IAA Mobility 2021: Brose presents "Smart Comfort Solutions" for tomorrow's mobility

Coburg/Munich (06. September 2021) Automated driving, electrification and connectivity paired with shared mobility are changing the way we get from point A to point B. Means of transportation should be comfortable, safe and environmentally friendly while offering individuality and flexibility in terms of their use. To achieve this, Brose is turning its products into intelligent, connected systems. The automotive supplier is enabling new features in all types of vehicles – whether two or four-wheeled. "Smart Comfort Solutions" is the family-owned company's theme at the IAA Mobility in Munich from 7–12 September 2021, where it will be showcasing innovative and sustainable concepts for new mobility experiences.

"Our products provide added value for users," says Ulrich Schrickel, CEO of the Brose Group. The company is supplementing its many decades of expertise in mechatronics with sensor technology and software to make this possible. Powerful electronics ensure smooth interaction between components that previously worked independently of one another. Doors, liftgates, seats, center consoles and air conditioning all work hand in hand to ensure maximum comfort and convenience. "This requires a comprehensive understanding of the vehicle as a whole," explains Schrickel. Brose is also using this expertise to actively contribute to environmental and climate protection. For example, integrated thermal management concepts boost efficiency, thereby increasing the range of hybrid and electric vehicles.

Positive business development in a challenging market

In 2020, the company's sales fell to 5.1 billion euros due to the Corona pandemic. For the current business year, reliable forecasts are difficult to make, as Schrickel emphasizes: "The semiconductor crisis as well as the developments in raw material prices are placing a heavy burden on us. It will therefore be a challenge to achieve our growth targets." Brose aims to

achieve 2019 sales levels again as early as 2022. If the vehicle market develops in a positive way, the company plans to increase its business volume to over 9 billion euros by 2025 – including the planned joint venture with Volkswagen for seat systems and interior concepts. The family-owned company would then employ over 34,000 people. This acquisition situation is also a positive one: Following already very positive numbers last year, Brose is expecting a record number of incoming orders this year. "The very good response from our customers shows that we are on the right track with our technological orientation and further development of our product portfolio", says Schrickel.

Investment in the future

The automotive supplier is making good progress in implementing the company-wide Future Brose renewal program it launched in 2019. The savings achieved through increased efficiency will already amount to more than 120 million euros annually in 2021. And this figure is expected to reach around 500 million annually by 2025. The socially responsible reduction of around 2,000 jobs in Germany by the end of 2022 is already 75 percent completed. The company is achieving this by not filling vacant positions, partial retirement options and through a volunteer program. "These savings are benefiting our business divisions and improving our competitiveness," explains Schrickel and adds: "Ultimately, this will give us latitude for important investments in future projects." The family-owned company will invest more than one billion euros over the next three years in innovative technologies, technical equipment and the worldwide expansion of locations. Brose already started production in Belgrade/Serbia this year. This new location is the single largest investment in the history of the company. Brose is creating new jobs in growth areas and is recruiting qualified personnel in the fields of electronics, sensor technology, software and IT, including in Germany.

Experience innovations

At the IAA Brose is using a near-series vehicle to show how the automotive supplier is connecting vehicle access, interior configuration and thermal management to create an overall experience for users. The car recognizes and welcomes the driver with projections in the side windows. A simple gesture, and the side door opens automatically. Inside the vehicle, passengers decide how they wish to spend their drive. Whether they choose to work, relax or drive the vehicle themselves: electronically controlled seats, screens and storage areas coordinate their positions and the flow of air from the AC system adjusts accordingly. If desired, the back seat can rearrange to form two individual seats that allow passengers to fully recline for ultimate relaxation – or the interior can flexibly adapt to offer maximum cargo space.

Intelligent feature connectivity

Brose has developed software that enables seamless and sophisticated interaction of adjustment systems, sensors and electronic systems in vehicles. BRAIN – Brose Access and Interior Network – integrates into the electronics and software systems of a wide variety of vehicles and OEMs. Standardized interfaces make it possible to control Brose products and even third-party components. At the IAA Mobility Brose is demonstrating the software integration in a high-performance vehicle electronics system of its cooperation partner Joynext. Visitors to the car show can configure and experience the interaction of all features

in the vehicle according to their own wishes. Cloud connectivity opens up new business models in which users can purchase additional features as permanent add-ons or use them for a limited period.

Access systems for people movers

Robotaxis and people movers will play an increasingly important role in urban mobility scenarios of the future. Together with its partner Bode, Brose has developed an access concept for these vehicles. Among other features, the system includes operating interfaces, obstacle detection and technology for fully automatic opening and closing of vehicle doors. Brose is also developing safe, comfortable solutions for standing and reclining while driving. This innovative approach becomes an experience for fairgoers to the IAA Mobility with a combination of a physical exhibit and virtual reality glasses. New forms of mobility for increased sustainability Brose is utilizing its decades of experience in developing and manufacturing electric drives for the automotive industry to serve other segments. Since 2014 the supplier has been actively involved in the emerging e-bike market. The portfolio includes drives for various applications from city bikes to mountain bikes along with displays and battery packs. Interested visitors to the IAA Mobility will have an opportunity to ride e-bikes with Brose drives on a test track on Hofgartenstraße.

To improve air quality in cities, small vehicles are also increasingly being electrified. Due to environmental and climate laws, promising markets are emerging for electric scooters and motorcycles, for example in India. Brose taps into this potential and will begin delivering motors, control units and power electronics for e-scooters starting in 2022. The compact and lightweight drive system reduces the weight of electric two-wheelers, increases their range and improves their handling.