

Press release

She has created a company of world renown Entrepreneur Ursula Ida Lapp celebrates her 90th birthday



Company founder Ursula Ida Lapp celebrates her 90th birthday on 30 May

Stuttgart, 25 May 2020

Ursula Ida Lapp has written German economic history. Together with her husband, Oskar Lapp, she has created a company of world renown with courage, vision and an unbelievable creative power. She has shaped LAPP into the world market leader for integrated fastening systems. On 30 May 2020 the successful entrepreneur will celebrate her 90th birthday in Stuttgart.

"My mother is still the heart of our company today. She has shaped us with her immense drive and passion for the company and its employees. She is our great role model," emphasises her son Andreas Lapp, Chairman of the Executive Board of Lapp Holding AG.

A big birthday party in her honour was cancelled due to the Corona crisis. "Unfortunately, we can only celebrate our mother's birthday in the smallest family circle - but of course with a birthday cake and a serenade," regrets Andreas Lapp.



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LAPP's success story began in the late 1950s. Ursula Ida Lapp's husband Oskar Lapp (1921-1987) was a brilliant inventor and tinkerer. At the end of the 1950s he developed the first industrially manufactured connection and control cable, which revolutionised connection technology. Previously, all the wires in the cables were black or grey and master electricians found it difficult to correctly assign the wires at the respective ends when connecting them. This required a laborious process known as ringing through. In addition, the cables had very large cross-sections and were not very flexible. Oskar Lapp invented a cable with coloured wires with much smaller diameters. The first industrially produced connection and control cable was born. This was accompanied by another innovation: the couple invented the matching brand name: ÖLFLEX®. Even today, this brand name is still synonymous worldwide with particularly oil-resistant and flexible control cables.

In 1959, the Lapp couple founded their company with the help of a bank loan of 50,000 marks. Because Oskar Lapp was still employed by another company, Ursula Ida Lapp had herself entered in the commercial register as the founder of the company. The name of the company was created at the kitchen table: U.I. Lapp KG - U.I. stands for Ursula Ida. Similar to many other start up companies today, the Lapps initially ran their business from the garage of their house in Stuttgart-Vaihingen. Oskar Lapp took over the customer sales, Ursula Ida Lapp took care of the bookkeeping, orders, advertising and the young children at home. She often drove to the freight station with her handcart to receive the freshly delivered cables, which the entrepreneur couple initially had manufactured to order, and to send the cables straight on. Ursula Ida Lapp stood "her man" in the industrial male world. ÖLFLEX® was the right product at the right time. The Lapp couple thus set quality standards that are still valid worldwide in cable production today. They even offered ready-made cable harnesses with up to 130 coloured cores. The demand was enormous.

As early as 1963, the first own factory was opened to produce the ÖLFLEX® cables themselves. In 1965 the company headquarters was moved from the family home in Stuttgart-Vaihingen to Schulze-Delitzsch-Strasse - still the company headquarters today. When Oskar Lapp died in 1987, Ursula Ida Lapp and her sons Siegbert and Andreas took over the management of the company. The internationalisation process was continued. In Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa and recently also in Australia, new markets were developed and new locations were established.

Today, LAPP is a leading supplier of integrated solutions and branded products in the field of cable and connection technology. The company's portfolio includes standard and highly flexible cables, industrial connectors and cable entry systems, customized system solutions, automation technology and robotics solutions for the intelligent factory of the future, as well as technical accessories. LAPP's core market is in the industrial machinery and plant engineering sector. Other key markets are in the food industry as well as the energy and the mobility sector. LAPP has remained in continuous family ownership since it was founded in 1959. In the 2018/19 business year, it generated consolidated revenue of 1,222 million euros. LAPP currently employs approximately 4,650 people across the world, has 18 production sites and around 44 sales companies. It also works in cooperation with around 100 foreign representatives.

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Ursula Ida Lapp is still passionately committed to the company today. She is Honorary Chairwoman of the Supervisory Board and is present at important company events. Already at the end of the 1990s, she handed over the day-to-day business operations to her sons Siegbert and Andreas Lapp. Today, Andreas Lapp is Chairman of the Board of Directors of the global holding company Lapp Holding AG, and his brother Siegbert E. Lapp is Chairman of the Supervisory Board. Two grandchildren have also already taken on responsibility in the company. Grandson Matthias Lapp took over as CEO for the Europe region including South America, Africa and the Middle East in 2017. Grandson Alexander Lapp is responsible for digitization and e-business at the holding company. This also fulfilled a life's wish for Ursula Ida Lapp: the company was to remain in family ownership - the third generation was also to continue what she had built up.

Ursula Ida Lapp has always exemplified what characterises the company culture today: namely, the values of customer orientation, family, innovation and success. Sustainable action and responsibility for the employees are always at the centre of attention. Ursula Ida Lapp knows from her own experience how important the compatibility of family and career is. For example, U.I. Lapp GmbH was awarded the prize for its life-phase-oriented personnel work because LAPP support employees in all phases of life in combining work and family life, for example with flexible working hours and shift exchanges. LAPP also provide support in finding daycare places or nursing care, as well as numerous health programmes. For this reason, LAPP was also named the most family-friendly company in Germany by the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth.

Ursula Ida Lapp has always been passionate about social and cultural commitment outside the company as well. In addition to generous donations for institutions in and around Stuttgart, but also in India, she and her sons initiated the Oskar Lapp Foundation in 1992. It was founded in honour of her husband Oskar Lapp, who had died of a heart attack. The foundation offers young scientists additional incentives to become specifically involved in cardiovascular research. The Oskar Lapp Research Prize, which is endowed with 12,000 euros, is awarded annually. Every two years, an Oskar Lapp Scholarship is also awarded, with up to 20,000 euros for material resources. The realization of the Community Center Möhringen was also only possible thanks to a generous donation of 600,000 euros. Ursula Ida Lapp also spent four years in the regional parliament.

Her grandson Matthias Lapp sums up how much Ursula Ida Lapp has shaped the company. "Our grandma, that's the company." For her achievements as an entrepreneur, as well as for her social commitment, Ursula Ida Lapp has received many awards, including the Federal Cross of Merit and the Business Medal of the State of Baden-Württemberg.

You can find the image in printable quality [here](#)

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About LAPP:

Headquartered in Stuttgart, Germany, LAPP is a leading supplier of integrated solutions and branded products in the field of cable and connection technology. The company's portfolio includes standard and highly flexible cables, industrial connectors and cable entry systems, customized system solutions, automation technology and robotics solutions for the intelligent factory of the future, as well as technical accessories. LAPP's core market is in the industrial machinery and plant engineering sector. Other key markets are in the food industry as well as the energy and the mobility sector.

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