

Strive With Grit, Keep Going Forward 砥砺前行 继往开来

—— Interview with Richard Zhang, CEO of KERN-LIEBERS and Chairman of Taicang Roundtable
—— 访 KERN-LIEBERS 首席执行官、
太仓高新技术产业开发区欧商投资企业协会主席张臻伟先生

第三次工业革命“工业 4.0”再工业化的实施，旋即引发了世界范围的蝴蝶效应。中国版“工业 4.0”《中国制造 2025》意在推动中国制造向中国创造转变，中国速度向中国质量转变，中国产品向中国品牌转变。李克强总理 2014 年 10 月 10 日访问德国期间，中德双方就发表了《中德合作行动纲领：共塑创新》，宣布两国将开展“工业 4.0”合作，该领域合作已经成为中德未来产业合作的新方向。占世界份额 70% 的安全带弹簧生产企业德国克恩 - 里伯斯是如何以领先的技术站在产业发展的前沿的？带着这个问题，记者采访了 KERN-LIEBERS 首席执行官、太仓高新技术产业开发区欧商投资企业协会主席张臻伟先生。

张臻伟总裁介绍说，德国克恩 - 里伯斯集团成立于 1888 年，是位于德国西南部的中型家族企业，克恩专营用于各领域的高科技弹簧、精冲及冲压件、冲压折弯件、卡环及纺织元件的生产和销售，并先后在世界各国成立 50 余家子公司。克恩 - 里伯斯中国业务集团于 1993 年由德国克恩 - 里伯斯集团公司投资兴建，注册资本 4,600 万欧元，投资总额 1 亿欧元，是太仓第一家德国独资企业，至今已成立 25 周年。经过全体员工的不懈努力，现已拥有 1100 余名员工



KERN-LIEBERS 首席执行官、太仓高新技术产业开发区欧商投资企业协会主席张臻伟先生 (摄影赵辉) Richard Zhang, CEO of KERN-LIEBERS and Chairman of Taicang Roundtable (Photo by Zhao Hui)

的创新及质量理念。凭借这种优势做我们技术的开发，其 8 个产品组覆盖了范围较广的应用领域。金属加工结合特殊机加工的综合技术是我们中国业务集团的核心竞争力。我们在开发、生产和销售技术复杂的弹簧，冲压、折弯和精密冲压件方面拥有核心竞争力。除了处理和加工金属以生产精密零件和组件外，我们在塑料复合材料领域也颇

□记者 李 莉

和 3.8 万平方米现代化厂房。公司以其全方位的管理理念、优质的产品、先进的生产设备、尖端的研发力量和完善的客户服务赢得了在国际汽车、电子、电器，铁路行业的盛名。其中克恩 - 里伯斯生产的安全带弹簧占世界份额的 70%，同时国内三分之一的紧身服装制品采用 KERN-LIEBERS 沉降片制成，并在国内相继成立 9 家分支机构，遍布东部，北部，西部地区。2017 年集团销售额达 7 亿欧元。中国市场占 20%。

任何一个企业，欲保持持续的发展与稳步的增长，都必须进行技术的改造与产品的创新。张总说：“克恩 - 里伯斯在太仓按产品分 5 个不同的事业部，市场不一样产品也不一样，汽车行业和纺织业客户比较多，中型家族企业的做法都是在某一个领域非常专注，使得某一个产品或者几个产品能够在全世界排名第一或者第二。我们继承了德国原有产品

有经验。我们希望加强我们现有的市场地位，并获得新的市场份额。在尚未实现的区域，我们致力于通过产品和服务取得市场领先地位。”张总强调说：“智能制造和德国‘工业 4.0’，对我们在中国的德企来说，实际上是很大的利好。我们 1993 年进入中国的时候，中国的劳动力成本很低，整个社会的质量需求，市场追求数量比较多，追求质量的相对少，所以那个时候我们会面临很多无序的竞争，很大部分是通过低价来进行竞争的。现在，质量比数量更重要，整个社会劳动力成本也非常高，营商环境对我们来说反而更好，社会的规范性，法律的规范性都比以前更好。我们在生产技术复杂的弹簧、冲压、折弯和精冲件方面处于市场领先地位，并且已经成为工业企业可靠的合作伙伴，这在全球有重要的意义。全球约三分之二的客车使用的部件来自克恩 - 里伯斯。通过实施零缺陷目标，我们取得了非凡的成就，为此，我们深感自豪。我们公司的融资和发展一直具有可持续性，所以，我们今天的业务具有坚实的经济基础，能够承受周期性的波动。我们很早就开始利用全球化带来的机遇。我们是最早在中国成立分公司的外资企业之一。此举对我们今天的发展和成功做出了重要的贡献。”

