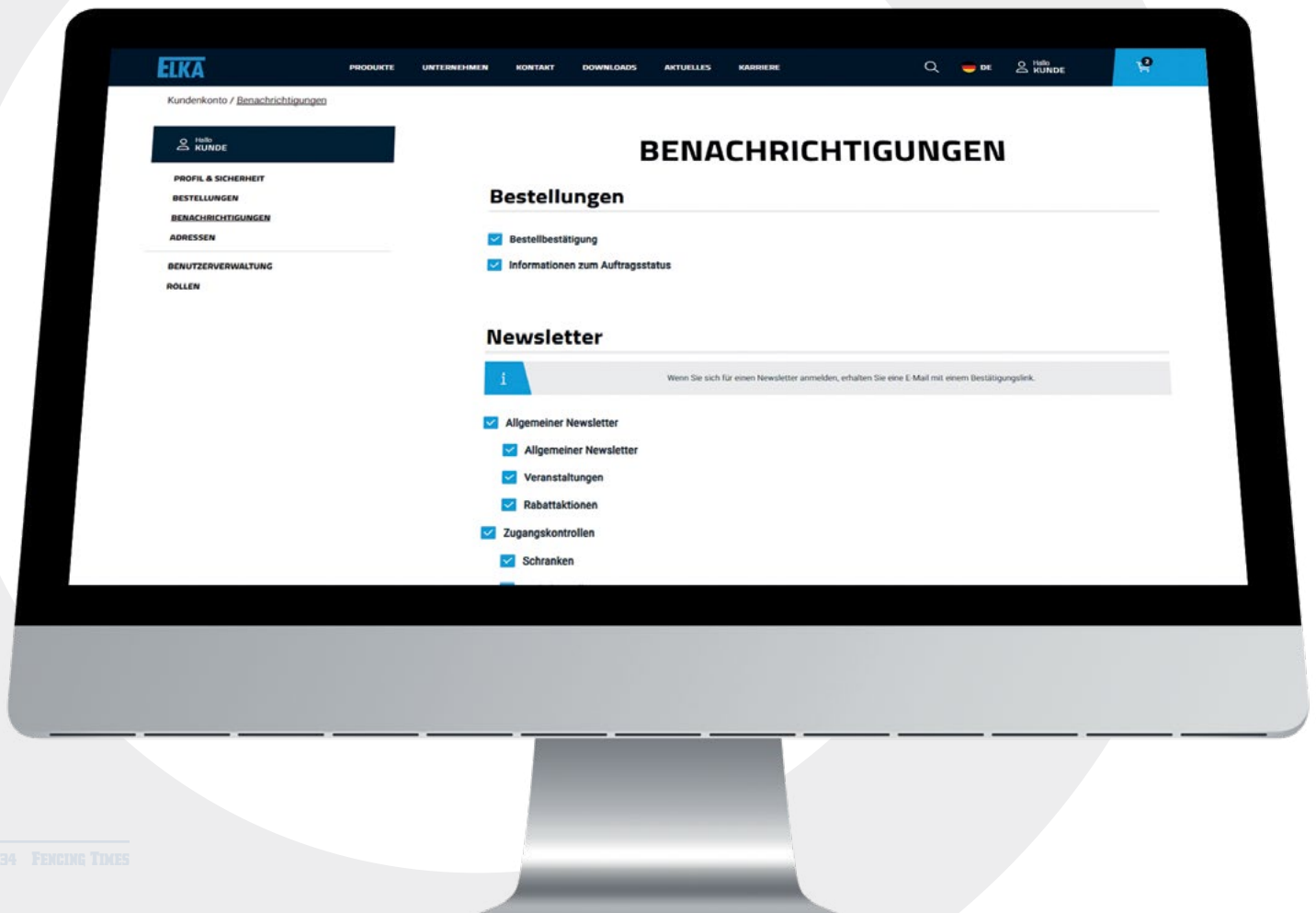
“Ordering in itself is also faster now,” says Repenning. “For example, you can specify all options from our transport partners right at the time of ordering, such as neutral delivery to a different address, delivery by truck with pump truck because there is no forklift truck at the site, telephone announcement of delivery and a desired delivery date. And then you will be informed about every step of the fulfillment process if you want. You would then receive an email that we have received the order, that we have placed it into production and an e-mail when the order has been shipped, of course also with tracking code. If you are logged in, you can see all packing slips and invoices for all orders you have made so far. Also of orders you entered by e-mail or by phone. This is how we provide more transparency.”

