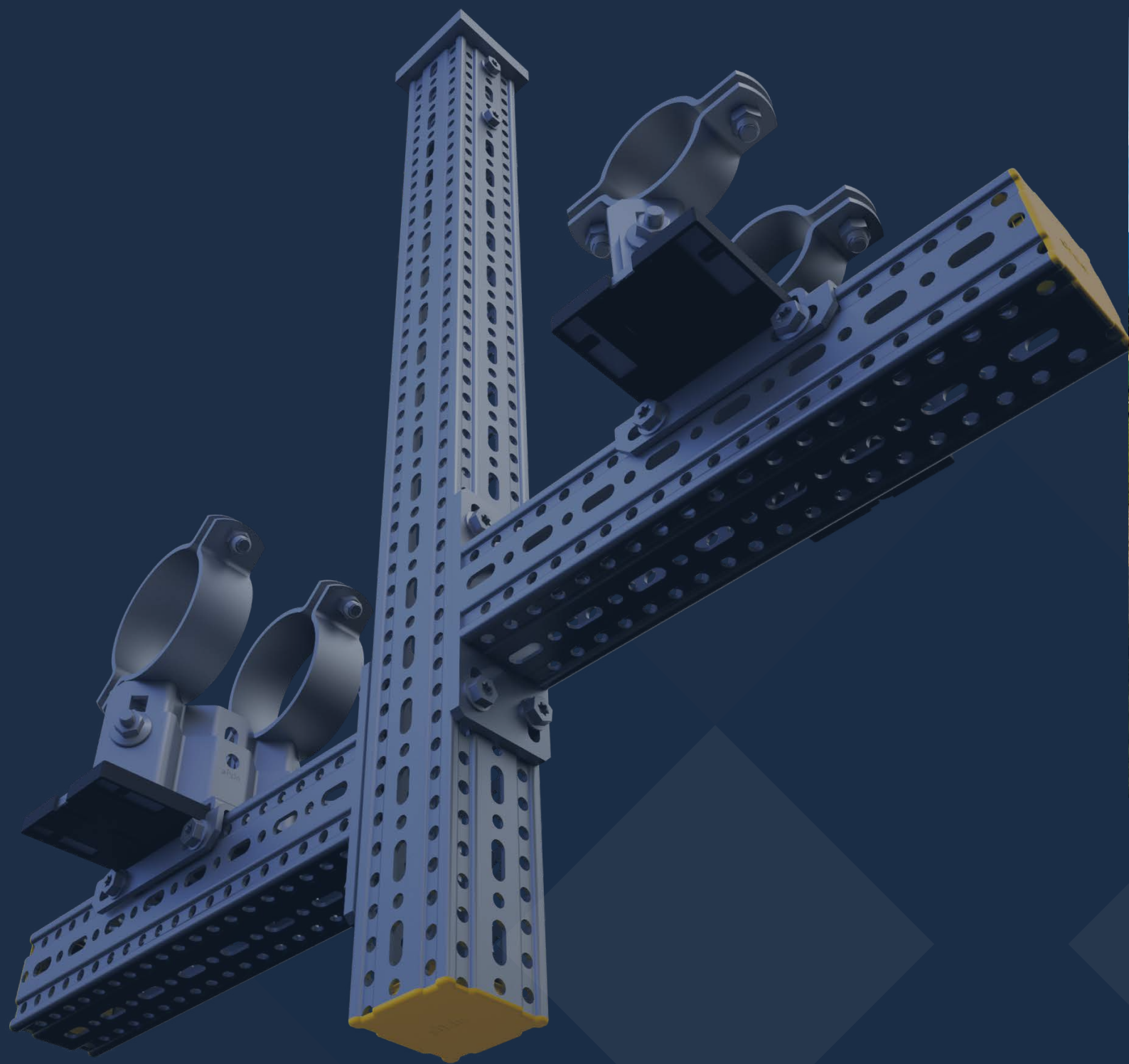


# MEMORIES



**20**  
LAT **sikla**

*Forever young!*





# *Dear Team of Sikla Polska,*

Congratulations on the company's 20th anniversary and on an impressive success story. Who would have thought 20 years ago that we could also inaugurate the new building at the same time as the anniversary? 20 years stand for continuity, and the new building stands for a positive expectation for the future.

Looking back, the market was full of opportunities in 2001, but it had to be built from scratch. It started with a vision that was so strong that Sikla gained an attraction from the beginning. For new employees and customers alike. From the very beginning, the Sikla brand stood for quality and reliability, and all measures consistently followed this strategy. Integrated into the Sikla Group, you have taken good ideas from the experiences of the other companies and developed new ideas that have brought you and the whole group forward.

Sikla Polska is an example of successful market development, customer orientation and an exemplary working atmosphere. The identification with Sikla and the enthusiasm can be felt throughout the company. The team is stable despite the strong growth, the fluctuation is low. This makes it possible to provide exceptional services in a stable and secure manner. The service package that you offer is unique on the market. Our thanks go to the whole team, but especially to Uwe and Alicja Gärtner, who pursued this goal with curiosity, enthusiasm and perseverance and built up this team.

The new building is a milestone for Sikla Polska. Here you will find the opportunities to actively shape the future. Attractive workplaces and enough space to grow. And again, here we come to the human factor. What would a building be without the colleagues who work in it? Here is the place where the yellow blood pulsates.

We would like to thank you for your achievements, congratulate you on the anniversary and look forward to the future.



**Dieter Klauss and Reiner Klauss**  
Management of Sikla Holding

## *A brief history of the creation of this publication*

I remember like today my job interview from two years ago. My future boss told me then that Sikla was a very family-oriented company. I didn't really want to believe it. I thought at the time „such a big international company, it's not realistic". I quickly changed my mind when I got to know the people who I started working with. They are fantastic people, always willing to help (and at the very beginning I needed a lot of help), kind, tolerant, open-minded, with a lot of perspective and, above all, they like to dance.

In the publication that we are presenting on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of Sikla Polska, you will not find a comprehensive history of the company, statistics or graphs. What we publish in it are stories and memories of people who work here. Some have been with the company practically from the beginning, others for a few years. What do they have in common? Passion, commitment, working together, trust and loyalty – these are just some of the values that identify Sikla Polska, which I call #siklaspirit.

I had the pleasure of conducting all the interviews in person. It was a new and interesting experience for me, but also a great fun. None of my interviewees knew the memories of their colleagues – I hope this will come as a surprise to them. How did it happen that exactly these people shared their memories? It started with a meeting with Eliza Słaboń, who nominated another person, and that person nominated another and another and so on.

I thank them for the trust they placed in me and for their openness. In one of the statements to all employees, the owners of Sikla used the phrase „Sikla is a great team providing great opportunities".

Let's meet the Sikla Polska team today.

Justyna Adamczuk  
Marketing Manager  
Sikla Polska



September, 2022

# Meet Sikla Polska

## A timeline of key events at Sikla Polska

- 2001** ◆ Memorandum of association
- 2004** ◆ Uwe Gärtner becomes the Managing Director of Sikla Polska  
Relocation of the company from Chojnice to Jelenia Góra
- 2006** ◆ Purchase of land for development and investments  
by Sikla Polska
- 2007** ◆ Laying the foundation stone for the Sikla  
building on Spółdzielcza Street
- 2013** ◆ Sikla Polska exceeds turnover of 10 million PLN  
for the first time
- 2014** ◆ First ever significant strategic meeting.  
Focus on major projects and industrial customers.
- 2015** ◆ First major industrial order
- 2019** ◆ Expansion of Sikla Polska / Logistics Centre
- 2021** ◆ Expansion of Sikla Polska  
New office and warehouse building
- 2022** ◆ Opening of new company headquarters.  
20th anniversary of Sikla Polska  
Development the company's strategy for the next 10 years

*Forever young!*

The history of Sikla Polska can be described in three stages. The first was the moment in 2004 when married couple Uwe and Alicja Gärtner decided to take over responsibility for the fate of Sikla in Poland. Within one day, with the support of the employees, they moved the company from Chojnice to Jelenia Góra.



Warehouse / first location of Sikla Polska in Chojnice  
(Pomorskie Voivodeship)







Laying the foundation stone for the office building and warehouse of Sikla Polska at 55 Spółdzielcza Street, 2007

Initially Sikla was a small company, serving a few customers, with big aspirations and plans for the future.

Its first years of operation were hard work and required sacrifices from the whole team. Uwe's vision was the driving force behind Sikla, and Alicia supported him with her calmness and care for the company's finances.

The second stage of intensive development took place in 2007, during the laying of the foundation stone for the ambitious project to build an office building and a Sikla warehouse. Even then, the concept provided the possibility of extending this building with warehouse space and further floors of the office building.



Office building and warehouse of Sikla Polska, 2013 source: Google.com





Laying the foundation stone for the construction of a modern Logistics Centre, 2019

In 2015, the Managing Director of Sikla Polska presented the first plans for the expansion of the facility. Then the third phase of Sikla's history and development

began. And so, step by step, a larger project related to the development of warehouse automation and the creation of a modern Logistics Centre was created.



Sikla Poland headquarters, year 2020, photo: studiocolor.pl



At the turn of the year 2021/2022, Sikla Polska reached another milestone in connection with its development. This time in the company's history was special and challenging. The pandemic and the lack of sufficient office space meant that, for 14 months, some employees worked in rented offices, some remained in premises on Spółdzielcza Street and some worked exclusively in home-office mode. Despite these difficulties, a

state-of-the-art office building in the Sikla Group was commissioned in April 2022. An innovative office concept was implemented in it, which is oriented towards the needs of teams, but also of each individual employee.

From the end of 2014 to date, Sikla Polska has quadrupled its turnover. It is currently ranked 3rd in the Sikla group of companies. ◆



Current headquarters of Sikla Polska (May 2022)



**Uwe Gärtner**  
Managing Director  
at Sikla Polska

I am proud that  
in the Sikla family  
we have transformed  
from an ugly duckling  
into a swan – into an  
individual that counts  
in the group, because  
we have achieved  
this success with  
our own hard work



### **Uwe how did you meet Sikla?**

I had known Sikla since 1993. The company I worked for ordered our fixings, so I already had some insight and contact with the German branch of our company.