自 1992 年开始，张臻伟先生走出交大校门就开始了他的创业里程。1992 至 1995 年，他就职于韩国三星中国办事处，在这期间，他们 20 余人三星进入亚洲乃至中国市场奠定了良好基础，创立了良好开局。1995 年张臻伟先生加入克恩 - 里伯斯（太仓）有限公司，担任总经理，从此就与克恩 - 里伯斯结下了不解之缘。如今，身兼

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(左) 张臻伟先生，(中) Owner of KL Group, Dr. Steim, (右) Dr. Udo Schnell Richard Zhang, Owner of KL Group, Dr. Steim and Dr. Udo Schnell from Left to Right



克恩 - 里伯斯德国总部 3C (左) CFO Mr. Klaus Scheuble (中) CEO Dr. Udo Schnell (右) CTO Mr. Dirk Heers (摄影赵辉) 3C of KERN-LIEBER Headquarters, CFO Mr. Klaus Scheuble, CEO Dr. Udo Schnell and CTO Mr. Dirk Heers from Left to Right (Photo by Zhao Hui)



KERN-LIEBERS 中国业务集团 3C (左) CFO Mr. Alexander Tobert (中) CEO 张臻伟先生 (右) COO Mr. Simon Veit (摄影赵辉) 3C of KERN-LIEBERS Chinese Business Group, CFO Mr. Alexander Tobert, CEO Richard Zhang and COO Mr. Simon Veit from Left to Right (Photo by Zhao Hui)

的贡献。他像一块具有极强磁力的磁铁，吸引和凝聚了国内大批志同道合者，并已经成为克恩 - 里伯斯的中流砥柱，成为克恩 - 里伯斯创业道路的先锋。通过张臻伟先生多年的努力，运用其智慧和丰富的专业知识，成功地将克恩 - 里伯斯公司发展为行业的领先者。他还一直致力于中德文化和企业交流，抓住地缘优势、政策优势，积极地向德国和欧盟公司及其投资者宣传太仓的良好投资环境、促进外商在太仓的投资，同时把德国企业声音反馈给政府，也把政府政策等及时与德国企业互动，2017 年张臻伟先生被 86 家德国企业推选为欧商投资企业协会主席，跟太仓政府特别是高新区政府进行合作，帮忙他们成立“工业 4.0”诚信公共服务平台，联络很多德国企业、研究所、高校等，希望把“工业 4.0”概念元素展示出来，也希望德国公司各自成立各自的博士工作站，然后成立联合工作站，一方面能够帮助到在太仓的德国企业，另外一方面也能够通过

这样一个服务平台给太仓的民企做一些帮助。他说：“我们愿意花点时间去参与欧商协会，让几个德国企业一起来做厂房的维护保养或者智能化的一些工作，甚至包括集中一些产品和原材料的采购，这样，德国企业各自也减少了人力物力，降低了成本，为德国企业在中国的发展架起一座金桥。”

企业文化是源于共同志向和共同目标基础上的价值

观，而这种价值观又渗透在企业整个管理和经营的实践之中，渗透在企业的管理制度之中。支撑克恩 - 里伯斯走得远、走得快的最主要原因就是人才。张总说：“我们克恩 - 里伯斯中国区现在是三 C 并行管理，我是 CEO，CFO 和 COO 都是德国人，CFO 财务总监 Alexander Tobert 先生负责财务，IT 和采购等，COO 运营总监 Simon Veit 先生负责日常生产和质量，我负责市场和技术发



张总向集团董事会介绍企业发展情况 Mr. Zhang introduce the development of company to board members

展，我们分工负责，层层负责，基层管理干部也都能独当一面，在各个领域如鱼得水，让我们比建几个厂房添加几台机器更有成就感，以前的人员数字和人员比例是三角形，最底层的工人最多。未来的发展应该是一个菱形，也就是上层少，最底层的员工也会越来越少，中间体有技术有能力的会越来越多。这样企业才会更智能，效率更高。我们鼓励员工开发和贡献新的想法、方法、技术和工艺。希望在集团内部通过有组织的知识转移来实现协同效应。”建立一个吸引人、培育人、尊重人、理解人的企业运作体系，才能使企业生生不息，才能不断地留住需要的人才，吸引更多的人才。公司为吸引和保留人才，建立了良好的薪酬福利体系。为顺应行业的发展趋



