

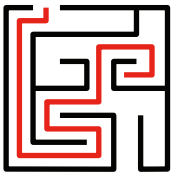
J. Führ Gets a Lift from J.W. Speaker

Partners Customize LEDs, Create New Market Opportunities



For nearly 50 years, J. Führr has met the unique lighting needs of a wide range of OEM and aftermarket customers. During that time, the company has expanded from a two-person family shop to one of Europe's leading suppliers of industrial worklights and warning lights, especially in the materials handling market.

J. Führr



Challenge:

- Meet customer's specific application and budget requirements
- Create custom LEDs for price-conscious market



Solution:

- Partner with J.W. Speaker on research and development
- Produce custom LEDs that can be sold to many customers



Results:

- Met client-specific needs
- Introduced J. Führr as leading supplier for custom LED lighting
- Established J.W. Speaker as a premier LED brand in Europe

“Safety has become a priority in European factories. We believe that’s in part because of our work with J.W. Speaker developing the ‘blue spot’ LED for forklifts.”

- Alex Führr

How do you promote customization and quality in a market driven by price points?

Challenge: Create a custom LED for customers unwilling to pay for it

Some of the best ideas never see the light of day. J. Führ was determined to do something about it. When one of its prominent material handling customers in Germany requested a specialized warning LED light for factory forklifts, Alex Führ, owner of J. Führ, knew there wasn't anything on the market that would work. He also knew the customer was unwilling to invest in design or tooling for a custom solution.

"Lighting manufacturing in Germany can be driven by price more than style, design or even quality," said Führ. "Fortunately, we're able to connect with J.W. Speaker when we need affordable customizable options. Even though it's a pretty big company, J.W. Speaker has a history of developing great ideas quickly and economically."

Solution: Collaborate with a savvy research and development team

Führ presented the customer's challenge to his J.W. Speaker representative. Soon, the company was working directly with J.W. Speaker engineers, including the Research and Development team, on a new LED warning light built specifically for forklifts.

"It was our first experience making a light work how we want it to," said Führ. "A lot has changed since our first customized project, but the development process remains largely unchanged to this day."

After a concept is created, and fine-tuned, J.W. Speaker manufactures a prototype to share with the end customer. In the case of the "blue spot" warning LED, the customer suggested a few tweaks for the lamp so that it clearly identified a "stay clear" area behind the forklift. Another prototype followed. And then another.

Eventually, the customer was willing to purchase the LED light from J. Führ for all of its forklifts. The customer didn't care that it wasn't proprietary. They simply wanted a solution that could protect employees — without investing a wealth of resources or money in creating it.

"The blue spot forklift project helped us grow significantly," said Führ. "Other customers faced similar problems, so we could sell them the same light. Plus, we could sell new customers on our proven history of custom LED solutions at reasonable cost."

“We’re seeing more and more customization opportunities. There’s always a need for custom products at lower volumes. And J.W. Speaker enables us to offer affordable solutions quickly.”

- Alex Führ

Results: Re-tooling on the fly

The market for LED work lights in Germany and throughout Europe continues to evolve. Price remains a primary concern, but a newfound commitment to safety measures has introduced many new opportunities for J. Führ.

Today, the German company claims about 80% of the forklift lighting market in the region. About 75% of its business is for material handling applications, but its reach extends into a wide range of work lights, warning lights, driving lights and more.

Many of the LEDs are off-the-shelf solutions. Others are custom creations from J.W. Speaker for specific customers — which become available for others as an off-the-shelf LED. Because they don’t need to worry about tooling costs, design resources and excess investment capital, customers can simply pick-and-choose which LED solutions work best for them — even for their most unique and challenging applications.

About J.W. Speaker

J.W. Speaker specializes in the design and manufacturing of vehicle lighting systems for OEMs and aftermarket applications. For more information, visit jwspeaker.com or contact J.W. Speaker at 800.558.7288 or speaker@jwspeaker.com.

