



## HISTORY OF THE AKEMI COMPANY



Erich Höntsch was a young businessman who had the three classic characteristics which are fundamental for almost all successful enterprises: He was full of ideas, had courage and was ambitious.

Erich Höntsch was born in Dresden in 1911 and learnt to be an export merchant. His real passion, however, was chemistry and for this reason he turned the garden shed on his parent's estate in Dresden into a small laboratory and spent almost every free minute there carrying out his chemical experiments. He was fascinated by the possibilities chemistry offers and he soon developed an adhesive which could be used to glue animal hair into the shaving brushes which were still common at that time. This adhesive was a powder which had to be mixed with water before it could be used. Success proved he was on the right track. Soon businesses from the shoe and the electrical industry were among his customers and he developed special adhesive products just for their needs.

On account of the increasing demand and the success of his adhesive he founded the company **AKEMA** in Dresden in 1933. The name of this new firm was probably inspired by the daughter of a good friend of his who was the Japanese consul in Berlin.

In 1945, in face of the approaching Russian troops, Erich Höntsch fled from his home town of Dresden on his old BMW motorcycle. He first went to Hanover before moving to Nuremberg in 1948. Here he initially produced his adhesive in a rented garage.

One year later **AKEMA** moved into the premises of a former carpenter's workshop. Adhesives were produced and sold here for the production of brushes as well as for the shoe and phonographic industries. His customers included such renowned enterprises as Metz, Loewe and Grundig.

At this time Erich Höntsch also recognised the importance of adhesives based on reaction resins for the stone industry and started research work in this direction. He worked in cooperation with a renowned German chemical concern for special resins and in 1952, after an almost three-year development period, he put the first adhesives on the basis of polyester resin on the market. The name of this product was **STEIN- UND MARMORKITT UNIVERSAL (UNIVERSAL STONE AND MARBLE CEMENT)**. With the introduction of this innovative adhesive, a new era in the stone processing industry began.



In order to gather inspiration for the further development of the **AKEMA** products, he regularly visited the stone-processing companies in the Franconian Jura and discussed about processing problems with the users. The information which he

gathered on these occasions was used directly to develop new products. He faithfully abided to the principle: **One can solve old problems with new products.**



In 1952 the company was renamed. Instead of **AKEMA** it was now called **AKEMI**. The reason for this lies in the similar sounding name **ACHEMA**, a trade fair for chemical engineering, environmental protection and biotechnology which still takes place every two years in the city of Frankfurt.



In 1954 the range of products became wider. It was complemented with fillers and primers for the expanding car industry.

Because the demand for **AKEMI** products was steadily growing, the company set up an efficient distribution network of its own in Germany and other European countries in order to serve its customers even faster. Production took place in the United States on a concession basis.

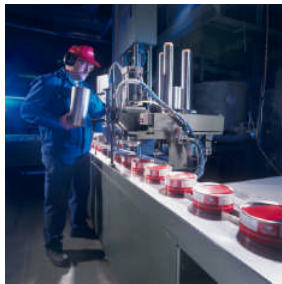
As a logical consequence of the increasing demand for **AKEMI** fillers and adhesives and the increasing use of natural stone, especially for façades, a further important step in product development was taken: the development and production of adhesives on the basis of epoxy resins. These could be employed especially outdoors. With this new product family, which was given the name **AKEPOX**, a further important milestone had been set in the field of natural stone processing. The name **AKEMI** gained even greater importance and stands today worldwide as a synonym and guarantee for high-grade and durable bonding in the natural stone sector.

Because there was now insufficient space in the former carpenter's workshop it was planned to construct a new building in Nuremberg. However, Erich Höntsch did not live to see the completion of this building. He died in 1970 after long illness.



A spacious new building, the headquarters of the **AKEMI** company today, was built in the Lechstraße 28 in Nuremberg and was completed in 1972. Erich Höntsch's widow, Mrs. Angelika Höntsch, led the company until 1996 when she placed it in the hands of today's owners, the Hamann family.

Under the leadership of the new director, Dipl.-Kfm. Torsten Hamann, the product range has been widened considerably and is complemented by new products every year.



Under his direction **AKEMI's** premises have increased to more than 12,000 m<sup>2</sup> and production, dispatch and logistics have been restructured in order to make them more efficient. Important markets for natural stone have been opened up in China, India and Brazil. Subsidiaries have been set up in China, the USA, Australia, Russia and India.



At **AKEMI** special products for numerous major industrial customers, for example from the orthopaedic or machine construction industry, are developed in its own laboratories and produced in its modern mixing and filling plant. In order to assert its position as market and innovation leader, **AKEMI** will continue to invest up to 10% of its entire turnover in research and development every year.



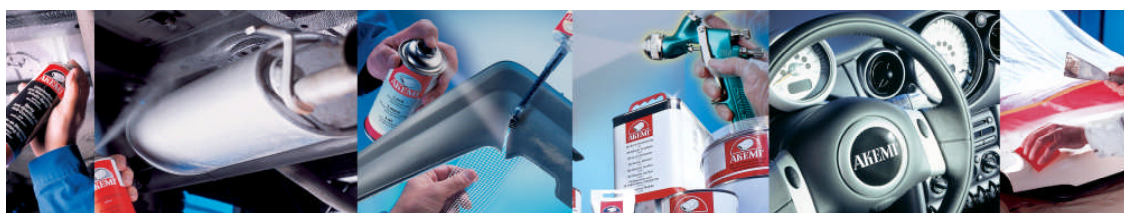
For large-scale processing companies in the stone industry **AKEMI** offers all-round solutions in the shape of stone filling and dosing equipment as well as UV ovens for drying natural stone fast and effectively.

Over the last years the extensive range of adhesives and fillers has been complemented by a range of cleaning and care products for natural as well as engineered stone which are exactly attuned to each other. With products such as Triple Effect, Darkener Super or the patented Colour Converter **AKEMI** has also proved why it is a leader in the branch!

To round off this product range, **AKEMI** also provides high-grade silicone, polyurethane and acrylic sealants for use in sanitary rooms and special silicones for natural stone in a large number of different colours.

The range of car products has been expanded to include adhesive systems for plastic parts, products to protect the underbody, repair sets, flexible elastic filling knives and high-grade acrylic products to repair damage to car paint.

Today **AKEMI** has almost 100 employees and produces more than 3,000 high-quality products for the stone and automotive industry at its location in Nuremberg. It therefore offers the right solution for just about any task and any problem. **AKEMI's** products are exported to more than 90 countries worldwide.



The production and development of the **AKEMI** products is subject to strict quality requirements (DIN EN ISO 9001). The ecological aspect also plays an important role at **AKEMI**. Important environmental guidelines in the production process are always observed and put into practice. In the 1990s, for example, an environmentally-friendly, styrene-free filler was introduced. Water-based care products were also introduced, e.g. Stain Repellent W, Triple Effect, Stone Cleaner, Crystal Clean, to name just a few.



In order to give product users and distributors the necessary familiarity with the adhesives and care products and their application, regular product training courses are held free of charge by highly-qualified technicians and chemists in **AKEMI's** own training centre. The latter was opened in 2003. Familiarity with the product is also ensured by means of the technical instruction and the safety data sheets which are constantly updated. These are available in about 20 different languages.

With the addition of Dr. Dirk Hamann in October 2001, the next generation of the Hamann family is already actively participating in the management of the **AKEMI** company.

Today and in the future, the Hamann family and the employees of **AKEMI** will abide to their corporate statement: **Shaping the future innovatively, but building on tradition.**

