

We protect, design and drain

The ACO Group. A strong family you can build on.



ACO history – growth from strong roots

1780



1780 The sailing ship captain Otto Friedrich Ahlmann decides to pursue a career on land as a businessman. It proved a successful move: his sons and grandsons become bankers and owners of a large ironware trading business operating in the Scandinavian region. The Ahlmann family's commercial activities soon focus on the Carlshütte iron foundry set up in Büdelsdorf in 1827. The iron foundry is the first industrial company established in Schleswig-Holstein.

1931



1931 Käte Ahlmann (1890-1963) takes over management of the Carlshütte following the sudden death of her husband Julius. She grows the company in the face of many challenges, and becomes one of the most famous business women of her time. Among her many achievements, Käte Ahlmann was a founding member and first president of the Association of German Business women (VdU).

1946



1946 Josef-Severin Ahlmann (1924-2006) sets up his new company, ACO, on the site of the Carlshütte. The youngest son of Julius and Käte Ahlmann, he starts a business producing concrete construction components and windows. The first drainage channels are added in the 1960s and the innovative polymer concrete channel drainage system, ACO Drain®, was launched in the 1970s. Also in the 1970's ACO expands into markets and establishes companies outside Germany for the first time. In the early 1980s, Severin Ahlmann gradually transferred the reins to his nephew Hans-Julius Ahlmann, under whose visionary leadership the ACO Group has experienced significant growth, diversification and globalization. Today, ACO remains a family owned company.

2009



▲ **2009** The present and the future of the ACO Group as represented by Hans-Julius and Johanna Ahlmann, and their sons Johannes (right) and Iver (left). Both sons have successfully finished their academic qualifications, and are now gathering valuable experience as an informatics specialist and engineer respectively, at home and abroad in companies outside of the ACO Group. In addition, as partners in the ACO Group, they are already shouldering corporate responsibility, and will bear the torch for ACO's identity as a family run business in future.



▲ Büdelsdorf near Rendsburg, North Germany, is still the headquarters of the ACO Group. The historic buildings at the site of the former Carlshütte foundry on the banks of the River Eider have undergone significant restoration over the years, and are used today as offices, guest accommodation, and conference and event venues. This environment gives visitors and employees from all over the world a direct insight into ACO's deep commercial roots.