MORE THAN A WEB STORE

With the new portal, Elka aims to offer more than just a convenient web shop with configurators. "For example, you can give employees a user role that suits their tasks," says Repenning. "For example, a buyer can see prices and place orders. An installer does not see prices and cannot order. But he can select parts and put them in the cart, so a buyer can easily order for him. To quickly find the correct spare part, we have put exploded views in the web shop. There you can

see, for example, the barrier broken down into all the spare parts you can order. You can easily select the parts you need to repair damage, for example. This even works for older models, you enter the serial number of the barrier, and the drawings automatically change to the old model and show the right parts. For a year now, we have been working on a system where every barrier and drive will have a QR code. Scanning this code on the job

will automatically take you to the right product and you can immediately download the correct installation instructions without having to search. Soon, that link will also allow you to go directly to the parts section of the web store." The new web store with configurators is already online and is available in English and German. ■



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Demex launches its own app for access control and service



Demex, a gate manufacturer from Smålandsstenar in Sweden, is launching its own app. From now on, all Demex gates will include an integrated LTE module as standard. The company's aim is to give gate owners a wider range of access control features, while making it easier for installers to perform maintenance.

Demex



"The communication modules already on the market are universal," managing director Donald Malmström says.

"They need to be able to work with all brands and types of gates and drives, but also with water pumping stations, wind turbines, and other types of engines. This often makes for extensive setup procedures... and even then, once everything has been connected and configured, they are often confusing and difficult to operate. We wanted to offer our customers something better."

TAILOR-MADE

The new Demex app has been tailor-made for gate owners and service engineers. "We've placed enormous emphasis on the app's user-friendliness," Malmström says. "No one wants to have to read instructions. Apps should be straightforward, logical and simple. We've set out all the features logically, using unambiguous pictograms as much as possible. We also wanted all the settings and features to be accessible from the app. You've always got your phone with you; it's really annoying if you're working on your phone and then still have to use a computer to log in to a portal in the cloud for certain features. We do have a cloud portal as well though, by the way, so you can change settings quickly using your computer, but you can also set up and control everything in the app. And finally, we've ensured that the gates are always online and that they send any change of status to the app without delay."

CUSTOMERS

With the Demex app, customers have access to a wide range of features. "Obviously they can open and close the gate," Malmström says. "We are working on a widget, so they can do that even from the home screen, without opening the app. They can see whether the gate is open or closed, or whether an obstacle has been detected, from anywhere in the world at any time. They can create new users and give them temporary or permanent access, and withdraw that access too. They can set up as many schedules as they like for when the gate needs to be open, and can automatically add their country's public holidays as well. And they can set up automatic push notifications, so they receive a notification if the gate opens when it's meant to be closed."

USERS

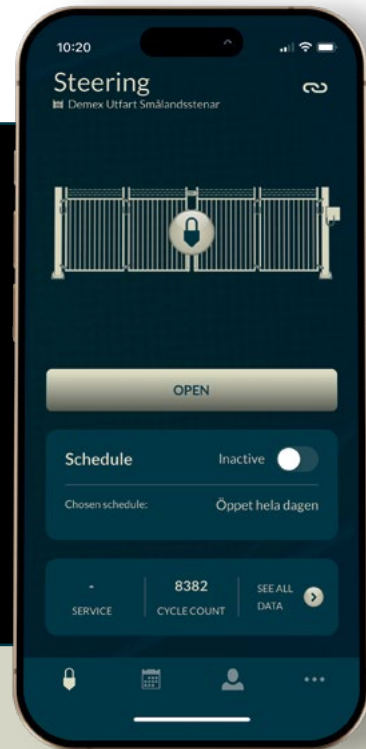
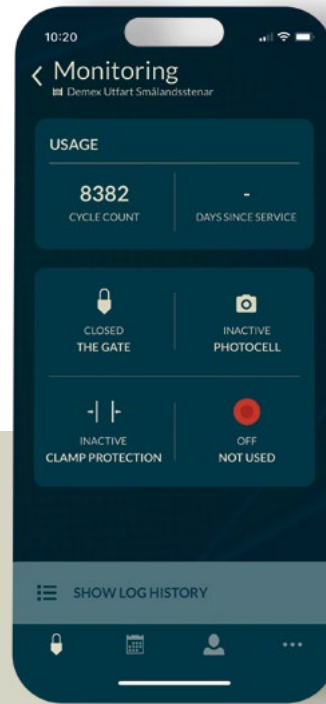
When customers create new users, they can set the permissions individually for each user. "If there's no reason for the gardener to be on your property at night, then you only give him access during the day," Malmström says. "And a gardener has no need to be able to create other users or set schedules either. But you do want your secretary to be able to do that. In addition to creating users, you can create guests. Guest accounts give access for a limited time, say a day or a week, after which their access rights expire automatically. If you click on the 'users' button for a gate, you can see exactly which users have access to that gate and which permissions they've been given."

