

SUSTAINABILITY AT ABICOR BINZEL

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A composite image of Earth with a city skyline, a rainbow, a boat, and an airplane. The Earth is shown from space, with a city skyline of modern skyscrapers curving around the top and right sides. A vibrant rainbow arches across the blue oceans. A white cruise ship is visible on the water's surface. An airplane is flying in the upper right sky. The sun is shining brightly from the top left, creating a lens flare effect. The overall scene is a blend of nature, urban development, and global connectivity.

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We hope that our concept will encourage others

Sustainability reports by similar well-known companies are usually more than 100 pages long. And more pages are added over time. Most of the contents are repetitive and are included every year.

We decided to do it differently: This version of our sustainability report provides all of the basic information. All new items (and only those) are summarized in a separate annual brochure that is completely updated every year starting in 2025. The years 2022 to 2024 are summarized in one single edition.

In this way, information about further developments and changes is reduced to the essential and presented in a concise manner. This is beneficial not just for readers but also for the environment. Because even though sustainability reports are generally available on-line, they are also frequently printed out.

Perhaps our concept, which focuses on sustainability, will attract more supporters over time. We would welcome such a development.

Our understanding of sustainability

ABICOR BINZEL has had a successful presence in the global market for 80 years now and is the global market leader and innovation driver for manual and robotic welding. The development, production and distribution of long-lasting products has been a matter of course since the beginning.

Sustainability is very important to us. For this reason, we support the 17 sustainable development goals of the UN Agenda on Sustainability that was approved in 2015. This approach is firmly rooted in our company's values. Of course, ABICOR BINZEL is also a profit-oriented company that complies with the applicable laws and directives. At the same time, we do everything we can to be a sustainable company as defined by the UN Global Compact.

To this end, we appointed a "Sustainability Officer of the Management Board" at the end of 2020. With this commitment, and in our capacity as an industrial company, we want to support the United Nations' efforts to reach the goal of a more sustainable and better future for humanity. We want to contribute with concrete measures and responsible action, not empty words.

Corporate objectives = sustainability objectives

Sustainability objectives and the classic corporate objectives (including profit generation) are not mutually exclusive concepts. A closer look quickly reveals that issues such as employee health and wellness, high-quality education and measures for conserving resources contribute to a sustained increase in business success over the long term. For several years, companies have increasingly struggled to find employees with technical qualifications. These employees prefer modern employers that focus on sustainability, and that care not only about maintaining the environment but also about securing human rights, good working conditions and protection against corruption. We are convinced that the original corporate objectives can only be reached in an overall responsible context.

The objective of climate-neutral management is a significant challenge. As a manufacturer, we cannot keep up with the New Economy, as manufacturing activities inevitably result in emissions and other waste products. Our goal is to keep emissions to a minimum – and we are already making good progress in this regard.

We are pleased to support the UN Global Compact with concrete action, and we would like to see many more companies join us.



Prof. Dr.-Ing. Emil Schubert
CEO

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**"The beginning is the most important
part of work."**

Plato





ABICOR BINZEL – Welding technology that connects

Alexander Binzel Schweisstechnik GmbH & Co. KG (under the umbrella brand ABICOR BINZEL) is a multinational specialist and technology developer for welding and joining technology. Its high-quality, efficient and innovative solutions can be used in a variety of applications and application fields, with a constant focus on the users and their individual welding tasks. With its clear industry orientation, products that are developed with the process in mind, as well as a global service network, ABICOR BINZEL is one of the top players for welding worldwide.

Founded as a wholesaler for welding equipment in 1945, ABICOR BINZEL has been responsible for many key developments and new standards. The foundation for many more developments (most of which were patented) was laid with the first high-performance MIG/MAG shielding gas welding torch in 1963. It was followed by TIG shielding gas welding torches, the standardized central connector and socket system, the ABICOR BINZEL coaxial cable assembly BIKOX®, robotic welding torches as well as robotic periphery, WH replacement neck torches for robotic welding, the wire feed system MFS, crash protection for robotic welding torches CAT3 PRO/iCAT/iSTM and for the light-weight torch line ABIMIG® A T LW and the high-performance torch line MB EVO PRO, just to name a few. At this time, the company also provides system solutions in the area of extraction technology, welding with cobots, and laser joining.

