

Press release
Frankenberg, January 2023

First-class seating for a state-of-the-art manufacturing facility Thonet furniture in the Strauss CI Factory

Timeless designs and iconic products using the highest quality materials.

This is a fitting description of both Thonet, a world-renowned and tradition-rich company, and Engelbert Strauss, one of the world's leading manufacturers of workwear, utility wear and personal protective equipment. And the similarities don't stop there: both companies are headquartered in the German state of Hesse, Thonet employees proudly wear work clothing from Engelbert Strauss and now Thonet furniture is also featured in Engelbert Strauss's CI Factory. The Thonet 118, 520 and S 166 chairs are featured in the meeting rooms as well as in various hospitality areas, inviting employees to linger, creating a welcoming atmosphere and providing comfortable seating for breaks and meetings.



The CI Factory, in Hesse's Main-Kinzig district, opened in 2020 and is celebrated as a cutting-edge manufacturing and logistics facility. The brand's workwear and fashion items are highly popular. A family-owned business with international operations, Engelbert Strauss embraces state-of-the-art logistics, laser technology and robotics to offer practically limitless customisation options for shirts, trousers and shoes in every colourway imaginable. For Strauss's 1,600 or so employees, the CI Factory provides a modern, high-tech workspace with an inviting ambience. Floor to ceiling windows flood the stylish rooms with light and provide stunning views of the surrounding landscape.

Coffee house tradition meets lunch break

The smell of freshly brewed coffee wafts through the CI Factory, inviting employees up to the fifth-floor. Here in the company canteen – with its own café, bakery, patisserie and even an in-house coffee roastery – particular care is paid to the quality of the products used, many of which are locally sourced. Employees can pull up an elegant Thonet 118 wooden chair to sit comfortably, take in some refreshment, talk and enjoy their breaks together. The 118 is a classic Thonet product. The principle behind it was introduced by Michael Thonet in the mid-19th century as he worked to reduce a chair to the fewest elements possible. Sebastian Herkner's popular design for the 118 is based on this idea, paying tribute to Thonet's roots and taking the minimalist approach a step further. The designer has added clever details of his own for an air of understated sophistication. The 118 with moulded plywood seat can be found in a range of different stains and finishes at the CI Factory: black blue, bright green, subtle grey and a warm beech. Engelbert Strauss also opted for barstools (118 H) from the same range, which are perfect for a quick coffee break or catch-up at higher level counters.

The company canteen has been furnished with fully upholstered 520 chairs with armrests for an extra touch of luxury. This range of inviting chairs is based on the iconic bentwood classic, the 209, a long-

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standing favourite among architects. For the 520, designer Marco Dessí filled the open spaces between the bentwood elements in the 209 with cosy upholstery. Within the famous furniture maker's portfolio, the 520 chair undeniably shares the Thonet DNA and creates a connection to traditional Viennese coffee house culture. The 520 is also the perfect chair for meeting spaces, providing somewhere exceptionally comfortable to sit for either a sociable break or longer gatherings. Fabric coverings in iridescent olive blue and vibrant coral pink provide colourful accents adding aesthetic interest.

Holding a meeting? Think Thonet!

Various versions of the S 166 from Thonet have been used in the CI Factory conference rooms, adding style and ease. The upholstered seat offers premium comfort, no matter how long the meeting or conference. There are more than 130 of these stackable chairs with seat shells in white, sky blue and lemon yellow, injecting a pop of colour to any meeting and offering creative inspiration. The S 166 can be tightly stacked (up to 17 chairs) and features a patented linking technology, which is a space-saving way to connect the chairs safely and easily without tools. This makes the colourful chairs in the Strauss CI Factory an exceptionally versatile seating choice.

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Thonet – future-oriented furniture design with a long tradition

The unique success story of Thonet began with the work of master carpenter Michael Thonet. Ever since he established his first workshop in Boppard on the River Rhine in 1819, the name Thonet has stood for high-quality, innovative and elegant furniture. The breakthrough came with the iconic chair No. 14, today known the world over as the Vienna Coffee House Chair: the pioneering technique of bending solid beechwood enabled the mass production of chairs for the first time. The second milestone in design history was the tubular steel furniture by the famous Bauhaus architects Mart Stam, Ludwig Mies van der Rohe and Marcel Breuer in the 1930s. During those pioneering years, Thonet was the world's largest producer of these tubular steel furniture designs, which are today considered timeless.

For the company today, the continuous process of innovation is the top priority, together with a focus on tradition and fine craftsmanship. Thonet's furniture designs originate both from its collaborations with renowned national and international creatives and from the in-house Thonet Design Team. Chief Executive Officer Brian Boyd and Creative Director Norbert Ruf manage the company from the corporate head office and production site in Frankenberg/Eder (Germany). Michael Thonet's fifth- and sixth-generation descendants are actively involved with the company's business as partners and sales representatives.