INSTALLERS

The app gives installers a clear overview of all the gates they manage.

“On the opening screen you see the three gates that were used most recently,” Malmström says.

“You can also bring up a list of all gates, or search for all gates in a particular city. For each gate, you can see exactly how many opening cycles it’s had and the number of days since it was last serviced. Then on a separate screen you see the status of the safety edges and photocells, but you can also see things like whether there’s been a power failure. The LTE module has its own power backup circuit, so it can register power failures and send an alert to the server. Then you’re always able to see what time the power went out. There’s also a sensor that registers whether the control box is open or closed, and each gate has a GPS sensor so you can see exactly where it is on a map. In addition, all information is logged – which comes in handy if you have a customer who claims that he hasn’t made any changes to the controls.”

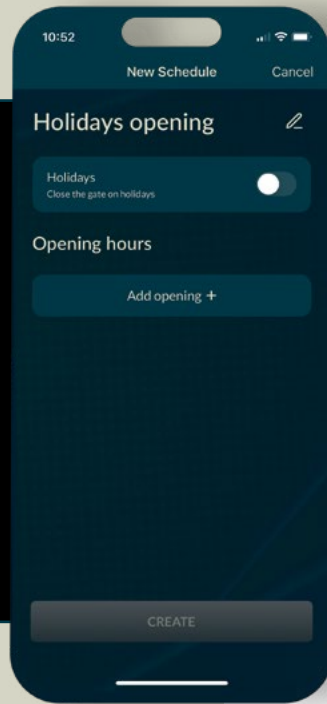
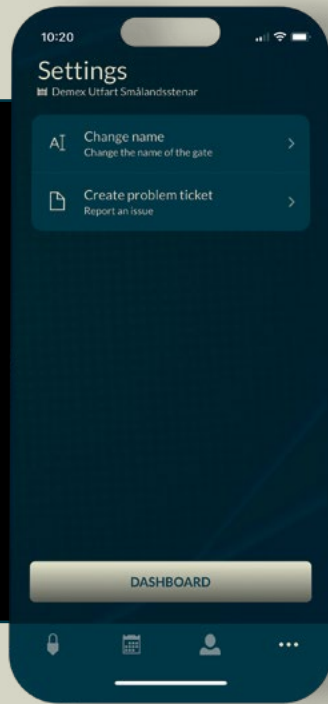
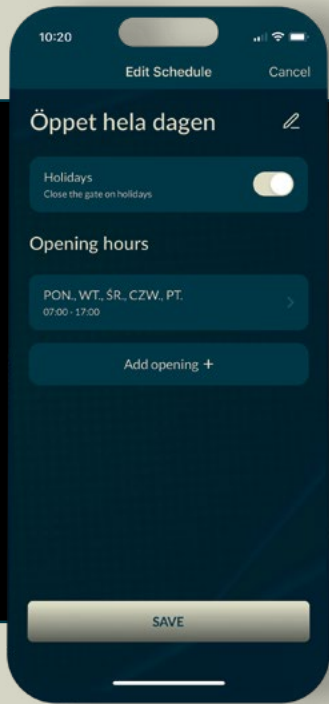


SERVICE

“All these features enable you to provide your customers with much better service,” Malmström goes on. “If a customer calls to say his gate isn’t working, you can take a look at your app and see right away that there’s a problem with the photocell. You get him to wipe the dirt and snow off the glass and then his gate works again, with no need for you to visit the site. Installers can also set up notifications for a gate the same way customers can, for example when there’s a

problem with the safety edges or when the gate hits a certain number of cycles. This enables you to plan your maintenance better, but it also makes it attractive to offer lucrative fast-response service contracts, where you promise that in the event of a problem, someone will always be at the gate within a certain time. If that gate stops working, sometimes you even get there before the customer realises there’s an issue. Some customers are willing to pay good money for that.”

