



# Stefan Marxer

A new chapter in operations

Since joining Evatec at the beginning of 2025, **Stefan Marxer** may still be “the new kid on the block” as COO, but he certainly knows a lot about our industry from the days of his apprenticeship and early career. In his interview, Stefan talks about the current challenges in Operations, how Evatec is tackling them, and what transparency and operational excellence mean in this context.

Stefan Marxer joined Evatec as Chief Operating Officer (COO) in February 2025. Bringing more than 20 years of international experience in operations, including key leadership roles in Asia and Eastern Europe, he offers extensive industry expertise with a strong emphasis on LEAN management and operational excellence. Known for his collaborative leadership style, Stefan is dedicated to driving process standardization and strengthening cross-functional teamwork.

## EFFECTIVE TOGETHER

### 01 Can you remind us how you knew Evatec and what made you interested to join?

I began my career with an apprenticeship as a physics laboratory technician at Balzers AG in 1990 and spent a total of 16 years there, experiencing the company’s transformation through Balzers, Balzers Process Systems, Unaxis, and OC Oerlikon. Since then, I’ve held various operational roles in international companies, including a five-year assignment in Shanghai. Most recently, I had the exciting opportunity to establish a new manufacturing site in Eastern Europe. When I learned about the position at Evatec, I immediately felt that my experience could add real value in strengthening the company’s operational performance.

### 02 What were your first impressions and how has the business changed since you left the industry back 2006?

The portfolio has grown significantly – not just in size, but also in complexity and technological sophistication. But in many ways “onboarding” felt surprisingly easy. I’ve reconnected with familiar faces and returned to an industry I know well, which made it feel a bit like coming home and helped me get up to speed quickly.

### 03 What do you see as the challenges for operations from a customer perspective?

It’s clear – speed, quality and cost efficiency. In rapidly changing market situations, our customers need to react quickly to help them take advantage of opportunities so speed at Evatec is essential. At the same time, quality must remain consistently high. It is a key differentiator ensuring high equipment uptime which together with cost efficiency ensures a strong value proposition through cost of ownership. However, these expectations are further complicated by geopolitical uncertainties and export restrictions, necessitating flexible, scalable solutions and adaptable supply chains.

### 04 How do such challenges affect you internally and what are you doing to address them?

We are currently running several initiatives focused on reducing lead times, lowering manufacturing costs, and maintaining high product quality. These include simplifying internal processes and developing closer collaboration with key suppliers. We’ve also introduced new shopfloor management reporting to increase transparency, monitor key performance indicators (KPIs), and ensure we take immediate corrective actions when needed. A dedicated task force helps us respond quickly to supply chain disruptions and set clear priorities to ensure continuity.

### 05 Many people talk about “Operational Excellence”. What does that term mean to you?

For me, Operational Excellence means delivering consistent, efficient and reliable performance in daily operations. It focuses on optimizing procurement, inventory management, logistics, and supplier performance to reduce lead times and costs, while fostering a culture of continuous improvement. Ultimately, it’s about ensuring material availability, minimizing operational costs and delivering high-quality results in a sustainable way.

### 06 What role does transparency and data play in improving and tracking Evatec’s operations processes?

Transparency is key to success. Without clear data, you can’t take the right actions or measure progress. That’s why we’ve introduced visible shopfloor boards that display KPIs and relevant information. We’re also driving digitalization initiatives to track tools in assembly across the value chain and gain better insights into productivity.

### 07 How do you see the role of AI to support you in the future?

AI is becoming increasingly important across many areas. We’re currently rolling out a software solution that uses AI to support business processes like order confirmations, delivery notes, and invoices. It also helps improve the quality of master data in our ERP system. As part of this initiative, we’re implementing key processes such as Purchase-to-Pay (P2P) and Order-to-Cash (O2C).

### 08 How do you keep your team motivated and working effectively together?

It’s all about being a team and pulling in the same direction. In March this year, we held a two-day workshop to define our strategy, KPIs, and the actions needed to reach our goals. This collaborative approach created strong alignment and ownership within the team. At the heart of our daily activities is the principle of working ‘Effective Together’, a slogan we launched to reflect our commitment to collaboration, and leadership. Regular communication, clear responsibilities, and recognition of achievements help maintain motivation and team spirit high. A big thank you to my team for the welcome and what we achieved together already!

**“The challenges are clear – speed, quality and cost efficiency”**