ABICOR BINZEL is part of IBG Industrie-Beteiligungs-Gesellschaft mbH & Co. KG (IBG), domiciled in Cologne – a company that has been family-managed for over 100 years and that boasts an international affiliate network of its own distribution and production companies and exclusive partners. The IBG Group also includes companies in the welding and cutting technology segment, tungsten components and construction chemistry with more than 2,500 employees around the globe.

On February 1, 2024, ABICOR BINZEL joined the ABICOR GROUP, which combines the strong global brands of IBG Industrie-Beteiligungs-Gesellschaft mbH & Co. KG in the cutting, welding and components segment under one roof. It means that manufacturing companies in the metal industry now have access to the entire portfolio of all ABICOR GROUP companies including their cooperation partners with high-quality products and strong system solutions.

The first subsidiary, ABICOR BINZEL USA, was founded in 1976; currently there are 38 subsidiaries around the world. The company not only experienced international growth, but also expanded its permanent workforce in Giessen, which now comprises four building complexes. Currently, more than 400 employees work at this location, including over 140 employees who have been working there for 25 years or longer (and some even in the third generation).

The provision of training for the business professions and for industrial managers, as well as IT specialists for system integration (since 2021), is a big priority for the company. Dual studies are also offered. These future specialists and executives are part of the company's future and ensure that knowledge can be maintained and passed on within the company.

Currently, ABICOR BINZEL has more than 1,300 employees in 38 countries. It is these employees who – under the name "Alexander Binzel Schweisstechnik GmbH & Co. KG" and the umbrella brand ABICOR BINZEL – have turned a wholesaler of welding equipment into a global market leader for shielding gas welding and cutting torches over the last 80 years, and who are actively involved in sustainability as defined by the UN Global Compact.





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**"Human rights begin where
prejudices end."**

Marie-Joseph Motier, Marquis de La Fayette



1. Human rights

Principle 1

Companies are expected to support the protection of international human rights.

Principle 2

Companies are expected to ensure that they do not become complicit in human rights violations.

ABICOR BINZEL is committed to the internationally recognized human rights standards such as the principles of the UN Global Compact and the General Declaration of Human Rights by the United Nations (UN). Of course, this also includes compliance with all national and internationally applicable laws.

The IBG Code of Conduct

The basic principles of ABICOR BINZEL's business activities are specified in the Code of Conduct of the IBG Group. This Code of Conduct is mandatory for all company divisions and employees worldwide and defines the minimum standards that must be adhered to. This includes acting in accordance with all relevant laws and statutory provisions, as well as promoting a culture of equal opportunity and the consistent equal treatment of all employees without discrimination. Moreover, the Code of Conduct also formulates the commitment to protecting the environment, rejecting child and forced labor, complying with work safety measures and protecting employee rights.

Permanent measures

- In the context of the internal audits undertaken by the IBG Group, compliance with the Code of Conduct in its subsidiaries is also reviewed on a regular basis.
- The principles of the Code of Conduct are a mandatory part of the eplas® employee training program to ensure that they are firmly established among all employees.
- The international project and production management (IPM) regularly audits ABICOR BINZEL production locations with regard to production processes, quality and efficiency, and in this context also documents and reports any violations in this regard.

Through the Code of Conduct, all ABICOR BINZEL production locations are committed to compliance with human rights, including the prohibition of child and forced labor. The auditors are required to promptly report any anomalies. For the reporting of violations of human rights, laws and internal company directives with regard to conduct, IBG has established a central whistleblower system that meets the requirements of the Whistleblower Act.

Supplier selection

Approximately 90 percent of purchases from abroad are delivered by suppliers that belong to the IBG Group. These companies are committed to the same Code of Conduct as ABICOR BINZEL. Therefore, the risk of human rights violations at first-level suppliers can be assessed as very low.

Permanent measures

- A systematic audit of external suppliers is performed in the context of up to 25 audits annually. Here, the focus is mainly on the approximately 50 top suppliers with purchase volumes of more than EUR 100,000 per year.
- The issue of human rights is firmly integrated into the audits to raise awareness among suppliers and to identify potential violations.

Responsibility for employees and society

ABICOR BINZEL is well aware of its responsibility to its employees, society and the environment. The company takes a number of different measures to pro-actively address the resulting obligations. Of course, this includes all measures to comply with all generally recognized labor standards, measures to protect the environment, as well as active work safety and health protection management.

