

The Machineseeker Story

It all began in a spare room...

It started in his spare room in 1999, but now it's Europe's leading marketplace for used machinery – entrepreneur Thorsten Muschler from Essen is the CEO and founder of the online trading platform *machineseeker.com*. His company now has 13 employees – a number which is expected to rise to 30 this year.

In the late 1990s, the company founder worked for a firm that occasionally traded in used machines. "That's where I got the idea of developing an online marketplace where everyone could buy and sell machines cheaply," says Thorsten Muschler. The internet pioneer launched the *machineseeker.com* platform in 1999 – the same year as the German offshoots of Google and Ebay went online. Machineseeker has become today's leading European marketplace for used machinery without a single cent from investors.

Until 2008, Muschler was solely responsible for the development and management of his search engine for machines. He even wanted to do his own bookkeeping and attended a course on financial accounting. "A day only has 24 hours, so eventually I was unable to do everything myself," says the 43-year-old. His first employee is still on board today. Six new members joined the team this year alone. The company offices on Kronprinzenstrasse – close to Essen's main train station – are currently being extended by another floor, to make room for more staff.

Muschler has seen the rise and fall of many online trading portals for used machinery over the last fifteen years. The market has swallowed up countless millions from investors, but Machineseeker has grown completely organically. "Until 10 or 15 years ago, very few traders were active online. Most machines were sold to regular customers through the traders' own networks", comments Muschler. In the meantime, the machine trade business has become digitised, so the company founder is currently investing heavily in new personnel. "We want to make Machineseeker the worldwide market leader," explains Muschler.

His company is now represented in over 50 countries by a broad range of localised platforms such as *machineseeker.co.uk*, *machineseeker.fr* and *machineseeker.es*. 5,300



dealers are currently offering over 128,000 machines on the platforms of the Essen-based company. "We are generating an enquiry volume of over 500 million euros a month," says Muschler. "The high level of interest makes our platform an immensely attractive way for traders to advertise their machines."

The cramped little spare room has long since become a large office, but the basic idea of providing a simple, secure and low-cost marketplace for buyers and sellers has remained unchanged for 17 years.

About Machineseeker:

Machineseeker is Europe's leading online marketplace for used machinery. More than 5,300 dealers currently offer over 128,000 machines on the online platform. As a globally active marketplace, the company is represented in over 50 countries by a broad range of localised websites such as *machineseeker.co.uk*, *machineseeker.fr* and *machineseeker.es*. Monthly inquiries for used machinery total over 500 million euros.

The Managing Director and founder is Thorsten Muschler, who started *machineseeker.com* seventeen years ago without investor money. Muschler simultaneously went online with the German versions of Google and Ebay. Since then, machineseeker has grown organically – and exclusively using its own revenues.

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