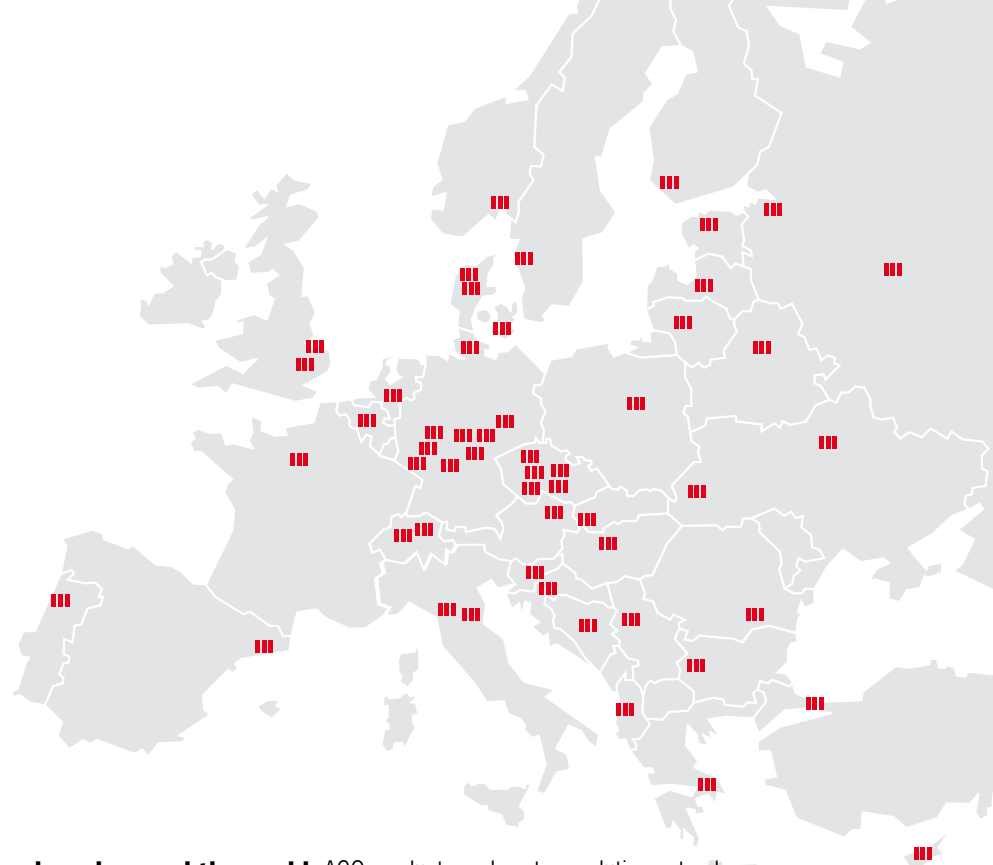


▲ The modern face of the ACO Group is the ACO Academy in Rendsburg/Büdelsdorf opened in 2007. With a showroom, hospitality centres and meeting/lecture facilities it allows a wide ranging programme for staff, clients and users to promote knowledge transfer, help forge personal contacts, and facilitates training and further education. The ACO Academy is an important element in the ACO Group's strategy of maintaining its status as a quality supplier now and in the future in the face of global competition.



Members of the global ACO family. Hans-Julius Ahlmann, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the ACO Group (top row left) together with the international management team: top row from left to right: Hans-Julius Ahlmann, Jacob Henckel (ACO Nordic), François Cortet (ACO South Western Europe), Richard Hill (ACO North Western Europe), Peter Fröhlich (ACO Germany). Lower row from left to right: Derek Humphries (ACO PanPacific), Hans-Peter Meyer (ACO Group Chief Operating Officer), Dr. Dieter Strich (ACO South Europe Arabia), Gerald Dirnböck (ACO Eastern Europe), Jens-Uwe Paasch (ACO Group Chief Financial Officer)

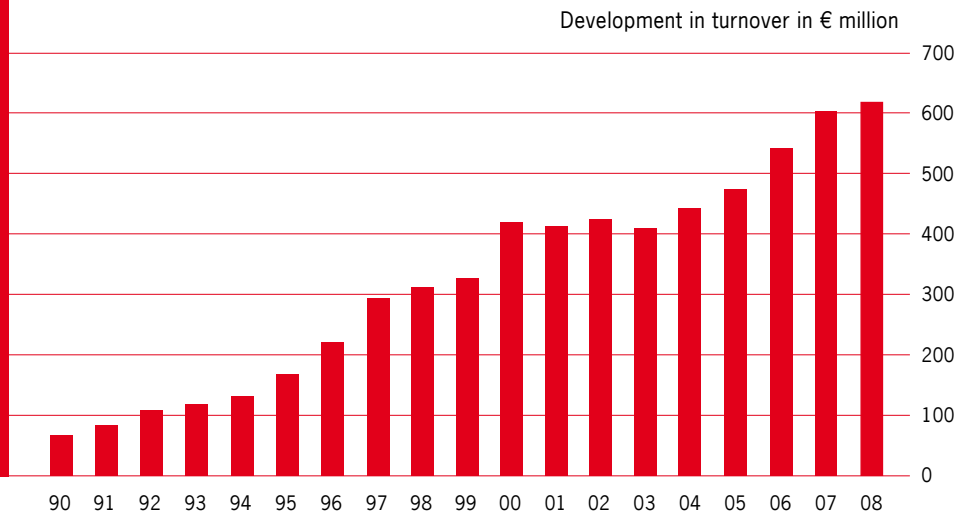
*Global player
with its feet
firmly on the
ground*



A strong brand around the world. ACO products and system solutions stand for the professional protection, design and drainage of roads, open spaces and buildings. The 3,800 members of the international ACO family, at home in 40 countries, with 31 production sites, generate a turnover of Euro 610 million – and rising. Today, optimism is deserved because the ACO Group is extremely well positioned as an innovation and quality leader in the growth markets of the 21st century.

ACO at a glance.

- 1946 Company founded by Josef-Severin Ahlmann
- 3,800 employees in over 40 countries (Europe, America, Asia, Australia)
- 31 production sites in 13 countries
- Turnover 2008: Euro 610 million





Water is our element. We bow to its priceless value, and we know its destructive power. We therefore develop technically and environmentally intelligent solutions, which function in both directions: protecting people from water – and vice versa. With groundbreaking polymer-concrete ACO DRAIN® channel systems we pioneered the market and established ourselves as the world market leader in line drainage – a position we continue to expand.



