

Brose Group celebrates 100th anniversary

Ceremony to mark the 100th anniversary in Berlin: (from left to right) Former German President Dr. Richard von Weizsäcker, Michael Stoschek, Chairman of the Shareholders' Meeting of the Brose Group, and Matthias Wissmann, President of the Association of the German Automotive Industry.

Berlin (17. April 2008).

Under the slogan "100 Jahre Zukunft", the international automotive supplier Brose celebrated its 100th anniversary in Berlin, where the family-owned company was founded. The ceremony was held in the historical "ewerk" on April 17, 2008, in the presence of many guests from business, politics and industry associations.

Dr. Richard von Weizsäcker, the former President of the Federal Republic of Germany, praised Brose as an exception and a model family-owned company in a world geared to shareholder value where managers and the stock market celebrated when employees were made redundant. "Above all, I was very impressed to hear you say that your company focuses on reinvesting what it earns so as to ensure people can keep on working and make new progress. That is a major exception in this country, and it goes to show that we have to make greater efforts to retain family-owned enterprises that truly abide by such values."

Prof. Martin Winterkorn, Chief Executive Officer of Volkswagen AG, said at the event in Berlin: "You have written a 100-year story of success in the automotive industry, one that can rightly be called exemplary." He also stressed the importance of continuing to nurture the decades of trusted partnership between his company and Brose: "We at the Volkswagen group are delighted to be working on the future of the automobile together with the Brose team."

Looking back at the company's successful development over the past 100 years, the Chairman of the Shareholders' Meeting, Michael Stoschek, who took over in 1971 at the age of 23 and was President and CEO until the end of 2005, stated: "I am grateful to have been at the helm of the Brose Group for more than a third of this time. Not many family-owned companies are lucky enough to develop so successfully and independently over such a long period of time."

Stoschek pointed out that Max Brose started out in business on March 4, 1908 in Berlin and that as of a few days ago, Brose is once again present in Berlin in the shape of the cooling fan plant it has taken over from Continental AG.

Stoschek stated that as a family entrepreneur he did not regard himself as indispensable. It was important, he said, to take advantage of the opportunities offered by a change in leadership, even if those in the next generation of shareholders were pursuing different careers. That is why Brose decided in 2006 for the first time to appoint a man who was not a member of the family, but had its full backing. He was delighted that Mr. Otto and his management team were helping the company make advances with such commitment and success.

As Stoschek added, the critical and constructive working relationship between the experts on the Supervisory Board, family shareholders and Management Board had meant that there had only been unanimously adopted shareholder resolutions at Brose since the

company's constitution had been adopted and that over decades 90% of profits had been invested in expanding the company.

Jürgen Otto, the Chief Executive Officer of the Brose Group, sees it as being "very well prepared for a further 100 years" technically, organizationally and commercially given the company's inherent dynamism and highly motivated employees at worldwide locations: "My task is to steer this huge potential and help Brose continue writing its success story."

The President of the Association of the German Automotive Industry (VDA), Matthias Wissmann, offered congratulations from the sector and paid tribute to Michael Stoschek's life's work: "Brose's success would not have been possible without your commitment, dedication and energy." He added: "You stand for the type of entrepreneur who devotes himself and all his energy not only to the company, but also to his roots. Your numerous initiatives for the future of your home city of Coburg, as well as for training young people, and your work as President of the Coburg Chamber of Industry and Commerce not only prove your love and closeness to the community, but also your dedication in supporting it in heart and mind."

VDA president Matthias Wissmann expressed his conviction that the Brose Group would fare well in the international market as an excellently positioned vendor: "Brose has a brilliant line-up. The company has the strength to grow and help our industry advance."

The company's founder Max Brose, whose parents ran a coach-making works in Elberfeld/Wuppertal, opened a firm in Berlin that traded in automotive accessories and aircraft materials at the age of 24 and so laid the foundation for a group that is today ranked fifth among family-owned automotive suppliers worldwide.

Max Brose founded Metallwerk Max Brose & Co. in Coburg in 1919 together with his partner Ernst Jühling and headed the company for six decades.

In three-and-a-half decades, his grandson Michael Stoschek developed Brose into an international group that is a world leader in terms of market share, technology and quality.

The Brose Group develops and produces systems and components for car bodies and interiors at 51 locations in 21 countries. Its customers include more than 40 carmakers and suppliers. The family-owned company employs more than 14,000 people worldwide. In fiscal 2008, the Brose Group will generate turnover of 3.1 billion euros.