



## PRESS RELEASE

# BRUDER Spielwaren invests in the future

Ten new products planned for 2024

Fürth-Burgfarrnbach – 23/01/2024. The toy industry started 2023 with great optimism: The toy fair took place again after a two-year absence and the economic situation appeared hopeful. But 2023 had new challenges in store. The impact of these crises resulted in a general decline in the toy industry of 5 percent. For BRUDER Spielwaren GmbH + Co. KG, too, this difficult year did not pass without a moderate decline in sales. Nevertheless, the family-owned company has a positive outlook for the future and is facing the challenges at its European location.

### Review 2023 – Investments in efficiency and sustainability

After BRUDER Spielwaren closed 2022 with record sales in the company's history, expectations for 2023 were initially high. This confidence was quickly replaced by general disillusionment. Global hot spots, earthquakes and large scale fires resulted in a renewed exacerbation of the economic situation. The global increase in living costs influenced consumer behaviour. There were also enormous challenges from an operational perspective. Although some costs have declined over the course of the year, operating and production costs for companies producing in Europe remain generally very high. Financial balance sheet for 2023: sales of EUR 97 million with a still moderate decline of 2.45 percent compared to the previous year. "Despite the difficult circumstances this year, our standards for quality, functionality and longevity "Made in EU" are well received by end customers. We are delighted that many families share our values and that the BRUDER brand continues to grow worldwide," says Paul Heinz BRUDER, Managing Director of BRUDER Spielwaren GmbH + Co. KG.

The excellent availability of goods throughout the year was positive for the overall development. In order to meet the increased demand, the <sup>1</sup> Franconian manufacturer has been working

intensively over the past two years on expanding and improving the efficiency of production and logistics. In October, the expansion of the production halls at the Czech plant in Pilsen was put into operation.

At the same time, BRUDER invested in measures for effective energy savings at the Fürth-Burgfarrnbach site as part of the manifested sustainability concept of the family company. "We are constantly working on devising and improving our production methods so as to conserve resources as far as possible. We are achieving excellent results by means of a range of adjustments in the area of material handling. Ten injection moulding machines at the production site in Fürth-Burgfarrnbach have also been replaced. They use around 20 percent less power than their predecessor models," says Paul Heinz Bruder. Overall, the investment volume over the course of the year amounts to around 14 percent of sales. On the agenda for 2024 is the finalisation of another major energy-saving project to recover waste heat from production for heating the buildings.

Investments were also made in 2023 in the new development of ten products and in the registration for industrial property rights. The articles will be launched in the course of 2024 and will enrich the agricultural, municipal, construction and leisure segments.

### **Country overview**

BRUDER Spielwaren supplies its model-like toys and accessories to over 60 countries worldwide. Last year, too, the export rate was 70 percent. The DACH region, with Germany as the strongest market, recorded further sales growth and closed with a good plus compared to the previous year. The markets in Poland, the Czech Republic and the Baltic States, which have shown steady growth for several years, also showed particularly strong sales. In terms of market, sales and turnover, the greatest challenges arose in the USA and Asia.

### **Challenge skilled labor shortage**

The year also posed challenges for HR management. When it came to filling vacancies, the shortage of skilled workers, especially in the commercial sector, once again proved to be a major issues. Nevertheless, we managed to keep the workforce number stable. As of the reporting date of 31 December 2023, the number of employees remained at 500, including 22 trainees.

At the start of September 2023, the filling of the apprenticeship positions proved to be more difficult than in previous years. Many school graduates took more time than usual to decide on

an apprenticeship. For commercial positions in particular, the right candidates were found very late, whereas commercial positions could be filled early on. A positive outlook: A large proportion of the contracts of apprenticeship for the coming training year have already been signed. For September 2024, BRUDER will once again offer ten young trainees apprenticeships in five professions.

