

Gauselmann Group acting with full confidence and preparing for end to lockdown

Sights set on future despite crisis

Espelkamp. The over 700 MERKUR arcades in Germany and Europe are currently all closed, as too are all ten German casino venues of the Gauselmann Group and additionally the company's many hundreds of sports betting shops in Germany and abroad. Nevertheless, the East-Westphalian family-owned company is looking to the time after the crisis with courage and confidence.

“For the Gauselmann Group, solidarity is the order of the day”, emphasizes company patriarch Paul Gauselmann. “Our focus is currently on retaining all of the 14,000 jobs in our corporate group to the greatest extent possible. Our employees have dedicated themselves to the company for many years and decades – we therefore cannot abandon them in these difficult times. That is a huge and challenging task when you consider that we are currently generating practically no revenues.”

Short-time work is the key way to preserve jobs in the long term. In the Gauselmann Group, approximately 13,500 employees are affected by this. “In certain cases where short-time work would lead to extremely dramatic social hardship, we will top up the short-time work allowance. Given the size of our company, that is a considerable load, which we are bearing not only for solidarity reasons but also to secure our company”, says Paul Gauselmann. Out of solidarity, members of the Management Board and managers, comprising approximately 60 people, are waiving or deferring payment of, on average, 50 percent of their salary.

In consultation with landlords, rent payments for arcades of

the Gauselmann Group in Germany have for now been reduced by approximately 50%. "This measure helps us to secure liquidity and thus conserve a certain amount of clout", Paul Gauselmann goes on to explain. "Each party is bearing 50% of the loss for which he/she is not to blame."

The Gauselmann Group is geared toward re-starting the market. The development teams are therefore continuing to work on new products so as to be able to offer customers the best "Made in Germany" games, machines and services in the future. The corporate group is optimistic that arcades and casinos in Germany will reopen soon. According to Paul Gauselmann, this is also urgently necessary for player protection reasons, as significantly increased use of illegal online gambling from abroad is to be observed since all arcades and other legal gaming offerings necessarily had to close due to the coronavirus crisis. "Under these circumstances, we can currently no longer collaborate on the task formulated in the State Treaty on Gambling to steer people's natural drive to play games such that they do so in an orderly fashion, and to counteract the proliferation of illegal gambling offerings", reports Paul Gauselmann.

The Gauselmann Group is optimally prepared for a reopening of the arcades as soon as possible. "The commercial arcades, in particular, have the advantage that, under the legal provisions, they are already implementing requirements that comply with the principle of social distancing anyway. Therefore, when we reopen our arcades, these in conjunction with additional extensive measures will ensure optimal infection protection for our guests and employees", assures Dieter Kuhlmann, Board Member with responsibility for Gaming Operations.