

# CARPET HOME

AKO  
A. Kolckmann:

Carpet underlays –  
the next generation



Cornelius Sorg

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COVER STORY: **OTTO GOLZE**

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## Golze celebrates 150 years



# COVER STORY

Otto Golze, Emmerthal (Germany)

## Golze: Celebrating 150 years

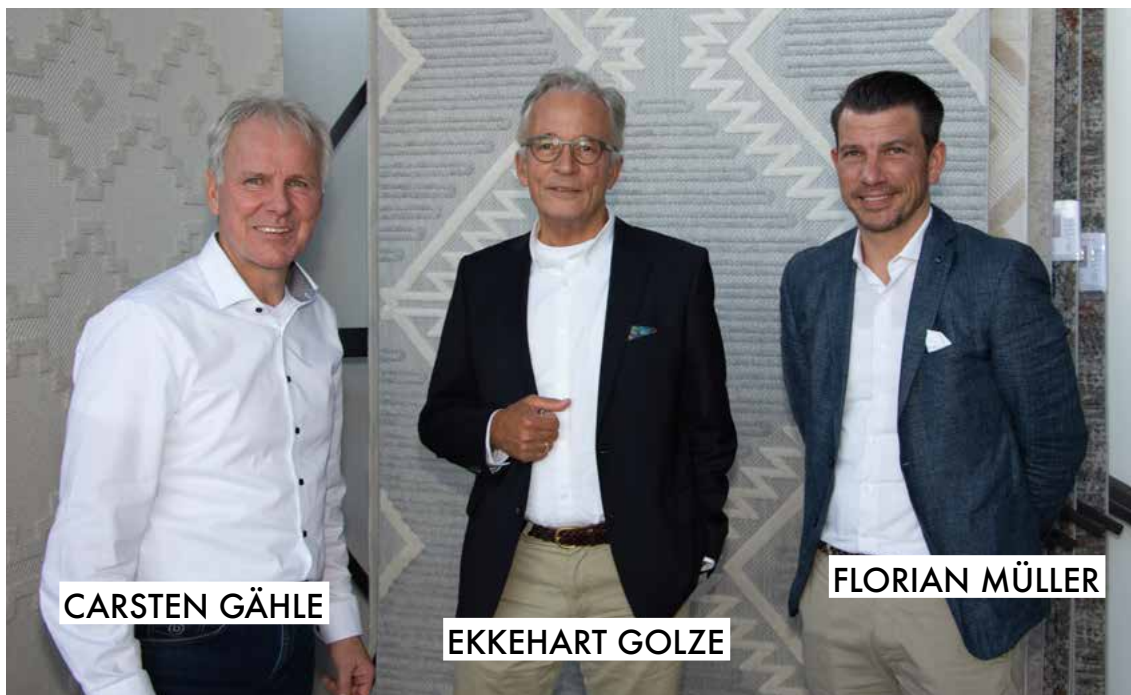
Golze is not just a carpet and flooring wholesaler but a family firm celebrating its 150th anniversary in 2023! This occasion is accompanied by a top management shift as part of a realignment to enhance productivity and ensure the company's success going forward. Carpet Home met with sales veteran and managing director Carsten Gähle, shareholder and managing director Ekkehart Golze and the firm's new CEO Florian Müller to talk about today's market and the current outlook.

