

Felder Group: CMO Tamara Felder on the subject of visibility on social media

Woodworking

is a business full of emotion



Tamara Felder,
CMO Felder Group.

The Felder Group has grown considerably in recent times. Both under its own steam and through the acquisition of the Otto Mayer machine factory. Anyone who has recently viewed the company on social media will probably have come across the unconventional brand communication from Tamara Felder, CMO of the group. How and why this works and how the social media marketing concept fits in with the company's self-image, is explained to "möbelfertigung" by Ms. Felder.

möbelfertigung: You are personally very active on various different social media platforms. Obviously, much of it relates to the Felder Group. What is the message you are conveying?

Tamara Felder: Through my personal presence on various social media channels, I am able to give the respective followers a little bit more of an insight behind the scenes at the Felder Group. I also like to mention subjects which are important to me, that relate to the industry in

“ We must be visually visible, approachable and responsive. ”

general or daily events, sometimes I also focus on topics that in my opinion require more attention. These topics, however, normally have some form of connection with the Felder Group.

What is most important to me is to stay true to myself and to remain genuine. But let us be honest: Social media embodies and strengthens the societal transitional path from exclusivity through to connection with the masses and this process supports companies in effectively communicating to the outside world.

möbelfertigung: The Felder Group itself can be proud of its campaigns, such as the #felderchallenge. How does your personal presence complement that of the company?

Tamara Felder: The #felderchallenge you have just mentioned is just one of our many social media projects. The challenge was something that we set up to bring more attention to the secondary woodworking branch, regardless of whether the participants use products from our company or not. Through this challenge we are able to create a platform, each year, where creativity knows no bounds, free of bias.

Since last year I have also started personally supporting this by working on a project together with our application team as part of every #felderchallenge, but obviously we are not part of the competition. I don't reveal what it is until the end, we prefer to take the followers along with us, step by step. Last year we worked on a DJ console, as in my opinion, good music, design and wood go hand in hand.

möbelfertigung: Is it possible to charge woodworking machines with emotion?

Tamara Felder: You can see that this question has brought a smile to my face! My team would say: If it was down to me, then yes. And I am happy to explain why: A good friend of mine summed up my opinion very well. Thomas Meyer (CEO of the Büro für Interaktion) is of the opinion that "people buy from people, not from machines". I am in 100% agreement with him and would even add that, especially in our sector, there is a lot of emotion that resonates when it comes to wood. This is because: Individuality, creativity and innovation are all combined when working with wood.

There is nothing more personal than the furnishing of your own apartment or house. This is where somebody's personality is made visual. So for this reason we obviously charge our woodworking machines with emotion, this is a "state-of-the-art approach".

möbelfertigung: You strongly connect your brand with yourself as an individual online. Do customers trust the brand or the person?

Tamara Felder: In this case, I have to partly disagree with you. The Felder Group is an independent and incredibly successful brand, which without me would cope just fine.

In my function as one of the two CMOs of the Felder Group, a job role which I share with my brother Alexander Felder, it is one of my responsibilities to be genuine and honest with our employees, customers, partner and suppliers as well as potential new customers and to interact at eye-level. We can only achieve this when we are visually visible, approachable and



Tamara Felder breaks new ground in the presentation of the Felder Group and their machines.



“ We want to act at eye level and have the courage to try new things. ”



At the main production facility in Hall in Tirol, the machine manufacturer Felder has begun with the construction of a 5,100 square metre logistics centre.

responsive. At the end of the day, customers will have a love brand but it is the people behind the brand, that they trust and from whom they buy, regardless of their position in the company.

möbelfertigung: You also give an insight into your thoughts and your private life. Does that not come at a cost?

Tamara Felder: This is the proverbial Achilles heel when it comes to the “right” communication on social media. It is something that I struggled with myself for many months before I became active on several platforms. What can I share, what should I share, at what point will I become vulnerable, when could I be misunderstood and fundamentally, does the world actually want

to hear what I want to say? After many sleepless nights and discussions I came to the conclusion that I have to weigh everything up very carefully before I share it. But behind every post that I make, you can be assured that it is my thoughts

at that time that have driven it, something that I believe in.

