



A company's success is closely linked to the people who shape it.

Ivo Petschke has been part of L.A. Schmitt GmbH for more than 12 years. In this time, Ivo has set essential milestones in the company's development.

In conversation with us, he looks back over his career and provides insight into his work and L.A. Schmitt's product range.

Interview with the managing director Ivo Petschke

EURO COSMETICS: *Ivo, you've been with the company since 2013 and handled sales and marketing until you became Managing Director after Mr. Manfred Stöver. What motivated you to accept this role?*

Ivo Petschke: I was never afraid to take on responsibility – after all, I had already served as Managing Director. The takeover was carefully planned, prepared over time, and agreed upon with the entire team, which made the decision much easier. At a medium-sized company, you have a unique

opportunity to shape its history actively, which was a key motivation for me.

EURO COSMETICS: *Which direction has the company taken since then?*

Ivo Petschke: During his time as Managing Director, Mr. Stöver focused on the company's technical equipment and on establishing expertise. I used this solid foundation to acquire new customers and help existing partners grow.

EURO COSMETICS: *What changes do you regard as turning points for L.A. Schmitt when you look back across the company's long history?*

Ivo Petschke: There were many critical moments, such as the move from Leipzig to Ludwigsstadt in the 1950s. But let's focus on the last 20 years: The 2009 takeover by BRAIN AG was a key step. When Mr. Stöver joined the company, there was a strategic shift away from our own brands toward becoming a dedicated private-label

supplier. He reorganized the company from the ground up, especially in production and development, driven by the new European cosmetics regulation at the time. Another central turning point was BRAIN AG's decision to shift its focus, which meant that L.A. Schmitt no longer aligned with its group structure. This was communicated early and transparently, so we could work together to find a new investor. I am grateful to the leadership, especially Lukas Linnig, for this openness. In La Cultura Verde Ltd. and the Kim family, we found the ideal partner – not just as a buyer, but also as an investor in the location. The newly created “Frauka” brand, which is currently sold in Korea, is developing very well. For us, “Frauka” is just like any other private-label customer; everyone benefits equally from growth and modernization.

EURO COSMETICS: *And which moments or events were especially memorable and have left their mark on your work up to now?*

Ivo Petschke: The assumption of the Managing Director role and the change of managing director were definitely critical, but well-planned and structured. The Corona pandemic and Russia's attack on Ukraine were utterly different. These events left deep marks, as we suddenly had to react to entirely new basic conditions. During Corona, we had to change our workflows and take the opportunity to produce disinfectants. After the start of the Ukraine war, there were raw material shortages, delivery bottlenecks, and exploding energy prices. We overcame both crises, and even if it sounds corny, we came out of these stronger because we put our flexibility to the test.

EURO COSMETICS: *How large is the company in the meantime, and what is its production capacity?*

Ivo Petschke: We currently employ 25 people and operate on a single shift. With planned investments in larger, state-of-the-art machines and the option to introduce two-shift operation, we have sufficient growth potential.

EURO COSMETICS: *L.A. Schmitt also produces its own products. Of which product are you the proudest?*

Ivo Petschke: In addition to our shareholder's financial strength, we benefit from their decades of experience in the Korean cosmetics market. This expertise flows into our product development: Korean innovation combined with German quality. The result is a line of ten body and face-care products under the “Frauka” brand. We are also happy to make this expertise available to our private label customers.

EURO COSMETICS: *Can you explain the science/research behind the products?*

Ivo Petschke: Our development team is closely networked with the raw materials industry and gains early insight into new trends, which we present to our customers as finished concepts. Added to this are our strong connections from our association work, which keep us informed about regulatory changes. And finally, we profit from our Korean partners' market knowledge.

EURO COSMETICS: *What exactly do you offer your customers beyond finished product lines?*

Ivo Petschke: Our core competency is developing custom recipes tailored to our customers' requirements. Finished product lines and our expertise serve as inspiration and support here. Each brand has its own language, and our task is to create the correct formulation.

EURO COSMETICS: *Where can you buy L.A. Schmitt's products?*

Ivo Petschke: Our products are available to customers in spas, hotels, thermal baths, cosmetics studios, retail stores, and online. The “Frauka” brand is currently sold primarily on Korean teleshopping; online sales in Germany are planned for 2026.

EURO COSMETICS: *What are the most significant current challenges for contract manufacturers in the cosmetics industry?*

Ivo Petschke: There are many challenges: increasing regulation, for example, deforestation-free supply chains and the European packaging waste regulation; a weak consumer climate, especially in Germany; and long-term problems in supply chains. For particular raw materials and packaging types, prices and delivery times are very difficult to calculate. But whining doesn't help; we must remain flexible and find solutions.

EURO COSMETICS: *How do you see the company's future role?*

Ivo Petschke: We are a strong, innovative partner to our private-label customers and those who want to work with us. We will rely on our own “Frauka” brand and additional investments in the location.

EURO COSMETICS: *Ivo, thank you very much for the conversation.* ■