### **And how did it happen that you started working with Sikla?**

I was looking for a new challenge at the time, and because I knew the owner of the Sikla company we started discussions in this direction.

### **I already knew the history of Sikla and I know that previously the company was located in the north of Poland – so why Jelenia Góra?**

Because this is where my home is. The previous location of the company from a logistical point of view was not good. There were people here with whom I wanted to start cooperation. That is why we decided to move Sikla to the capital of the Karkonosze Mountains.

### **Uwe you set up your company in Jelenia Góra from scratch. What has changed over the years of your work?**

Everything – except the product. Initially, we started by copying already existing structures that we had learnt in other branches of the company – the biggest ones, like Sikla Germany or Austria, but that didn't work.

### **Why?**

Because we had a different sales mentality and culture. Our employees had different expectations of us as an employer than employees in central Europe. Initially we had problems finding employees because Sikla had little recognition. It was the same with customers. We did the advertising without being completely familiar with marketing. Our function also changed – we went from being a slightly larger wholesaler to becoming a specialist in solving our customers' fixing problems. In the first few years we didn't have a single strategic position filled, few years later we started to develop this area. A huge milestone is the fact that we have improved working conditions for our employees over the years. We moved from Karola Miarki Street to Spółdzielcza Street and today we offer a very high standard. People want to work here.

### **And what about the market? How has it changed over the years and how has your vision for the company's development changed?**



There has also been a reorientation here. Reality has verified everything. First of all, we changed our attitude. At first, we looked at the market – that's obvious, but at some point, we looked at what we had, what we could do with our own strength. We stopped looking at what our competitors were doing – that's when we were successful. At the moment we are innovative, we introduce and improve new products ourselves. In some of them we are pioneers in the market.

**I guess the beginnings were not easy. So, tell us, what are you most proud of?**

Of the development and the employees who have been with us practically since the beginning of Sikla in Jelenia Góra. I am proud that in the Sikla family we have transformed from an ugly duckling into a swan – into an individual that counts in the group, because we have achieved this success with our own hard work.

**Over the course of 20 years, you probably have that one special day that you remember. What was it?**

I have a lot of nice memories. It all depends on the context. But there is one day that has stuck in my memory in particular. It was the day we crossed a turnover line that had been impossible for many, many years. We opened a bottle of champagne that day. It took us 10 years to reach that goal.

**After that particular turnover, do you still have any interesting memories you would like to share?**

I have many memories of our employees' anniversaries when they celebrated 10 years of working at Sikla, although I would like to mention that we have people in our ranks who have been with the company for more than 15 years. The day we moved into Spółdzielcza -Street, the day the latest Skoda company cars arrived – branded with the Sikla logo.

What also makes me happy is the opportunity to innovate, to optimize processes to make things better, faster, more productive, not only for us, but above all for the customers.



Mezzanine level siFramo

### What did you feel at the time?

I felt pride at the time – at what we had achieved – this is the next stage in the development of this company. I felt the same way when we received permission from the owners to expand the logistics center and the new office building – it's amazing the trust they have in us. There are also days that are special to me as well, such as the day we launched our crane, the day Kardex was launched. Little things like that make me very happy.

### And what do you enjoy most in your job as Managing Director of such a significant and dynamically developing company?

The thing that I like is when everything is working, but also thinking and anticipating things that we can do and going forward in say, two years' time. And the moment when we put it into practice is what I enjoy most. Growing turnover is such an example. We used to want to achieve a turnover that at the time we thought was unattainable, and when we managed to cross that

'magic' boundary – moments like this make me incredibly happy. What also makes me happy is the opportunity to innovate, to optimize processes to make things better, faster, more productive, not only for us, but above all for the customers.

### What Sikla has achieved in 2 decades is impressive. What do you think is the greatest value in this company?

I think Sikla's greatest value is its employees – long-serving, committed, innovative. We also have younger colleagues who do a great job and are very committed, but these long-standing employees are a special value at Sikla. In addition, I think a big value here is trust. As Managing Director, I have trusted many colleagues and this value has come back to me. There are employees on board with us who have been working for more than 10 years and also remember the hard times that followed, for example during the economic crisis. Their loyalty and the fact that they are with us – for that I am very grateful. In my opinion, these values work both ways. ♦

I think  
Sikla's greatest  
value is its employees  
– long-serving,  
committed,  
innovative.



Fleet Sikla Polska



**Ala tell me how did you meet the company? What was your recruitment process like?**

In the previous company where Uwe and I worked (Eliza Słaboń and Krzysztof Cybulski also worked with us) we met Mr. Reiner Klauss – one of the owners. When we finished working there, we got in touch again and it turned out that they were looking for a person to take over and run Sikla in Poland. I was accepted without being recruited. I had never submitted a CV in my life. I started my job on 1 January 2004, but I was already doing pro bono work looking for a good location for Sikla Polska.

**Did you have to travel somewhere? Did you have any meetings – what was that like?**

The first contact was a trip with Uwe to Austria to Mr. Reiner, then to Sikla in Germany to meet the other owner, Mr. Dieter Klauss, and only after these meetings we were hired. But interestingly enough they hired us as a package deal.

**You have been involved with this company since day 1 of its inception. What has changed over the years of your work Ala?**

Everything!!! Starting with the number of people employed, (at the beginning the whole Sikla Polska consisted of 5 people, today we have 61\* employees) through the quality of the offices and premises in which I started my work and the ones we have today. Our approach and understanding of the industry and approach to work has changed. Whatever you look at now, over these 20 years has changed. Our quality of work has changed. We started from a chicken coop (that's how we jokingly referred to Sikla's first location in Chojnice) and today Sikla Polska is at the top when it comes to fixings in Poland. My position has also changed – 20 years of working for Sikla is a load of life experience and knowledge – today I feel that I am a professional partner to talk to.

**These 20 years of building the Sikla Polska brand certainly fill you with pride. What are you most proud of Ala?**



**Alicja Gärtner**  
Head of Administration

What I enjoy most is the fact and opportunity to work with people. I listen to others I learn from them. All the combination of my knowledge and experience makes us to develop interesting projects

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\* Date of interview – March 2022. As of the date of this publication – September 2022, the Sikla Poland team consists of 73 people.

The thing I am most proud of is that employee turnover has ended, people are happy to work with us. We have employees who have been working with us since the company was founded and they appreciate this cooperation. A similar situation is reflected in the customer structure – I am happy that there are customers who have been working with Sikla Polska since the company was founded.

**And if you could recall the best memory that comes to mind when you think of the company – what was it?**

There was a day that is my favorite memory. It was the day when we organized a planting around our new company headquarters (where we are now located). It was a Saturday in the spring of 2008. The employees came then – some with whole families. All the planting that was done around was done by our hands. I remember to this day the atmosphere – it was indescribable. It was very welcoming, only the beer was hot.

**Hot beer?**

Exactly – beer. Eliza our Commercial Director tried so hard to prepare everything so that it would turn out well that she put the beer in the sun. It was so hot that it was impossible to drink, but Eliza made a big effort because everything looked nice.

**Ala what do you enjoy most about this job?**

What I enjoy most is the fact and opportunity to work with people. I listen to others I learn from them. All the combination of my knowledge and experience makes us to develop interesting projects. The people and the opportunity to work with them gives me great satisfaction. And I am convinced that when I retire, I will leave the company with prospects for further development, because I will leave a competent team here.

Moreover, I am very happy when I see how Sikla Polska has developed over these 20 years, what turnover it achieves, what people it attracts – this is an amazing achievement.

**Although I have only been working here for 2 years, I have to admit you are right and I somewhat guess your answer to the next ques-**

The thing I am most proud of is that employee turnover has ended, people are happy to work with us.

**tion. Ala what do you think is the greatest value of our company?**

The answer will not be difficult at all. People who identify themselves with the company, who feel responsible for their work, those who do not only look at the hours they spend in the company, but those who are committed and who sometimes devote their private time to the company. My division is made up of such people and this is what drives me.



Eliza Staboń – Commercial Director during planting of vegetation around the company (spring 2008)



Loyalty – this is the other value of this company. We know that times have been different, but our employees have always been dependable and this loyalty and commitment to the company is strongly felt here.

Shared responsibility for employees – this #siklaspirit – is the trust that employees have in us when they

need support (sometimes financial, or simply to talk and advise). I also feel this support and co-responsibility strongly from the owners.

**Ala thank you for meeting me and I wish you only kind people around you. ♦**

I am happy that there are customers who have been working with Sikla Polska since the company was founded.



Sikla Polska Administration and Development Team



**Eliza Słaboń**  
Commercial Director

I don't play,  
I don't manipulate.  
I always focus  
on honesty,  
transparency, trust.  
I apply the same  
principles to my  
employees and,  
above all,  
to my customers



**Eliza how did you end up at Sikla Poland? How did you find out that they were looking for employees?**

Actually, I wasn't looking for a job, it was the company that found me. I worked with the current Managing Director of Sikla Polska in my previous company, where I ended up right after my studies. There I was in charge of customer service, secretarial duties, group insurance, cash accounting – a kind of multitasking. Later, I was solely involved in sales and preparing offers for clients. I came to the job interview with my 8-year-old son.

**What did you do in the beginning at Sikla Polska?**

I have been working at Sikla since 2005. When I started my job, our head office was an old, shabby building, provisionally adapted to house of Sikla Polska. When I think back to those times, there was absolutely nothing like what our company looks like today. It is the same with me. I started in the Order Processing Department. Then I was promoted to Telephone Sales Manager. Every year I gained experience. The company has given me a wealth of opportunities, which I can admit with full responsibility, I have taken full advantage of. Since 1 January 2014, I have been Sales Director and I am responsible for sales throughout the company.

**What do you think has changed in the 17 years you have been working at Sikla?**

To say everything and everyone is to say nothing.

