

Brose Coburg location a strong technology base



Coburg (25. November 2016) Brose, the largest industrial employer in the region, has created over 5,000 jobs – around 3,400 of these directly at the company and another 1,700 at local suppliers. The "Vestestadt" (fortress city) is home to four of the international automotive supplier's seven executive vice presidents; 60 locations in 23 countries are managed from the headquarters here. Alongside various group functions, the seat systems business division is based in Coburg. The family-owned company held a press talk on 25 November to discuss the development of the division.

Seat business turnover has quadrupled in the past decade to 1.9 billion euros. Coburg coordinates global sales, development, production and quality activities as well as 20 production and four development locations in eleven countries. Two factories are currently under construction in China and Mexico. "Around 9,000 employees work for the seat systems business within the business division, the plants and headquarters," explained Periklis Nassios, Executive Vice President Seat Systems.

Combining lightweight design and electrification

"Our products have a modular design. We combine standard components with individual parts to develop custom solutions for car manufacturers. Thanks to intelligent material combination and engineering concepts, our products lead the industry in terms of lightweight design," said Nassios.

Brose is an expert when it comes to combining lightweight design and electrification. "The seats go through a complex manufacturing process before they leave the plant. We have a high degree of vertical integration with everything from stamping, welding and painting to plastic injection molding," added the executive vice president. A seat structure can be made of around 200 single parts and include up to ten motors for power length, height, depth and tilt adjustment. The position of the headrest, lumbar support and side bolster can also be adjusted.

The mechatronics specialist supplies seats to around 40 carmakers worldwide – including many premium brands. "Our products must meet the highest standards in terms of comfort, acoustics and crash safety," explained the executive vice president. Brose operates its own crash test facility in Roth am Forst near Coburg. The experts here perform around 1,500

tests annually using two catapult sled systems to verify the strength of driver seats and door system carrier plates.

Effective collaboration between the division, regions and plants

The development of the common front seat structure for BMW and Daimler was a milestone. The project was the largest single order in the history of the corporate group. Over five million seat systems have been manufactured since the start of production in 2012; around 32 million units will have been built by 2026. They are used in various models such as the Mercedes C-Class and E-Class or the BMW 5 Series and 7 Series. A key factor in the project's success was the close collaboration between the business division, regions and plants worldwide. "The complexity of the order presented a unique challenge to our international project management. Strong leadership from Coburg with competent teams at the respective locations is the only way we can guarantee the same level of productivity, delivery reliability and quality at every production site." The seat structure is now manufactured worldwide in five plants on four continents.

New comfort and lightweight solutions

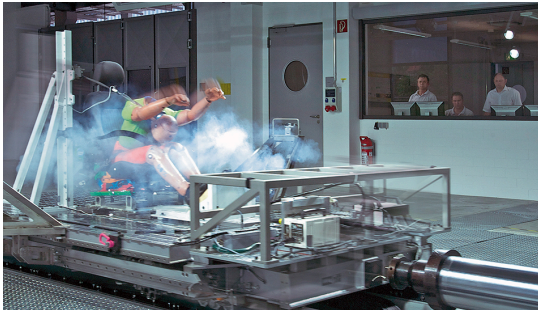
Two automobile trends offer further growth opportunities: lightweight design and customer demand for greater comfort. Brose uses innovative materials to reduce weight in seat structures, thereby helping OEMs meet emission guidelines. For example, glass fiber fabric-reinforced plastics – so-called organo sheets – are used in the rear seat load-through. "This amounts to weight savings of around 40 percent compared to steel variants," said Nassios. Brose is also driving forward the development of multifunctional vehicle interiors. The electrification of all seat rows makes it easy to flexibly adapt interiors to changing transport needs.

Group-wide test runs in Coburg

The Coburg plant has nearly twenty years of experience with highly automated production of seat components. "We are the competence center for the group and support the locations across the globe in the use of this technology," explained general manager Dr. Frank Remy. The production facility ranked highest among 60 European competitors for its highly efficient processes and was presented the "Automotive Lean Production Award 2016" by the trade journal "Automobil Produktion".

Regional importance

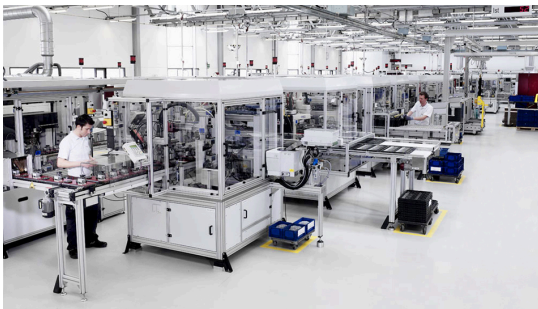
As the group's second-largest location, Coburg is responsible for around 630 million euros in turnover or roughly ten percent of Brose's total business volume. The family-owned company has invested nearly 200 million euros here over the past five years. Around 800 employees in Coburg develop new products and technologies. Brose is a major economic factor in the region, paying wages and salaries in the amount of 116 million euros annually and spending 180 million euros for purchasing activities every year.



Experts at Brose perform 1,500 tests annually at the crash test facility in Roth am Forst.



A seat structure is made of around 200 single parts. Up to ten motors are included for convenient height, depth and tilt adjustment.



Brose uses highly automated production techniques and innovative technologies.