

Europa-Park founder Roland Mack is celebrating his 75th birthday

Man of ideas, motor, maker and family businessman admired around the world:

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The founder and owner of Europa-Park in Rust (Baden-Wurttemberg, Germany), Roland Mack is celebrating his 75th birthday on 12. October 2024. Roland Mack is considered one of Germany's most successful, if unusual, family entrepreneurs.

He has made millions of children and families happy with 'his' Europa-Park. Since its opening in July 1975, over 145 million people have visited Germany's largest theme park and the Mack family have invested more than one billion euros in it, without recourse to one cent of public funding. Those asking what his qualities are will keep hearing: curiosity, warmth, openness, directness, discipline, socialness, conscientiousness, constant presence and quality orientation. But by no means are these all the characteristics to make up Roland Mack's success.

The former President of the Bundestag Wolfgang Schäuble, who passed away at the end of 2023, said of Roland Mack: "Roland Mack is far more than the Rollercoaster Master. 'Many talk, we do' is a common

way entrepreneurs in Baden-Wurttemberg have of describing themselves. Roland Mack would be trusted to come up with that tagline himself. His endeavours gain shape and often serve as a 'model' for imitators. Internationally, Mack has long been a brand name in the world of the theme parks and, moreover, has been given an honorary doctorate by the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology. The real Europe often is, unfortunately, more complicated than is portrayed at Europa-Park. Roland Mack also knows this. The Upper Rhine has been a battleground, a hinterland and a home front all at once. Far away from Berlin and Paris — although always at the heart of events. Today, borders are lifelines that connect. In the Upper Rhine, it shows that growing border regions together works. This is not a matter of form. Realising the vision of a united Europe required the boldness and courage of Roland Mack".

Roland Mack studied mechanical engineering at the University of Karlsruhe and, at the young age of 24, founded Europa-Park with his father Franz. Today, the theme park in the boarder triangle between France, Germany and Switzerland is at the pinnacle of seasonal theme parks worldwide. Europa-Park has been awarded 'World's Best Theme Park' nine times by a renowned American jury. The Mack family is unique in the world by their combining the manufacture of ride attractions and the operation of a theme park. Attractions produced by Mack are active on all continents and in all major theme parks.

As shareholder and former Managing Director of the Mack Rides production company in Waldkirch, Roland Mack has played a key role in driving its development, achieving a turnaround during a difficult period for the company. The company has developed from a purely artisan business to a high-tech 'Engineering 4.0' enterprise with state-of-the-art production by robot. In the meantime, Mack Rides is among the world's leading producers of rollercoasters, water rides and other rail-based attractions. Over 95 percent of rides built in Waldkirch are exported. It was still the other way around 30 years ago: over 90 percent were delivered to Germany. These days, they don't build mobile setups for fun fairs any more, but focus on permanent installations instead.

Roland Mack runs a family firm par excellence. Alongside his father Franz, wife Marianne, brother Jürgen and their children, he built Europa-Park up, leading the almost 250-year-old MACK Rides production company nearby to international success. Meanwhile, Roland Mack is handing the company over to the next generation, continuing to act as an advisor and mentor. "I am a trustee for our family business", he says, "and I'm handing a company over that's well equipped for the future". His sons, Michael and Thomas, have long been active in the company management, having taken over operational responsibility. Daughter Ann-Kathrin is a qualified architect and authorised business representative.

Multiple awards

Roland Mack has been awarded many prizes, including the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany (First Class), induction into the 'Hall of Fame' by the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) alongside Walt Disney and Franz Mack, honorary citizen of Rust (Germany) and Sélestat (France), Restaurateur of the Year, Hotelier of the Year, the Brillat-Savarian Plaque (the German hospitality industry's greatest accolade) and Knight of the Légion d'Honneur, one of the highest honours the French state can bestow. Roland Mack has been honoured with a German Founders' Prize and named Officer of the Ordre des Palmes Académiques. Roland Mack was the first German to be appointed Chief Executive of the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions. He is also Honorary Senator of the Albert Ludwig University of Freiburg, Special Ambassador for Families at the Council of Europe, bearing the title of Knight of the National Order of Merit (France). In Los Angeles, 2023 saw him awarded the industry's highest accolade, the 'Thea Award', for his life's work.



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Roland Mack is the man of ideas, motor and maker behind Europa-Park



Roland Mack riding on the 'blue fire Megacoaster' rollercoaster