The family entrepreneur
Christen Merkle has been in charge of AHP Merkle for 25 years

The beginning could have been easier. When Christen Merkle joined his parents’ company in 1988, the vessel was in rough sea. "I was very young. It was a difficult time in which I had to actively support my parents", recalls Christen Merkle. Today – a quarter of a century later – the 45-year-old does not regret this decision. The vessel is afloat again. "AHP Merkle" is at home on all Seven Seas. Gerhard Merkle – the brilliant tinkerer. What he may have lacked was somebody with the opposite skills, somebody like his son Christen – the business man with the ability to see things from the perspective of the customer. While father and son may be different in terms of vocation, talent and interest, when it comes to company values, they are on common ground. "For us, this includes honesty, reliability, high quality, innovation, open-minded thinking, but also just plain hard work", says Christen. As early as 1983, Gerhard Merkle opened a branch office in Switzerland. However, after his son joined, who initially was responsible for accounting, the company’s ambitions for becoming a global player intensified. Branch offices in Scandinavia, southern Europe and overseas followed. Today, AHP Merkle is represented in 20 countries – and there is no end in sight. However, the most important innovations are still made at home. Since 2010, AHP Merkle is based in Gottenheim. This is where every new product is developed. Here ideas take shape. Following the construction of the new premises in 2010, the next major investment in the future is ready to take shape. The 1,500 square metre large building, which will be completed next year, will house, above all, the company’s own product development and the apprenticeship and training facilities. Even today, AHP Merkle has more than 20 trainees among its almost 150 employees. Christen Merkle himself completed a commercial apprenticeship. After joining AHP Merkle, he also studied part-time at the University of St. Gallen. Since 1998, Christen Merkle has been managing the company together with his father. The future is not something that worries him. "We are doing everything to ensure that AHP Merkle will be around for a long time." Christen Merkle certainly sees potential in the next generation. Married for more than 20 years and the father of six children, he is a true family entrepreneur.

Barnes Group Inc. to Acquire Männer

Barnes Group Inc. (NYSE:B), an international aerospace and industrial manufacturing and service provider, today announced that it has entered into a definitive agreement to acquire privately held Männer, a leader in high precision mold-making, valve gate hot runner systems, and system solutions for the medical/pharmaceutical, packaging, and personal care/health care industries. Männer, which is headquartered in Bahlingen, Germany, operates out of three manufacturing locations in Germany, Switzerland and the United States, and has sales and service offices in Europe, Hong Kong/China and Japan. Barnes Group has agreed to purchase the capital stock of all the Männer operating companies for € 275 million, subject to certain closing and post-closing adjustments, and is expected to finance the transaction with cash on hand and borrowings under the Company’s revolving credit facility. In addition, subject to the terms of the agreement, € 27.5 million of the consideration payable would be delivered in the form of Barnes Group common stock. The acquisition is anticipated to close in late October or early November 2013, subject to the receipt of regulatory approvals and the satisfaction of other customary closing conditions. Following the closing, Männer will operate as a business unit within Barnes Group’s Industrial Segment. “We look forward to adding Männer and its highly skilled and committed workforce to Barnes Group and the significant new opportunities for growth we expect this acquisition to generate,” said Patrick Dempsey, President and CEO of Barnes Group Inc. “We anticipate the global demand for more complex, highly technical injection molding solutions to increase substantially in the future and are eager to add Männer’s innovative suite of products and services to Barnes Group’s core capabilities. We welcome the opportunity to invest in and grow this successful company and to continue to provide customers with the superior products and services associated with both Barnes Group and Männer brands.” Barnes Group will provide additional details about Männer upon the close of the transaction.