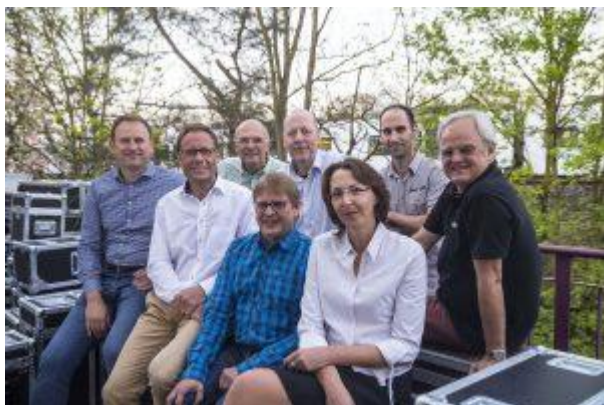


## Robe Deutschland is Launched



Front row left to right: Josef Valchar (CEO Robe lighting s.r.o.), Martin Lönner (MD of Operations & Finance, Robe Deutschland), Olaf Nehrenheim (Robe Deutschland Area Sales Manager for North Germany), Stephanie Walloner (Robe Deutschland's Head of Sales for Southern Germany and Deputy Sales & Marketing Director) Back Row left to right: Ingo Dombrowski, Robe lighting Key Account Manager Europe), Dieter Gross (Robe Deutschland Managing Director of Sales & Marketing), Martin Opitz (Robe Deutschland Area Sales Manager for East Germany & Berlin,) and Harry von den Stemmen (Sales director, Robe lighting s.r.o.)

Robe lighting announces a new wholly-owned subsidiary – Robe Deutschland GmbH – which will be based in Munich and have a regional sales force covering the entire country.

The new company hits the ground running in this key European market with an exceptionally strong, experienced and well connected 'dream-team' on-board.

It will be headed by Dieter Gross, MD for Sales & Marketing and Martin Lönner, MD for Operations & Finances, a dual management framework that has worked so well in other Robe subsidiaries including Robe France and Robe North America.

Stephanie Walloner is Deputy Sales & Marketing Director and Sales Managers include Olaf Nehrenheim who will be on the road in north Germany and Martin Opitz who will be covering east Germany and Berlin.

Robe s.r.o.'s Sales Director Harry von den Stemmen explains that Robe Deutschland architecture has been strategically moulded and the personnel carefully hand-picked to drive the continuation and further optimisation of Robe's success in the region.

"As we all know, getting good people and the right people is absolutely essential to maintaining relationships and building new ones. There has been intense interest from people wanting to join, and we are very fortunate to start with an incredibly well-respected and liked management team who are both outward looking and united".

He adds that the recruitment will continue during the first months of Robe Deutschland GmbH's operation and as

its business takes shape.

While sales in Germany have been healthy in recent years, they are committed to extending Robe's very personal service and standards of excellence in customer support ... for which the brand is synonymous.

Robe wants to get closer to customers and end-users, not just physically, but to more fully understand the detailed requirements of their business and continue its path of innovation and providing the solutions and strategies they most need to grow, as well as bringing a wider range of products to the market.

In Germany, Robe is popular in the worlds of rental, live production and automotive events. Robe Deutschland will grow these alongside developing markets like television, theatre and architectural. "There is a massive potential" says Harry, "especially with the current and planned products, and we believe the best way to capitalise on this is to have the strength and stability of a full Robe operation in place."

Robe CEO Josef Valchar commented, "This is a very exciting phase in Robe's development and we welcome our new colleagues in Germany to the Robe Family. We are all looking forward to working alongside them and sharing ideas, energy and success".

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## **Meet the Team ...**

### **Dieter Gross**

Managing Director of Sales & Marketing Dieter Gross is one of two directors heading Robe Germany.

Dieter brings a wealth of experience, flair and strategic imagination to the team. He's already enjoyed a trailblazing career in the entertainment industry, including as a creative producer and running artist management and associated companies in various senior management roles including CEO and MD.

Most recently he was MD for Berlin based production company EuroArts which created and marketed numerous award winning shows with top acts for live TV, DVD, Blu-ray and cinema, including an acclaimed series of concerts by the Berliner Philharmoniker which were aired worldwide. In 2013 he became MD of respected German rental company Gahrens+Battermann and moved to Cologne after 30 years in Berlin.

Having watched Robe expand and assert itself in the market, particularly over the last 10 years with "first class quality, excellent service and attractively designed products" Dieter is very excited to become part of the phenomenon. He has seen how clients can benefit from Robe's "willingness to listen to and meet their needs with some of the best price-performance ratios on the market".

Dieter is passionate about optimizing systems, promoting fluid and open communications and bringing people-focused transparency and responsibility to a work process that is underlined by sound commercial behavior.

