

How BYK attracts trainees worldwide with immersive HR applications

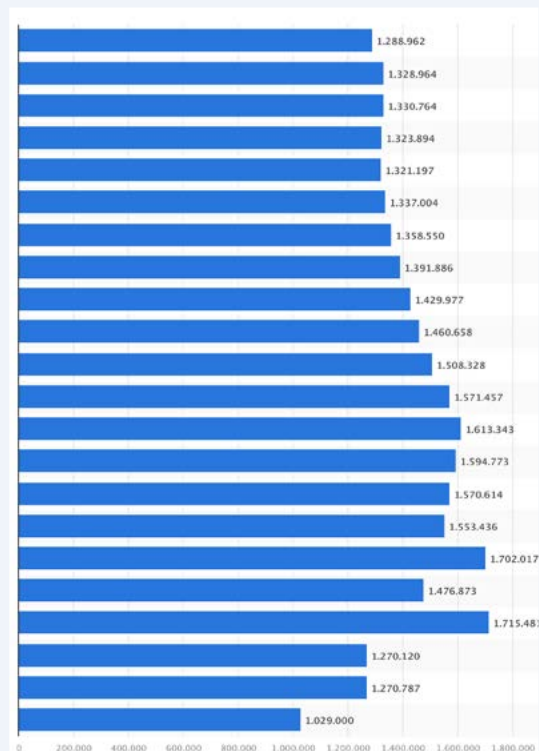
BYK is a leading global supplier of specialty chemicals headquartered in Wesel, Germany. Founded in 1873, the company produces additives and measuring instruments for customers in the coatings, printing inks, plastics and oil/gas industries and employs more than 2.400 people worldwide. Products from BYK are also used in the manufacture of care products, adhesives and sealants as well as construction chemicals. BYK is one of the four divisions of the ALTANA Group, a globally active chemicals group.

BYK relies on innovative solutions for personnel acquisition in times of shortage of skilled workers

For years, companies throughout Germany have been facing an ever greater challenge: the shortage of skilled workers. The so-called “war for talent” might be tackled with targeted talent promotion, but the number of trainees in Germany is steadily declining. Companies are therefore competing for fewer and fewer trainees and must win them over. In order to position themselves as an attractive employer and provide potential applicants with a particularly impressive and comprehensive insight into everyday working life, many companies are looking for innovative means – including BYK.

To this end, the specialty chemicals supplier headquartered in Wesel, Germany, was initially looking for a solution that would allow prospective applicants to discover and learn about the job of a coatings lab technician up close and personal in order to generate interest in an apprenticeship at BYK.

Number of trainees in Germany from 1950-2020



Source: Statista.de

Because of the high immersive potential of the technology and its growing importance in the emerging metaverse, BYK opted for a virtual reality solution. For the company, it was also clear from the outset that the job presentation solution was to be just the starting point for a whole series of virtual reality applications in the company, which would firmly anchor the technology in the various departments as part of its own digitization concepts. BYK was therefore looking for a solution that could successfully roll out a pilot project in the short term, but also provide the framework for long-term work on and with virtual reality applications.

One platform for the entire virtual reality ecosystem

In its search for a suitable solution, BYK came across the VRdirect platform. The software met several of BYK's key requirements right away: For example, it can be used to implement extensive and immersive virtual reality applications within a very short time and roll them out across the company. The platform also allows the company's own solutions to be used on all common end devices, i.e. VR headsets, smartphones or even web browsers. Furthermore, the VRdirect platform provides the necessary infrastructure to make complex virtual reality ecosystems available company-wide and around the clock. According to Axel Vogelbruch, Global Head of Digitalization, a key argument in favor of VRdirect was also its user-friendliness, which will allow BYK to develop further virtual reality solutions independently and without external expertise in the future:



„VRdirect allows us to easily roll out a VR platform across the company, as well as independently implement virtual reality projects within different areas of the business.“

Axel Vogelbruch

Global Head of Digitalization (CDO)

Key Requirements for BYK's VR application

- ✓ Fast rollout across entire enterprise
- ✓ Compatibility with multiple end devices
- ✓ User-friendliness in order to empower other departments to create additional solutions on their own
- ✓ 24/7 availability independent from location



