

# THE PIONEERS OF THE BECK GROUP – GUSTAV BECK AND THEODOR BECK

Gustav Beck was born on 26 July 1896 in »Toening an der Eider« (Schleswig-Holstein) as the first of five children. He, the son of the locomotive driver of the Royal Prussian Railway Hermann Beck and his wife Anna, was not granted an easy and carefree childhood. At the age of 4 years he was already an orphan. He already got to know the hardships of life as a child, and – growing up in simple circumstances – he was spared nothing in need and privation.

## THE ROYAL MERCHANT

As a non-commissioned officer in the Imperial Army he experienced his deployment as a soldier on the Western Front. After the collapse of the Empire, he experienced the years of privation and hardship and the beginnings of the Weimar Republic and yet, as a trained coppersmith, he made the courageous decision to set up his own business in Nuremberg on 1 August 1925.

Already in the early days of his existence he was active as a sales representative for electro-technical products and for products of overhead line technology, especially insulators as well as technical synthetic resin and ceramic products. Already before the 2nd World War he laid the foundation for the current development of the BECK Group. As early as 1924, he was commissioned as general agent for Rosenthal AG in Selb with the distribution of the entire product range.

This business relationship also survived the shadows of the dictatorship of the Third Reich. Only a few weeks after the collapse of the Nazi regime,

Gustav Beck resumed his old business and looked optimistically into the future. For him, for whom life has never been easy, no effort was too much and no task too difficult. In the city of Nuremberg, destroyed by nearly 95%, he resumed his work.

Since there was nothing of everything and the shortage was great, he undertook his first business trip by bicycle from Nuremberg to Selb. After two days of hardship and toil on the destroyed road and path system, he arrived in Selb and filled the old contractual relationships with new life.

Together with his son Theodor, company founder Gustav Beck was restless in the difficult post-war period and already in the time of the currency reform they created the basis for the later success of the company.



Gustav Beck

In addition to the electro-ceramic products of Rosenthal AG, they sold all those products that were urgently needed in post-war Germany at that time.

These included UPAT plugs for fixing to roofs and walls,

Resopal for kitchens from Römmler springs for ballpoint pens from the Schnöring-Werke, spacer bolts and cables of all kinds and much more. With the addition of the representation of the Roederstein group of companies for passive components as well as Intermetall for diodes and rectifiers and SGS-Ates for integrated semiconductors, sales were increasingly directed towards active and passive electronic components.

Already in the 1950s, the industrial agency Gustav Beck KG took a significant upswing and became an irreplaceable supplier for all major companies in the electronics and electrical engineering industry in the period of the economic miracle. Legendary customers such as Grundig-Werke, Siemens, Diehl, SEL, Loewe Opta, Metz, etc. took a tremendous upswing even in these stormy years of prosperity and restless work.

In the 50s and 60s, the name of the industrial agency Gustav Beck KG was inseparably connected with the products resistors, capacitors and insulators and on this basis, under the direction of Dipl.-Ing. Theodor Beck, it advanced to become the largest industrial agency in the state of Bavaria at all.

Many of his customers called Gustav Beck a »royal merchant« to worship his reputation as a salesman.

We will always honor the memory of our company founder, to whom we owe the basis of our development to this day. At the temporary peak of the company development of Gustav Beck KG, the founder died after a serious illness on June 11, 1968.

## THE FIRST SALES ENGINEER

When our company's founders time had come, his son, Dipl.-Ing. Theodor Beck, our current senior, had already been working for the company for 13 years and successfully initiated further development in the direction of distribution of electronic components at the beginning of the 1970s.

After completing his studies in electrical engineering, the young graduate engineer joined the company in the second generation on March 1, 1955.



Theodor Beck

On September 1, 1966, the so-called »commercial department for electronic components« was established as a separate business unit alongside the original field of activity of industrial representation. Already at this time, the head of the company attached great importance to firm contractual relationships with the manufacturing industry in order to be able to offer the clientele a wide range of products with regard to warranty and guarantee services. Among the first suppliers were: RIG-Draloric, Roederstein, (ERO, ROE,

ERO-Tantalum), SGS-ATES, Nortron, ITT-Cannon, Honeywell, Zeissler and Monsanto.