We grew up with water

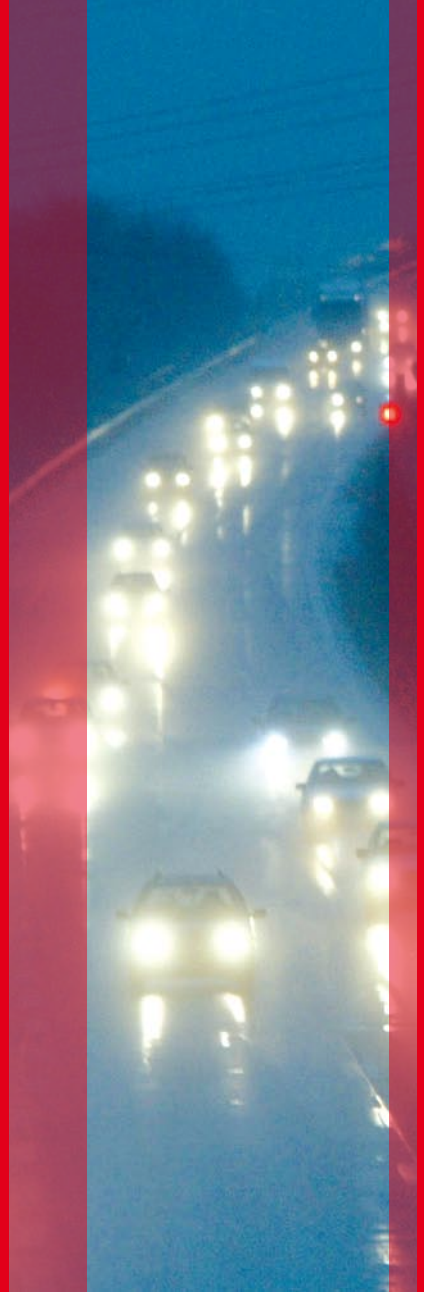
The numerous system solutions ACO develops and manufactures today go well beyond channel drainage and embrace applications in civil engineering, construction, building services and environmental protection. Directly or indirectly, they all serve to catch, control, treat and sustainably use water in the private, public and industrial sectors.



Global weather is becoming more extreme. ACO rises to the challenge in instances where water creates an increasing risk. Extremely high volumes of rain after long periods of drought can only be tamed by special drainage, backflow and drain systems; all designed to cope with very heavy rainfall. The high performance solutions ACO has developed include channels with enhanced drainage capacity and flow, flood proof separators and pumps, reliable backflow systems, and pressure water tight cellar and window well systems.