Social commitment

ABICOR BINZEL actively donates to or promotes social projects, institutions and organizations. The company intends to continue this practice.

New developments, changes and planned activities can be found in the latest sustainability report.

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**"We are not just responsible for what we do,
but also for what we fail to do."**

Molière



2. Labor standards

Principle 3

Companies are expected to protect the freedom of association and the effective recognition of the right to collective bargaining.

Principle 4

Companies are expected to advocate for the elimination of all forms of forced labor.

Principle 5

Companies are expected to advocate for the elimination of child labor.

Principle 6

Companies are expected to advocate for the elimination of discrimination in hiring and work.

ABICOR BINZEL requires a respectful and dignified attitude within the company and in dealings with third parties, and it promotes a culture of equality of opportunity and non-discrimination. Discrimination on the basis of ethnicity, religion, age, gender, physical constitution or sexual orientation is rigorously prohibited. ABICOR BINZEL respects the freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining, and advocates for the abolition of child labor and all forms of forced labor.

Employee representation in decision-making

Together with the disability representative, our works council has represented the interests of our employees since 1994. Working closely with the works council, the youth and apprentice representative looks after the special needs of young employees and apprentices.

Through its membership in the Employers' Association and the trade union, ABICOR BINZEL is committed to free collective bargaining, whereby the Hessian collective agreements for the metal and electrical industry apply to all.

The works council and management regularly discuss the concerns in the company. If needed, negotiations are undertaken with the goal of concluding the required company agreements. Examples include company agreements on flextime or mobile work.



Another co-determination instrument is the company's suggestion system, whereby employees can submit ideas for improvement.

2. Labor standards



Since the introduction of Shopfloor Management (SFM) in 2021, such ideas are also communicated directly on that platform. Depending on the significance of the suggested improvement, employees receive small to large bonuses ranging from fuel vouchers to several thousand euros.

Action against forced and child labor

In accordance with the Code of Conduct of the IBG Group, ABICOR BINZEL rejects any form of forced and child labor. As a sustainable company, ABICOR BINZEL also requires this commitment from its suppliers



Work safety

Work safety is an important issue in a company that is characterized by a lot of manual work. Therefore ABICOR BINZEL views work safety as an integral part of its quality and environmental management system (QM/EM system) and commits to comply with or exceed the statutory provisions regarding the prevention of accidents or protection against health risk. ABICOR BINZEL is certified according to DIN EN ISO 9001:2015, DIN EN ISO 14001:2015 and DIN EN ISO 50001:2018.

Permanent measures

- A full-time specialist for work safety analyzes hazard potentials, documents them in an annual report and develops the required measures
- Regular training sensitizes employees to safety in the workplace
- The work safety standards are regularly audited by the employers' liability insurance association BGHM in the context of the "Sicher mit System" (SmS) (systematic safety) audit. It is based on the national guideline for work safety management systems

The occupational safety committee consists of management, the works council, the safety representative and the company doctor and meets every quarter.



Occupational health

Many years ago, ABICOR BINZEL established a series of preventative health measures. These include regular visits by the company doctor, the provision of height-adjustable desks, and the financing of workplace eyeglasses.



Sports and preventative activities

Ongoing programs in this area include free health and sports courses such as courses for the back, badminton, as well as "Bewegte Pause" (active break) and participation in company runs.

ABICOR BINZEL also participates in the BusinessBike program and supports the purchase of (electric) bikes for employees and/or their partners. Depending on the value, a bike can be leased for a period of three years against a monthly fee.

Health exam and health days

Health exam and health days are held alternately every year.

Permanent measures

- As part of the health exam day, and in cooperation with the university in Giessen, employees are offered an opportunity to do a health checkup
- As part of the health day, various organizations set up booths to provide information about health and preventative measures
- Depending on the event location, workshops and taster courses are also offered
- Various sports courses such as back courses, badminton or breaks involving active movement are sometimes held several times a week

Attractive employer

Employee satisfaction is an important pillar for sustained business success.