Already in the first years the assortment enjoyed great popularity among our esteemed customers due to the quality and reliable delivery. Since then, a stormy development began. Already in 1970 the company building in Scharnhorststrasse was bursting at the seams and the office and warehouse facilities were moved to the company building in Praterstrasse 32 in the centre of Nuremberg, which was three times larger. For just 5 years, the new premises offered sufficient space for the growing number of employees and the products to be stored. With far-sighted foresight, the head of the company built the 1st construction stage at the current location in Eltersdorfer Straße 7 as early as 1974 and again increased the area by the factor five. »At the beginning«, Theodor Beck told us again and again, »we felt completely lost in the big building«, it was a huge step forward after all.

The following 70s were marked by the great expansion in terms of employees, contract suppliers and also the founding of new branches in the Federal Republic of Germany at that time. BECK has always wanted to be particularly close to its customers through its own branches in order to be able to provide continuous and good advice directly on site.

## THE GREAT LEAP

So in 1982 it was time to create an independent and legally autonomous company from the then »Trade Department

for Electronic Components« within GUSTAV BECK KG: On 01.01.1982, the current »Beck GmbH & Co. Elektronik Bauelemente KG« was founded and from then on took an independent path alongside the parent company GUSTAV BECK KG. The positive development continued in the following years and was even strengthened by the entry of the 3rd generation Dr. Dieter Beck (1982) and Dipl.-Ing. Alexander Beck (1984). As a trio, the sons and their father continued to develop BECK ELEKTRONIK uninterruptedly until the 90s.

The constant development of the product range and the competent and friendly advice increasingly thanked our customers with orders. Parallel to this, BECK ELEKTRONIK began to carry out its own imports from the Far East as early as the mid-80s. Thus, in 1993, it was once again the case that all spatial boundaries had been blown up to the point of intolerability.

The current managing directors Dr. Dieter and Alexander Beck decided to build a large warehouse and dispatch building, our present logistics center, in Emskirchen, about half an hour from Nuremberg. At the same time, the office and administration building at the Nuremberg location was redesigned and considerably extended (additional floor, conversion of storage rooms into office/training rooms) during a 2nd construction phase.

New business fields were also developed, such as cable and battery assembly or BCM production. In 1996, the cable and battery assembly division were spun off into a separate company, Beck Kabel- und Gehäusetechnik

GmbH. Initially the company was integrated in a part of our warehouse in Emskirchen, but in 2003 the company headquarters was moved from Emskirchen to Rustow/Loitz to have room for further expansion. Very soon the space was again insufficient, so in 2009 a further warehouse and production hall was built. In 2003 the company Distronik GmbH was integrated into the Beck group of companies, thus expanding the TFT division.

As more and more of our customers moved their production to the Far East, the company BEC Asia Limited in Hong Kong in 2008 was founded to be able to supply customers faster. In 2016 the company Beck Elektronik Display GmbH was founded in order to push our TFT business further.

## THE MODERN TIMES

At this point, we take up the more recent history, which is still personally known to some, and which is told to others from stories told by our esteemed former colleagues at one of our joint festivities.

With foresight, and with the help of the third and fourth generations and all our colleagues, our BECK group of companies, in no less exciting times, develops into the modern and globally active distribution company that we are today.

It is remarkable that none of the suppliers from the first two founding generations still exist in their original form. Either they have left the market or were taken over by other manufacturers.

Accordingly, the focus of our distribution activities has changed completely four times in the company's history. Thanks to our willingness to innovate and drive, we have succeeded in evolving each time and BECK is now celebrating its 95th birthday.

But we also want to continue to equip ourselves for the future, so we are currently considering whether to replace the rented hall in Pirkach (Emskirchen) with another new building of our own warehouse. In Loitz we have bought another hall and are setting it up as an additional production and storage hall for BKG.

We hope to be able to add many more points to the group's list of success until its 100th birthday.



ELECTRONIC  
FAMILY