**And specifically?**

In the beginning there were a lot of provisional solutions. In every area. We learned everything from our mistakes. Over time, we gained experience, developed a lot of procedures, most of which are still working very well today.

**And what are you most proud of during these 17 years at Sikla Polska?**

What I am most proud of is that I follow the same simple principles from the very beginning.

**What specifically do you have in mind?**

I don't play, I don't manipulate. I always focus on honesty, transparency, trust. I apply the same principles to my employees and, above all, to my customers. I have



taken this path from the very beginning. I have often heard that after all, sale is a game, manipulation or theatre. Every day, with the whole team, we prove otherwise. I am sure that the attitude we have been following for years simply works.

### **And if you could go back in your memory – what is your fondest memory associated with Sikla?**

There were so many situations that it is hard to recall them all. Nevertheless, there are a few that have stuck in my memory.

I remember the day we had no electricity at our first headquarters. As I mentioned earlier, something was always missing there. The Managing Director brought in a generator so that we could work normally. Krzysztof Cybulski, the Warehouse Manager at the time, brought the coffee machine outside on a forklift and connected it, so that we could drink coffee. At that moment our boss arrived, started laughing and asked for coffee. We didn't have much time to relax, because a while later, we had to plug in the computers again. The conditions there were not luxurious, but I have very fond memories of my time there: 8 people in the office and shared meals. We were such a working family. It was a really special time. A time when you didn't need much to be happy. I can still remember how happy I was when our landlines were replaced with mobile phones. Such a small thing and so much joy.

### **Is there another memory you would like to share?**

Yes, I always recall with a smile on my face how together with all the staff and their children, we organized the planting around our new premises. The work, of course, ended with a barbecue and a feast late into the evening. Moments like that are very bonding and allow us to build relationships, that have survived to this day.

### **Eliza, what do you enjoy most about this job?**

The independence. The fact that I have a free hand and can make my own decisions. I enjoy the contact with people, the variety of activities, the new challenges. Every project is different. With each one I can learn

a lot because I work with exceptional people who really do it best.

I also enjoy the fact that every day I become more and more convinced that the way I work with people, the approach I took a dozen or so years ago – is working today. I don't look at how others work, I don't use benchmarks – I trust my own intuition.

The fact that we get calls from former Sikla employees, former employees of our Key Accounts, who want to maintain a relationship with us – this also gives a lot of satisfaction.

### **What do you think is the greatest value of Sikla Polska?**

I also enjoy the fact that every day I become more and more convinced that the way I work with people, the approach I took a dozen or so years ago – is working today.



Eliza during a joint barbecue for employees organized on the occasion of planting vegetation around the Sikla Polska head office



Power generator from the time of the company headquarters  
in Karola Miarki Street

The efficient management of changes in our organization, the continuous improvement of processes and an individual approach to both every employee and every customer. We probe what they need, we always look for the best way, because thanks to this we help them to develop, and a development, which is a special kind of change, is our second name.

The current trend, i.e. sales based on trust and values, has always been with us and this approach is behind the success of Sikla Polska.

For all these years, we have been working on the trust of our customers in our team, in our company and in our brand, and, as we all know, trust cannot be built through manipulation, clichés or excessive artificiality. Trust is backed up by sincerity and authenticity.

**Eliza congratulations on your approach and I wish you further success and that you always follow your intuition. ♦**



**Ms. Felińczak, please tell me how did your history with Sikla Polska begin?**

Before I started working for our company, I worked in an accounting office and since we were entrusted with the bookkeeping of Sikla Polska my boss appointed me to take care of it. One day Ms. Alicja came to us, brought the documentation and accidentally bumped into her school friend who was working with me at the time. And so, it all started. Alicja was very keen to have an accountant on site, my friend recommended me and my adventure at Sikla began, which continues to this day.

**How many years ago was that?**

17 years ago, to be exact.

**Has anything changed in your 17 years at Sikla?**

The company has changed – it has developed and gained momentum. As is common in any business, there are ups and downs. I have experienced every stage here. In 2007, we were hit hard by the economic crisis – but we survived. Sikla in Poland has developed a lot in terms of technology, but also in terms of people. As far as I am concerned, I have experienced an acceler-

What matters to me is development and people working together



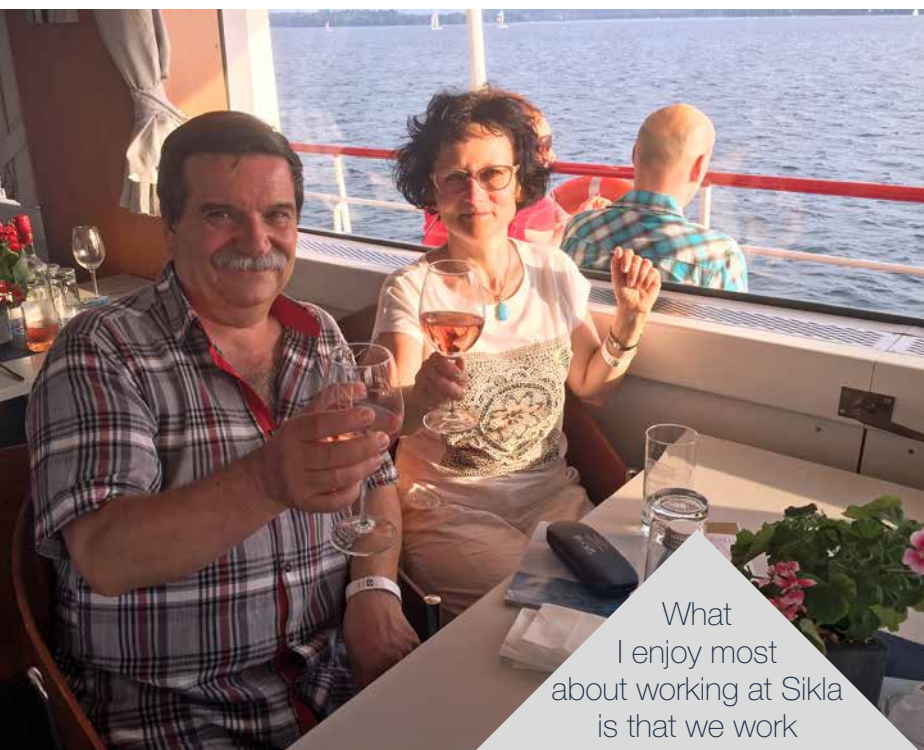
Ms. Ewa Felińczak in her office after moving from Karola Miar-ki Street to Spółdzielcza Street (January 2012).



**Ewa Felińczak**  
Chief Accountant

What I am most proud of is that Sikla gives employees the opportunity to develop





Ewa Felińczak and her husband  
at the Sikla company's 50th  
anniversary party

What  
I enjoy most  
about working at Sikla  
is that we work  
in a friendly atmosphere  
and that we have  
the opportunity  
to develop

ated evolution in the field of IT, the use of equipment, working with modern tools and software. Accounting has also evolved in terms of staff. It used to be just me, last year we hired a bookkeeper, another bookkeeper is coming in from June and if we continue to grow like this, who knows, our bookkeeping department might need more hands to work.

I've now entered retirement age, but I wouldn't want to leave the company without help, so before I take my well-deserved retirement, I'd like to prepare my successor.

**I wish this will happen soon and that you will be able to fulfil your dreams, because I know that you love to travel. If you could sum up your 17 years at Sikla, what are you most proud of?**

What I am most proud of is that Sikla gives employees the opportunity to develop. Thanks to a wise personnel

policy, our company is growing – that is the most important thing for me and that is what I am most proud of.

**And is there a special day that you will remember fondly?**

It will be 2007 and the moment when we moved from Karola Miarki to Spółdzielcza Street. The previous premises were not very representative. At the time, our new premises on Spółdzielcza Street were impressive and breathtaking. I was proud when we had visitors and you could show someone around our premises, apart from the fact that several people lost their suspension to get to us, because at that time there was no tarmac road to get to us, just a bumpy dirt road.

**Ms. Felińczak, what do you enjoy most about working at Sikla?**

What I enjoy most about working at Sikla is that we work in a friendly atmosphere and that we have the opportunity to develop – as an accountant – it is this development that is extremely important to me. I can't hide the fact that I'm getting on in years, but my brain is working at top speed, except perhaps for the fact that we have a balance sheet.

**Finally, what do you think is the greatest value of Sikla Polska?**

I may seem monotonous, but what matters to me is development and people working together. This comes from my upbringing and the values that my grandfather passed on to me. He always used to say, 'what you see, what you learn, no one can take away from you' and that's probably why the opportunity for intellectual development is so important to me. And that's what I value Sikla for – it gives me such opportunities.

**Ms. Flinczak, these are beautiful words from your grandfather, and I think that even when you take your well-deserved retirement, this curiosity, opportunities to develop and learn about the world will not change – which I wholeheartedly wish for you.** ♦



**Krzysztof, I ask about this all my interviewees I will ask you too. Tell me how did you meet Sikla Polska? What were your beginnings?**

The Managing Director and I knew each other from our previous company, one day he came to my house and informed me that he was starting to work in Sikla and whether I would like to create this company with him.

**And what did you answer him?**

Let's try. That was 18 years ago. I was then after an operation, we were preparing a place for the company on Karola Miarki Street, and suddenly it turned out that we had to go to Chojnice (Pomorskie Voivodeship) and take everything from there. The Chairman and I organized all and transported Sikla from the north to the south of Poland in one day.

**18 years is a long time. What do you think has changed for the better over these years of working?**

The working conditions have changed. I used to be in the warehouse by myself, I had a small room and room-mates (such little rodents), the coffee in the cup was frozen, but those were funny times. We wrote letters for shipping by hand, we wrote WZ documents by hand, Alice came in for a cigarette around lunchtime. My room was as big as the table we sit at now. Do you think anyone complained then? No.

