



ebm-papst A&NZ Pty Ltd · 10 Oxford Road · Laverton North VIC 3026 · Australia

21-year-old international Business Administration student Katharina Fritz from Germany has recently completed a three-month internship at the ebm-papst A&NZ head office in Melbourne. As a member of the ebm-papst Group, the Australian subsidiary tries to support young people in their quest to gain international business and life experience.

"My name is Katharina and I have been studying Business Administration (B.Sc.) at the University of Trier for the last two years. I chose to apply for an internship abroad because I wanted to learn from the experience. I knew that theory at university is very different to everyday life in a company, so I wanted to reach for a new challenge to learn, develop and improve new sets of skills, especially regarding international business and language. In my eyes, global work experience is very important in today's world, and intercultural communication an important skill to be learned. In addition, working abroad helps you to get to better understand what you want from life and where to focus your subjects on. But as you can imagine, moving abroad for a period of time is about much more than work experience.

I started my internship at ebm-papst in Melbourne on 9 August. I had just arrived and was still tired due to jet lag, but this didn't last long.

During my internship I worked in different departments, taking on a range of responsibilities and tasks, such as Finance and Accounting, Purchasing, Sales, Marketing, Operations/Logistics and Engineering. I've become familiar with the use of different software packages, as well as stock and customer management and marketing strategies. I was able to experience these roles first-hand and got to know many different sides of the company and its projects, e.g. the general process of how a project is planned, developed and completed, as well as how much work and detail goes into every stage. My colleagues always provided me with further information and training on the relationships to customers, wholesalers and other significant intermediaries in the supply chain. I took part in customer visits, in international conferences and monthly company briefings. Additionally, I visited the All Energy exhibition and conference at the Melbourne Convention and Exhibition Centre and the AIRAH Trade Night in Bendigo.

One of my highlights took place in October. ebm-papst participated in Melbourne's Ride around the Bay – an event that supports the not-for-profit organisation Engineers Without Borders. On our ride most of us did the 60km or 100km. As a small group we headed out to Mordialloc or Frankston along the Beach Road and we really enjoyed it.

In my free time I had access to a car, which enabled me to discover Australia. With so much to offer, the continent is a destination that has it all - from beautiful beaches and stunning cities to friendly countryside, there was so much to do and see during my time Down Under.

My internship has also exposed me to the unique culture of Australia. As an international student from Germany, I initially didn't expect the Melbourne culture to be much different from my own, but surprisingly I was sometimes quite mistaken. I appreciated the most the relaxed atmosphere throughout Australia. Everybody has a really positive attitude towards life and everyone is called by their first names even if you haven't known them for a long time. That's why my colleagues felt more like friends than supervisors. Another significant difference is Australia's multiculturalism. Here, everybody is considered a citizen until you mention you are not from Australia, whereas in Germany foreigners are more often recognised as immigrants. Therefore I prefer the Australian way of thinking.

Regarding further differences, the time overseas definitely expanded my world view!

Reflecting on my internship abroad I can say that I was challenged to adapt both personally and professionally. I have developed new skills, such as developing more strategic ideas, managing databases, gaining knowledge in all departments, working with software, analysing the industry and working with customers. I worked with a diverse range of people and I ended up learning a lot more than I expected. Everyone I met helped me to grow both as an employee and as a person. My supervisors and contact persons talked with me about my ambitions and struggles regularly, not because they felt obligated, but because they truly cared. Their commitment to their jobs and their fellow employees is something I will never forget.

I would like to thank everyone at ebm-papst in Melbourne for welcoming me into their community. My internship was an amazing experience and I can honestly say that my time with ebm-papst A&NZ was one of the best summers of my life. Not only did I gain practical skills but I also had the opportunity to meet many fantastic people. What I have seen was an unforgettable experience.

I could not be more thankful!"