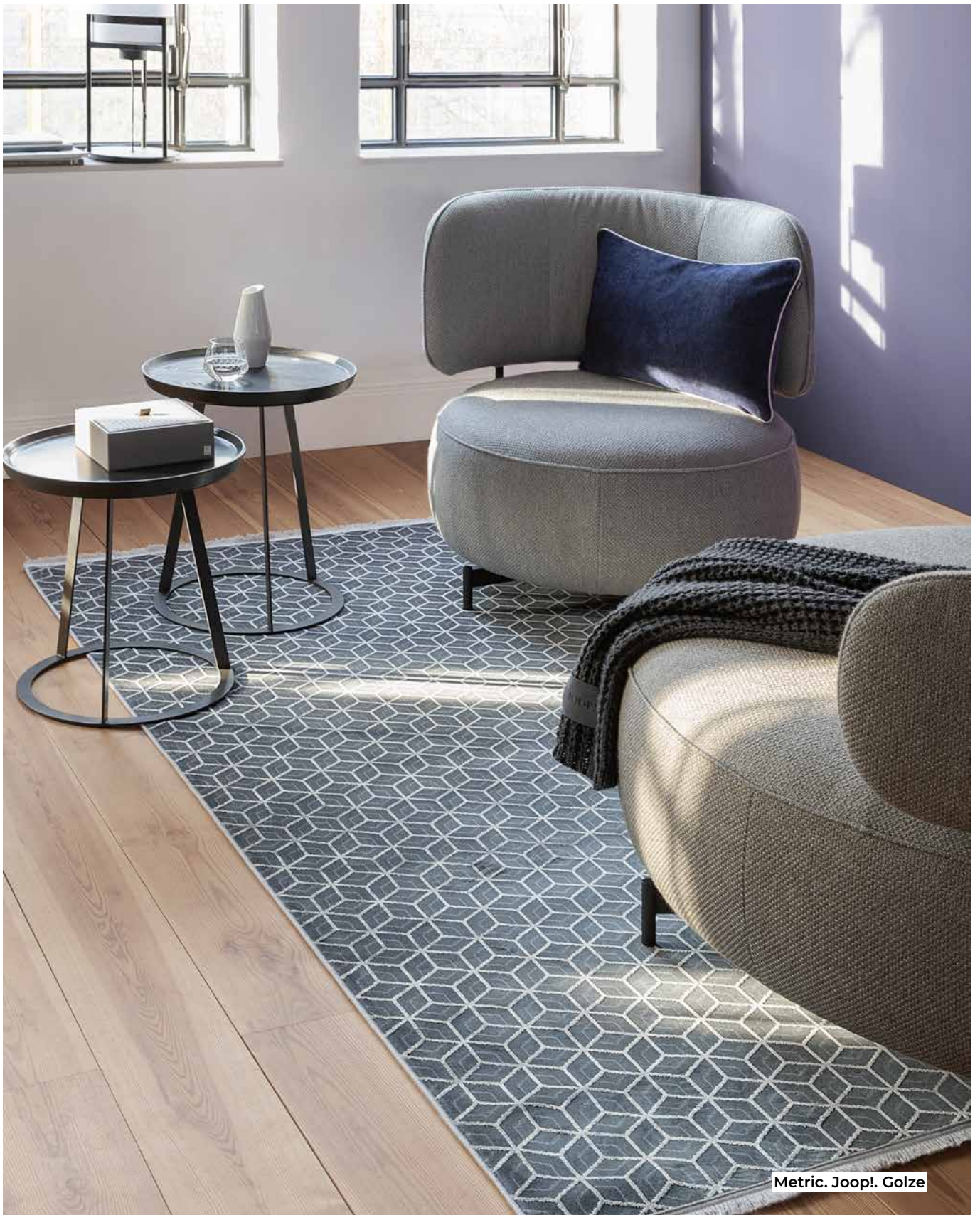
Formally named Otto Golze GmbH & Söhne, the company was founded in 1873, as indicated in its logo, and that means 2023 is the big 150th birthday of the enterprise. Majority-owned by one family since its beginnings, the firm has been based in the town of Emmerthal, Lower Saxony, since 1994. The location features good transport access for the large warehouse, modern logistics department and order picking & packing operations maintained there. Just over 120 employees currently work at the site, some of whose parents worked for Golze before them,

and the company has a field sales team of eight out covering the market.

### Portfolio and speciality items

Area rugs are the main product of full-range supplier Golze alongside a variety of doormats/entrance mats, natural fibre floor coverings, bath mats, stair mats and aluminium profile systems. The company's carpet range spans the proprietary label Astra and two licensed brands: Joop! and Schöner Wohnen-Kollektion, the latter ▷





Metric. Joop!. Golze

of which includes doormats and bath mats. The portfolio is rounded out by carpet underlays of manufacturer AKO.

Sales Director Carsten Gähle: “We are a partner to retailers worldwide, to whom we provide major added value. Times change and challenging situations arise from time to time that sometimes require modifying the business model. This adaptability has been key to our success, allowing us to maintain nearly 100% deliverability over the last few months. Florian Müller is now taking over for Ekkehart Golze as CEO, as part of ongoing succession-related personnel changes.”



Summer. Schöner Wohnen-Kollektion. Golze



Parkland. Schöner Wohnen-Kollektion. Golze

Golze started offering made-to-order products ten years ago, which is now an important business. As Carsten Gähle explains: “It gives retailers a major selling point to talk to customers about: that they can have the carpet they want in precisely the right dimensions for their interior. This really adds value while boosting revenue, given the higher price per square metre for custom sizes. The products are cut to size in our factory and finished for delivery in our sewing workshop. A good third of our revenue now derives from this segment.” Products of the three brands Schöner Wohnen-Kollektion, Joop! and Astra are available in custom sizes, and fringing is now available for some products.

### New showroom

Golze renovated its facilities in Emmerthal in 2022, creating a spacious new 230 sqm showroom with lots of windows for natural light, enabling year-round presentation of the company’s continuously changing collections, rather than just by season and at trade fairs. And right next door the company put in a modern conference

room with XXL digital multimedia board and eight networkable workstations.

In the showroom, the focus is on the rug and mat collections. The concepts for the POS and the corresponding presentation units are shown digitally.

Carsten Gähle: “We are reviewing whether we will continue using print catalogues to present the entire product array, as catalogue information can become outdated surprisingly quickly. For now we still have the two channels, but using tablets will become standard procedure in the field.” Florian Müller: “Digital printing comes into play here strategically, allowing us to do smaller runs on short notice.”