**In fact, conditions have changed a lot since then. I remember the conditions before the expansion of the office building, and they were already very good then. Krzysztof, what are you most proud of?**

The thing I am most proud of is how this company has managed to grow. When Sikla was located on Karola



**Krzysztof Cybulski**  
Manager of Operations  
and Development Projects  
– Advisor to the Director  
of Logistics

The thing I am most proud of is how this company has managed to grow. When Sikla was located on Karola Miarki Street in Jelenia Góra, nobody thought that the company would look like it does now



Krzysztof in his office, the first headquarters of Sikla Polska on Karola Miarki Street





I just like this job,  
although sometimes  
there is a lot  
of adversity.

Driving of stakes marking the parcel boundary after the purchase of the land in Spółdzielcza Street

Miarki Street in Jelenia Góra, nobody thought that the company would look like it does now.

### What do you mean?

So big. So equipped, with such a stock, with so many people employed, with such innovative machines – an overhead crane, a cardex. At that time, no one even thought about it.

**It is a huge leap. And if you could go back in time further, what is your fondest memory associated with the company. Do you have a special day that you remember warmly?**

There is one. Making coffee with Eliza in the bunker.

### And what was the bunker?

It was our 'nuclear shelter' in the old headquarters. The two of us stayed at the company. I remember that there was no electricity and we really wanted to have coffee. Uwe provided us with a generator so that we could plug in our computers and work normally. In order to brew ourselves the coffee we were so keen on, we had to switch off the computers. A coffee machine – that was a must. We didn't have anything except the coffee

machine. So, Eliza and I brewed the coffee, turned the computers back on and kept working.

### Is this the only memory that sticks in your mind?

No. There is another situation that sticks in my mind, when we bought the land on Spółdzielcza Street near the current headquarters. I was walking around in my rubber boots, Uwe was holding the map, we were both dressed in our warm coats and we were driving stakes.

**It is clear that you are very connected to this company. What do you enjoy most about this job?**

I just like this job, although sometimes there is a lot of adversity. I feel fulfilled, I like it when there is a lot going on, and in this company, there is always something going on. Working here is always in high gear, every hour is different, every day is different.

**Krzysztof, what do you think is the greatest value of this company?**

Development. There was stagnation up to a certain point and then a big BOOM! And let's keep it that way.

**Krzysztof thank you for the interview. I wish you and Sikla Polska could stay this way. ♦**



**Artur how did your adventure with Sikla start – how did you get into the Company?**

I found out about recruitment to our company from an advertisement on the internet. I am an architect and I used to work in a design office. The economic crisis forced me to change my job and I just happened to come across an advertisement for a technician.

**How did the interview go?**

I had three of them. The first meeting was general. At the second one I had to demonstrate technical skills and the 3rd interview was to make sure I was definitely a good candidate.

**You've been working at Sikla since 2013. What has changed over that time?**

Everything has changed. When I was hired to work it was a different company, its organizational structure was different. In 2013 there were 11-12 people working at the head office together with the warehouse. The Commercial and Technical Department was just being set up. Today we have 12 jobs in the Industrial Department including all the regions. Today, the department I head is the size of a Sikla from 10 years ago. During this time, I have gone through several different positions. I started as a technical-commercial advisor, then worked in an independent technical position. When the first industrial projects started coming in, there was a strategy meeting, where the decision was taken to create the Simotec Industrial Division. In the subsequent stages of my career, I was head of the Technical Department, I was also head of the Industrial RKS and head of the Industrial Department, which is under my care to this day.

**Do you have any more positions planned in the future?**

There are plans to develop the department further.

**Next year it's 10 years of working at Sikla. What do you think has changed for the better over the years?**

The working conditions. Sikla puts a lot of emphasis on the development of working conditions for its em-



**Artur Kozera**  
Head of Department  
– Industrial Sector

the greatest value  
in this company  
are the people,  
their commitment  
and the fact  
that Sikla  
has such people  
on board



Artur at the company party to celebrate Sikla's 50th anniversary

There are days that I remember with a smile on my face. They are days that taught me something.

employees, but also thinks ahead. It invests in buildings, equipment that will last for many years ahead and also to ensure that employees are comfortable.

### **And what are you most proud of in this job?**

Of being part of the process of bringing Sikla to the right level in the market. When we set up the industrial department in 2015, no design office had heard of the Sikla brand. We had to explain everywhere who we were and what we did. 7 years later, Sikla is recognizable in virtually every design office. Customers increasingly associate us with high quality, they come back to us and there is even an opinion that when a customer has a problem with a large project, they want to carry it out exclusively with Sikla.

Apart from the statistics, the surveys we do, talking to customers I can see the change that has taken place.

Today Sikla is the leader of fixings in Poland – and that makes me very happy.

### **Is there a day that you remember the most?**

There are days that I remember with a smile on my face. They are days that taught me something. I remember my first independent construction project for the expansion of one of the companies in Jelenia Góra. It was one of the biggest projects at the time, but it was carried out at a time when we had less facilities for calculation and I was calculating the structures by hand on paper. It makes me laugh, but I gave my head to the Chairman that these constructions would hold up. After the project was completed, we had a visit from colleagues from Germany and when they saw my design, they said it definitely wouldn't hold up. They spent three weeks analyzing my documentation.

### **Was the design durable?**

Durable. After 3 weeks, information came from Germany that they had analyzed it and it would hold. The structures are still hanging on one of the largest production facilities in Jelenia Góra.

However, there is another funny story connected with this project at the moment. When specifying the material, I ordered two pallets of the wrong material.

### **Only the one who does nothing, doesn't make mistakes. Did you return them without a problem?**

I remember I came to work on Friday, the Managing Director was already standing at my desk and said I had to go myself to get new consoles. At that moment I didn't know if it was a joke, so I took the car keys and went. I took it as a lesson. People make mistakes, that's normal, I had the opportunity to fix mine, and to visit Austria.

### **And what did the chairman say about it?**

I think he was pleasantly surprised. I don't think he expected my reaction. I just got in the car and drove off.

### **Interesting story. Do you have any other memories you could share?**

I still have loads of memories of my first industrial projects. Once a customer gave us one investment, 2-3 weeks later he sent us another one and then another one. I made a bet with the Managing Director at the time that there would be further orders from this customer. We bet then, that within 2 months I would bring some projects worth a million PLN to the company.

**I don't know if I should ask. What were you betting on?**

That there would be a Simotec Industrial Division in Sikla Polska.

**And what if you had lost?**

I don't remember (laughing).

**Artur you are clearly fulfilling yourself in your work. What do you enjoy most about it?**

Challenges. I set myself 1-2 challenges a year with the investments I make – the size of the investment, the size of the contract. I remember we started with 4 projects – we got very good references then, which opened doors to other companies. I enjoy and have fond memories of the first project for one million PLN, the first power plant and its large orders.

Sikla puts a lot of emphasis on the development of working conditions for its employees, but also thinks ahead.

Another thing is the atmosphere in the company. The fact that the company is growing, there are more and more of us every year, but we all treat each other as colleagues. I know a lot of companies where there is a hierarchy of Mr./Mrs. type. This is not the case at Sikla Polska. Here everyone helps each other. As an example, I can cite a waste incineration project from England, where we didn't have the opportunity to bolt together the structure (as part of the pre-assembly) – our employees came at the weekend and helped to bolt together the structure.

**Artur, I ask this of all my interviewees I will ask you too. What do you think is the greatest value of this company?**

In my opinion, the greatest value in this company are the people, their commitment and the fact that Sikla has such people on board. A great value of Sikla is also the working conditions it creates, making these people want to develop themselves.

**Artur thank you for an interesting conversation. I keep my fingers crossed for your challenges and wish you continued success in the development of your industrial projects. ♦**





**Tomasz Malec**  
Head of Department,  
Sales Project Siconnect

The thing I am  
most proud of is  
the fact that  
my department  
is developing  
and moving forward,  
both in terms of people,  
competences  
and the number  
of completed projects



### **Tomek, how did you end up here?**

I honestly don't remember. Probably a bit unexpectedly.

### **You made me curious – tell me.**

Unexpectedly, because the truth is that I had a job, and when you have a job, you don't have so much pressure. But the fact is that I wanted to try something different. I had previously worked in a design office and decided to send in my CV.

### **And what was the interview like?**

I had the interview with Eliza and Artur. It was my first serious job interview. I remember it was very factual and specific, but I felt very comfortable. I wasn't nervous. To my surprise it went very normally, nothing artificial, no strange questions. I felt comfortable at Sikla.

