

ELSTER-AMCO: A BREATH OF FRESH AIR ON THE WEB

From 'update' to 'up-to-date'

The ELSTER-AMCO Group has in the last few years not only grown in size but it has grown together into a unit. The members of the group from a variety of different nationalities and, in some cases, vastly different backgrounds, now see themselves as members of a closely-knit community, which as a supplier and partner is well known and highly respected in the world of gas. This can be clearly seen in one of today's most modern means of communication – the Group's Internet site.

The ELSTER-AMCO group is represented on the Internet with a uniform design and structure. This is a tremendous advantage for the web-site visitor. The features of the site are self-explanatory so that it is easy to navigate and find information. If in doubt the help function is available to provide support. Gathering information from another member's home page is easy, as the look and feel of the site is similar everywhere the visitor goes. Making a large number of different website designs from a variety of different countries uniform in a short period of time is without doubt a difficult task. But a start has been made. The newly designed website for the ELSTER-AMCO group and ELSTER HANDEL is now online. Other sites will soon follow. Our colleagues overseas at AMCO are also in the midst of redesigning their website to incorporate the new structure but at the same time include their traditional corporate colours red and blue.

Interested? Let's start off with the opening address for the ELSTER-AMCO Group: www.elster-amco.com (Fig. 1). The screen is clearly divided into three areas. The graphic area in the basic yellow and grey colours including the group logo separates the navigation area on the left from the information area on the right. On the Home page we can see a brief description of the ELSTER-AMCO Group and the latest news in four blocks. At the top of the graphic area, the ELSTER-AMCO logo shows that we are on the Group page. The navigation



Fig. 1: Part of the ELSTER-AMCO Group Home page



Fig. 2: Very interesting for all those who want to go into detail ▶ 'Products and services'

ELSTER AMCO

area structures the content of the Group website. A mouse click on one of the buttons displays the corresponding information on the right. 'About us' introduces the user to the ELSTER-AMCO Group and gives a brief description of each of the group members. For any of our customers visiting the site, the sections 'Products and services' (Fig. 2) as well as 'Contact partners' (Fig. 5) will be of particular interest. In 'Products and services' you will find a short description of the products manufactured within the group and their fields of application. Let's have a look at the section 'Gas metering' ▶ 'Diaphragm meters', for example. If you need any more details, there are links directly to the websites of the manufacturers, e.g. www.elster.com and www.americanmeter.com.

Let's click on the link that takes us to the ELSTER site: www.elster.com. In the graphic area, we can now see the ELSTER logo at the top. If we follow the same path as on the Group page, i.e. via 'Gas metering' ▶ 'Diaphragm meters', we can then click on 'more' and get more information/details on these particular meters, e.g. technical data, and we can also download datasheets.



Fig. 3: Surf the links



Fig. 4: The slider: selected functions are available at all times

That was just a very short introduction to the new website. There is, of course, a lot to discover if you surf the site, which can be both interesting and useful (Fig. 3). For example, the slider on the right side of the graphic area (Fig. 4). This follows the user and appears on every page so that the commands

- ▶ Print
- ▶ Contact
- ▶ Search
- ▶ Site Map
- ▶ Top of page

can be selected at any time without having to move to another page.

Have you switched on your computer to check out the website? If not, then maybe you should try it out as soon as possible. We look forward to your visit. And why not make it a regular visit – the four blocks at the top of the Home page are regularly updated with the latest news so it's worth a look. With Elster you are always 'up to date'.

DR. HARALD DORNAUF, ELSTER GERMANY

dornauf@elster.com



Fig. 5: 'Contact partners' – information displayed in a compact form