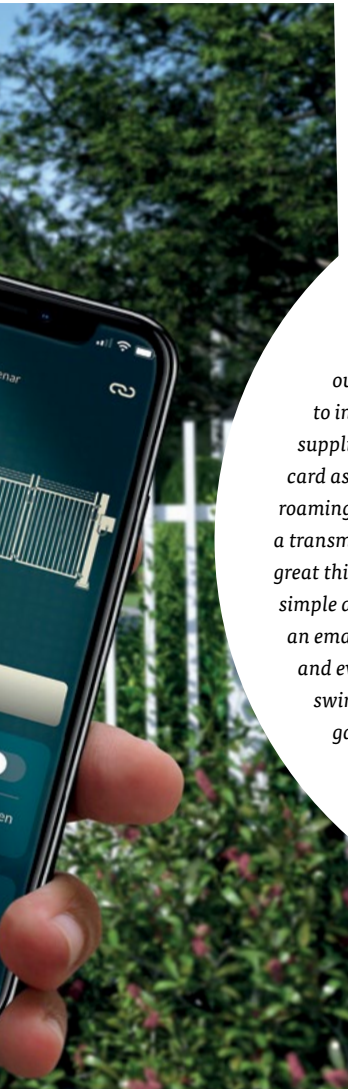






DEAD MAN'S SWITCH

“And the final feature: as an installer, you have a remote dead man’s switch,” Malmström says. “For example, let’s say the battery of the safety edge at the front of a sliding gate leaf runs out of power in the middle of the night. In the morning the gate will simply open as usual, without the customer noticing anything, because the edge on the gate leaf doesn’t need to work when a gate is opening. But then at the end of the day – and of course it’s a Friday – the gate won’t close. So at five minutes to five the customer calls to see if you can come round, because obviously he can’t leave his gate open all weekend. In the old days you would have had to have gone out to change that battery on the Friday night. With our app you ask the customer to go and stand at the gate to check that no one’s in the opening, and you use a special dead man’s switch in the app to override the safety edge and make the gate close. Then you can head over there on Monday or Tuesday at your convenience to replace the battery.”



RANGE

The new Demex app works with all swing, sliding and folding gates as well as with all barriers in Demex's range. "We developed our drives and the controls ourselves, so we were easily able to integrate the LTE module," Malmström says. "All gates we've supplied since the start of last year include that module and a Sim card as standard. We use Telenor SIM cards, as they have the best roaming contracts. The module works anywhere in the world that there's a transmission mast; it doesn't matter which telecom provider it's from. The great thing is that we've also made the signup and registration process as simple as possible. When you place your order, you only need to provide an email address for the owner of the gate – we send an activation link, and everything just works. The app immediately knows whether it's a swing or sliding gate, the passage width, and everything else. The gate is also automatically linked to the installer account of the installer who placed the order. There's no messing around with passwords or time-consuming setup procedures."