### **Did you become a department manager straight away?**

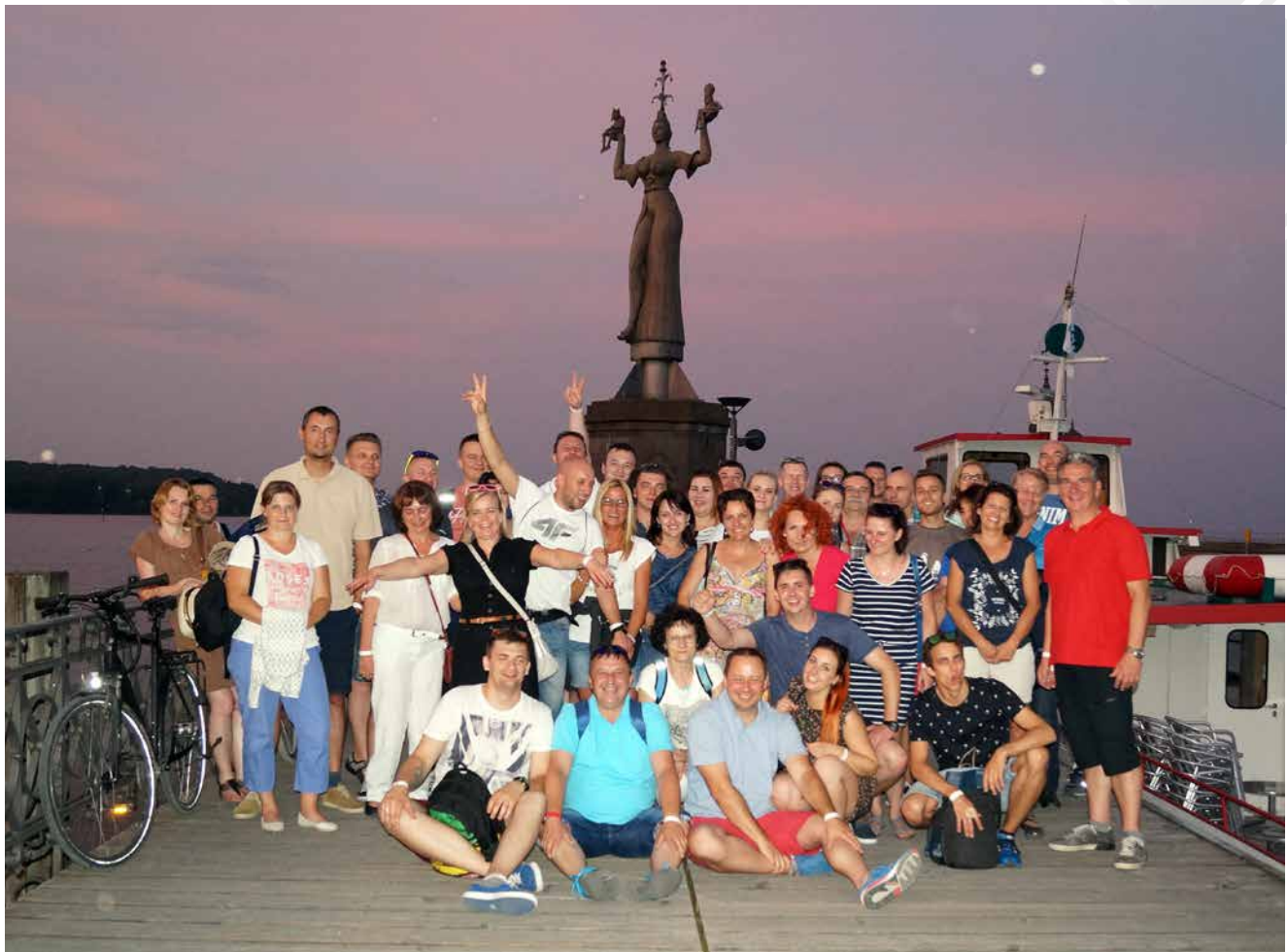
No, at first, I worked in the Industrial Department, after less than a year I was offered to head the Siconnect Department.

### **Oh, that quickly? What did you think then?**

My first thought was „Me?“, because you know there were people at the time who had been working longer than me. At first my department was made up of 2 people – me and a colleague. Year by year there were more and more new engineers. Today the Siconnect department is made up of 8 people and there are plans for more hires.

### **Tomek, 7 years is already a long time in this company. In your opinion, what has changed in Sikla – is there anything that has changed for the better?**

I can see only positive things. First of all, Sikla has developed a lot. Nothing is contrived here everything has its place and we all have a specific purpose. More and more employees are being hired – which is very positive. I also feel confident and stable here, thanks to this development. We're not standing still, we're moving with the times, we're constantly observing what's going on in the market and we always try to be a few steps ahead of others – we look strategically.



Sikla Polska employees at Sikla company's 50th anniversary party

I have also changed a bit during this time – I don't look at a topic to 'tick it off' and send an offer. I always try to see a topic through to the end – whether it's a big offer or a small one.

**And what fills you with pride as you think about the seven years you have spent at Sikla?**

The thing I am most proud of is the fact that my department is developing and moving forward, both in terms of people, competences and the number of completed projects.

I am happy that we are not afraid of big topics. I'm proud that we cooperate with Tesla – it's a company

that is also developing dynamically, innovating so that others can benefit from it. It's a bit like us – we also develop our products and services so that our customers can succeed.

Nothing  
is contrived here  
everything has its place  
and we all have  
a specific  
purpose.

And as I observe the market, I am proud to work for a company whose products others would like to have – because they are the only ones, unique, patented and innovative.

**Is there a day, that sticks in your mind and that you remember in particular?**

I remember the 50th anniversary of the Sikla company to which all employees were invited. I had not worked long at that time, so I felt honored to be

invited to such a celebration. Employees from all Sikla branches from all over the world were invited to this event. I felt like a member of this family at that time – this is my fondest memory.

Even now, sitting in the office and talking to you I am happy that we can talk in such a place, in such an office building, in such comfort and that we are all together again.

**Speaking of joy, this is my next question. What do you enjoy most about this job?**

I enjoy the fact that something is happening here all the time, that interesting topics are emerging all the time. Of course, we are constantly designing, calculating, working with figures, but each project is different, each one has to be tailored to the customer's needs – you could say that each one has to be tailor-made. It is also a joy to deal with customers on a daily basis. Personally, I feel that every day at Sikla is different, because here something different is happening all the time. Someone might say – how many times can you design a structure for an air handling unit? – But every roof is differ-

ent. In my work we don't do projects on a 'copy and paste' basis – we do each project individually.

I am happy with the general development of Sikla Polska, because thanks to this, I can develop too and can devote 100 % to our customers.

**This development would not be possible without hard work. What do you think is the greatest value of Sikla Polska Tomek?**

The first thing that comes to my mind is the people – their attitude and approach. Sikla itself is the name, the logo, the building, but it is the people who are responsible for the way it looks, for the way we are perceived with customers – their openness, honesty, help, camaraderie – these values definitely define Sikla in Poland.

**Tomek, I sign my name to your statement with both hands. Thank you that we could meet in our new office building and you shared your story with me. I wish you further development and more projects of which you will be very proud. ♦**

I am happy that we are not afraid of big topics. I'm proud that we cooperate with Tesla.





**Gosia, I know you started working at Sikla a few months before me. How did you end up here?**

It's funny, but I didn't know I was going for an interview at Sikla Polska. At the time, I was after maternity and parental leave and I realized that I wanted to change jobs. I had previously worked in a design office and after 5 years of 'isolation' I was drawn to a big company and to people.

**So how did you find out that Sikla was looking for a project engineer?**

I was talking to a friend whose husband works at Sikla. She told me over coffee that Sikla was looking for an engineer. And I decided that I wanted to go back to work so I sent in my CV.

**And who contacted you?**

First this colleague's husband, then there was silence. After some time, Eliza called me, I was recovering from an operation and asked to postpone the interview for another week. I met up a week later without any problems. I had heard that it was a nice company, and I knew what they did. After the interview, Tomasz Malec invited me for a few days to see if the job was for me, as I am an educated architect. There was Autocad, there



**Małgorzata  
Kociołek-Cichoń**  
Deputy Head  
of the Department  
Sales Project Siconnect



Construction site  
visit 2020

the fact that women  
are managing  
the departments (...).  
I am happy to see  
this strength  
of women in  
this company





Female team of Sikla Polska

was drawing and counting – it would be good I thought. Also, Tomasz mentioned that there are nice people here, for birthdays people bring cakes, and it's someone's birthday here all the time so I thought it was the perfect place for me.

#### Are you so into cakes?

No, it's more about enjoying the little things. It convinced me with this cake and these people.

And the moment when we find out that our designs have been approved by the customer and have been bought – then I feel a sense of purpose in what I do and great satisfaction that I could help someone.

#### Gosia you've been working here for 2.5 years, has anything changed in your opinion during that time?

A lot has changed. I think the way the company is managed, has changed, the organization of work has also changed. I have the impression that there is better cooperation and communication between us.

#### I know that 2.5 years is not too long, but are you proud of anything in this job?

Of the female directors.

### **Really?**

Yes. When I started working at Sikla I thought to myself „Wow” working in a company where one of the directors and the other are women. It is known that there is a Managing Director who is very respected among the employees, but also, it's the fact that women are managing the departments. For me this is something to be proud of. When I started working at Sikla women were in the minority, today there are many more. I am happy to see this strength of women in this company.

### **And is there a day that you remember most fondly?**

There have been several such pleasant days, but one I remember in particular. When we started working in home office mode as the pandemic came. We had a monthly update at the time, and it was my birthday. Everyone sang me a “Happy Birthday” song via Teams – I had tears in my eyes. Such a small gesture, but it meant a lot to me.

I also have fond and special memories of the day at the construction site. I went with Zbyszek to a plant under construction (Nestlé Purina) near Wrocław, where we delivered our installation fittings. It was a mega interesting experience to see live what was being drawn. I felt very honored and responsible at the same time wearing the Sikla waistcoat. And it was such pleasant experience that Sikla – the company I work for, is a brand that is recognizable to strangers.

### **I remember that it was still very cheerful in your room in the old premises sometimes.**

I have very fond memories of working in our department still in the old building. When our colleague Marek worked with us – he could often turn a very difficult situation into a joke so that my stomach hurt from laughing. I loved our jokes. They often defused stressful situations. And I was happy to come to work the next day.

### **I guess another answer. Gosia what do you enjoy about this job?**

The people. The fact that I can go to them and talk to them. You know I'm a bit separated now because I'm working hybrid but being able to work with people – that's what I enjoy most.

And the moment when we find out that our designs have been approved by the customer and have been bought – then I feel a sense of purpose in what I do and great satisfaction that I could help someone.

### **And what do you think is the greatest value of this company – also the people?**

Exactly – the diversity of the people. Because everyone is different, and everyone brings something different to the team. And even more, so now there are so many people at Sikla, so many new employees that I haven't met them yet. I'm already looking forward to talking to everyone.

I would also like to add that I have recently seen a different value in the people I work with. It may sound cliché, but I have experienced genuine care for a colleague. I returned to my stationary job after a long period of working from home in a slightly worse mental shape. And at some point, I needed understanding, support and help. And I genuinely got it.

But this concern in general was always there, just so unnamed. It was that moment when someone shared lunch with me in the canteen because I had forgotten from home. Or gave me a lift home when I had my car dropped off at the mechanic's. It's things like this that make me enjoy working here.