张臻伟与太仓领导在中德合作太仓二元制本科项目揭牌暨首期项目开班仪式上
Opening Ceremony of Taicang Sino-German Dual Bachelor Training Program

势和公司内外部环境的变化，公司进行不断的评估、检讨和调查，确保公司的薪资福利水平对内公平，对外具有竞争力，谋求人才价值的充分体系。经过 25 年的运作和积累，公司形成了卓有成效的人才管理体系，建立了结构合理的立体人才梯队，并实现了人力资本的持续有效增值，为日常经营的有效运转和企业快速扩张提供了强有力的人才保障，同时，员工也在公司的发展

壮大中，找到了职业发展舞台，充分体现了人的自我价值，获得了丰厚的回报和认可，员工与公司真正结成了利益共同体和命运共同体。克恩 - 里伯斯的发展战略充分契合“中国制造 2025”的目标，扎根中国，从“中国制造”转变“中国研发”。张总说：“20 多年前技术依托德国总部，经过一点点分层次转移到中国，10 年以前我们开始研发当地的技术并申请专利。我们两年以前很多研发技术人员分散在 5 个事业部，目前已经对组织机构进行了大调整，研发重新合并，2018 年我们会建立工程技术中心，正式成立研发事业部。未来，我们在研发方面会投入很多，一是新技术、新产品的研发，二是对现有技术现有工艺的优化，并加大自动化智能化的投入。另外，我们会培养出更多人掌握这些新的技术，建立职业发展通道，使各类人才相得益彰。2018 年年底我们在天津和太仓还将投资两家新工厂。这项投资再次清晰地表明了

中国业务的顺利发展对于集团而言的重要意义。”雄关漫道真如铁，而今迈步从头越。回顾过去，在德国总部管理层的关怀支持下，经过 25 年的艰苦创业，克恩 - 里伯斯已经基本具备了在市场大潮中搏击风浪的实力。“砥砺前行，继往开来”。作为有着百年历史的家族企业，追求稳步健康的长远发展是其重要的战略思想。克恩 - 里伯斯的未来非常令人鼓舞。



势和公司内外部环境的变化，公司进行不断的评估、检讨和调查，确保公司的薪资福利水平对内公平，对外具有竞争力，谋求人才价值的充分体系。经过 25 年的运作和积累，公司形成了卓有成效的人才管理体系，建立了结构合理的立体人才梯队，并实现了人力资本的持续有效增值，为日常经营的有效运转和企业快速扩张提供了强有力的人才保障，同时，员工也在公司的发展

The implementation of the third industrial "Industry 4.0" reindustrialization soon initiates the butterfly effect worldwide, Chinese version of "Industrial 4.0", "Made in China 2025" aims to promote the transformation of "Made in China" into "Created in China", "Chinese Speed into Chinese Quality", and "Chinese Products into Chinese Brands". During Premier Li Keqiang's visit to Germany on October 10, 2014, China and Germany have issued "Sino-German Cooperation Action Program: Co-shape Innovation", announced both countries to conduct "Industry 4.0" cooperation, which has become a new direction of Sino-German future industrial cooperation. How did KERN-LIEBERS, the German safety belt spring production enterprise accounting for 70% world share, stand at the front edge of industrial development with leading technology? With this question, Multinationals in China talks with Richard Zhang, CEO of KERN-LIEBERS China and Chairman of Taicang Roundtable.

