



SALES

A day like no other

Here today, there tomorrow. Sales representatives are on the move a lot and for a long time – Wörwag believes that in sales, personal contact with the customer is important. Besides profound expert knowledge, this also requires an open style of communication, a good dose of flexibility. **finish** joined the reps on the road.

By Thorsten Schönfeld Photos by Petra Stockhausen

According to the workplace directive, a minimum size for a monitor-based workstation is eight square metres. That is especially tiny when compared to Lars Fischer's working space: His area of activity is well over 10 million times larger! It comprises North Rhine-Westphalia, Rhineland-Palatinate, Hessen and Saarland. Fischer is employed as a sales representative at Wörwag.

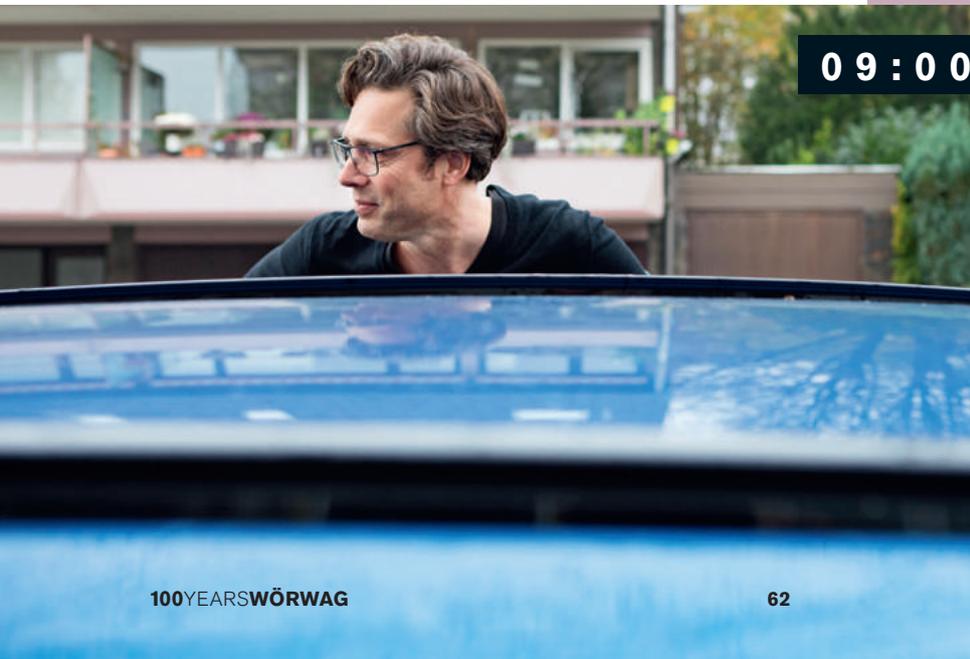
As one of twelve account managers in the sales department, he takes care of the large automotive customers, manufacturers and suppliers who purchase products from the company's wet and powder coat-

ings and lacquer film segments. "Previously, customers were subdivided according to region. It incorporated many different industries. But then Wörwag reorganized the sales force and structured it according to business units," explains the 46-year-old. The distances grew accordingly. Yet the personal contact with customers is essential. New projects need to be planned, experiences discussed, and any problems solved as part of a joint effort. No matter how long the road ahead.

The job requires a high degree of flexibility. No day is like any other. Which in turn brings with it many freedoms. Sitting in

the office for eight hours wouldn't be an option for any sales representative. "The diversity, the travelling and the largely self-sufficient work – that is what makes the job so special," says Fischer.

This requires technical expertise. The customer appointments are where you get down to the nitty-gritty. Fischer has been with the company for 17 years. The trained lacquer laboratory technician and business administrator has been working in sales since 2011. The account managers are supported by the technical customer management in Stuttgart. Colleagues also attend important appointments on-site.



09:00

What sounds like a normal start to the working day is an exception for Lars Fischer. Since today's journey is only from Wuppertal to Düsseldorf, Fischer can start relatively late. "Sometimes I have to leave as early as 4.30 a.m. depending on where I am going," he says. First appointment: Picking up Wörwag colleagues at Düsseldorf train station. The regular meeting in a large group then takes place at Daimler at 11.30 a.m.



09:02

Before Fischer sets off, he checks his diary to find out what else is lined up in addition to on-site appointments. As well as the Daimler meeting and a meet-up at vehicle component varnisher KSK, he needs to deal with the issues from other customers in the automotive supply sector such as Montaplast, Schröder, Wayand or Dura along the way.



09:08

As soon as he reaches the A46 freeway, the phone rings. Fischer uses the hands-free system of his company car to communicate with customers or colleagues at all times while driving.



10:45

The colleagues arrive. Fischer greets Eleonora Rösch, Key Account Manager, and the Head of the Top Coat Department, Sevastos Kavanozis. They discuss the most important points of today's agenda again on the way to the Daimler plant in Düsseldorf. Once on-site, they are also joined by Tobias Hummert, Area Manager Base Coats.

Düsseldorf train station, call to colleagues: the train from Stuttgart is delayed by 15 minutes. He will not arrive until 10.45 a.m. Time for a coffee – and one or two phone calls.

09:50





11:30

Meeting at Daimler: Wörwag supplies a range of base and top coats for the Sprinter van. Thomas Bajor, an application technician from Wörwag, provides on-site support to the varnishers to ensure that the application functions smoothly for the customer. During the regular meeting, coating experts from both companies exchange information about the products used and their processing.

That's all part of the job: on the freeway again, this time heading towards Geilenkirchen, Fischer is stuck in traffic, as is often the case. It hasn't got him flustered for a long time though. "I factor in buffer time for all trips so that heavy traffic doesn't mean I'm late for appointments," he says, and then rings a colleague.



13:15



14:25

Fortunately, the road was soon clear again. That leaves enough time before the next customer appointment to grab a snack at the bakery in the Geilenkirchen industrial park.



15:00

At KSK industrial coatings, the Technical Director of the company, Achim Derdak, talks through the current projects with Fischer. The medium-sized company coats automotive add-on parts. The Technical Customer Manager at Wörwag, Stephan Fuchs, would usually be present at the meeting. He has, however, been delayed today.



16:05

Shortly before the KSK meeting, the sales representative received an emergency call from Stuttgart: the wrong hobbock was delivered in Geilenkirchen. No problem! Fischer simply puts the 25-litre shipping container into the car and secures it safely. Since he has to go to the headquarters soon anyway, he will just take it with him.



16:15

Following his “rescue mission”, the Wörwag Account Manager heads back to Wuppertal. On the way, Fischer tells his colleague Fuchs about how the meeting at KSK went, and what needs to be done when he gets back to the office.



17:45

Fischer arrives home. But he will have to wait a while longer before clocking off. Firstly, the two appointments need to be followed up, emails read and answered, and plans made for the following day. There is an appointment in Idar-Oberstein in Rhineland-Palatinate. That means a much earlier start than today. Yet, for Lars Fischer, the best thing about this job is that no day is like any other.