He is fascinated by creative opportunities and his own hands-on experience and insight into media production and technologies thoroughly enhances and underscores his understanding of customer needs.

He intends to steer the Robe Germany sales operation as a slick, highly successful enterprise, driven by individuals who have the space and opportunity to excel and be themselves as well as working as part of a vibrant "Dream-team".

The goals are to embrace all sectors of professional entertainment and guarantee the best customer experience at every stage of engagement. He's also looking forward to Robe Germany being a major part of Robe's global network.

If Dieter has any spare time he enjoys making music, outdoor exercise and sighthound sports like racing and coursing.

### **Martin Lönner**

As MD of Operations & Finance, Martin is one of two managing directors who will head the new company.

He has been working in the professional production industry since 1993, starting as an accountant and financial controller. As his career developed, in addition his incisive understanding of figures, analysis and dexterous financial strategies, Martin has also managed recruitment drives and human resources. He is a skilled communicator.

He wanted to work with Robe because of the company's excellent reputation as an independent business and their range of innovative and high quality products. He also sees it as a valuable chance to grow as a professional.

He brings many qualities to a dynamic equation including the ability to perform under pressure, being a firm and resolute decision maker and having imagination and foresight as well as a genuine passion for the industry ... a trait that permeates the entire Robe organisation.

"I'm very proud and happy to be involved with Robe Germany from the inception and look forward to building a highly successful, principled and respected company," he stated.

One of his roles at Robe Germany will be to ensure that the very best standards of excellence in customer service are maintained for all clients – existing, new and future – for which Robe is renowned.

Martin is busy even when he's not officially working! His hobbies include hiking and skiing ... and all that fresh air fuels his appetite for philosophising on policies and schemes to streamline and optimise new multi-level business activities.

### **Stephanie Walloner**

Stephanie joins the team as Head of Sales for Southern Germany and Deputy Sales & Marketing Director.

Her professional entertainment industry career started working for a wholesale company offering a wide range of production related products. She soon found lighting to be the most interesting sector, and then went on to work as sales manager for an intelligent lighting and control manufacturer for 17 years, where the remit included establishing an international distributor network.

Stephanie has also been involved in product development and gained extensive technical knowledge of moving light technologies over the years as well as developing marketing and communication strategies. Her personal focus is on sales of premium products.

She believes the performance and development of Robe is unique and impressive and that it is also the most attractive brand on the market due to its diverse and quality engineered product portfolio.

She is looking forward to being part of a dynamic team of skilled and experienced professionals who will progress and strengthen the Robe brand in all sectors of the German market.

In her spare time, Stephanie is a keen sportswoman and especially enjoys horseback riding and jogging as well as travelling and cooking.

### **Olaf Nehrenheim**

Olaf will be the Area Sales Manager for North Germany. He already has considerable Robe brand experience and – since 2001 – has been a keen advocate of Robe products.

Olaf cut his entertainment industry teeth as a club LJ and laser operator in the 1980s, then went on to work as a sales and project manager in the technology sector. During this time his eclectic work included designing and programming laser and lighting shows, project managing clubs and other music venues and running his own company.

Olaf's core skills include being a great communicator, having a thorough knowledge of technical elements on all levels and the ability to think laterally and produce inventive solutions.

He fully embraces the products and core values of Robe and believes that the company has a great future ... in which he wants to play an integral role.

His work at Robe Germany will include presenting and demonstrating the product ranges to theatres, the television sector and rental companies, and in developing and building relationships in all areas, where his renowned sense of humour will also be a great asset!

"I'm really looking forward to the opportunity of working in this go-ahead inclusive and positive environment," he states.

If he gets any time off, Olaf enjoys music, cooking, gardening, swimming and intergalactic exploration.

### **Martin Opitz**

Martin Opitz is the Area Sales Manager for East Germany & Berlin

His first foray into the glamour and glitz of entertainment was as a working DJ. He became fascinated by the technology which progressed to being a light jockey and operator, then worked as an independent specifier and installer for club and disco lighting systems.

He is already extremely familiar with Robe's products, philosophy and company structure, and for the last 13 years has worked as a sales and technical sales manager in the same geographical area that he will continue to represent.

Martin is known as a character! He's popular for his zany humour as well as his encyclopaedic technical and product knowledge, enthusiasm for the industry and hands-on experience. He loves the "spirit and family atmosphere" of Robe and of course the stream of ground-breaking products "which just seem to keep flowing".

In addition to in-depth demos and presentations, Martin will continue to take his specific formula of technical sales on the road around Germany, keeping his vast clientele abreast of the latest technologies and advice. He will further develop his many ongoing customer relationships and make many new ones as part of Robe Germany.

Any 'down time' is spent Go-Kart racing, playing volleyball, programming and designing light shows ... and chilling out and about with his family.



***Photo by Louise Stickland***