As Zhang introduces, established in 1888, KERN-LIEBERS is a medium-sized family enterprise located in the south-western region of Germany, exclusive in production and marketing of high-tech spring, coining and stamping part, stamping bended part, snap ring and textile component of various fields. So far, it has established over 50 subsidiaries successively all over the world. KERN-LIEBERS China Business Group was invested and established by KERN-LIEBERS Group Corporation in 1993, with the registered capital of EUR 46 million and aggregate investment of EUR 100 million. As KERN-LIEBERS' first wholly owned enterprise in Taicang, it has developed for 25 years. Under unremitting efforts of all employees, it possesses over 1,100 employees and 38,000 square meters of modernized plant. By virtue of all-around management philosophy and high product quality, advanced production equipment, edge-cutting R&D strength and perfect customer service, the company has won high reputation in international industries of automobiles, electronics, electrical appliances and railway. Among the above, the safety belt spring produced by KERN-LIEBERS accounts for 70% world share, meanwhile one third of body fitting garments adopt KERN-LIEBERS sinker. What's more, it has established 9 subsidiaries successively in China, covering eastern part, northern and western parts. In 2017, the group sales amount to EUR 700million. The Chinese market contributes 20%.

Any enterprise will keep continuous development and stable growth through technology and product innovations. According to Zhang, the products of KERN-LIEBERS in Taicang are put into 5 different business divisions, different products for different markets. Relatively more clients are in automotive textile industries, and generally medium-sized family enterprises are more devoted in a certain field to enable one or more products to rank No. 1 or No. 2 throughout the world. Our company inherits innovation and quality concept contained in



张总在 2015 新厂房扩建典礼上致词 Speech by Mr. Zhang at 2015 New Building Extension Ceremony

the original German products. By virtue of this advantage, we conduct technical development, with 8 product groups covering extensive application fields. The core competitiveness of our China business group is the comprehensive technology integrating metal processing with special machine processing. We possess core competitiveness in developing, producing and selling spring, stamping, bending and precision stamping with complicated technologies. Except processing and handling metal to produce precision parts and assemblies, we are quite experienced as well in the field of plastic composite materials. We hope to strengthen our existing market niche and obtain new market share. In unrealized area, we devote oneself to acquiring market leading status via product and service. Zhang emphasizes, "intelligent manufacturing and German 'Industry 4.0' is actually great bull news

for us, the German-funded enterprises in China. When we entered China in 1993, the labor cost was very low in China; as for the quality demand, the market pursued quantity quite much, and quality quite little, so then we were faced with much disordered competition and to quite large degree, we conducted low-price competition. At present, quality is more important than quantity, the labor cost of the whole society is very high, business environment is better for us and social and legal normalization is better than before. We are in the leading market position in spring, stamping, bending and fine punching parts with complicated production technology, where we have become reliable partners with industrial enterprises. This is of great global significance. About two thirds of global passenger cars adopt components from KERN-LIEBERS. Via implementing zero defect objectives, we have obtained extraordinary achievements, therefore we are quite proud. The financing and development of our company has always been with sustainability, so our current business is supported by solid



economic foundation which can bear cyclical changes. We have early started to utilize the opportunities brought by globalization. We are one of the foreign-funded enterprises which set up branch companies in China at the earliest time. This action has made significant contribution to today's development and success.

Zhang started his entrepreneurship mileage since he graduated from Jiaotong University in 1992. Then he has taken office at Samsung China Office till 1995. During this period, their team of over 20 personnel has established satisfactory foundation and created a good start for Samsung's entrance to Asian and Chinese markets. In 1995, Zhang joined KERN-LIEBERS (Taicang) Co., Ltd., assumed the General Manager, and since then has become tightly bonded to KERN-LIEBERS. Nowadays, assuming both CEO of KERN-LIEBERS China and Chairman of Taicang Roundtable, Zhang has been keeping shuttling between German headquarters and China. By virtue of his intelligence and ability, Chinese complex and profound background in German enterprise, he has obtained solid trust from German headquarters and clients. Under strong support and assistance from the German headquarters, many products that he introduced from German headquarters have filled up the blank in the Chinese market, provided extensive development space and stage for the Chinese market and made excellent contribution to the development of the field and industry. Like a magnet with strong magnetometric power, he has attracted and coagulated large number of domestic people in the same camp, who have become the backbones of KERN-LIEBERS and the pioneers on the entrepreneurship path of KERN-LIEBERS. Via multi-year efforts, Richard Zhang has successfully developed KERN-LIEBERS into an industrial leader via his intelligent and abundant professional knowledge. He has always been dedicated to Sino-German culture and