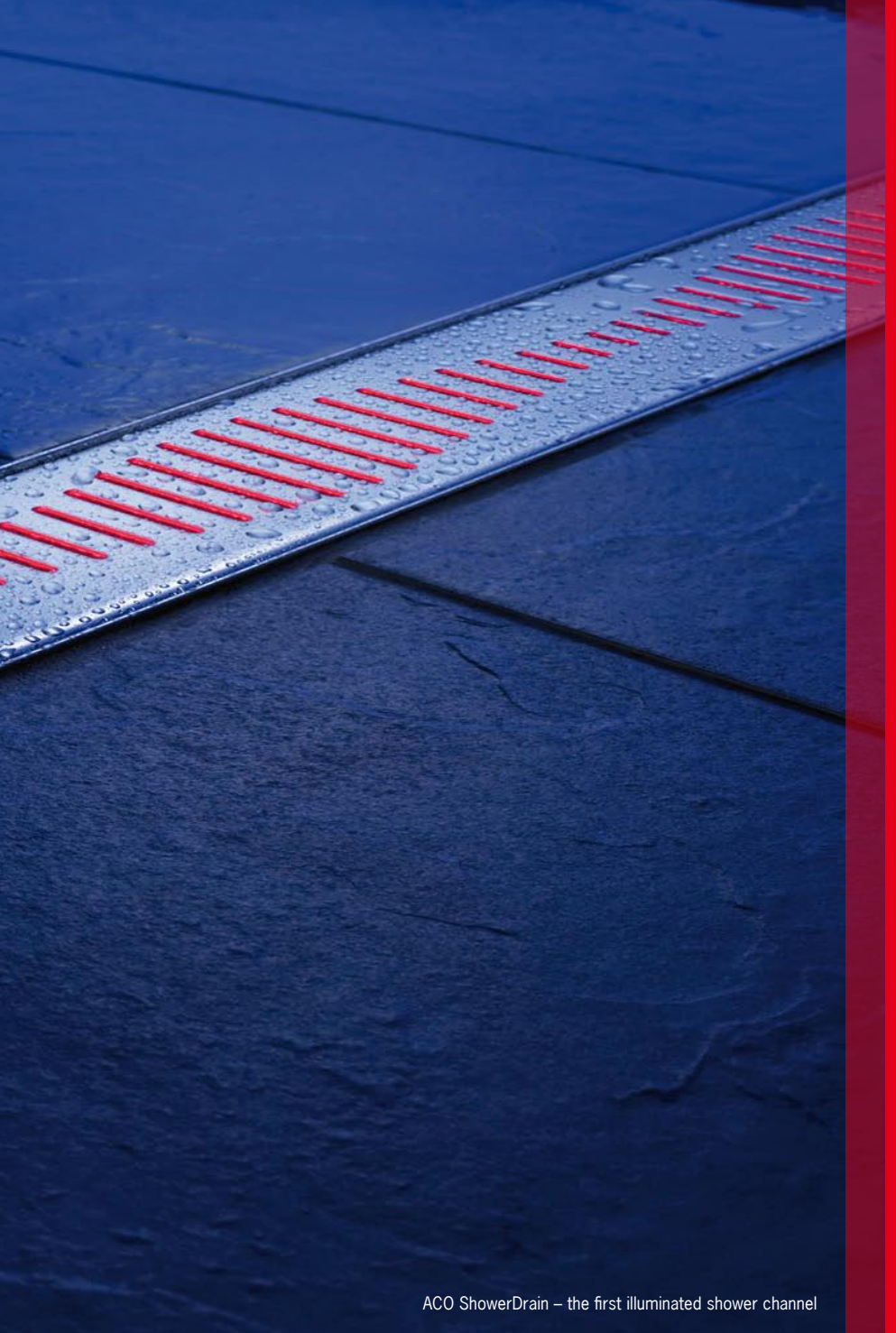


*Working solutions for
the effects of climate change*



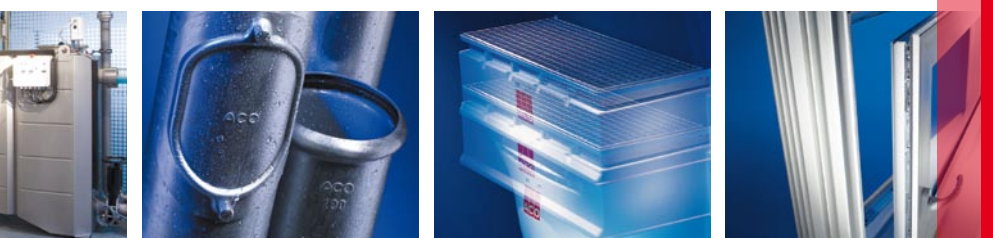


Not all of our products are as eye-catching as an illuminated ACO stainless steel channel. Most of our products do their jobs reliably, but unnoticed, year after year. They are still attractive because we strive for perfection in every detail. As even products of the highest quality can always be improved, our engineers and technicians are constantly working on innovations to enhance all kinds of aspects delete, - no matter how large or small. Polymer concrete, reinforced concrete, polymers, stainless steel and cast iron are materials ACO masters to create intelligent, efficient and sustainable products and solutions.



Perfection is beautiful

ACO ShowerDrain – the first illuminated shower channel





Being on hand pays dividends – for our customers and us. The planning and installation of drainage, water treatment, and backflow systems is best left in the hands of experts. This work demands detailed knowledge of local situations: planning depends on the right design and calculation criteria, while in depth know-how is vital for professional installation and operation. You can always rely on ACO project engineers and system consultants to be on hand when needed. Their invaluable experience and professional commitment on site ensures that our products are optimally installed in roads, open spaces, or buildings – effectively assuring ACO's high quality standards whenever our products are depended on.