**Gosia I am very grateful to you for our conversation and for the opportunity to see the company from your perspective. ♦**





**Tomasz Węglarz**  
Warehouse Management  
Manager –  
Incoming Goods  
and Maintenance

I am proud  
of the friendships  
at Sikla – there are  
people here  
with whom  
I spend a lot of time,  
even more than with  
my own wife



## Hey Tomek, will you tell me your story at Sikla Polska?

Well sure, ask away!

## Tomek, tell me how it happened that you started your professional adventure at Sikla?

I knew Ala for a long time, she lived next door to me. When I graduated from school, Ala and Uwe invited me for an interview, because they were looking for someone to help in the warehouse. I had no qualifications at that time – no qualifications, no driving license, nothing – I got everything by working at Sikla and I developed thanks to Sikla.

## Tomek, you've been working here for 17 years now what has changed over the years of your work?

For me? Everything has changed. I have gone from being a madman to a decent, orderly, stable man. This company has shaped me. I came here straight out of school knowing practically nothing about adult life. Now I have a wife and a child. Before, I did everything with a light hand, here I learned discipline and responsibility. For me everything has changed for the better – from a boy who lived with his parents I am an independent man who can support a family.

## And what are you most proud of?

Privately or professionally?

## If you can, share both.

Privately, I am proud of my family, of the fact that I can work for their happiness. For me, family is the most



Krzysztof Cybulski, Dariusz Trzepizur and Tomasz Węglarz at the headquarters of Sikla Polska on Spółdzielcza Street, 2008.

important thing – when I got sick, I really felt their support and understood it even more strongly.

Professionally, I am proud of the friendships at Sikla – there are people here with whom I spend a lot of time, even more than with my own wife. At Sikla I felt my value. I have become a multi-tasker. We started from a 'garage' on Karola Miarki Street, today we are in a modern office building. Uwe taught me that it's fine, when you have achieved something, but there are more things to conquer in front of you – he always wants to be 10 steps further ahead.

#### **What is your fondest memory of working at Sikla?**

I had a nice feeling today (opening of the new office building) when Uwe, in front of the whole team, handed me the keys to Sikla and gave me a new task. I returned to work today after 6 months where I didn't really know how my life would go on. The warm welcome I received, the fact that I can work among people again, that I have something to fight for, and that I still have some things to improve in the warehouse and would like to change things for the better here.

Before that, a fond memory was the Sikla 50th anniversary party – whoever was there, knows what it was about. It was one of the best company events. First, we visited Nürnberg, then we sailed on Lake Constance, our colleague RKS was newly married, so for him the event was like a honeymoon.

I have fond memories, also of Christmas Eve in Dresden. Uwe took me and Darek, we visited the Christmas market with a smaller group and drank mulled wine.

The beginnings in this company – that was something. I still remember them fondly today.

I had no qualifications at that time – no qualifications, no driving license, nothing – I got everything by working at Sikla and I developed thanks to Sikla.

#### **What do you enjoy most about your job?**

I've always worked in a warehouse and I enjoy this job. I am a born warehouseman, a logistics technician by training. At Sikla, I was in charge of the warehouse operation, so that there was space on the racks, goods on the shelves, etc. Darek was in charge of shipping and orders. What I enjoy most about this job is that I had a free hand in what I was doing, Uwe always gave me the opportunity to try out my ideas in practice – a great honor. And also, I enjoy every day, each one is a new challenge.

#### **Tomek, and what do you think is the greatest value of Sikla Polska?**

People – for me it has always been the people. All the successes that this company has achieved – there are people behind them. Their commitment – when you have people around you who try, you try together with them.

**Tomek thank you for meeting me. I wish you good health and that you can continue to implement your ideas in the logistics area. ♦**



Krzysztof Cybulski, Dariusz Trzepizur and Tomasz Węglarz at the company Christmas Eve in Dresden 2013



**Dariusz Trzepizur**  
Purchasing Manager

I am proud  
of how this company  
looks today.  
Just the fact  
that I've been part  
of this development  
from the beginning  
and continue  
to be part of it is  
very important to me.

**Darek I know you are one of the longer-term employees here. How did it happen that you ended up in Sikla?**

It was Krzysztof Cybulski who offered me this job. I had previously worked for a courier company and picked up goods from Sikla every day. Because of this, I got to know the whole team, sometimes I helped the guys to pack the parcels. When Krzysztof offered me a job, I already knew the company. At that time there were 10 people working at Sikla together with the representatives. My wife was skeptical because I had a regular job, but I had a feeling from the beginning that it would be good. I felt that Sikla had a lot of potential and would grow intensively.

**So, you weren't wrong?**

No, in retrospect it was a very good choice.

**From your perspective, has a lot changed over the years of your work at Sikla?**

Oh dear, a lot. When I started work, we didn't have our own premises, and we didn't have room on Karola Miarki Street where the first location of Sikla Polska in Jelenia Góra was. In order to be able to start work, we had to empty the passage to work on the hall.

It is known that at that time we had lower turnover, less goods, we did everything manually, now we have devices which help us do this, i.e. paternosters, karedux, etc. full automation. Back then, shipping documents were hand-written, there were no labels or scanning, and we used to freeze our coffee in a cup in the social room. The conditions back then I could describe were survivalist – but from the beginning I had the conviction and felt that Sikla had the prospect to grow and I could grow with it.

**Darek to answer my question: what has changed?**

Everything has changed from A to Z – the premises, the conditions, the equipment and also my duties. I started as a warehouseman, acted as warehouse manager at one time, and today I am responsible for Purchasing at Sikla Polska.

**And what are you most proud of?**

Probably where I am at the moment. I remember how I started, and I can see where I have come to. I am



proud of how this company looks today. Just the fact that I've been part of this development from the beginning and continue to be part of it is very important to me. Because, you know, it's nice when you can contribute to this development – you have an impact on it.

My assumptions about this company have come true. My generation cares, it doesn't shut up after 8 hours of work. When I go home, I continue to live my work. My wife laughs at me because when I get home I continue to talk about the company.

**As a long-time employee, you probably have many interesting memories. And if I asked you to describe one to me – what would that day be like?**

I can't remember the specifics anymore, but one of the fond memories it's when the Managing Director comes and compliments you on something.

In fact, I remember all 16 Christmas Eve parties, the 50th anniversary of Sikla, the time we spent together. I think, Justyna, that we don't have enough time for me to tell you about all of them here. The pandemic has unfortunately put everything on hold, but I believe we will soon make up for it.

**Darek and what do you enjoy most about this job?**

This freedom of action. It is known that we have guidelines, but I also have an influence on how my work looks like. When I started at Sikla, the company was in the development phase and we worked a lot at that time. Today I'm at the stage where this working time is more normalized. But if I had to answer you in one sentence what I enjoy most is the development and the knowledge that as an employee I also contribute to it.

**You say that the development of the company is very important to you. What is Sikla's greatest value in your opinion?**

I would say that it is the people – the old team that created the company – that is Sikla's greatest value. We identify with this company. I think, thanks to such people this company can benefit.

**Just the people?**

Not only, I also think that the image of this company is its great value. We have new halls, new headquarters – this is also a great asset for Sikla. We are probably the only company that has its own headquarters.

**Darek I would love to describe all your memories, but I am afraid we would run out of pages. Thanking you for the interview, I wish you and Sikla further development and interesting people around you. ♦**



(...) what I enjoy most is the development and the knowledge that as an employee I also contribute to it.

Unusual diameter Fi 1455 – Darek presenting off-catalogue items



**Paweł Marcinkiewicz**  
Regional Sales Manager –  
Silesian and Lesser Poland  
Voivodeships

I can see a big progression in the customer service policy that has taken place. (...) a whole team of people who work for the satisfaction and success of the customer.

**Paweł I am curious to know how it was in your case. How did you start working for Sikla Polska?**

I started working with Sikla Polska 7 years ago. Before that, I had been working in the industry for 14 years in a competing company. At some point, I reached a stage that I needed changes and new challenges. I changed my status on my Goldenline profile, and it was actually Sikla that found me – I got a call from Eliza, who offered me a job offer.

When I went to the sikla.pl website and saw the company's offer, in particular the siFramo profiles, I knew that this was a product that was missing on the market and I wanted to sell it.

**What was next? The interview and the visit to the company – how do you recall them?**

Eliza invited me to the company. I dressed up I even borrowed a car so I wouldn't arrive in my old 'grandpa'. The interview went very nicely, although I remember being very stressed and unable to do a simple calculation out of nerves. Fortunately, thanks to my cleverness, I managed to solve the task and overall, we got along very quickly.

**Paweł, what do you think has changed over the seven years you have been working here?**

Our staff has expanded. It is a very cool and harmonious team. Our communication with the client has also changed. I have the impression that it is more professional. I can see a big progression in the customer ser-



Paweł on the roof of one of the construction sites

vice policy that has taken place. More and more often I hear from the customer „Mr. Paweł, you don't have to come any more, because I have already discussed the issue with Małgosia or Karolina\* and I already know everything”. It is no longer one Paweł Marcinkiewicz who was responsible for the contact or the project, but a whole team of people who work for the satisfaction and success of the customer.

### **Is there a day that you remember very fondly at Sikla?**

Yes, 5 years ago when Sikla celebrated the 50th anniversary of the company. All the employees were invited at that time. I was newly married, and the event was a bit like our honeymoon. It lasted a few days the experience was unforgettable. A year later, our baby girl was born.

In fact, I have fond memories of all our annual team-building events.

### **Paweł, you have been working in this industry for so many years – what do you enjoy most about this job, especially working at Sikla of course?**

What I enjoy the most is the fact that I can jump on roofs.

#### **On roofs? Why?**

Because I get to see beautiful views that are only given to a few. That's the way I work. Whenever I introduce our constructions to a customer, I always start to visit the site with the roof. I always want to get on the roof, and once I'm there, I can see the structures, the walkways, the systems with my eyes.

#### **Apart from jumping on roofs, is there anything else you enjoy about it?**

Yes, I enjoy my portfolio of constructions. And when I drive around different cities, I think to myself „Here I was, there I was, here we sold such a construction,

\* We are talking about Małgorzata Kociłek-Cichoń, who is a project engineer at Sikla Polska, and Karolina Łuczak, who works in the Order Processing department and deals with complex customer service.