Permanent measures

- Attractive and appropriate remuneration with Christmas and vacation benefits, and performance-based additional payments
- 35-hour week
- A family-friendly flextime model
- A company agreement in 2021 improved the general environment for mobile work for the benefit of the employees
- Our canteen with rooftop terrace offers fresh breakfast and lunch options every day from Monday to Friday
- The digitization of personnel file management in 2021 facilitates time recording, vacation planning and sick reporting for employees
- Four view-protected terminals have been installed for commercial employees to submit working hours and sick notes, and also for vacation planning
- Non-commercial employees have access to an employee portal that can also be used to record working hours during mobile work

2. Labor standards



Diversity

With approximately 1,300 employees in branch offices and foreign representations in 38 countries, diversity is a matter of course for ABICOR BINZEL, and a daily lived business practice. On average, more than 20 different nationalities are employed at ABICOR BINZEL at the Buseck location.

Approximately five percent of employees are disabled (or equivalent); they are represented by an independent disability representative.

Promoting young talent

Promoting young talent is a top priority for ABICOR BINZEL. For this reason, the company has established permanent measures for promoting young talent.

Permanent measures

- Regular student internships and summer jobs
- Hiring of student trainees
- Internships for students
- Support completing final theses
- Possibility of foreign internships for apprentices and StudiumPlus students

Structured education system

ABICOR BINZEL established the training program eplas® for continued education, which provides all employees with individualized annual plans.

Moreover, a new platform for internal continued education (ABICOR BINZEL Academy) was added to the external courses for learning or enhancing language skills, Microsoft applications, sales training etc. in 2023.





Management principles

ABICOR BINZEL executives act according to the following management principles:

- 1. Our actions are determined by clear goals
- 2. We make decisions and take responsibility
- 3. Controls and feedback are necessary
- 4. We motivate by providing leeway and performance incentives
- 5. We promote our employees
- 6. Information and communication facilitate successful collaboration

Employee satisfaction

ABICOR BINZEL is aware that society is changing and that various transformation processes are taking place in the company. It includes mediating between young and experienced employees, as well as aligning the company to quickly changing market conditions or digitization. These processes can lead to uncertainty and dissatisfaction. ABICOR BINZEL tries to address this situation by expanding educational opportunities and pro-actively increasing internal communication activities, such as regular newsletters by management to employees, as well as surveys on employee satisfaction.



Transparent complaints process

Complaints of all kinds are taken very seriously by ABICOR BINZEL. Depending on the assessment, a variety of contact points may be used for this purpose.

Permanent measures

- Supervisors and the works council are considered the internal points of contact for complaints
- If discrimination is suspected, employees can also contact the AGG (General Equal Treatment Act) complaints office, which is comprised of a male and a female ombudsperson
- A neutral ombuds office is also available. Employees can contact this office with confidence, if they suspect that laws have been violated within the company

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"If we are serious about the future, we have to stop leaving things to other people and take action."

Jane Goodall





3. Environmental protection and climate

Principle 7

Companies are expected to use the precautionary principle for managing environmental problems

Principle 8

Companies are expected to implement initiatives for increasing environmental awareness

Principle 9

Companies are expected to accelerate the development and distribution of environmentally-friendly technologies

Approach and objectives

ABICOR BINZEL considers it both a challenge and opportunity to be able to support the UN Global Compact with concrete initiatives for maintaining our environment. We consider technological progress and future-oriented action in accordance with integrated sustainability to be a matter of course. This approach is also demonstrated by the three awards that our company has received in recent years.

In 2018, Alexander Binzel Schweisstechnik GmbH & Co. KG won the "IHK-Unternehmenspreis" (Chamber of Industry and Commerce award) in the industry category and is therefore considered a driving force in the domestic economy that is also internationally successful. In 2019, the company won the "Großer Preis des Mittelstandes" (award for medium sized sector businesses), after reaching the finals in 2018.

This award, which is Germany's most sought-after business prize, honors companies that show considerable strength in the following five competitive objectives:

1. Overall development of the company
2. Creating/securing training and workplaces
3. Modernization and innovation
4. Engagement in the region
5. Service and proximity to the customer

In the following year, the company was awarded the title "Hessen-Champions 2020" in the category global market leader - a prize presented by the Hessian Ministry of Economics, Energy, Transport, and Housing, which was announced and presented online by the then Minister of Economics, Tarek Al-Wazir, among others.

In 2023, the company received the award "Arbeitgeber der Zukunft" (employer of the future) from the German Innovation Institute for Sustainability and Digitization (DIND) together with the business magazine DUP UNTERNEHMER. The award was handed out by former Federal Minister for Economic Affairs Brigitte Zypries. This honor goes to companies that are innovative, that have a clear digitization strategy, that pursue sustainability objectives and modern management, and that focus on their employees. ABICOR BINZEL met all of these criteria.



