

# The simulation specialists

## tarakos develops planning software for the fields of production and logistics

"We make movies for executives and decision-makers," says Herbert Beesten with a laugh. The managing director of tarakos GmbH is sitting in a former warehouse that has been converted into an office building in the former Magdeburg trading port. When Herbert Beesten looks out of his window, he can see a disused crane. His company tarakos also offers cranes – on-screen cranes, however.

**Herbert Beesten and his employees** develop 3D software solutions for the virtual planning, simulation and visualisation of complex manufacturing processes. Before investors and companies build a production plant or logistics centre, they can simulate the new facility with the software kit from tarakos. These days, a 3D visualisation process is pretty much indispensable before large projects are put into action. The benefits are clear: more accurate planning, superior production, more safety and efficiency, lower energy costs.

"Our software products are not hard-to-access, high-end applications for specialists. They are aimed specifically to the needs of SMEs. Their benefits range from effective operational use due to cost-effective acquisition and intuitive operation, through to simple integration into the users' existing IT architecture. The program can be used after just a few hours of training. It's a kind of on-screen form of LEGO," explains Herbert Beesten.

**The software kit from tarakos** contains industry-specific libraries with over 500 animated items that are used in the field of logistics and production such as robots, high racks, assembly lines, forklifts, boxes, stairs and, of course, people. Production lines, assembly lines or dispatch processes can be digitally mapped using "drag and drop" without difficulty and in considerable variety. A task, a speed, or a cycle time can be added to each module. The entire process is finally played back in a video – either from bird's eye view or from an on-the-ground perspective. With 3D glasses, the virtual scenarios can also be impressively "flown through". Visualised and "walk-in" processes such as these are becoming increasingly decisive to the question of whether a project is realised or drops off the agenda. The technology enables the risk of technical and business planning errors to be significantly reduced.

"Our customers don't just come from the conventional sector of production and logistics. Training companies, manufacturers of conveyor technology and planners are also among the users. Close contact with our customers is important to us. With training and intensive consultations, we solve the problems encountered and therefore highlight the possibilities for optimisation," explains the managing director. Tarakos' customers are as varied as the possible applications of the visualisation software: automotive manufacturers such as Volkswagen, BMW and Daimler and businesses such as Würth, Siemens and IKEA. This means, of course, that the software isn't just used in Germany, but also in countries such as the USA, China and Dubai. "Foreign business accounts for around 30 percent of turnover. The demand for our products is particularly high in China," explains Beesten.

Yet it isn't just major corporations that use the software from tarakos – it is especially popular with medium-sized companies. German kitchens firm Burger Küchenmöbel GmbH, for instance, planned its new production facility with the help of the program.

A stone's throw from Herbert Beesten's office in the so-called "Science Port" are the headquarters of the Fraunhofer Institute for Factory Operation and Automation (IFF), which cooperates very closely with tarakos, something which is also true of the Department of Computational Visualistics at Otto von Guericke University. "They solve problems for us, and we solve problems for them. Our customers benefit hugely from these collaborations. Magdeburg is home to employees with excellent levels of training and education, especially in the fields of computer visualisation and materials handling, and they bring their know-how into our product development," explains the native citizen of Münsterland. On starting his career as a young electrical engineer in the 1970s, in addition to other fields, Beesten spent a lot of time working with heat pumps. He is now a pioneer of the Industry 4.0 – a revolution towards digital production.

Beesten founded tarakos, a business which was originally based on the campus of the University of Magdeburg, in the year 2000. Today, the tarakos team consists of some 13 employees.

Herbert Beesten was born in 1953 – and these days, his thoughts frequently turn to his retirement and stepping down from his company. "Ensuring an orderly transition is exceptionally important to me. I would prefer to retire gradually," explains the managing director. There is no shortage of potential investors for a possible takeover. Enquiries from China and the USA are already on the table. But Beesten doesn't intend to rush things – he wants tarakos to have clear future prospects. After all, he knows that before putting anything into action, the advance planning needs to be as meticulous as possible. Incidentally, the name tarakos comes from an opening in the game of chess – which for Herbert Beesten has led to success.

> more information on logistics in Saxony-Anhalt

> Saxony-Anhalt at transport logistic China

◀ previous article

next article ▶

Add page

