

Document destruction company relies on shredding technology from Vecoplan

What no one should read...

Confidential data must be securely kept and also reliably destroyed – especially now that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) has come into effect. For document destruction, the company Aktenvernichtung Brokamp in Germany's Münsterland region relies on high-performance systems from Vecoplan. The newly installed VIZ 1300 shredder destroys even the most bulky files in an efficient, maintenance-friendly process that is digitally monitored all the way to the connected conveyor system.

"Paper is awful stuff! It's a material that's very hard to shred," says Heiner Brokamp, who knows what he's talking about. "I can tear it with a few fingers, but when it's in the form of a phone book it's as tough as a brick." Brokamp is the managing director of Brokamp Aktenvernichtung, based in an industrial area in Weseke, a district in the town of Borken in Germany's Münsterland region. The company specialises in secure, reliable and environmentally friendly destruction of files and electronic media. "We ensure that our customers' confidential information stays protected when it's no longer needed," says Brokamp. His customers include a wide range of companies, but also hospitals and banks. "They include everyone from A to Z – from attorneys to zoo managers."

Brokamp's parents founded the company in the early 1990s. At the start, his father drove a panel van with a mobile shredder to customers. Later, Heiner himself took the wheel. In 1995, he took over the management, and just before the turn of the millennium the company relocated to Weseke. It has enjoyed steady growth ever since then. The mobile shredder is now long gone: over the years, stationary machines have taken its place.

Increasing demands

The introduction of GDPR in 2016 gave secure data destruction new relevance. Companies are now required by law not only to carefully store personal data but also to securely destroy the data at the end of its life cycle. Securely? This is defined by ISO/IEC 21964, an international standard that specifies various protection classes and security levels based on the sensitivity of the data. Different degrees of mechanical destruction are required, depending on whether the material comprises business documents, medical data or highly confidential information. Brokamp's company complies with security levels P2 to P5. "In the case of P5, the particles from paper shredding must have a size of only 30 square millimetres. This makes reconstruction very difficult – or nearly impossible," says Brokamp.

More customers, greater throughput

The company's input continued to grow, and by the spring of 2024, its shredder had reached its limits. Frequent downtimes and high maintenance costs were the consequence. "There was little that we could repair ourselves," says Brokamp. "What's more, the supplier was not located in Germany. Usually, a mechanic had to be sent in, which took a long time because of the distance. This also cost us a lot of money. The shredder stood still, and we couldn't do our work." Documents delivered by customers have to be destroyed within a prescribed period – an obligation that Heiner Brokamp must comply with.

Thus accessibility to the system was just as important to the company as performance. For example, the operators had to be able on their own to remove extraneous materials without trouble or do repair work, so the company saw accessibility as a key success factor.

The managing director looked at a number of shredders. "In the past, we had a second-hand machine from Vecoplan's VAZ series, and we were very satisfied with it." Vecoplan, based in Bad Marienbad in Germany's Westerwald region, develops systems that shred, convey, separate, and store wood, biomass, plastics, paper, domestic waste and commercial waste. "We don't just put a machine on a customer's doorstep," says Bastian Wienen, Regional Sales Manager at Vecoplan. "We also offer complete project management, assembly, commissioning and a comprehensive service programme."

25% energy savings and extremely easy maintenance

Vecoplan recommended its single-shaft shredder in the VIZ 1300 series for the demanding task of destroying files and data storage media. In March 2024, Heiner Brokamp visited Vecoplan's headquarters in Bad Marienberg to examine the machine and was impressed. The VIZ can be precisely matched to the user's input and output requirements by the number of cutters and the choice of screen hole size. The throughput is 500 to 3,300 kg per hour, depending on the chosen particle size. "Customers can adjust the cutting speed of the robust single-shaft shredder as needed," says Wienen. The cutting tools are made of high-alloy special steel and fulfil all of the requirements pertaining to secure document destruction – in only one shredding step.

The machine excels above all in its simple maintenance. The hydraulic swing-open bottom flap allows quick and easy access to the cutting unit. The counter knives can be adjusted from the outside, and the screen unit swivels away for easy changing. Variable positioning of the screen segments means a maximum life cycle.