Demex

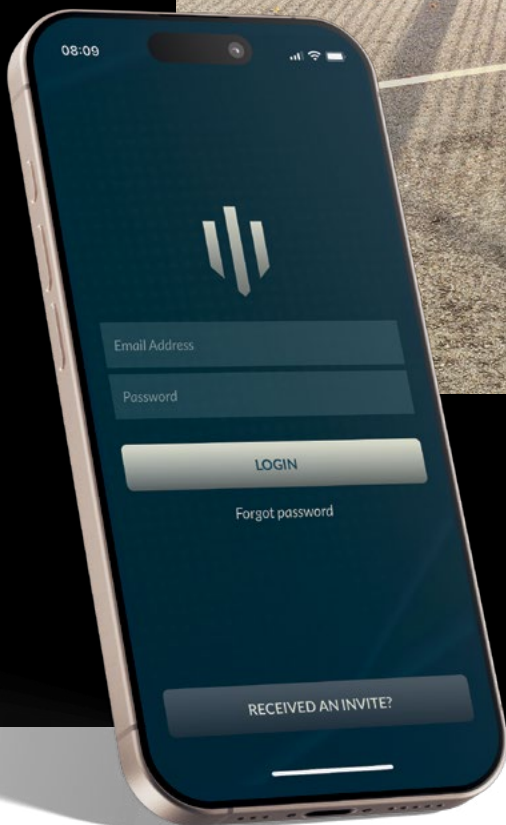
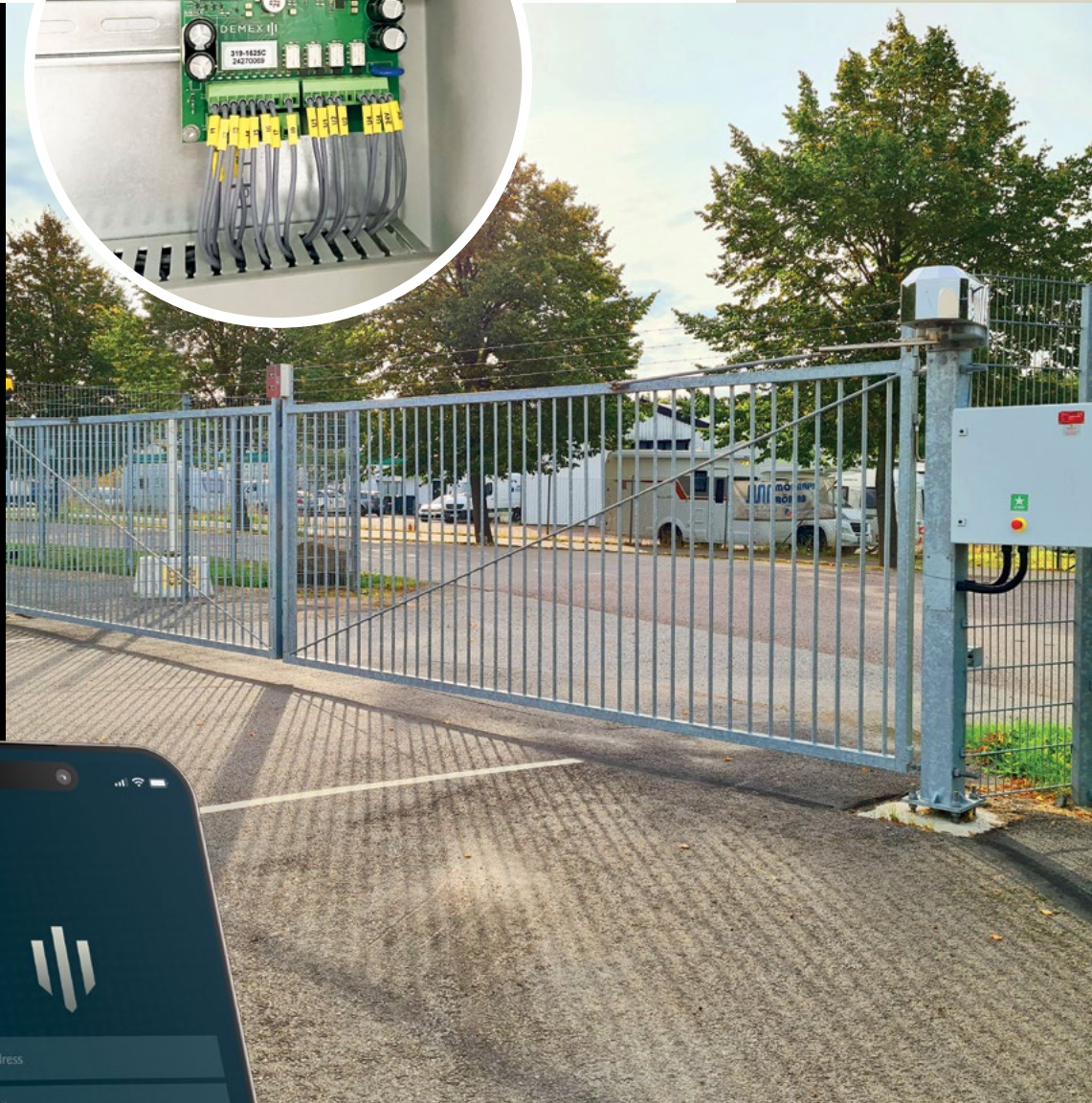
UPDATES

