

SERVING GENERATIONS OF GARDENERS

If you're a keen gardener in Potsdam, you will most likely know the father-and-son duo Bruno and Thomas Discher. Since 1979, the name Discher has been synonymous with garden equipment, quality, and service. Together with STIHL, the independent dealer has not only developed substantially in the past, it's also ideally positioned for the future.





Discher Gartentechnik OHG is based on Fritz-Zubeil-Strasse in the Babelsberg district of Potsdam, in a white building with a pitched roof and large window fronts. Even from a distance, the flag bearing the unmistakable orange-and-white logo catches the eye. In the store, the one thing you notice is that STIHL is everywhere. The sales floor is home to a wide variety of products, from ride-on mowers and work clothing to robotic mowers and much more. The walls are adorned with vintage-style metal pictures of STIHL saws, certificates, photos of employees, and trophies. Tradition and family come first here.



The garage workshop survived the winter, though, and turned into a success story. Over the years, the business grew steadily, and customers not only flocked from the region but

came from much further afield. “We even had customers from central and northern parts of the country,” Discher recalls. Their order book filled to such a degree that they sometimes had up to 100 lawn mowers waiting to be serviced.

“We didn’t become dealers until the Berlin Wall came down. There was nothing to sell, so we just repaired things,” he says.

ICY START IN EAST GERMANY

The story of the Discher family begins in 1979 in the former East Germany. Bruno Discher, now 81, plucked up the courage back then to start his own lawn mower repair workshop in Potsdam. It quickly turned out to be a real gamble, because that was the year a catastrophic winter swept over the country, with meter-high blankets of snow everywhere. Intermittently, the entire power supply went down in East Germany. “I sat in my workshop and wondered whether it was really a good idea to start my own business right then,” Discher says. “Who wants to have their lawn mower repaired when everything is covered in snow?”

FALL OF BERLIN WALL OPENS UP NEW OPPORTUNITIES

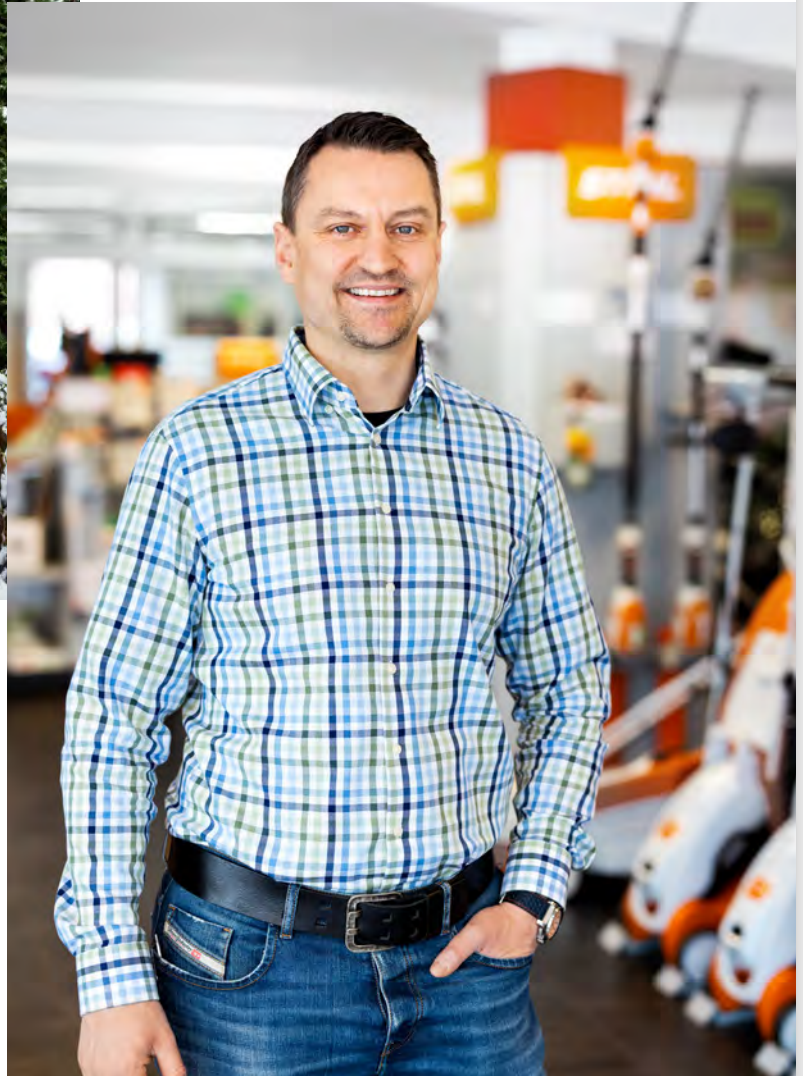
The reunification of Germany brought big changes, with an abundance of goods suddenly appearing. Discher decided to expand his business from just repairing lawn mowers to selling garden equipment as well, adding more rooms to his garage. In addition to the sales area, today’s store has a state-of-the-art workshop in which ride-on mowers, chainsaws, and robotic mowers are repaired.