### **Outlook and new products for 2024**

The third-generation family-run company plans to make further investments in the areas of digitalisation and modernisation in 2024. It is important to be future-oriented and effective, also with regard to new EU and Federal Government laws or projects. In particular, the reforms of the Toy Safety Directive, with the planned introduction of a product passport and the expansion of chemical test procedures. Due to the Supply Chain Due Diligence Act, BRUDER Spielwaren will also have to deal with documenting the supply chain down to the individual material.

From 30 January to 3 February 2024, the toy professionals will meet at the Toy Fair in Nuremberg. The BRUDER Spielwaren stand is located in a well-established location in **Hall 6/Stand C31-37**. As a special highlight, the Franconian company will be presenting the renewed “ROADMAX” brand line at this year’s world’s leading trade fair. The products previously known as the “2Plus line” have been relocated to this category. To introduce the line accordingly, BRUDER will launch a tractor with frontloader and tipping trailer in July. The ROADMAX brand series with its characteristic BRUDER design is specially designed for children aged two years and up. The series is particularly robust and easy to use. BRUDER’s familiar attention to detail has not been neglected.

### Agriculture themed world

In addition to the new ROADMAX tractor, the agriculture themed world will have the most new items in 2024 with total of four additional products. The DEUTZ 8280 TTV will be launched in October. The new tractor features an impressive, strong design and the typical BRUDER functionality. A perfect work machine for young farmers aged three and up. In March and April 2024, BRUDER will expand its range of agricultural trailers with the Lemken Grubber Koralin 9 and the Fliegl Jumbo Line Plus barrel trailer. Impressive in size, the Lemken Koralin offers a versatile solution for the gentle cultivation of agricultural land. Even at the BRUDER scale of 1:16, the cultivator still has an impressive size of just under 50 x 45 centimetres. Fliegl’s Jumbo Line barrel trailer is also impressively large. The true to detail model is equipped with a towing hose

system, which extends by 75 centimetres. “Water on!” is the call when the integrated tank is filled with water.

#### Leisure time themed world

Attention adventurers aged four and above! From January on, BRUDER Spielwaren will take you on a kayak tour. Let your outdoor adventure begin with the Jeep Wrangler Rubicon Unlimited with kayak and figure. The Jeep is equipped with sprung front and rear axles, a detachable roof and a removable rear bench seat. Ready for a trip to the water: The kayaker has already packed his life jacket and helmet. With the floating kayak on board, you can go to the next river, lake or even take it in the bathtub.

#### Construction site themed world

The early summer will see the launch of BRUDER's new Cat® compact articulated wheel loader. As a new model at BRUDER, this all-rounder will complement the construction vehicles themed world from June on. In the BRUDER-typical Scale 1:16 and with many BRUDER-typical functions, the articulated wheel loader has the familiar articulated steering, a fully functional loading arm and removable loading shovel.

#### Commercial vehicles themed world

The manoeuvrable small garbage trucks are seen increasingly more and more, especially in urban areas. BRUDER Spielwaren is following this trend and will launch the MB Sprinter municipal garbage vehicle based on the versatile all-rounder from Stuttgart in August 2024. Children aged four and up can immerse themselves in the world of waste disposal with the detailed vehicle and matching waste bin accessories and play and learn through a range of functions – also in terms of recycling and sustainability.

#### Emergency vehicles themed world

The new addition to the BRUDER fleet will be ready for any police adventure from February on. The MB Sprinter police emergency service vehicle with police officer is indispensable for all playful police, search or rescue operations. The interior of the Sprinter has a removable and convertible table with bench seats that are quickly accessible via the sliding door. Take your position and dive into the world of policing.

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**About BRUDER Spielwaren GmbH + Co. KG:**

For many decades, the family-owned company BRUDER has been developing and producing model-like toys with international success. A large part of the products is still manufactured in the main factory in Fürth/Bavaria. The multiple award-winning manufacturer pays particular attention to the details and play value of its 1:16 scale toys. In addition to tractors, forklifts, combine harvesters, emergency vehicles or trucks from numerous well-known brands, the bworld range with a variety of realistic-looking figures and themed sets has been completing children's play worlds since 2011.

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