*When something is new,
ACO is there*



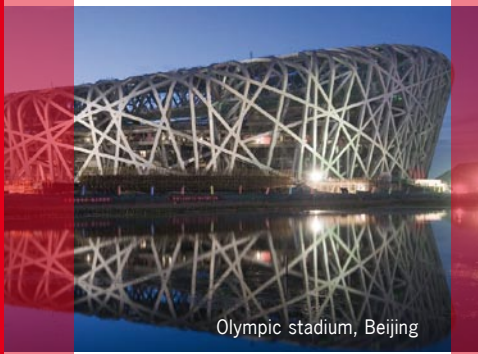


Elbphilharmonie, Hamburg

Great architecture makes no compromises. Our products are frequently found in, on and around many stunningly beautiful and spectacular buildings worldwide. Planners and architects know they can depend on ACO's competence in situations where not only design excellence but also extreme ruggedness, functionality and safety are a top priority. A big thank you to all those in the construction business who demand quality!



Burj al Arab, Dubai



Olympic stadium, Beijing



Petronas Towers, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia



Airrail Center, Frankfurt

*Great architecture makes
no compromises*

*Olympic champions
since 1972*



Proof of sustained world class performance Starting with the 1972 Olympic Games in Munich, we have equipped all, bar one, Olympic stadiums with special ACO Sport drainage systems and construction components for sports arenas. ACO has always been involved in Olympic infrastructure projects and building complexes, and that's why we are always working on the next Olympic venue.





When markets take off at high speed, ACO is the leader from the start.

A great example is the use of ACO Drain® surface drainage systems at the most modern motor racing tracks around the world – from Shanghai and Dubai to Indianapolis. The development of transport infrastructures in India, China, the Middle East and South America is a gigantic undertaking. ACO experts provide advice on planning, and product choice for draining roads, industrial sites, ports, airports, tunnels, and bridges – for high speed as well as heavy duty.



*Faster, bigger, stronger –
ACO in pole position*



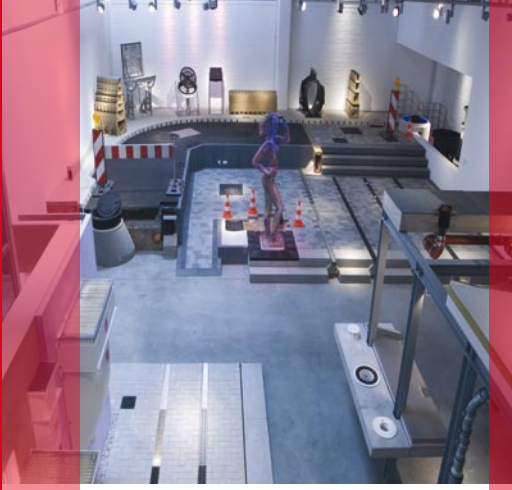


Innovative ACO technology, helps keep the oceans that bit cleaner.

Solutions that have been successfully tried and tested in industrial kitchens, clinics and factories on land, also work just as smoothly offshore: ACO separator systems, drains and pipe systems, as well as biological wastewater filtration and treatment plants, are highly reliable onboard cruise liners, luxury yachts and naval vessels that sail around the world everyday.



ACO cares for clean seas



*The ACO principle:
Sharing knowledge means
spreading knowledge*



Another aspect strengthening the ACO family: we see communication as a success factor. With our extensive knowledge and ability to network worldwide, we can put our creativity and experience to use quickly where it is needed in practice. The ACO Academy in Rendsburg/Büdelndorf, Germany opened in 2007, and is our centre for the exchange of ideas and expertise between staff, partners, and clients.

ACO Academy



The central ACO showroom, lecture theatres, meeting rooms, e-learning in virtual classrooms, and of course, making personal contacts in the Academy Lounge, establish the best conditions for sharing expertise and giving everyone a big advantage.



A well established home for international art. The cultural initiative “KiC – Kunst in der Carlshütte” forges the link between the industrial traditions of the Ahlmann family, and modern cultural sponsorship along the lines of Public Private Partnership. More than 200 international artists present their works every summer in the environs of ACO’s global headquarters in Rendsburg/Büdelndorf, Germany. KiC was given an award as an inspirational place of creative passion and visionary thinking by the “Germany – Land of Ideas” location initiative, whose patron is the German President.

**Deutschland
Land der Ideen**



Ausgewählter Ort 2008



*An environment for
development:
the ACO culture*



Team work and personal commitment are what's needed at our regattas and sailing trips with staff, partners and clients. This is where the ACO family demonstrates, in hands-on fashion, how well it can be relied on by all those aiming to win.

**ACO Severin Ahlmann
GmbH & Co. KG**

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