VR makes everyday training and the workplace tangible

Together with BYK, VRdirect developed the project “Paint Lab Technician @BYK”. The application lets users experience the tasks and everyday life of a paint lab technician up close in an immersive and interactive 360° environment, bringing them closer to this often rather unknown profession in an exciting way. In addition, users discover the BYK brand in the application and learn more about the company and their career opportunities. The virtual reality application combines a wide range of multimedia content with texts, images, videos, 360° shots, and interactive elements, thus offering users a variety of starting points to explore the application independently and at their own pace. Users are guided step by step through the lab rooms and receive in-depth information about everyday working life from real BYK trainees and employees. The development of “Paint Lab Technician @BYK” was always carried out in close collaboration with BYK in order to adapt the solution as much as possible to the needs of the Marketing and Training & Education departments and at the same time to pass on important know-how for further internal projects. Christine Thannheiser-Rumpf, Head of Training and Development, emphasizes the efficiency and professionalism of the collaboration:



„Through VRdirect, we can present the different professions in a completely new way and make everyday training and working life even more tangible for trainees. The cooperation with VRdirect was goal-oriented and professional at all times, so we feel we are in very good hands.“

Christine Thannheiser-Rumpf

Head of Training and Development

A project with great impact – both externally and internally

With the first virtual reality project for the job presentation of the paint lab technician, BYK now has an innovative tool for personnel recruitment in its hands, which can be used in many different ways via the VRdirect platform. Among other things, BYK plans to use it at trade fairs, in schools, but also on the company’s own website. The virtual job presentation can be played out on a variety of devices and can thus also be used flexibly for future application scenarios. BYK hopes that the use of the virtual presentation will increase awareness of the job of a paint laboratory technician and thus increase the number of applications.

However, the project has also already had an impact internally: as a proof-of-concept, the pilot solution has demonstrated how virtual reality solutions can support specific business processes within the company in a targeted and innovative way. This has also raised awareness of the technology in various departments, opening up new opportunities for use in other areas of the business.



By using the VRdirect platform, which places great emphasis on ease of use, further projects can now also be developed independently directly in the specialist departments. BYK's efforts to anchor and use virtual reality throughout the company have become much more concrete through the successful implementation of "BYK – Job presentation 'Paint Lab Technician @BYK'".

Foundation stone for widespread use throughout the entire company

For BYK, it is clear that the first virtual reality project is just the beginning. The company plans to use virtual reality on a large scale throughout the company in order to continuously advance digital development. Other departments are to be introduced to the topic so that in the future they will be able to independently create further VR projects, for example in the areas of logistics, production, or EHS (Environment, Health & Safety) instruction. BYK is also examining the possibility of expanding the use of virtual reality job presentations to other fields of activity and thus also using the technology for personnel acquisition in the future. Currently, two additional apprenticeships are already in the planning phase.

The company continues to count on the VRdirect platform, emphasizes Christian Schüring, Project Manager VR/AR/MR:



„Particularly in regard to the increasing importance of the metaverse, it is also becoming increasingly important for BYK to use innovative technologies such as virtual reality for its own benefit. With VRdirect, we were not only able to successfully master the entry into virtual reality, but also have the opportunity to exploit the immersive potential of VR throughout the company in the future.“

Christian Schüring

Project Manager VR/AR/MR

Key Learnings

- ✓ The higher the immersion, the bigger the impact of recruitment activities
- ✓ Use cases that support real business processes showcase benefits of new technology for other departments as well
- ✓ Easy-to-use solutions provide a perfect entry into the Metaverse



Read the Success Story on our Website:

<https://www.vrdirect.com/success-stories/how-byk-attracts-trainees-worldwide-with-immersive-hr-applications/>

About VRdirect

With its “VRdirect Studio” platform, the Munich-based software company VRdirect enables companies to design and publish their own virtual reality content completely without programming effort. Typical use cases of these VR apps range from corporate training and development processes, to recruiting and onboarding of personnel, to deployment scenarios in sales, customer support, or in the context of trade fairs. Once created, the content can be accessed on all common end devices. Users are thus brought particularly close to the action and have the feeling of really engaging with the simulated environment.

Further information at www.vrdirect.com