



## Innovation driver

Only few companies manage to make themselves known as a synonym of the product they make. Exactly this is the case with the Japanese watchmaking enterprise Seiko. Founded back in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the company is still one of the globally leading watch brands in the medium price segment. Frank Deckert, managing director of Seiko Deutschland in Willich, has every reason to look to the future with confidence.

“Of course, our industry is subject to general economic development like any other industry,” he says. “Yet here in Germany, we managed to continue our growth course thanks to new products and technologies.”

One recent highlight is the new Astron GPS Solar wristwatch. “We are able to develop and produce all types of watch technologies, from quartz to mechanical systems to spring drives and clocks that process

time signals from international GPS networks,” says Mr. Deckert.

Seiko Astron GPS Solar offers travelers a comfortable time-zone adjustment. It is the first watch worldwide to consider all 39 time zones. The indicator of the second time zone, a perpetual calendar and the adjustment to daylight savings time complete the features of the watch. “It took our engineers almost ten years to develop the Astron GPS Solar,” says Mr. ...

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► Deckert. “Reducing energy consumption especially was a challenge.” In addition, a completely new type of antenna makes the Astron GPS Solar the first radio-controlled watch to function worldwide.



Seiko was founded by Kintaro Hattori in 1881. This year the first Seiko wristwatch celebrates its 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary. In 1964, Seiko became the first official timekeeper of the Olympic Games in Tokyo and introduced a transportable quartz chronometer. The new device made timekeeping much more precise and laid the groundwork for modern timekeeping at sporting events.

Seiko was also the first company to offer a quartz wristwatch in 1969 and is acknowledged as a pioneer in spring drive technology. “Innovative strength and technological leadership are our greatest assets,”

Mr. Deckert explains the sustainable success of the company. “We hold several technological patents. We already have 100 patents

for Astron GPS Solar.” No wonder Seiko was awarded watch brand of the year four times in a row by Markt Intern for the medium price sector.

In addition to the Astron Line, the product spectrum of Seiko boasts the collections SPOR-TURA, VELATURA, COUTURA and PREMIER. The premium product of the company is the Grand Seiko model. Its in-house brands Pulsar and Lorus secure access to the lower price sector.

With 40 people on the payroll, Seiko Deutschland sold around 200,000 watches last year. The company regularly showcases its latest developments at international trade fairs such as the Inhorgenta in Munich or the Basel World – the world’s leading fair of the watchmaking industry.

“Trade fairs are ideal platforms for our label to reach an international professional audience and to expand our network,” says Mr. Deckert. “At present,

the Eastern European market is developing well, as well as Finland. In the coming years, we are going to enhance the

brand awareness of Seiko and emphasize the USPs of our label to distinguish it from other watch brands.”

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Mr. Deckert