

**WELT****WELT AM SONNTAG****Manfred Koslar, the master inventor from Moabit**

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A Berlin engineer revolutionizes chip technology

Unbelievable, Manfred Koslar shakes his head. He has been an engineer for almost 40 years now, and technology never ceases to amaze him. Or, to be more specific, to delight him. Koslar has just taken a portable voltage tester out of one of his office cabinets. The product he developed had been lying there unused for ten years. Nevertheless, it works straight away when he switches it on. The batteries had survived all that time. "See how we have minimized the leakage current," he explains enthusiastically.

But he actually didn't want to talk about measuring devices, but about chips, data transmission systems and his new company Nanotron. For the past six years, communications engineer Koslar has been working on a new technology. This technology will enable chips to exchange data wirelessly - more reliably and cheaply than competing systems. This month, Koslar opened its doors and declared the development period to be over. Now it's Koslar's sales managers' turn. The Danish Danfos Group has ordered the first chips.

The Moabit-based company now employs almost 30 people. If Koslar's business plan works, there will be twice as many next year. Koslar hopes that devices such as fire alarms, electricity meters, car tires and heating systems will increasingly automatically send signals from sensors wirelessly. This means, for example, that measuring devices permanently register the pressure in car tires. Nanotron's chip sends this data to the central on-board computer, which warns the driver when the pressure drops.

"Connecting machines and computers with cables is cumbersome," explains Koslar. And expensive. Networking via data lines costs eight euros per meter. "We have overcome the landline philosophy. The 'wireless age' will soon begin," says the Nanotron CEO. This will mean a huge boom for his company. In Koslar's vision, billions of tiny radio links will transport data from machine to machine. And this will mean that device manufacturers will also order billions of chips.

The Berlin-based company could be the first port of call, says Koslar, because its process could set a standard. During experiments, he came up with the idea of using analogue rather than digital data transfer. Digital technology has one disadvantage: it consumes a lot of power. According to the company, the battery life of the four by four millimetre Nanotron transmission chips is five times longer than that of the competition. Since changing the batteries in the micro-components makes no sense, the chip's service life is therefore much longer. And that ultimately reduces the cost of the technology.

It would not be the first time that the inventor from Berlin has brought an innovative product to market. Koslar has been an entrepreneur for 21 years. A portable digital oscilloscope was the product of his first company, Createc. "A world first," emphasizes Koslar. But when he lost out in competition to a large corporation from the USA, he had to start again. In 1991 he founded Nanotron, initially as an engineering firm. "That was unsatisfactory for me. My expertise lies in making a finished product," says the founder. So research began again.

Koslar initially had a completely different product in mind. The "electronic chain" was supposed to warn consumers with a beep if they left their wallet somewhere. "That happened to me in a phone booth. I was incredibly annoyed and thought about how to prevent something like that." But Koslar encountered a major problem during product development: the batteries of the electronic chain would have run out so quickly that the product would have been of little interest to customers. When technology lover Koslar had solved the problem, he realized that the technology could do much more than just prevent wallets from being lost.

Koslar also likes to talk about business management, about costs that an intact company must have under control. After all, he was once a manager. As an executive assistant at Triumph-Adler, he spent five years learning about business organization. He then restructured a company in North Rhine-Westphalia. And at 67, he no longer wants to give the impression that he is one of the new economy high-flyers. "A lot of it was unrealistic. They wanted to create needs that couldn't possibly exist." Koslar's formula sounds simpler: "We want to offer the customer something that they can be satisfied with because the price-performance ratio is right again." And products that achieve this can only be created with an "integral approach," according to Koslar. Many of the young engineers are no longer able to do this, says the graduate of the Berlin Technical University. "An overall view of the technical world" is what the engineer demands of his employees.

With his love of technology, Koslar has already convinced many of his ideas. He has even poached high-tech specialists from large German corporations or Silicon Valley. And financiers were also convinced. When the technology euphoria had already collapsed in the summer of last year and investors hardly had a penny left for founders, Koslar found three new investors and also managed the third round of financing.

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