Golze is certainly in an ongoing process of renewal, but we are in all cases proceeding with restraint while remaining focused on the individual needs and requirements of our trading partners as our forefront consideration. Ekkehart Golze: “We are making changes to make sure that the flow of goods is as smooth as possible, employing contemporary processes, with the aims of optimising purchasing on the one hand and increasing sales to customers on the other.”

Golze has developed a branded system to enhance product presentation for its brick-and-mortar store partners – a system that has proven its effectiveness in boosting turnover. Carsten Gähle: “Of course, we never stand still – the system is continuously optimised as well.”

### Digitalisation

Digitalisation is a top priority for CEO Florian Müller, who has been getting to know all of the departments since coming on board the company in October 2022. Müller, who has just returned from touring around with the field sales force, believes digitalisation holds major opportunities: “We want to give retailers useful new tools, like QR codes on product packaging and our presenter stands. If a customer in the rugs

section needs assistance but no one on staff is currently available, using his or her smartphone the consumer can call up additional information and/or an explanatory video. And we are working on a B2B concept with interfaces that enables direct delivery to the retail customer.”

### Expanding logistics

To improve goods handling and in general preparation for future needs, Golze is currently investing to expand its warehouse, principally to optimise logistics. Ekkehart Golze: “Political crises come and go, but we believe firmly ▷



PHOTOS: GOLZE

Jesi. Astra. Golze

PHOTOS: GOLZE



in our business model, and are committed to keeping our goods available for short-notice ordering at all times. Logistics processes have been changing – take drop shipping for example – so you simply need more space to work with maximum efficiency.

We are making improvements in our incoming and outgoing goods departments, creating space for quality assurance and installing additional packing lines. Shipment packages are getting heavier; automation makes everything faster and easier, and we are also going to have three additional loading docks. These moves to expand are crucial because we have been essentially bursting at the seams.” Carsten Gähle:

“This demonstrates our philosophy of ‘action, not reaction’. The Supply Chain Protection Act has been important to us across all processes for quite some time now.” The majority of our suppliers are already certified, as Ekkehart Golze underscores: “We made sure to integrate corresponding processes years ago, and in par-

**Parkland.**  
Schöner Wohnen-Kollektion. Golze

allel have narrowed our assortment to ensure our capability to deliver.”

Schöner Wohnen-Kollektion,  
Joop!, Astra

Walking through the showroom, Ekkehart Golze showed us their new products from license partners Schöner Wohnen-Kollektion and Joop!: “Our in-house product development people are extremely innovative; they enable us to identify emerging trends early on and move in those directions.” Joop! rugs feature myriad variations on the familiar stylised cornflower motif in combination with graphic designs of a restrained nature. All collection products have an elegance in common that bespeaks top quality.

New in the Schöner Wohnen collection are washable hand-woven cottage rugs made of recycled cotton; these are available in three sizes and come in four colours. They come in bags specially made for retailers with a window in the packaging and an image of the product usage setting, and are displayed mounted on the cottage presenter. Suitable for indoor and outdoor use, the Parkland model comes in four designs with matching single colours in five sizes, and is highly robust and easy to clean.

These are shipped rolled up in boxes bearing images of the indoor and outdoor product use/ placement settings which render their versatile usability immediately clear, out on a terrace



## Golze turns 150: Highlights

**1873**

The company W. Golze is founded in Landsberg (Warthe), east of Berlin

**1946**

As post-war refugee, Otto Golze re-forms the company in Hameln on the Weser river.

**1952**

Production starts of coconut floor mats for cars. The company eventually becomes Germany's largest car floor mat manufacturer and exclusive supplier to Volkswagen, headquartered in Wolfsburg, for the VW Beetle.

**1968**

Golze makes a pioneering move as the only German manufacturer to introduce a patented tufting process in production – this ultimately revolutionises the coconut floor mat market.



Cornflower Double.  
Joop!. Golze

and in a dining room, for example. “Outdoor rugs are much in demand currently, as more and more customers are viewing the terrace as a kind of second living room, for which they want high-quality furnishings for a stylish look and cosy feel – same as indoors. Carsten Gähle: “I don’t think there is anywhere else where customers can find these in custom sizes.”

The Ravenna product under Golze’s proprietary label Astra has come out in a new look, which of course is also available in custom measurements

and comes in varying designs, edging types and shapes.

### Golze turns 150

At Golze retailers will find a vivid spectrum of innovative products and ideas, combined with broad-based support for in-store presentation and customer advising. Rather than resting on its laurels, the company is staying active as it looks ahead to its 150th anniversary coming up. Carsten Gähle: “We are 150 years young ... so look forward with us to the new Golze!” □

#### 1973

The company acquires sisal weaver A. Strasser (Astra brand) located in Neu Ulm

#### 1995

New central logistics hub built in Emmerthal, Astra relocated to Hameln from Neu Ulm

#### 1997

Bordered sisal carpet production starts; the operation evolves into today’s made-to-order business segment

#### 2004

The company opens its first proprietary furniture stores, which evolve into today’s brand stores

#### 2007

License agreement concluded with Schöner Wohnen

#### 2016

License Agreement concluded with Joop