My private life remains completely separate and does not have any point of contact with my professional career. When I engage privately, however, in any company or branch related topics, then you can be sure to find these on social media. At this point I would like to emphasise again: “Authenticity is the key”. Do subjects that appeal to me on a private level

work better? Definitely, yes. In a figurative sense, this means you have to find the balance, your niche and your own voice, and as they say, “your vibe attracts your tribe”.

möbelfertigung: Do you have any role models for the way in which you communicate on social media platforms?

Tamara Felder: No, as I prefer to be authentic.

möbelfertigung: You now have a lot of experience with various different platforms. What kind of content works best and where?

Tamara Felder: There are obviously the standard, unwritten rules which guide you on what will theoretically work best on which platforms. These rules, however, are not set in stone and are always changing.

Let us take a look together at the most commonly used platforms: LinkedIn is a business network, and as such our mindset must be business orientated. Facebook has a wider target group, the strategy as such has to be tailored to the various user groups. What still matters on Instagram is that “pretty perfect picture”, but what we are now seeing are the developments in video content: The younger users no longer just want to see perfection, but rather more “authenticity” and credibility. TikTok is a video platform. Let’s just say: This is a platform where we don’t have to take ourselves too seriously! What is important, however, is that we need to follow the trends.

But in the end, all of these platforms have something in common and that is community management: As what really matters is that we as a company interact with the users and are available for them.

“ It is something that I struggled with myself for many months, what the right communication on social media should look like. ”

möbelfertigung: Your latest social media foray was with TikTok, a platform which is predominantly used by teenagers. What was the idea behind this?

Tamara Felder: That is actually quite a common misunderstanding when talking about TikTok. It actually lacks any basis. Let's take Austria as an example: According to Statistik Austria, the Austrian statistic agency, there are 1.2 million TikTok users in Austria. Globally, according to the Canadian social media management platform Hoot-suite, 32 percent of the users are between 25 and 34 years of age, 3.4 percent are over the age of 55. Another statistic: Ampere analysis reported that in the 1st quarter of 2021, 36 percent of the users worldwide were between 35 and 54 years of age.

For the sake of argument, however, let's assume that your assumption is correct and that TikTok is predominantly used by the younger generation. In this case, my answer would be that I am very happy to interact with our customers of tomorrow and also welcome the chance to be seen by the woodworking clientele on a global level.

möbelfertigung: You are the next and above all the youngest generation in a long-established company. Where do you see your role and perhaps also the biggest challenges?

Tamara Felder: Together with three other high-ambition and eminent personalities I belong to the third generation of the Felder Group. Neither my cousins Daniel and Patrick Felder, nor my brother Alexander and I place any value on generation differences. Such schematic ways of thinking are a foreign subject for us. Instead, we are much more of the opinion that: Regardless of which age bracket, which gender and sex or which ethnicity somebody belongs to, a transparent communication and an exchange of knowledge is the basis for the future. What counts is the courage to dare to do something different and to allow and accept a "failure culture".

Relating to the point on challenges: Sometimes it helps to break the mould, to surpass yourself, to really listen and to accept opinions, even if you do decide not to necessarily pass them on. These are, in my opinion, virtues that should be established.

möbelfertigung: The Felder Group has grown recently through the acquisition of other brands. How did the integration of the Otto Mayer machine factory go?

Tamara Felder: An integration is a process where, in addition to the hard facts, soft skills such as the merging of the company cultures, common understandings and

“ Especially in our industry branch, woodworking, emotions play a large role. ”

goals need to be carried out, redefined and aligned. We see this as an omnipresent process that is constantly driven and not as a project that has a completion date.

möbelfertigung: Are there other branches in which you as a Group have decided to expand into, whether it be through internal expansion or acquisition?

Tamara Felder: The Felder Group sees itself as a comprehensive supplier in the secondary woodworking branch, and our ambition is to be a partner for our customers. We grow with the challenges of our customers and offer solutions. The future will show us, which additional directions are interesting and also possible for the Felder Group.

möbelfertigung: How do you see yourself as a group positioned vis-à-vis market competitors?

Tamara Felder: We do not compare ourselves with market competitors. Our clear focus is on making the Felder Group accessible to our customers around the world. This brings challenges, but also many opportunities. We are a company that is committed to acting at eye level, being reliable and having the courage to try new things.

We believe that this is in line with the spirit of the times and we are not afraid to constantly rethink this and question ourselves in order to respond in the best possible way to market realities.

Sebastian Hahn