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An Industry Rethinks Itself – Reflections from 6th CTCV Conference

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There are events that feel like a snapshot of where an industry is today. And then there are events that feel like a glimpse of where it *might* go tomorrow. The 6th [CTCV - Centro de Tecnologia e Inovação Conference](#) in Coimbra was very clearly the latter.

More than 400 participants, over 50 speakers, an auditorium full of producers, researchers, engineers, technology suppliers and industry decision-makers. And above all: a shared willingness to talk honestly about the challenges that lie ahead.



CTCV Conference 2025, Coimbra

CTCV captured it perfectly in their message afterwards: This event brought together “the main challenges facing our sector”, balancing sustainability with competitiveness, technical depth with openness, and tradition with transformation. The success of the event, as they emphasised, was not only due to the relevance of the topics, but to “the high quality of the speakers, who provided a diversity of perspectives that fostered dialogue and sharing.”

A Conversation that Matters

Our Managing Director **Thomas Alten** was one of these speakers, invited to speak about the future of firing technology, not in the abstract, but grounded in real projects, real factories, real constraints.



Thomas Alten, Managing Director Keramischer OFENBAU

The essence of his talk was simple:

The transformation of the ceramics industry will not happen in one leap. It will happen technology by technology, kiln by kiln, decision by decision, step by step.

And yet, the direction is unmistakable.

Across more than 500 Keramischer OFENBAU kilns in 50 countries and over 250 modernisations, we see the same pattern: Our customers choose Keramischer OFENBAU because they are seeking ways to reduce emissions, increase energy efficiency, stabilise production, and maintain the highest quality standards - often simultaneously.

But Thomas did not simply share visions in Coimbra, he showed real-life, successful solutions and examples:

- **fully electric kilns** already in operation
- **H₂-ready kiln plants**
- **kiln upgrades** with EnerViT for up to 50% energy and CO₂ savings
- diverse case studies from table- and sanitaryware, technical and advanced ceramics

These aren't theoretical pathways. They are successfully in use today - and that is measurable.

The Core Message: Not one Technology, but a Toolbox

The ceramics industry is diverse, its path to decarbonisation must be as well. Thomas emphasised a threefold approach, mirrored in the CTCV discussions and the interest of participants:

- **Electrification where immediately feasible** Fully electric roller and tunnel kilns demonstrate impressive energy savings, stable atmospheres, and product-quality improvements as shown by recent projects with demanding porcelain producers such as [Vista Alegre](#).
- **Hydrogen compatibility as a transition option** With specialized construction and highly controlled combustion, H₂ ready kilns allow producers to prepare for a future where hydrogen becomes accessible - with up to 100 % gradual addition.
- **Efficiency optimisation of existing kilns** Technologies like EnerViT offer a realistic, high-impact path for plants where full replacement is not sensible or feasible, delivering up to 50% energy and emission reductions without major investments, high downtimes, or restructuring entire factories. The optimal transition technology - optionally even H₂ ready!

This variety of takes into account what we've witnessed for quite some time: A sector searching not for a silver bullet, but for informed, practical, steadily progressing solutions that simply work.

Why Events like this Truly Matter

What made Coimbra special wasn't only the technology. It was the spirit in which it was discussed. There was **curiosity**. There was **commitment**. There was a readiness to learn, to challenge assumptions, and to look beyond one's own production site and see the broader system.

And perhaps most importantly: There was a sense that change is no longer something the industry will eventually do, but something **the industry is already doing**.



Our thanks

To [CTCV - Centro de Tecnologia e Inovação](#), for organising an event to move the conversation forward. To our partners at [Hans Barnstorf & C, Lda](#) and [Sebastian Ribeiro Barnstorf](#) who joined us at CTCV. To our customers who allow us to talk about the technology milestones we have achieved with our technology in their plants. To the many producers, researchers, and partners who joined the discussion. And to everyone who approaches the future of ceramics with openness, ambition, and the courage to rethink long-established processes.

We look forward to continuing this dialogue – in Portugal, across Europe and the world, and with all partners who share the goal of a more efficient, sustainable ceramic industry!