3. Environmental protection and climate



Environmental protection measures

Even before joining the UN Global Compact, we already made small but significant contributions to the protection of the environment and species:

- Patronage of the company's own bee population, managed by a regional beekeeper, in order to protect the greatest pollinators of wild and agricultural crops
- Planting of fruit trees on the company's own meadow behind building/plant 4
- Employees are instructed to use the search machine [ECOSIA www.ecosia.org](http://www.ecosia.org), as one tree is planted for each search query

Established environmental program

In 2012, ABICOR BINZEL established an environmental program with targets, defined measures and specified dates, which are audited, verified and tracked each year as part of a review. Currently, it is used to define steps for lowering energy consumption and waste, but also for reducing the daily transportation volume by including mobile working (home office) in normal operations, to name just a few examples.

This environmental program is part of the ABICOR BINZEL environmental management system that meets the requirements of DIN EN ISO 14001:2015 and that is certified by TÜV Nord (technical inspection agency).

The environmental management system is part of an integrated management system that includes written provisions for many different areas.

The integrated management system was based on the quality management system according to DIN EN ISO 9001:2015, which has also been certified by TÜV Nord since 1995. Work safety provisions are also included in the system; they have received the seal of approval "Sicher mit System" (SmS) (systematic safety) from the employers' liability insurance association since 2013 following successful certification. The system also contains all of the relevant regulations within the company, such as:

- Corporate organization
- Business processes
- Work safety
- Occupational safety
- Fire protection
- Environmental protection
- IT organization
- Data privacy
- Compliance with laws
- Development of products and services

Prior to committing to the UN Global Compact, ABICOR BINZEL was already engaged in the following projects and campaigns.



Buildings and processes

Electric charging stations

Eleven double electric charging stations are available for company and employee cars. The development of electromobility for the company's vehicle fleet is being implemented gradually. The maximum emissions have been added to the corporate vehicle regulation as an emission limit. The stage has been set to make electric cars attractive to all.

New construction plant 3B

A new building according to the KfW 55 standard with a photovoltaic system was constructed adjacent to building/plant 3 in 2021; the building was completed in 2022. It is not just the building that complies with the current provisions for CO₂ savings, as the trades and the planning office that were engaged were also regional companies with the corresponding short transportation routes.

Reduction in delivery traffic

One small measure was enough to reduce the delivery traffic for beverages and waste: water dispensers. They are now available at all four plants. They are connected to the drinking water system and feature a special filter that removes contaminants and even harmful germs. Instead of having to use plastic cups, employees now have access to a refillable bottle. Normal drinking glasses are also available.

Digitized procurement

A significant milestone in the purchasing department has been the digitization of almost all internal processes. Suppliers are requested to refrain from sending unsolicited brochures to ABICOR BINZEL.

Sustainable supplier management

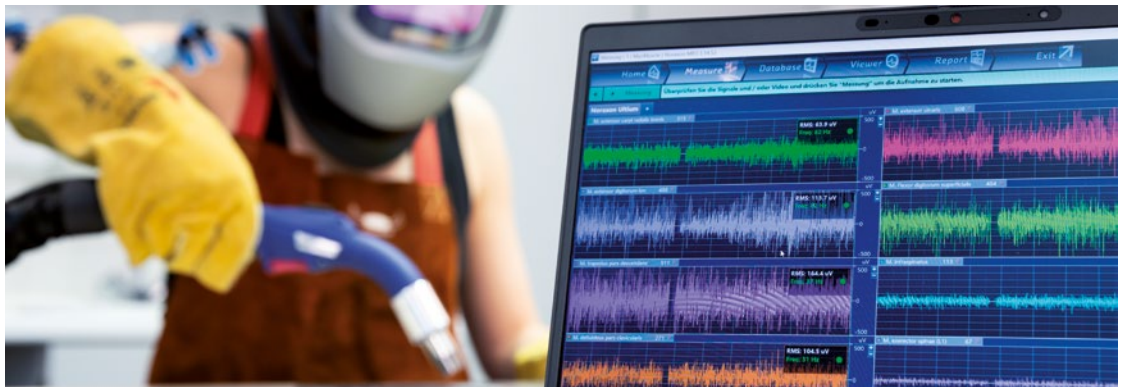
Fair, transparent and honest dealings with suppliers are a matter of course for ABICOR BINZEL. Mutual business relationships mean communicating in a way that is firm but also fair and open. This also includes showing a level of understanding for the supplier. For example, an understanding of why there may be supply bottlenecks helps when communicating with the internal production departments. Suggested ideas for supporting suppliers are given consideration. Sustainable supplier management is a give-and-take process that has a positive impact on all participants in the future.