The VIZ is powered by Vecoplan's ESC drive, a frequency-controlled belt drive with an asynchronous motor and a high-performance frequency converter. The system is especially energy-efficient: Brokamp has energy savings of up to 25 percent compared with competitors' products. Integrated slip control plus extraneous material detection with automatic reversing and restarting ensure high dynamism and operational reliability. "We can handle many procedures ourselves without calling in a technician," says Brokamp. Examples are turning the counter knives and replacing the cutters. These components are reusable and individually replaceable – another good way to cut costs.

The cutting gap can be precisely set for an especially effective shearing process to obtain uniform particle sizes. A fully automatic load-dependent hydraulic ram pushes the material into the work area of the rotor. "This gives us controlled, energy-efficient shredding with constant high throughput," says Brokamp.

From screwdriver to hammer

"The robust design convinced us," says the managing director. This is because extraneous material is a big problem in shredding. "Under the rules, we're not allowed to open files or containers filled by customers. Everything has to go straight onto the conveyor belt. So we don't know what's in there." Sometimes, for example, screws or small parts are mixed in with technical documents. "We've had screwdrivers in the system, and once even a hammer." Some customers have been known to throw toner cartridges into the containers. These contain thick metal bars that can't be seen through the plastic cover. The new shredder permits quick and easy removal of such items. The system is also tough enough to handle them.

Installation on the fly

To keep downtimes as short as possible, the plan was to replace the old shredder with the new VIZ on the fly. Installation was scheduled for October 2024. The challenge was to fit the machine into a cramped and awkward-to-reach space. To do so, Vecoplan constructed a deeper feed chute so that the new shredder could be seamlessly connected to the existing infrastructure. The external peripheral systems comprised a feed belt and a bale press. Vecoplan also supplied a drag chain conveyor for moving shredded material to the press. The dimensions of the VIZ were adjusted to take account of the low ceiling.

Better orientation thanks to digitalisation: early fault detection, even in external systems

The VIZ comes with the Vecoplan Smart Center (VSC). This highly effective digitalisation

concept includes the intuitive VSC.control operating panel. The panel serves as a communication medium for the state-of-the-art control unit and a direct link to Vecoplan. “The VSC has already proved itself in practice,” says Heiner Brokamp. “We even pinpointed a fault message from the existing conveyor belt and quickly rectified it.” VSC.connect provides connectivity. This tool enables operators to take advantage of further services such as remote maintenance, information on key figures and access to a media database.

And what happens to the files after they are shredded? “They go right to the paper factories,” says Brokamp. “Here they’re transformed into a recycled product that we’re all familiar with – one that shouldn’t be missing from any bathroom.”

Meta title: Efficient document destruction with the Vecoplan VIZ 1300 at Brokamp

Meta description: Data protection at the highest level: Brokamp relies on the VIZ 1300 from Vecoplan for reliable, energy-efficient document destruction.

Photo captions:



Photo 1: Files from customers are delivered in containers.



Photo 2: Brokamp ensures reliable transport of the files.



Photo 3: Files travel on the customer-facing conveyor belt (red) to the Vecoplan shredder.



Photo 4: Brokamp has been relying on a powerful VIZ 1300 shredder from Vecoplan since autumn of 2024.



Photo 5: One thing that the shredder is short on – space. Vecoplan had to adapt the VIZ to the low ceiling.



Photo 6: Vecoplan also supplied a drag chain conveyor for moving shredded material to the press.



Photo 7: A cutting crown on a counter blade – both can be easily replaced and used multiple times.



Photo 8: The powerful ESC drive is especially energy-efficient.



Photo 9: The necessary screen sizes can be changed in just a few minutes, depending on the security level.



Photo 10: The VIZ comes standard with the Vecoplan Smart Center (VSC), the powerful digitalization concept.



Photo 11: The pressed paper is ready to be picked up.



Photo 12: (left to right) Managers Heiner Brokamp and Bastian Wienen from Vecoplan.



Photo 13: Heiner Brokamp: "With the new shredder we can handle many procedures ourselves without calling in a technician."

Photo credits: Vecoplan AG

The high-resolution image material is available [here](#) to download.

Vecoplan AG is a producer and supplier of machines and systems for processing and handling primary and secondary raw materials for material and thermal recycling. These include wood, biomass, plastics, paper, other materials, and household and commercial waste. The company lays the foundation for functioning recycling thanks to its extensive portfolio. Vecoplan supports its customers as a partner for single-machine orders, complex plants, and mega projects. 580 employees currently work at the company's sites in Germany, the USA, the UK, Spain, Austria, Poland, Italy, and France.

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