The app was developed in collaboration with a local software company. "We have extensive experience with gates and maintenance, as well as with third-party GSM modules," Malmström says. "We knew exactly what we wanted, and in particular what we didn't want. We were able to give very specific information to the software team. They produced amazing results – I know for sure that this is the best app on the market, both

for access control and for maintenance. And right from the start we said that building the app wasn't going to be a one-off project, but an ongoing process. Every day we gather feedback, then once a month we release an update to make the app even better. That widget on the home screen, for example: that was the result of a tip from a customer. We thought it was such a good idea that we started working on it the very same day."

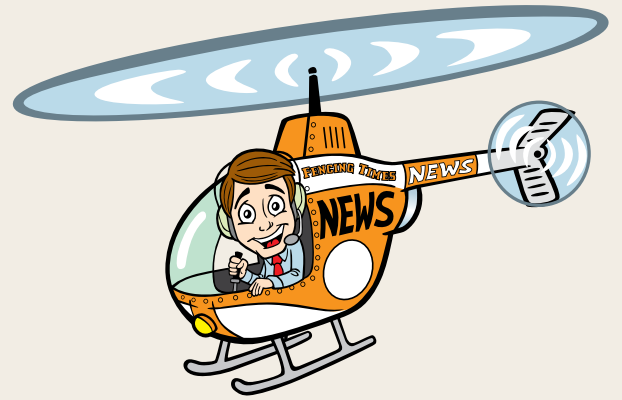
COSTS

The Demex app is currently free to use. "In the test phase, which has been running since last year, we didn't want to ask for money," Malmström explains. "As of next January we will charge a fee per gate to use the app. Installers can integrate that fee into their maintenance contracts and then pass it on to the customer with a margin added, but if they don't want to offer contracts they can also have the customer pay the fee directly. Then the customer can use all access



control features. As an installer you have the same level of access, as long as as the customer allows it, so if there are problems you can check the log to see what has happened to the gate. It doesn't matter to us who pays." The app is available for free in Apple's App Store and the Google Play Store. ■

FENCES IN THE NEWS



6 NOVEMBER 2024

Elephant escapes three times from enclosure



FUKUOKA, Japan – At a city zoo in southern Japan, a young elephant escaped from its enclosure three times in a row. Around that enclosure was a fence with three wires. Those wires were stretched at 66-centimetre intervals. That was more than enough, according to the enclosure's designers,

because the young elephant was 170 centimetres tall and would never fit through there. Well, it did. Things went wrong the first time on 18 August. Zoo staff returned the animal as soon as they saw little Jumbo outside his enclosure but took no further action. Apparently, you do not

have to be very smart to work at the Fukuoka Zoo. On 20 August, the elephant escaped again, and again he was brought back, with no further action. It was only when he escaped for the third time on 23 August and came to the paths where visitors walk as well, that a clever Japanese person

produced the idea of putting extra chains between the poles, so that the elephant would stay in its enclosure from now on. Do any of our readers have experience with fencing in animal enclosures? Give the Municipal Zoo and Botanical Garden in Fukuoka a call, they could use your advice there. ■

Bitter fencing dispute costs couple all their savings



SNETTISHAM, UK – Graham and Katherine Bateson burned up their entire savings over the past five years because they had an argument with their neighbour about a fence. Since 2019, they have spent 45,000 British pounds on lawyers and court fees.

Every time we think we have seen the worst neighbourly argument over a fence, another bigger or more extreme sensational story pops up. What is going on? In 1987, the Batesons bought a small house at the end of Brent Avenue, a cul-de-sac, in Snettisham in Norfolk. That house sits on a corner plot, sandwiched between two other plots. To be able to drive up the driveway of their cottage, the couple had to use a small part of the neighbour's driveway. This went well for 32 years.

"It was never a problem," Graham tells a reporter for *The Mirror*. "It was a shared driveway. That is how we bought it and all the neighbours, who lived in the neighbouring house, always agreed." Like all things that go well, until they no longer go well: in 2019, a neighbour moved in and did not like the fact that

neighbours were driving over her property. She sought some legal advice and put up a fence on the property boundary. As a result, the Batesons could no longer use their driveway.

