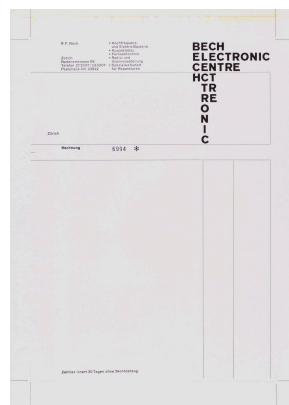1   Visitenkarte, Rudolf F. Bech – Bech Electronic Centre, 1959 61, Gestaltung: Gerstner + Kutter, Basel, CH / Karl Gerstner, Donation: Gerstner, Gredinger + Kutter, Werbeagentur AG, Basel, CH. Abbildung: Museum für Gestaltung Zürich / ZHdK.

2   Entwurf für Rechnungsformular, Bech Electronic Centre, 1959 61, Gestaltung: Gerstner + Kutter, Basel, CH / Karl Gerstner, Donation: Gerstner, Gredinger + Kutter, Werbeagentur AG, Basel, CH. Abbildung: Museum für Gestaltung Zürich / ZHdK.

The Basel agency Gerstner + Kutter, which enjoyed international success in the 1960s under the name Gerstner, Gredinger + Kutter GGK, is regarded as having been stylistically influential especially during its early phase. The graphic designer Karl Gerstner (1930–2017) found in Markus Kutter (1925–2005) the ideal copywriter, and was in turn for him the ideal graphic artist. They produced intelligent advertising in atypical ways, increasing the power of the message through the integral play of words and form. This advertisement for the Bech Electronic Centre from 1959–60 is a prime example.

Although the advertising profession was frowned upon in creative circles, the graphic designer Karl Gerstner and the historian Markus Kutter founded their own agency, Agentur für Werbung, Grafik, Publizität, Gerstner + Kutter, in Basel in 1959. Both of them had previously worked at the chemical company J.R. Geigy AG—Gerstner as graphic artist, Kutter as chief press officer—and together had published two seminal books: the synthetic novel *Schiff nach Europa* (Ship to Europe, 1957) and the jubilee anniversary double volume *Geigy 1758 bis 1939* (Geigy 1758 to 1939) and *Geigy heute* (Geigy Today) for the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Geigy company (1958). In both works, idea, text, and design are integrated together as one entity. This principle, which Gerstner called in 1959 "integral typography" and expanded into an interdisciplinary method in his cult book *Programme Entwerfen* (*Designing Programmes*, 1964), also played an important role in the conception of visual identities and advertising campaigns. One example is the design of the visual identity for the Bech Electronic Centre in Zurich starting in 1959. Gerstner recognized that the company name lent itself to word games and elevated this insight into a conceptual guideline. By varying the combinations of words on the printed materials and advertisements, he made them more interesting. The variants also suggested the creation of an electronic series. In a half-page newspaper advertisement, he incorporated Kutter's exuberant advertising copy so it appeared in columns as in a registry, listed beneath bold capital letters. This paved the way for the play on words with the company logo. (Barbara Junod)

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