

A pioneer in many fields

Commemorating the 100th birthday of Georg H Endress

Throughout his life, Dr Georg H Endress took the initiative and moved things forward. The core of his work was the development of the Endress+Hauser Group, which he shaped from humble beginnings into an international player. 9 January marks what would have been the entrepreneur's 100th birthday. His legacy is still visible today – in the family business and far beyond.

Why did he become an entrepreneur? Georg H Endress had two answers to this question. The official one was: "I wanted to prove to myself, my family and the world that I could turn an idea into a success." He usually followed up with the unofficial one: "When our fifth child was on the way, my wife asked me to do something – so I became an entrepreneur."

But first things first... Georg Herbert Endress was born on 9 January 1924 in Freiburg, Germany, where his father ran a factory for industrial gases. He was educated in Zagreb, Croatia, where his father later worked as general manager. Georg H Endress attended secondary school in Basel. The family had moved there due to the troubled political situation in Europe when his father was transferred to Paris.

Endress completed an apprenticeship as a mechanic and then worked for various companies in Switzerland. At the same time, he attended evening classes at technical college. But after five semesters, this came to an end: his father no longer supported him because, in his opinion, his son wanted to start a family too early. Georg H Endress had met Alice Vogt during his military service in Ticino. The couple married in 1946 and the first of eight children was born in 1947.

At that time, Georg H Endress was working for his father. He was selling British-made capacitive moisture meters to the textile industry around Basel. The young engineer had returned from a visit to the manufacturer of these devices, Fielden Electronics, with a new type of level measuring device in his luggage and the plan to sell them in Germany from then on.

Safely through the turbulent early years

As a Swiss citizen, Endress needed a German partner for his project. The 29-year-old found his counterpart in Ludwig Hauser (58), manager of a small cooperative bank. On 1 February 1953, L Hauser KG was entered in the commercial register 'for the sale of Fielden-Endres electronic devices' (including the spelling mistake). The company was named after Hauser's wife Luise, who was also the company's first shareholder with a stake of 2,000 deutsche marks.

Development was rapid right from the start. In 1955, the engineer applied for his first patent, and in 1956 the young company started its first in-house production in rented premises. The work soon spread across several buildings – a mechanical workshop, electronics production, dispatch and offices – which the employees affectionately and mockingly referred to as the 'United Hut Works'.

Foresight and prudence formed the basis for success. While Georg H Endress developed the business with a keen sense of the market and customers, Ludwig Hauser kept an eye on the finances. Many of

the principles that Endress+Hauser still adheres to today were already taking shape at that time. Georg H Endress expanded his business step by step according to the 'dough roll-out method' in order to reduce dependence on individual technologies, industries and regions. A strong focus on customers was also in the company's DNA from the very beginning.

The small start-up became an ever-larger player. This was possible because Georg H Endress knew how to inspire people for his projects who were better than he was in their fields. GHE, as he was known internally, was a boss with rough edges: "Popularity is not my cup of tea," he once said. "I'd much rather hear someone tell me that I have a good company and excellent employees than someone patting me on the back and saying I'm great."

Overcoming boundaries and broadening horizons

Endress always attached great importance to training and further education. He made Endress+Hauser a model company for this. He launched the trinational apprenticeship program in the Basel region, initiated the trinational engineering degree program and was committed to cross-border cooperation. He was active in the German business association WVIB and in the Upper Rhine regional association, and he also supported the BioValley initiative, a network in the field of life sciences.

When he handed over the management of the Group to his son Klaus in 1995, the company had 4,300 employees worldwide and a turnover of 680 million Swiss francs. Georg H Endress received many awards for his entrepreneurial achievements and his social commitment – including the German Federal Cross of Merit with Ribbon and an appointment as French Chevalier dans l'Ordre National de la Légion d'Honneur, an honorary doctorate from the University of Basel and honorary senatorship of the Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg.

Georg H Endress died after a short illness on 14 December 2008, a few weeks before his 85th birthday. However, his legacy remains visible, his work alive in many ways: in the company, which is now a leader in process measurement technology, in his large family that now has more than 75 members, through the Georg H Endress Foundation, which is involved in education and research, and in the many people he influenced and who still remember him today.



EH_georg_endress_1.jpg

Georg H Endress was 29 years old when he founded the company in 1953.



EH_georg_endress_2.jpg

Georg H Endress recognized the need to internationalize the business at an early stage.



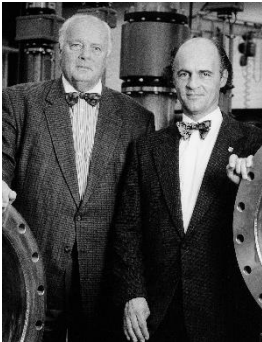
EH_georg_endress_3.jpg

Georg H Endress has received many recognitions, including an honorary doctorate from the University of Basel.



EH_hauser_and_endress.jpg

Georg H Endress found the perfect partner in Ludwig Hauser, who was twice his age when the company was founded.



EH_georg_and_klaus_endress.jpg

In 1995 Georg H Endress handed over the management of the Group to his son Klaus Endress.



EH_georg_and_alice_endress.jpg

Georg H Endress (1924–2008) and Alice Endress Vogt (1919–2016) had been married since 1946.



EH_endress_family.jpg

Georg H and Alice Endress in 2003 with their eight grown children.

The Endress+Hauser Group

Endress+Hauser is a global leader in measurement and automation technology for process and laboratory applications. The family company, headquartered in Reinach, Switzerland, achieved net sales of more than 3.3 billion euros in 2022 with a total workforce of nearly 16,000.

Endress+Hauser devices, solutions and services are at home in many industries. Customers thus use them to gain valuable knowledge from their applications. This enables them to improve their products, work economically and at the same time protect people and the environment.

Endress+Hauser is a reliable partner worldwide. Its own sales companies in more than 50 countries as well as representatives in another 70 countries ensure competent support. Production facilities on four continents manufacture quickly and flexibly to the highest quality standards.

Endress+Hauser was founded in 1953 by Georg H Endress and Ludwig Hauser. Ever since, the company has been pushing ahead with the development and use of innovative technologies, now helping to shape the industry's digital transformation. 8,700 patents and applications protect the Group's intellectual property.

For further information, please visit www.endress.com/media-center or www.endress.com

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