The partnership with STIHL began in 1992, when a STIHL representative presented the new chainsaws during a visit to Potsdam. Discher was initially skeptical about the idea of selling saws. Ultimately, though, the quality of the products won him over, and he added them to his range – a decision that worked out well for him and helped his business flourish.



You can see even from a distance that STIHL is central to the Discher business. A STIHL entrance sign directs customers to the parking lot.

In the store, we meet the general manager, Thomas Discher.



HOW IT ALL BEGAN

During the catastrophic winter of 1979, Bruno Discher founds his one-man lawn mower repair business in Potsdam (then East Germany).



1979



Founder Bruno Discher still comes into the store every day and advises his regular customers.

1989-1992

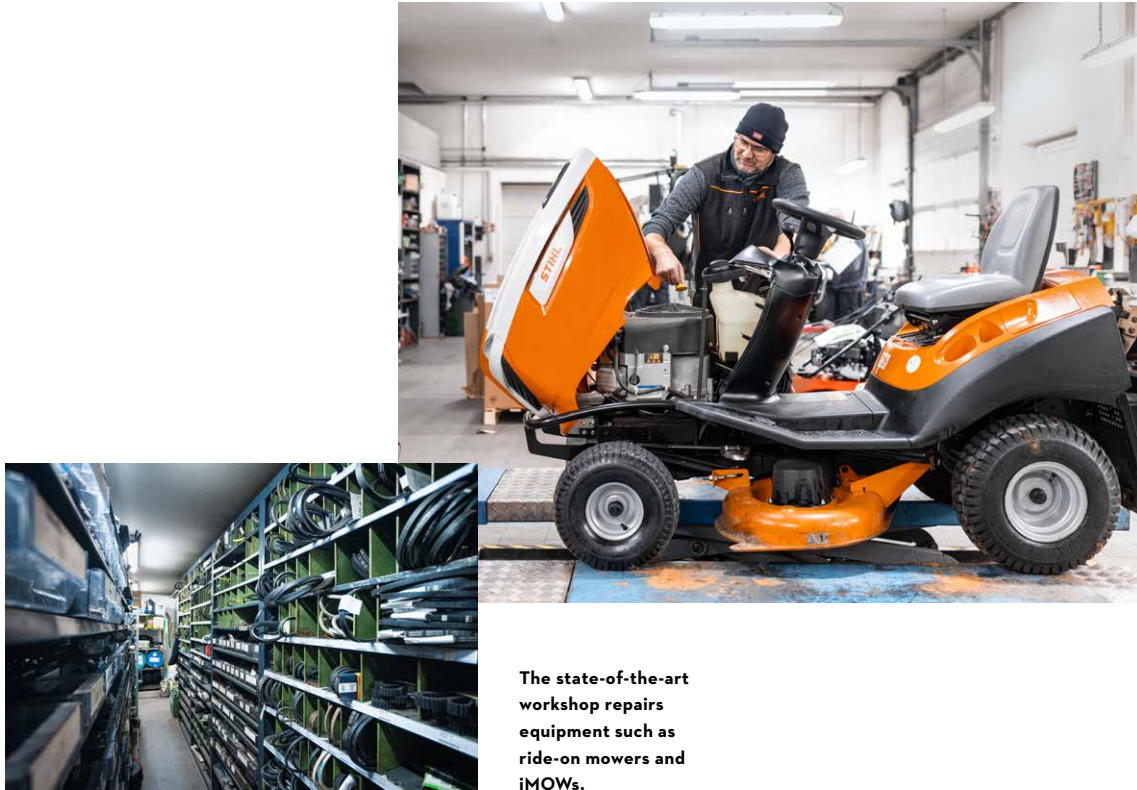


German reunification opens up new opportunities for Discher, who decides to start selling garden equipment, including STIHL saws.

2011



Bruno Discher's son Thomas decides to take over the reins of the growing family business. The father-and-son duo ultimately move into larger premises.



The state-of-the-art workshop repairs equipment such as ride-on mowers and iMOWs.

»I still come into the store every day. The work gives me energy.«

BRUNO DISCHER





Peter Romanek has been with the Dischers since 1984. A mechanic by training, he is also a true STIHL enthusiast. The 65-year-old proudly presents one of his 30 STIHL saws.

The Discher team (from left to right): Nancy Peske, Lars Sieber, Bruno Discher, Matthias Hoffmann, Jörg Slawinski, Michael Zeidler, Kathrin Lautsch, Rolf Rothe, Peter Romanek, Thomas Discher. Front row: Sebastian Buchs.



Bruno Discher's son Thomas started occasionally helping out in the store in the late 1990s. As retirement age was looming for Discher Senior, he asked Thomas if he would like to take the reins. "I was still very young, but I knew that I wanted to continue the family business," Thomas says.

DISCHER AND STIHL - A STROKE OF LUCK

In the mid-2000s, father and son decided to look for larger premises and to become business partners. They founded a general partnership, with Thomas being responsible for operations from then on. Although he has handed over the reins, Bruno can't let go completely. He still comes into the store every day, looks after regular customers, and provides his son Thomas with sage advice. At the same time, STIHL has continued to develop its network of dealers in Germany. Those who became dealers were able to "fit out their stores perfectly and showcase high-end machines professionally," Thomas Discher explains.