Paweł with his wife Magdalena during a boat cruise on Lake Constance during Sikla's 50th anniversary party

there we offered such a solution” – it gives me great joy and satisfaction.

#### **And what do you think is the greatest value of our company?**

People, a harmonious team thanks to which we can and do succeed. The projects we do, the logistics service we provide – this teamwork.

The very fact that customers feel well looked after, because the whole team is doing their best – this is a value that is also very strong here.

#### **And just to finish – what are you most proud of Paweł?**

Of being aware that I sell a good quality product and satisfied customers come back to us – that is my pride.

**Paweł thank you for your time – I wish you beautiful views while jumping on the roofs and interesting related projects. ♦**





**Zbigniew Furmanek**  
Regional  
Sales Manager  
Lower Silesia, Opole,  
Lubusz Voivodeships

Our customers  
always receive help  
and technical support.  
You prove yourself  
when you are with  
a customer for better  
or for worse.  
And with us, help is  
a certain standard.

### **Zbyszek how did you get into the company?**

In all, in a trivial way. I found an advert in a newspaper, as befitted the times. It was about the recruitment of a sales advisor in the construction industry. At the time, I was also involved in trade – although in a different field. I thought to myself „why not?”. I found the construction industry interesting and very growth oriented.

I was contacted by the commercial director. We talked and quickly found a common language.

### **And how did you find yourself in this industry?**

At first, I thought to myself ‚what am I doing’. At that time Sikla had Dacia Logan cars, which were uncomfortable and clunky, but had air conditioning. I was invited to a meeting with other representatives. When I spoke to these people, I got to know them and decided that I would give it a try.

Here a person  
is appreciated.  
And in retrospect,  
this has not changed  
at Sikla.



Zbyszek and Tomasz Węglarz cooking together / Sikla Polska company event, September 2012.

My training lasted for two days! And not two weeks as we now have as standard. I went through the catalogues, talked to Grzegorz Krzywicki and went with one of my colleagues who introduced me to the customers and then I had to manage on my own.

**14 years in one place is quite a distance. What do you think has changed over the years?**

A lot has changed. Looking at where I am today, what we have to offer as a company, I think a lot has changed. The market has changed, the position of our company in the market. When I started working at Sikla, the industry was just developing. When I started there were about 17 of us in the company. We had different working tools. Now I dare say it is a very high level. I used to work exclusively with Excel. Now we have systems and loads of software to help us work.

**Do these 14 years at the company make you particularly proud of anything?**

In retrospect, I am proud to have customers, who have worked with me for several years. The loyalty of a strategic company like Korea – they fill me with pride. It's a very big success for a salesman – that you are able to connect people. The very fact of how you talk to customers – they too have changed and grown – and you can show off your company, recall shared investments, successes as well as problems that happen, but what matters is how you manage to solve them – these are amazing stories.

**Is there a day that you particularly remember?**

There have been so many that I don't know which one to tell you about, but there is one that keeps coming back to me. When I started working at Sikla I had brand new customers. I was given a fixed-term contract for three months – a sort of trial period. I already did very well in the first month and the next month – to my surprise – I was hired on a permanent basis. I remember that there were better and worse months, but Sikla placed its trust in me right from the start – and it remains so today.

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Zbyszek at Sikla's 50th anniversary party

**As a salesman, what do you enjoy most about the job?**

First of all, the cool thing is that, as a company, we create something unique – we give versatile solutions, good and high-quality products. For me, that's genuinely important – selling something unique. And as I've been working here for 14 years, I don't remember any problems with our products, and if there were some, as I mentioned before – what matters is how you solve them.

Secondly, I am part of this team, which is a global team. I feel the joy of being part of it and being able to create and build something cool together with them.

Thirdly, the people make me happy. A lot of people with different types, ambitions, expectations and charac-

ters have come through our company. But in hindsight I can see that this is changing. There are more of us on social media, more and more people see what we do. It's also changed how we communicate with our customers and how we are perceived globally.

Fourthly, innovation – our products are being modified, improved for customer needs.

Fifthly, customer satisfaction – this also makes me very happy. There are customers who have been working with us from the very beginning of my career – this proves something. To a certain extent, they are also here because I am here (a common trust in what we do and together we take responsibility for investments). Our customers always receive help and technical support. You prove yourself when you are with a customer for better or for worse. And with us, help is a certain standard.

I have been working at Sikla Polska for 14 years. I have seen ups and downs, but the salaries have always been on time – that is what I value very much in this company. Here a person is appreciated. And in retrospect, this has not changed at Sikla.

### **Zbyszek, what do you think is the greatest value of Sikla Polska?**

People – there are people behind everything. Their commitment, work, attitude, identification with the company. I remember such a situation, a boy worked before me. When I met the customer, he asked me „Are you only here for two months, too?”. I didn't know what was going on. It turned out that he told the customer that he had only come here on a temporary basis.

### **And are you here on a temporary basis?**

Do you think 14 years is „temporarily”? I owe a lot to Sikla – as well as Sikla to me – but I am in a different place thanks to this company. We all live here in a certain symbiosis and the most important thing is that we are all happy.

**Zbyszek I congratulate you that you have such customers who have been with you for several years. Your approach to work with clients is worth following. Thank you for allowing me to pass on your story at Sikla to the world.◆**





**Darek please tell me how you ended up in Sikla Polska?**

I was looking for a job and came across a Sikla ad. Our company at one time had an offer for siaqua roof drainage systems. As I was interested in the topic, I sent my CV and that is how my adventure with our company began, which has lasted almost 10 years.

**Were you invited to the company's headquarters straight away?**

No. The recruitment was handled by an external company which first checked my predispositions and possibilities. I had 2 meetings in this way and the 3rd was held directly at our company's headquarters. Ms. Alicja showed me how the company operates, showed me around, I met colleagues and had the opportunity to learn about the details of the product range. I also talked to the entire technical and commercial department, which at the time was exactly 3 people.

**Darek, your work anniversary is coming up soon. What has changed during these 10 years?**

The fact that Sikla is part of a large corporation. Our staff is no longer the dozen or so people I remember from 10 years ago, but more than 70 people. We have made incredible progress during this time – from the office building we have, the large warehouse halls, to the stock we have.

**What are you most proud of in your work at Sikla?**

Since the first year of my work, I have been proud of the results I achieve – it gives me great satisfaction. Also, the feedback from satisfied customers – as the person who is directly responsible for customer relations – this gives me great pride and drives me to continue working.

**Is there a day that sticks in your mind and that you remember most fondly? Tell me about it.**

Since the first year of my work, I have been proud of the results I achieve – it gives me great satisfaction.



**Dariusz Jadowski**  
Regional Sales Manager  
Masovian Voivodeship

From the very beginning Sikla has attracted competent people who have a gift for solving complex situations





Darek and his wife Katarzyna during a boat trip on Lake Constance – Sikla's 50th anniversary party

Yes, there are 4 days. The trip to the 50th anniversary celebration of the Sikla Company.

**You are the next person to mention it – why exactly those days?**

We were all relaxed, there was a great atmosphere, and it was a fantastic time spent in good company. I have fond memories of the event and the situations that took place there.

**Can you tell me about them?**

Justyna, as a rule of thumb, what happened at the company's 50th

anniversary celebration remains at the event and in the memories of those who were there.

**I accept that, although I cannot hide the fact that you made me very curious. And tell me, Darek, what do you enjoy most about this job?**

Customer satisfaction and situations where I can help them. I enjoy talking to people. My function is not only to sell products, but first and foremost to build a relationship, trust, cooperation – this approach works because it works both ways. Situations when customers reciprocate this – that's what pleases most.

**Darek, what do you think? What is the greatest value of our company today?**

The people working here, on whom I can rely. From the very beginning Sikla has attracted competent people who have a gift for solving complex situations.

As someone who works with customers, we seldom hear from each other, we very rarely see each other, but I know that I can always count on them. That's what makes the company special, or rather, the people who make it special. I would like to take this opportunity to thank them for the years of working together and for the cool collaboration.

**Darek, thank you for your story and I wish that we have the opportunity to meet more often. ♦**

(...) as the person who is directly responsible for customer relations – this gives me great pride and drives me to continue working.

**Alfred, I heard that you were the first Sikla representative in Poland. Tell me how did you end up here?**

Let me start by saying that I left Poland when I was only 18 years old. In 1989, I started working for the Sikla company in Germany. In our company, I was in charge of many areas. At first, I was in charge of logistics, then marketing on the Polish market and everything connected with it, and now I work in the Projektengineering department. In 1992, during one of the private meetings with the owner of Sikla, Mr. Sighart Klauss asked me if I would see an opportunity to help with the introduction of Sikla brand products to the Polish market.

**And what did you answer?**

I replied to Mr. Sighart that I personally did not see how I could take on this task. I also did not have much experience in marketing and could not imagine myself in this task. Moreover, I felt fulfilled in my challenges and in my work at Sikla Germany.

**And what happened next?**

In 1995 I had to go to Poland for private reasons. At that time, I noticed that Poland was starting to develop, interesting buildings were starting to be built and the construction industry was gaining momentum. When I returned to Germany, I asked my boss why Sikla wasn't thinking about launching products in Poland.

**And what did he answer?**

He answered me briefly: take on the task. I couldn't imagine it, but he asked me to at least help establish contacts in Poland, which I finally agreed to. And that is practically how my adventure with introducing Sikla products to the Polish market began. I did not realize that it would take so long (laughing).

**And I understand you've gone back to your roots. Where did you start?**

I started at the Polish embassy in Berlin, which organized so-called business meetings. In December 1995, I went on my first business trip to Poland to look for partners and representatives in Poland. I started to go



**Alfred A. Orawski**  
The first Sikla Sales  
Representative in Poland,  
currently  
Projektengineering  
TB Sikla GmbH

For me it is an honor to work in a family company to which I owe a lot. (...). I have learned at Sikla that earnings are important, but the customer is the most important



to trade fairs and meet with installation companies, but after about 3-4 months I found that I had spent a lot of money and sold nothing. I have to admit that I thought it would be easier.

