

## **Würth Group Generates Sales of More Than EUR 11 Billion in Business Year 2015**

- **Global growth of 9.0 percent**
- **Record sales of EUR 1 billion posted in September and October**
- **1,000 additional sales representatives**

According to the preliminary annual financial statement, the Würth Group reports a sales volume of EUR 11.05 billion in 2015 (previous year: EUR 10.13 billion). Robert Friedmann, the Chairman of the Central Managing Board of the Würth Group, is satisfied with the sales growth the company achieved: "We were able to expand our sales volume by 9.0 percent. Among other things, this is due to the successful regional expansion of individual business units, the branch office network and the sales force." Exchange rate fluctuations had a positive effect on the Würth Group, driving sales growth by another 2.5 percentage points.

Above-average growth rates could be achieved in regions such as Southern and Eastern Europe. In Spain, the Würth Group achieved sales growth of 11.6 percent. Outside Europe, the Würth Group developed positively as well, especially the companies in North America. In Germany, the Würth Group's sales volume grew by 4.2 percent.

The months September and October 2015 were the most successful in the history of the Würth Group. In both months, the Würth Group achieved sales of slightly more than one billion euros.

In 2015, 1,000 additional sales representatives were hired all over the world, bolstering the Würth Group's reputation as the largest employer of employed sales representatives. The Würth Group is planning to hire 1,500 additional sales representatives in 2016. In addition, investments will be continued in the field of multi-channel distribution, which includes the sales force, branch offices and e-business activities.

The total number of employees in the Group increased from 66,044 to 68,922. In Germany alone, more than 900 new employees were hired.

The Würth Group's equity capital increased by EUR 300 million to around EUR 4 billion in 2015 (previous year: EUR 3.68 billion), which corresponds to an equity ratio of around 44 percent.

In 2015, the Würth Group made targeted investments in new acquisitions in promising foreign markets. At the end of the year, the Würth Group acquired the company Des Moines Bolt (Iowa, USA), a large supplier of fasteners in the USA operating mainly in the agriculture and construction sector (sales in 2015: USD 40 million).

The operating result of the Würth Group in 2015 is expected to remain on the level of last year (2014: EUR 515 million). "Investments in future growth and increasing price pressure have prevented a parallel development of profits and sales. We are planning to improve our profitability in 2016 while still generating reasonable sales growth." (Robert Friedmann)

#### About the Würth Group

The Würth Group is the world's market leader in its core business, the trade in assembly and fastening materials. It currently consists of more than 400 companies in over 80 countries with more than 69,000 employees on its payroll. Approximately 31,000 of them are permanently employed sales representatives.

In the Group's core business, the Würth Line, the sales program for the trades and industry comprises more than 100,000 products: from screws, screw accessories and anchors over tools to technical chemicals and personal protective equipment.

The Allied Companies of the Würth Group, which either operate in business areas related to the core business or in diversified business areas, round off the range by offering products for DIY stores, material for electrical installations, electronic components such as circuit boards as well as financial services. They generate approximately 40 percent of the Würth Group's sales volume.