



Join the VDTA as we learn the history and origins of the many thread companies that serve the independent retailer. For the next several months, watch for a new article or two in each issue, revealing the fascinating story of how your favorite thread companies came to be. This article in our series focuses on Gütermann thread, a premier European brand owned by American & Efird LLC

# Gütermann

When American & Efird LLC acquired Gütermann Thread Company in 2014, the German-based company was celebrating a rich history of 150 years! Let's explore Gütermann's company timeline and their innovations in the European textile market.

Max Gütermann established the Gütermann company in Vienna in 1864, producing silk threads. By 1873 at the World Exposition in Vienna, Gütermann initiated the selling of thread by the meter rather than by weight for the consumer. In 1884 Max reached a 20-year-long goal to achieve independent production along with handing the company over to his five sons.

The 1880s to the 1930s brought huge growth for the company, and they passed their good fortune along to their employees. Gütermann introduced unique social benefits including their own kindergarten, hospital, girls' homes, and 600 homes for their workers. They were famous for their "Gütermann Works Band," financing of the gymnastics hall for the Gymnastics Association, a Golf Club, and numerous other employee outreach programs (long before it was the norm). In 1910 they initiated International expansion, and by the 1920s and 30s grew to a worldwide company.



The World Wars brought much hardship and the Gütermann company continued to operate with the 4<sup>th</sup> generation of descendants at the helm, assuring the company's ability to survive economically difficult times post war. Innovation was and still is the key to the success of the Gütermann brand, including a patent for a self-service display unit (SVK) in 1935, the addition of polyester sewing thread to their product offering in 1955, and the computerization of dye operations in 1971. In 1996, Gütermann was the first German thread product to attain ISO9002. A merger with their long-standing competitor Zwicky in 2000 brought even more growth and success, adding Zwicky's automotive industry thread base to the Gütermann company.

## About Gutach, Germany:

Gütermann's European headquarters is Gutach, Germany, not far from Vienna, where the company was first established. Gutach is a municipality in the district of Ortenau in Baden-Württemberg in Germany and part of the Black Forest. Gutach is widely known as being shaped by the Gütermann thread company, bringing great wealth to the village over 100 years ago. That is still evident in the distinctive Art Nouveau villages and the affluent resort area. Today, Gutach is a small village with a population of slightly over 2,000, with an area of approximately 12 square miles. The quaint area is well known as the home of the famous Black Forest Open Air Museum, showcasing the beauty and history of this region.

# Gütermann

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In 2008, Gütermann developed MCT, the first microfilament polyester thread based on core spun technology, a major innovation in thread manufacturing. In 2010, a modern, more effective and efficient modular merchandising system was designed and introduced to retailers in Europe. This new modular merchandising system is now in development for the U.S. independent dealers.

With the acquisition of the Gütermann company in 2014, American & Efid became the second largest thread company in the world. A&E and Gütermann companies share many similar traits: a long and rich history, family run businesses for the majority of their existence, and a dedication to providing excellent products and customer service.

The combined companies offer distributors, retailers, and consumers the best of both companies with well-respected brands for all sewing, quilting, and crafting applications; many innovative floor, counter, and wall merchandising displays for great store presentations; pleasant and productive shopping experiences; and easy in-store maintenance. The A&E Gütermann combined company has a wealth of thread experience and knowledge in manufacturing, distribution, and customer service – a true benefit to all their customers.

Gütermann is well known for their premium quality European thread that is “low lint,” has silk-like sheen, and leaves no deposits in the machines. The consistent and uniform quality of this thread ensures consistent seams with no thread breakage. An innovator in polyester, Gütermann's Sew-all thread, Premium Serger thread, Topstitch, Extra Strong, and Extra Fine varieties share their trademark Micro-Core Technology. Its unique microfilament polyester-based core-spun thread continues to be precision engineered in Germany. Gütermann Natural Cotton threads come in several weights, solid and variegated colors, and spool and cone put-ups for the various home and long-arm quilting machines.

The Gütermann line also includes several specialty threads including Hand Quilting, Elastic, Silk, Upholstery, Metallic Effect, Bulky Nylon, Rayon, Trilobal Polyester, and Bobbin. With a full European line for the creative consumer, and now part of the A&E family, Gütermann continues to deliver innovation, quality, and engineering from its European headquarters in Gutach, Germany.

The Gütermann German-based brand brings strength to the A&E Consumer U.S.-based brands featured in the October 2017 *SQE Professional™* magazine. A&E Gütermann Consumer Division sells and services all U.S. distributors and retailers. It is headquartered in Mt. Holly, NC with centralized distribution facilities in Gastonia, NC



# A&E Gütermann

## Consumer Division