Regional cooperation partners

Advertising material providers, printers, office furniture suppliers, IT services, personnel services providers, notaries and solicitors, engineering firms and trades for new buildings, cleaning services providers, processing partners for our partners – all of them are providers from the central Hesse region that we have commissioned or will commission as needed. In the event of breakdowns or bottlenecks in production processes, we will prioritize alternative suppliers in the region. We strive to maintain a regional focus.



3. Environmental protection and climate



Products/services

Long-lasting products

The longevity of our products is one aspect that distinguishes ABICOR BINZEL from the competition. It begins with the quality of the raw materials that form the basis of our products and extends from the processing of the materials to their return and the recycling of the same in material management. Our precautionary principle is a long service life and hence the longevity of our products. Moreover, ABICOR BINZEL ensures a full range of spare parts for virtually all products.

Permanent measures

- Support for products over their entire life cycle
- Good reparability of ABICOR BINZEL products
- Provision of spare parts

User-friendly products

What physical strains are welders exposed to during their work? Which muscle groups are stressed the most? What are the implications for performance? How can this strain be reduced? What preventive measures can be taken to protect the body? What does this mean for the development of new welding torches? Working with the sports science institute of the Justus Liebig University in Giessen, ABICOR BINZEL has conducted various studies that aim to answer these and other questions since 2009. The first study already provided confirmation that the ABICOR BINZEL torch lines fitted with the innovative and lightweight cable assemblies reduce muscle strain by up to 35% (compared to a similar standard torch), and that the welding result is also improved as a result.

Already implemented measures

- **First study** with the sports science institute of the Justus Liebig University in Giessen with the objective: "Was ein Schweißer fühlt, wird sichtbar gemacht" (What a welder feels is made visible)
- **Second study** with the sports science institute of the Justus Liebig University in Giessen with the goal of clarifying the extent to which a regular fitness program can help to reduce physical strain during welding. Development of a special preventative training program for welders
- Publication of the "**Fitness-Handbuch für Schweißer**" (Fitness manual for welders) including training DVD and a poster with instructions for daily exercises for muscle strengthening and relaxation
- **Comparative study** of a new, air cooled torch line with a lightweight cable assembly and its ergonomic predecessor, using an augmented reality welding simulator
- **Long-term study** in the sports science institute of the Justus Liebig University in Giessen with the title "Einfluss verschiedener Schweißbrenner auf die Arbeitsgeometrie beim Schweißen mit einem Fokus auf muskuläre Belastungen, die subjektive Belastung sowie Belastungen der Hand" (Impact of different welding torches on the work geometry during welding, with a focus on muscular strain, subjective strain and hand strain)



Product design

The issue of sustainability is already given key consideration during the product design process. This approach is established in the ABICOR BINZEL guidelines for product design and is also reflected with regard to materials, the reparability of products and efficiency levels. ABICOR BINZEL continually reviews and revises products over their entire life cycle.

"Clean" robotic arc welding cell

With the support of TWI (The Welding Institute) Cambridge, ABICOR BINZEL implemented the project "Weld Galaxy" using a cobot welding cell which was supported by the European Union as part of the "Horizon 2020" EU research and innovation program. This project studied how a clean cobot arc welding cell for users in small and medium-sized businesses has to be assembled in order to meet current and future requirements with regard to health protection, data monitoring and productivity. The development project made it possible to collect, store and visualize all of the relevant data of a welding cell, and to determine the consumption data for wire, gas as well as the entire energy consumption of the cell including all ancillary consumers. In this way, customers are also able to determine not just productivity but also the environmental balance sheet of the production process and the products. The solution has been integrated into a cloud environment, therefore the system offers flexible scalability for providers and users alike. The project was presented for the first time in the fall of 2021 in the context of a customer day.

