



## Press Release

# Entrepreneur and ebm-papst founder Gerhard

# Sturm celebrates his 80th birthday on 17

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One of the pioneers in the field of fans, over five decades Gerhard Sturm led ebm-papst from its beginnings as a small company with 35 employees to become the world market and technology leader. Thanks to Sturm's visionary leadership, the fan specialist now employs around 12,000 employees worldwide and generates sales of over 1.5 billion euros.

The third of five children, Gerhard Sturm was born in the South German town of Künzelsau on 17 December 1934 and took an interest in technology and physics at an early age. By taking up studies to become a machine fitter, which he began at 14 in Esslingen, he sidestepped his parents' wish that he become a priest. Sturm, a classmate of German Entrepreneurs Reinhold Würth and Albert Berner, later moved to the fan manufacturer Ziehl-Abegg. After earning his master's certificate, Sturm was appointed assistant operations manager and in 1960 became head of production for external rotor motors, where he recognised that the external rotor motor is ideally suited as a fan drive for a variety of applications. That insight changed his life and also influenced the history of ebm-papst and a number of neighbouring companies and suppliers.

In 1963, Gerhard Sturm, together with his fatherly friend and mentor, Heinz Ziehl, founded the present-day ebm-papst Group, which he led as Managing Partner until his departure from business operations in 2007. Since then, Sturm has supported the company as Chairman of the Advisory Board.

Gerhard Sturm has received numerous honours for his social commitment and his business activities, including Germany's Order of Merit, Baden-Württemberg's Medal of Merit, the Medal of Honour bestowed by the region of Hohenlohe and the Diesel Medal, the highest distinction for inventors.

Sturm was an enthusiastic football and tennis player for many years and still skis today. He is still active in the choral society in Mulfingen, which he helped to found 30 years ago. On 17 December 2014, Sturm will celebrate his 80th birthday in the Stauseehalle in Mulfingen with his family and guests from politics, business and the workforce.