

TOP PLAYER IN MACHINE SAFETY

Oscar Arias
Chief Sales Officer (CSO), Schmersal Group



Fig. 1: Oscar Arias, Chief Sales Officer (CSO), Schmersal Group

From your company's point of view, how do you assess the economic situation in general and in your industry in particular - and what conclusions do you draw for your strategic decisions?

Oscar Arias: The economic situation remains tense and challenging, particularly in Germany, but also in the eurozone as a whole. We are in a period of economic weakness, which is also characterised by political crises, global trade conflicts and continuing high cost pressures due to rising labour, energy and raw material costs. Our conclusion is that we must work even harder to maintain and improve our competitiveness. This includes offering our customers innovative products and tailor-made technical solutions at competitive prices.

In your opinion, what are the most pressing challenges that your customers are facing today? And what specific demands do they place on you as their partner, supplier or service provider?

Oscar Arias: The economic situation is also a challenge for our customers. They need to increase productivity, operate more sustainably and gain competitive advantage. This is why many engineering companies are focusing on driving digitalisation to achieve efficiency gains through the use of data analytics, artificial intelligence and IIoT technologies. As a partner to our customers, we want to and can support them with appropriate solutions. With this in mind, we have reorganised our services division, tec.nicum, and in particular significantly expanded our service portfolio. Another challenge for our customers is the Cyber Resilience Act (CRA) passed by the European Union in response to the increasing number

of cyber attacks. Companies are required by law to protect their products and machines from unauthorised access. tec.nicum is also available to our customers as a competent contact and service provider for questions relating to the CRA.

New products, solutions, services: What are you working on most intensively at the moment? And what news can we expect from your company in the near future?

Oscar Arias: Schmersal is focussing on technological innovations: Our extended tec.nicum range of services includes in particular new digital technologies such as cloud solutions, IIoT applications, digitalised lockout/tagout procedures or tools for energy monitoring. For example, we now offer our customers visual safety monitoring based on artificial intelligence to prevent accidents. And we are working hard to develop new business models. The basic idea is that we want to offer our customers the option of completely outsourcing the complex task of machine safety. This would mean, for example, that Schmersal would be responsible for the safety of its customers' machines 24/7: Safety as a service.

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