Ground-breaking fume extraction technology

Our fume extraction torches and extraction devices, which are developed in-house, ensure clean air in the industrial facilities of our customers. With the xFUME® product line, ABICOR BINZEL has successfully introduced new extraction system solutions for manual welding work stations, automatic welding and robotic welding. The newly designed welding fume extraction torches typically capture between 90% and 98% of welding fumes, depending on the welding position and welding process. The xFUME® extraction devices filter and clean up to 99.76% of particles > 0.1 µm from these extracted welding fumes. Since these systems capture harmful welding fumes directly at the point of origin (extraction at the source), these fumes never reach the breathing zone of the welder or other people working in the vicinity of the welding location.

Moreover, the torch-integrated extraction process with a relatively low required air turnover uses much less energy than stationary extraction devices or building extraction systems.



Already implemented measures

- The xFUME® line provides the new fume extraction torch types for MIG/MAG and TIG welding
- The extraction devices xFUME® ADVANCED and xFUME® ADVANCED W3 have been added to the proven extraction devices FEC and FEC W3 as well as FES-200 and FES-200 W3

Gas management system for gas-shielded arc welding

EWR 2 and EWR 2 Net devices can reduce the consumption of shielding gases during welding in production settings by up to 60%. This gas management system also ensures continuous optimum shielding gas coverage, which in turn reduces reworking and rejects. The savings achieved for manual welding as well as robotic welding mean that less shielding gas needs to be purchased, so that the transport from manufacturer to production site is reduced accordingly. The transport of the gas bottles is the primary parameter in the CO₂ backpack of the shielding gas.

3. Environmental protection and climate



Lead-free products

The REACH Regulation sets out the registration, evaluation, approval and restriction of chemical substances (and mixtures made with the same) in the EU. As a supplier of products that can contain lead as a substance in the REACH ingredients list at a volume of more than 0.1 per cent by weight, ABICOR BINZEL is required to comply with the requirements and provide evidence of compliance. There are currently various exemptions for the use and processing of lead-containing alloys, which however are being gradually reduced. In this respect, ABICOR BINZEL has already taken precautionary measures and is currently implementing further measures.

Already implemented measures

- Full conversion to lead-free aluminum alloys

Thorium oxide-free tungsten electrodes

With the E3[®] tungsten electrode, ABICOR BINZEL offers an alternative to thorium oxide-containing TIG welding electrodes since 2012: Users are not exposed to radioactive substances and the environmental burden is reduced since grinding dust and leftover pieces do not have to be disposed of as hazardous waste. Similarly, no special precautions have to be taken with regard to transport and storage.

Already implemented measures

- In 2012, thorium-containing tungsten electrodes were completely removed from the portfolio and replaced with the E3[®] tungsten electrodes

Recycled products

Some countries have called for the labeling of material components for product packaging since 2022.

Already implemented measures

- The conversion of cardboard boxes for the shipment of extraction technology products already started in 2021

Reduction in air freight

Products are sent by air freight if lead times are short and the customer requires the products as soon as possible. The introduction of the new planning software add*ONE across the companies makes it possible to better forecast the flow of goods. In 2019, this software was first introduced for scheduling optimization at the production locations Buseck, Dresden and THERMACUT[®] (Czech Republic) as a subsidiary of IBG. Currently, this software improves transparency in daily planning and makes it possible to optimize the flow of goods and warehouse inventories in the entire group.

Already implemented measures

- Thirty IBG companies are connected to add*ONE
- For example, air freight volumes and therefore CO₂ emissions were reduced by 68% for South Africa and Australia
- The air freight volume to Brazil was already reduced by 45%



Expansion of drop shipping with suppliers

In order to save freight costs, prevent double handling and reduce delivery periods, ABICOR BINZEL suppliers have been shipping products such as welding chemicals directly to our customers for several years. We continue to work on expanding the drop shipping business with suppliers.

Electronic forms instead of paper

Circulation forms such as material requisitions, travel applications, vacation requests, warehouse withdrawals, requests submitted to administration and management, and all types of purchase orders, are processed digitally. Job applications are also received online through the new applicant portals and are no longer printed out and sent by internal mail. In this way, the consumption of standard paper decreased by 100,000 sheets between 2019 and 2020.

Home office

One initiative that was introduced during the pandemic is still in use: the work-from-home option for administrative employees. This option is important for our attractiveness as an employer and can facilitate the search for skilled labor. Moreover, it also means that there is less commuter traffic, which in turn reduces the CO₂ burden.



