Brose Meerane comes 3rd in German Excellence Award

(From right) Thomas Kraus, Chairman of the LEP Initiative, presented the award to Jörg Graichen, General Manager Meerane, Andrea Tabi-Noack, Production Manager, and Frank Richter, Quality Manager.

Meerane (22. November 2010)

The Brose plant in Meerane (Germany) came third in this year's Ludwig Erhard Prize (LEP) award for excellence. The prize is awarded by the LEP Initiative, which includes the Ludwig Erhard Foundation, the German Society for Quality (DGQ) and the Association of German Engineers (VDI). Since 1997, under the auspices of the German Federal Minister of Economics and Technology, these associations have been awarding prizes each year to companies that demonstrate a particularly high level of organizational maturity.

Jörg Graichen, General Manager of the Meerane plant, accepted the award on November 18th at the German Excellence Forum in Berlin: "My thanks go both to the Ludwig Erhard Prize Initiative and to all the employees at the Meerane site. Every one of them has contributed to this fantastic success with their personal effort. This appreciation of our work confirms that we are on the right path and gives us determination not to slacken in our efforts to offer our customers excellent service in all areas of our company."

In his speech at the awards ceremony, Prof. Wolfgang Vogt, Chairman of the LEP Jury, said, "Brose Meerane places customer requirements and staff potential at the center of its activities. The site's expertise in production and logistics contributes to company growth, meets customer demands and takes account of the increasing competition."

Logistical excellence is routine

The Brose Meerane plant began producing door systems for the VW Passat in 1997 with 55 employees. It was the first just-in-sequence (JIS) plant of the Brose Group worldwide.

A tightly organized manufacturing concept was used to introduce lean, consistent and transparent assembly and logistics processes. This set a standard for just-in-sequence delivery of door systems to the car manufacturers' assembly lines.

Today, the Meerane facility manufactures door systems for the Passat, the Passat CC, the Golf VI and the Porsche Panamera. It takes just three hours for a door system to be delivered to the VW assembly lines in Zwickau from when the order is placed, and four hours to manufacture the lightweight construction door system for the Porsche Panamera and deliver it to Leipzig.

At the beginning of 2009, the site was expanded to cater for the production of cooling fan modules for 17 customers worldwide. This means that Brose Meerane has developed from a pure JIS plant into a production facility with different logistical processes, and has systematically implemented its strategic objective of developing another pillar to secure the future of the plant and to increase its competitive edge further.

Because of these measures and its long-term strategic orientation, the site was able to increase sales by around 60% and to create around 70 new jobs even during the financial crisis of 2009. Brose Meerane currently employs around 230 people.

Strong identification with the company

Site-related HR concepts and high working time flexibility enable employees at the Brose Meerane plant to combine work and family. A works canteen, company sports facilities and integrated health promotion provide a high level of motivation. This is demonstrated by a staff turnover rate close to zero and by the company suggestion scheme. Staff participation in the ideas management system is nearly 100%, reflecting how much they identify with their company and see themselves as partners in the business.