That was the beginning of three years of a legal tug-of-war. The case dragged on until November 2021 when a mediation hearing was held. The outcome was that the land registry had to redetermine the boundary. The neighbour did not live to see that, she died a few months before the hearing. In 2022, the neighbour's house came up for sale again. Real estate agent Sowerbys wrote nothing in the sales brochure about a dispute over the property boundary or right of way, whereupon Bateson took the law into their own hands and tore down the fence themselves. This was reported to the police (the story does not say by whom), resulting in Bateson being arrested one Sunday and thrown in a cell, on suspicion of criminal vandalism. However, in December of 2023, the Crown Prosecution Service dropped those charges, saying it

was not in the public interest to proceed.

How the story ends is a bit unclear. The land registry has not determined a new boundary because signatures on the application supposedly were unclear. The neighbouring house has since been sold and the new owners seem to have no problem with the Batesons using part of their driveway, as the fence has not yet been rebuilt. And with that, everything is back to how it was for 32 years, except that the Batesons are now 45 thousand Pounds Sterling poorer. ■



Young woman prosecuted for petting tiger

BRIDGETON, New Jersey, USA – In Bridgeton, USA, a young woman is being prosecuted for trying to pet a tiger at the Cohanzick Zoo. Petting tigers is in itself not prohibited, but she had to climb over a fence to do so, which is not allowed according to the municipal ordinance. The woman did not climb directly into the tiger cage, but she did climb over a wooden fence meant to keep zoo visitors away from it. She then stuck her arm through one of the meshes of the fence around the cage, upon which that arm was almost

bitten off. Someone recorded the whole event and posted the video on Facebook, whereupon that video immediately went viral. An officer from Bridgeton PD also saw the video. He launched an investigation, which revealed that the woman had also tried to pet a brown bear earlier in the day. She was tracked down and so now prosecuted for climbing over a fence. We are curious to know what the punishment is - and whether that punishment will make her refrain from fence-climbing, or petting, in the future. We are guessing not. ■



Woman loses leg due to auger



ALLEGHENY TOWNSHIP, Pennsylvania, USA – Less pleasant news from Allegheny Township, a village just outside Pittsburgh. There, Trish Watt, and her husband were digging holes for a fence. To do so, they were using a tractor with an auger. They were both standing next to the tractor with the auger running, when the auger hit a piece of wire, which wrapped around Trish's leg in no time. Her leg was amputated on the spot. In her fall, she also broke several ribs and suffered a collapsed lung. She was flown to the hospital in Pittsburgh, but doctors were unable to save her leg. ■

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Neighbours find wildlife fence too visible



NEW CANAAN, Connecticut, USA – In almost all European countries, we have municipal rules about the height of a fence, which landowners can put around their perimeter. Usually, at the front facing the street, it may not be higher than 1 or 1.2 metres and at the back no higher than 1.8 or 2 metres. But in New Canaan, a village just outside New York on the Gold Coast of the state of Connecticut, the municipal regulations go a little further. Because New

York's elite can of course not be disturbed by the sight of a fence when resting from busy city life in their country houses. Just imagine that. According to the New Canaan Zoning Regulations, residents are only allowed to put up wildlife fences around their gardens without a permit. These must then meet a whole series of conditions: for example, the fence may only be placed in wooded areas (good luck with the tree roots, New Canaan fencers), it must be screened from the

street by landscaping, and it must have an open design so that it blends into the landscape and is not particularly visible from a distance of fifty feet (15 metres). It is yet more proof that you should never let unprofessional village politicians make laws and regulations, because such vague terms in a text can only of course result in endless legal wrangling. What is "particularly visible"? And does that apply in spring when the leaves are light green? Or in autumn, when the leaves

are deep-dark red? Or in winter, when there are no leaves on the trees at all? Besides, we wonder what the point of a game fence is that you may only put up in the forest. Surely then the deer and roe deer will just walk around it via the clearings? Anyway, for the residents of 78 Pasture Lane, that legal tug-of-war has now begun, because their neighbours do not agree with the fence they placed. They think it is too high, too ugly, and too visible. There will be a hearing. ■

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Warranty conditions vary according to gate or door application and usage. See full Warranty details and limitations on D&D Technologies' website.

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