Support for the PurCity start-up project

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Emil Schubert – who was CTO at ABICOR BINZEL at that time – and Morteza Ghorbani Eftekhari, founder of PurCity, became acquainted as part of an EU research project. It quickly became clear that ABICOR BINZEL's expertise in extraction technology and the planned products of PurCity for absorbing CO₂ through air cleaning systems in cities were a very good fit. The self-cleaning air cleaning systems developed by this start-up can be installed on new and existing buildings, and they significantly reduce the CO₂ burden in the vicinity. They are partially based on welding structures, which of course are supposed to be made with fume extraction torches.



Working closely with the founder, prototypes for these air cleaning systems were built at the ABICOR BINZEL Innovation and Technology Center (ITC) in Buseck. It is expected that each system will save 15 to 20 tons of CO₂, depending on the building and its size. As an added value, the absorbed CO₂ can be sold in various markets, for example in the construction industry or agriculture. This was an opportunity for ABICOR BINZEL to contribute and incorporate its welding technology and know-how into the further development of this trend-setting project.

New developments, changes and planned activities can be found in the latest sustainability report.

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**"Values cannot be taught,
only demonstrated."**

Viktor Frankl





4. Prevention of corruption

Principle 10

Companies are expected to oppose all types of corruption, including blackmail and bribery

At ABICOR BINZEL, honesty and integrity are the basic principles for its dealings with business partners and employees. This also includes compliance with all applicable laws and regulations. Moreover, ABICOR BINZEL rigorously rejects all forms of corruption, including bribery and blackmail.

IBG Code of Conduct

The Code of Conduct, which was released by the IGB Group in 2018, defines the mandatory standards for responsible business conduct for ABICOR BINZEL. The prohibition of corruption and bribery, as well as donations to political parties, represent an integral part in this context. The specifications are outlined in detail in the IBG anti-corruption directive. Regular training on corruption prevention is an important instrument for preventing corruption in the company and familiarizing employees with the anti-corruption directives. They are mandatory components of the eplas® training program for employees.

Ombuds office

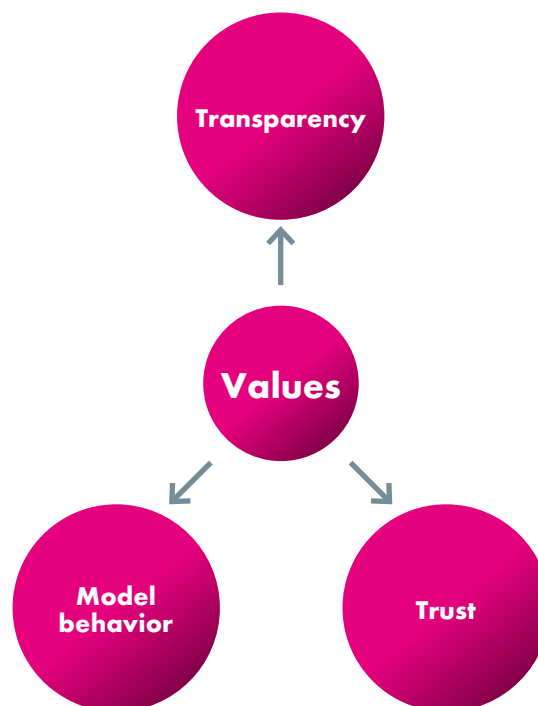
On October 1, 2021, ABICOR BINZEL set up an external ombuds office as a neutral point of contact for suspected cases of corruption and other legal violations. Employees were informed about the establishment of the ombuds office and are able to retrieve the contact details via the intranet (blackboard/permanent notices) at any time. They can report suspected cases to the complaints office. Reported cases are treated with absolute discretion.

Compliance representative

In 2018, we appointed a compliance representative who prepares an annual compliance report that documents the general status with regard to compliance issues such as compliance with laws, directives and the aforementioned codes. In addition, the representative also provides concrete information about e. g. types of compliance training and the number of participants.

Key data: anti-corruption

- IBG Code of Conduct
- Anti-corruption directives
- Ombuds office
- Annual training with exam and approval
- Annual report by the compliance representative



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Alexander Binzel Schweisstechnik GmbH & Co. KG
Kiesacker · 35418 Buseck · GERMANY
T +49 64 08 / 59-0
info@binzel-abicor.com

www.binzel-abicor.com