DAWT 学徒工车间 DAWT Workshop

enterprise exchange, grasped geographical advantages, policy advantages, actively publicize the satisfactory investment environment of Taicang to German and other EU companies and investors, promoting foreign investment in Taicang, and meanwhile, feed back German enterprises' voice to the government and as for the government policies, interacted with German enterprises. In 2017, Zhang was elected the Chairman of Roundtable by 86 German enterprises, and started to

cooperate with the government of Taicang, esp. the government of High-Tech Area. He helped them establish "Industry 4. 0" Integrity Public Service Platform, contacted many German enterprises, institutions, colleges and universities, etc., hoping to exhibit the concept of "Industry 4.0", and hoping German companies to establish respective doctor workstation, and



德国学徒工拜访 Visit of German Apprentices

then teamwork station. On one hand, he can help German enterprises in Taicang, on the other hand, offer some assistance to the private enterprises in Taicang via such a service platform. According to him, "We are willing to spend time participating in Roundup, enabling several German enterprises to conduct maintenance and intelligent work for plant, even including concentration of some product and raw materials purchase. In this way, German enterprises also reduce some manpower and material resources, reducing the cost and setting up a golden bridge for the development of German enterprises in China."

Enterprise culture originates in the outlook on value on the basis of common ambition and goal and the outlook penetrates into the practice of the corporate management and operation as well as the corporate management system. The major reason supporting KERN-LIEBERS to go far and fast is talent. As Zhang say, "KERN-LIEBERS China Area now adopts 3C parallel management: I'm CEO, and both CFO and COO are Germans. CFO Mr. Alexander Tobert is responsible for finance,



克恩·里伯斯车间 KL Workshop



IT and purchase; COO Mr. Simon Veit takes charge of daily production and quality, and I'm in charge of the development of market and technology. We adopt division and hierarchy of responsibility and our lower-level management can also take charge of a department alone and exert their abilities in all fields. We enjoy more sense of achievements more than building some plants and adding some machines. Formerly, the personnel number and personal ratio is triangle, with the most workers at bottommost. Future development is supposed to be diamond shape, namely, the top is of small number, the bottom staff will also be less and less, and the intermediate those with capacity and technology will be more and more. In this way, the enterprise can be more intelligent and efficient. We encourage the employees to develop and contribute new thoughts, method, technology and process. We hope to fulfill synergistic effect in the group via organized knowledge transfer." Only the establishment of enterprise operation system attracting, cultivating, respecting and understanding people enables the enterprise to trigger endless growth, continuously retain the talents and attract more talents. To attract and retain talents, the company establishes favorable salary and welfare system. To conform to the development trend of industry and environmental changes in and outside the company, it conducts continuous evaluation, review and investigation to ensure the salary benefit level of the company at internal fairness and external competitiveness as a sufficient system



to strive for talent value. Through 25-year operation and accumulation, the company has formed highly effective talent management system, established reasonably structured three-dimensional talent echelon and realized continuously effective value addition of human capital, which has provided strong talent guarantee for effective day-to-day operation and rapid expansion, meanwhile, during the corporate expansion, the employees have found career development stage, sufficiently embodied self-value of people, obtained rich returns and approval. In this way, the employees and the company have built up interest community and destiny community.

The development strategy of KERN-LIEBERS sufficiently corresponds to the objective of "Made in China 2025", rooted in China, transforming from "Made in China" into "Developed in China". As Zhang comments, "The technology depended on German headquarters 20 years ago, and was transferred to China by escalated level; but we start to develop local technology and apply for patent 10 years ago. Two years ago, many of our research and development technology personnel were distributed over 5 business divisions, while at present, we have conducted large adjustment on organizational structure and reconsolidated R&D: in 2018, we will establish engineering



technology center and formally establish R&D Business Division. In the future, we will invest even more in R&D: on the one hand, R&D of new technologies and products, on the other hand, optimization of the current technology and enhancement of investment in automation and intelligentization. In addition, we will cultivate more people to master these new technologies, establish career development passage to enable various talents to benefit mutually. At the end of 2018, we will invest two new factories in Tianjin and Taicang. This investment again clearly indicates the significance of Chinese business's smooth development for the group."

In retrospect upon the past, under the concern and support of the German headquarters, through 25-year hard-working entrepreneurship, KERN-LIEBERS has been basically equipped with the strength to fight against stormy waves in the springtide of the market. "Strive with Grit, Keep Going Forward". As a family business with the history of over a century, it takes the pursuit of steady and healthy long-term development as its significant strategic thought. The future of KERN-LIEBERS is quite inspiring.