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Consulting Project International  
Market Research  
for **Bühler AG Uzwil**

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# Exploring Promising Markets in the Belt Conveyor Segment

Bühler's Grains Handling division is focusing on expanding its conveyor belt business. The project aimed to provide up-to-date market knowledge for several regions in which the company operates and to develop fact-based recommendations on the direction future growth plans should take, focusing on sales strategy and high-potential areas.

## Proceeding

The team started with secondary research to gain a solid understanding of the grain-related conveyor belt market in North America, Europe and Commonwealth of Independent States, Middle East and Africa. Both primary and secondary research was conducted, involving senior Bühler staff, experts from academia, and customers. The internal interviews focused on specific elements of each market, such as the quality of the relationships with customers, the extent of Bühler's presence in the region, prospective areas of growth, and critical issues hindering expansion. Subsequently, a SWOT-analysis was prepared.

## Results

The grain belt conveyor market offers solid growth opportunities, despite regional differences. Emerging trends include dust emission, reduction of energy consumption, or compliance with environmental regulations. In addition, several prospective customers are demanding complete solutions that include other handling equipment apart from belt conveyors, but due to the breadth of Bühler's offer, the company can seize opportunities even when a high degree of flexibility is required.

To increase sales, the project team came up with recommendations for Bühler on how to (re-)organize its sales force, revamp its strategy, and prioritize the markets that boast the strongest potential. Furthermore, the team suggested that focus should remain on Bühler's iconic after-sales support, which is a significant competitive edge.

The company may also build local sales teams with direct knowledge of the markets where they operate, in order to gain an advantage over competitors that lack familiarity with the area.

[ost.ch/praxisprojekte-wi](http://ost.ch/praxisprojekte-wi)

## Bühler AG, Uzwil

Bühler AG is a globally active plant equipment manufacturer with headquarters in Uzwil, SG, and has over 12,000 employees. It consists of three divisions: Grains & Food, Consumer Foods and Advanced Materials. The company has a strong focus on R&D and is committed to generating solutions that offer unparalleled reliability, reduce climate change and unlock sustainable business. Its Grains & Food division alone, where the consulting project took place, had a turnover of CHF 1.7 billion in 2021.



## Client

Bühler AG, Uzwil  
**Stefan Anshelm,**  
Product Manager Grain Handling  
[www.buhlergroup.com](http://www.buhlergroup.com)

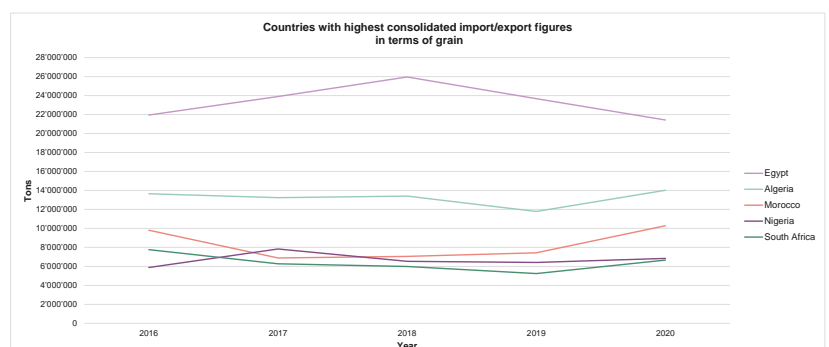
The team of the OST accomplished a thorough market analysis on the complex topic of belt conveyors. They gathered important information through both internal and external interviews. Despite any challenges encountered, they were able to produce exceptional results and deliver valuable recommendations for our future market strategy. It was a pleasure collaborating with the dedicated team of the OST, and I wish them all the best for the future. I eagerly anticipate future opportunities to work together on similar projects.



## Coach

OST – Eastern Switzerland  
University of Applied Sciences  
**Karin Pfister, MBA**

There is little data on the market for belt conveyors in the grain sector. However, the team has done extensive secondary research and supplemented its SWOT analysis with qualitative interviews. Over the past few months, the team proved that a lot can be achieved with high motivation and diligence. I am proud of the team, which also mastered the intercultural hurdles in this project very well.



African countries with highest consolidated import/export figures for relevant products  
Source: own illustration, based on Food & Agriculture Organization of the United Nations