The partnership proved to be a stroke of luck for the Dischers. STIHL not only supported them with sales tools for their store, but also became a strategic partner. "We got a lot of personal attention," Discher says, full of praise. "We were given training and met suppliers, sales staff, and even members of the Stihl family." STIHL offers Thomas Discher additional training to gain an

even deeper insight into the products. "We received personal insights into the different trades and even traveled to the U.S. for a factory tour," the business owner recalls. "Those were very unique experiences."

»STIHL is a reliable partner and supplier and gives us valuable support.«

THOMAS DISCHER

WELL POSITIONED FOR THE FUTURE

Today, Discher OHG bears little resemblance to its beginnings as a one-man business. The company now employs ten people, and father Bruno is still on the sales floor every day. Working in the store gives him energy, and he simply can't imagine retiring just yet. The same is true of the staff. Peter Romanek has been working in the workshop as a mechanic since 1984. Despite officially having been retired for a year, he still helps out for a couple of hours a week. "Peter knows our large customer base, as he has essentially been there from the beginning," Discher says. "Many people know and trust him and value his decades of experience." Romanek is also a passionate STIHL enthusiast. "I collect old STIHL saws and repair them," he says. The 65-year-old now owns over 30 STIHL chainsaws.

Although the Dischers sell other garden equipment, STIHL remains their biggest supplier by far. "STIHL is clearly in at the top when it comes to quality. They care deeply about what they produce," Thomas says. "STIHL is a reliable partner and supplier, and gives us valuable support. With that in mind, we are very confident about the future."

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YEARS is how long Discher OHG has now been operating. The company has overcome a number of hurdles and is now one of the best places to go for garden equipment in Potsdam.