### **What did you think at the time?**

I wondered if I was the right person for the job and if the Polish market was ready for these products. I also started to wonder where I had made mistakes. After analysis, I decided to target Warsaw. Large German-Austrian companies had offices in the capital, and they knew us from the western markets, where it was easier to establish business contacts. This was also when my previous relationships I had established in other regions of Poland came in handy.

### **Do you remember your first order?**

Yes, and very well. Instal Katowice was working for the Żywiec Brewery, and from this customer I received my first order for around 2,000 Deutschmarks. This was the first commercial 'success' for me. I began to use my contacts with my German colleagues and with those, gained in Silesia, where I come from. Slowly, we got further orders, for example from the pharmaceutical industry in Krakow. The Opel plant in Gliwice was a huge adrenaline rush for me personally. It was a breakthrough moment. I won further projects like VW in Poznań, Polkowice, Bosch in Wrocław, and so on. Work started to bring me pleasure. I also owe a lot to Mr. Holger Zwiebler and Mr. Uwe Koppen from Germany, who gave me a lot of support on the technical side. In the second half of the nineties, I met Uwe Gärtner and his wife Ala in Szklarska Poręba, who were already closely connected with the Sikla company while still working for HTD/HTS.

### **Official figures show that Sikla Poland was established in 2001. Do you remember that moment?**

I remember exactly, in 2001. Sikla GmbH purchased the company PKT (a manufacturer of pre-wall installa-

tion frames in Chojnice). As PKT had its own halls and facilities, it was the owners' decision to set up Sikla Polska right there. Initially, there were 3 employees with me – a representative for northern Poland and an employee from the internal department. In January 2004 Uwe Gärtner became Managing Director and moved the company to new premises in Jelenia Góra.

### **Did you also move?**

I was employed by Sikla Germany but continued to work with Sikla Polska. Since 2005, I switched to my own business, I was an independent sales representative in the construction industry. At that time, Uwe also asked me to take over the Warsaw market for Sikla Polska and focus on companies in the fire protection industry.

### **How long have you cooperated with Sikla Polska?**

I worked with the Polish branch until 2011, on my own account. All this time I knew that my adventure in Poland would end one day. At the very beginning I assumed that I would come only for max. 6 months, but as you can see, I stayed much longer.

### **Do you have any memories from your time working in Poland that you particularly remember?**

I have a lot of fond memories. I remember how, on a construction site in Polkowice, due to some problems, the VW project manager asked me for extraordinary help. I spent a full three days on site solving technical issues, and in the evenings and at night I drove from Polkowice to Berlin to pick up the goods. It was a great honor for me when, after a few days, the head of this project invited me to dinner and thanked me for my commitment and problem solving. Thanks to situations like this, our position and the image of Sikla on the Polish market was consolidated.

### **Solving problems on our customers' construction sites is our strong point. Do you have any other fond memories you would like to share?**

(...) these moments of building customer relationships and building the Sikla brand image very fondly.

I remember the day I was returning to Poland from the Czech Republic. I got a call in the afternoon from a customer who was not likely to use our offer. He needed our goods the next morning at the OBI construction site in Bielany Wrocławskie. He asked me if I could manage it.

**And what did you say to him?**

I could only guess at what was waiting for me, if only because we had two business partners in Poland. I realized that it would be impossible to send the goods in the late afternoon, but I replied that I could do it. It required me to go to Kraków to pick up the goods and then travel overnight to Wrocław. In those days, the A4 motorway did not exist and the journey from Krakow to Wrocław took about 6-7 hours. Nevertheless, to see his surprised eyes the next morning and to hear that he didn't believe I would make it was priceless. It was a turning point in our relationship. This customer never forgot my commitment and sent all subsequent orders to us. After a while, other customers also started to notice our support and commitment. I remember these moments of building customer relationships and building the Sikla brand image very fondly.

**Alfred, what do you like about working for the Sikla company?**

I feel I am a 'Sikla man' in flesh and blood. More than once – also in Poland – I have received job offers from the competing companies, I have never taken them. I am happy when I can help a customer, convince him of the high quality of the Sikla brand. I enjoy the opportunity to interact with customers, to meet new people.

**And what do you think is the greatest value of Sikla?**

For me it is an honor to work in a family company to which I owe a lot. In the so-called Sikla company guide there is a point that in Polish translation reads: 'Service goes before earnings'. I have learned at Sikla that earnings are important, but the customer is the most important, because it is the customer who pays our salaries. And moreover, Sikla has a unique approach to people, very human. Here the time and commitment you give to the company is appreciated.

**I definitely have to agree with you. Thank you for your time and the opportunity to meet and learn about the beginnings of Sikla in Poland. ♦**



**M**y cooperation with Sikla Polska started several years ago and has been very successful until today. From the very beginning of our cooperation, I have had a very good contact with the representative who is responsible for investments in my area. Zbyszek is very helpful, open and, above all, always available. In cooperation with Sikla, I appreciate the professional and expert technical advice, the availability of products, the fast execution of orders and deliveries always on time.

Andrzej Woźniak  
TAH Regulacja Sp. z o.o. sp. k.



**P**ersonally, I have been working with Sikla Polska for almost 15 years, and as GM Sprinkler Sp. z o.o. for even longer. Sikla fulfils its tasks professionally and reliably. We particularly value the fast execution of orders and the punctuality of deliveries. Sikla cares about transparency and professional information flow, which makes it a reliable business partner.

Paweł Racis  
GM Sprinkler Sp. z o.o.

**BORUTA**

**W**e have been working with Sikla Polska since 2007. Throughout these years our relations have always been professional. As a company, we value the cooperation with Sikla for a number of reasons: the quality of the products, which we are satisfied with and which corresponds to our customers; the logistics in the company, which is developed to the level of 'today you order, tomorrow the goods are at the construction site'; the technical design, when it is needed it is done for us; the contact with the representative – no rotation – one person with whom we have been cooperating for years. These elements distinguish Sikla Polska and make us want to cooperate with them.

Bartłomiej Boruta  
Boruta Sp. z o.o.





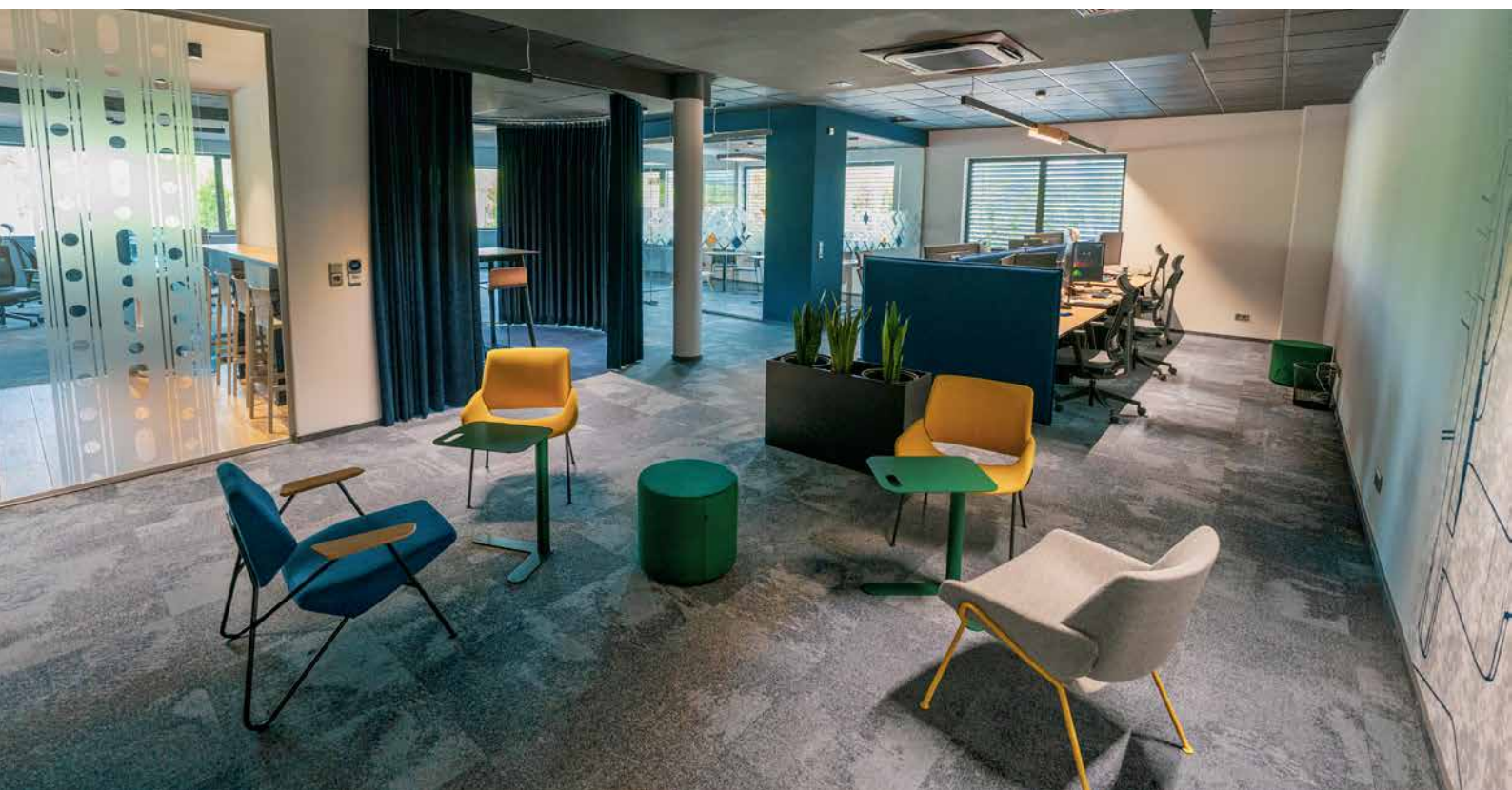














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