#WeAreSPIE: A conversation with Christian Wasmeier

Our employees in focus

At SPIE we're proud of our employees and of what they do every day. In our #WeAreSPIE: Our employees in focus feature, we highlight our employees' personalities, stories, talents, expertise and sheer enthusiasm for technology.
Today we talk to Christian Wasmeier, Project Manager in the Energy & Mobility Solutions Branch of the CityNetworks & Grids Operational Division in Ergolding.

Christian Wasmeier, as a project manager you drive the expansion of charging infrastructure throughout Germany. Which customers do you support, and how would you describe your everyday work?

According to the OECD, by 2030 there will be approximately 230 million electric vehicles worldwide – and over 200 million charging points. This makes e-mobility a strategic growth market for SPIE. As a multi-technical service provider, we have an extensive range of technical expertise relating to electrical facilities, including network planning, installation, operation and maintenance. So far we've installed more than 7000 charging stations in Germany and have built up considerable expertise.
And my branch, Energy & Mobility Solutions in Ergolding, is also heavily involved in the e-mobility sector. The customers we support from Ergolding include companies that operate individual charging stations using alternating current and others that operate large charging parks that work with direct current. In all of these projects, we provide our customers with end-to-end support. That includes analysing sites, drawing up the right usage-based plan, and planning the integration of the charging infrastructure into the existing private or public power grid.
As project managers, we always take complete responsibility for the projects so our customers have a single point of contact. My task as a project manager is to support my projects from start to finish, managing and coordinating them in cooperation with the various teams. I get support from three or four site managers, each of whom is responsible for four or five building sites. My responsibilities include undertaking the initial site survey, coordinating bids based on the site surveys, and coming to agreements with customers and public authorities. Ordering materials, organising installation work, handling additional requests, invoicing, and dealing with warranty claims are also part of my remit.

Are there any special projects you're working on at the moment?

Right now we're building charging infrastructure for a chain of garden centres with many sites all over Germany. At each site, we're typically building five rapid-charging stations and the associated transformer structure. There are 14 projects in progress and seven more are planned.
Based on data I gather in my initial site survey, our drafting department draws up proposals for positioning the charging stations. Once the decisions about the site have been made, I organise and manage the ground investigations. This also involves checking whether cables will be routed through the areas in question. Later come the selection of materials, earthwork calculations, requests for quotes, and finally ordering the materials. All of these activities are my responsibility.
Last but not least, I schedule the various activities so that they don't take place during the garden centres' peak season. Once everything is settled, we begin the work. We perform all tasks, including commissioning the charging stations.

What do you like most about your job?

My work is very diverse, and I really like that. I have lots of projects, and each one is different from the others. They all have their own unique characteristics and requirements. Every customer is different, too. I enjoy bringing together all the requirements, requests and conditions for successful results. What I also like about my work is that I can see how the projects develop every day. I studied high-voltage engineering for a few semesters and had to do maths, maths, maths every day. And at the end of the day, the result was just a number. That wasn't very tangible for me, not in the way that progress on a building site is.

How and when did you join SPIE?

I've been with SPIE since 2019. An acquaintance who works at SPIE recommended it to me. It's based not far from where I live, so I already knew quite a few of the company's employees and had heard a lot of good things. So I was happy to apply. Before that I was in the army, and I also received training as an electrician. In addition, I'm a master craftsman and industrial foreman with specialist training in three fields.

What is it like to be part of SPIE?

SPIE is a large international corporation with many large and small departments. You could also say SPIE is like a big family where I like to spend my time. I find its working atmosphere very pleasant. The teamwork, the geniality, the solution-oriented approach, the sense of shared endeavour where it's 'we' rather than 'me' – all of that fascinated me from the beginning. Communication is always on an equal footing, no matter what level you're at in the hierarchy. What I also appreciate a lot about SPIE is that personal interest and commitment are encouraged, and that means better opportunities for career development.

In your opinion, why should somebody aim for a career at SPIE?

For one thing, there's the potential for development that I already mentioned. For another, since the company is big and has many different lines of business, you have plenty of professional opportunities internally and can search for new challenges and still be part of SPIE. So that makes you very flexible in terms of the jobs you can do and where you can work since there are SPIE branches in almost every big city. If you value that aspect, this is a good place for you.

Then there's the fact that SPIE is a growing company that's working on the energy transition and the digital transformation, so it offers secure jobs. I'm proud to work at a company that's working for a sustainable future and is involved in fields like e-mobility, helping to make progress on these trends every day. At SPIE I have the opportunity to play an active role in the mobility transition and do something meaningful for myself and society.