

Press Release regarding the initiative „Jobs through Innovation“ on the occasion of the award as Kärnten’s country-wide winner

May 3, 2006, St. Michael ob Bleiburg/Austria

Product portfolio and structure of MAHLE Group

MAHLE Filtersysteme Austria GmbH was founded in 1969 and employs actually 1,950 employees. In 2005, the plant produced 83 million filters and generated a turnover of 353 million Euro. MAHLE Filtersysteme Austria GmbH is a subsidiary of the MAHLE Group whose headquarters are located in Stuttgart, Germany. The MAHLE group figures among the 30 largest automotive suppliers world-wide and is with

- 80 production locations in 4 continents,
- approx. 37,500 employees and
- a turnover of more than 4.1 bill. Euro (2005)

an important development and systems partner for the automotive industry in nearly all of MAHLE’s product segments. The array of products ranges from the manifold piston and engine components program for small engines, passenger car and truck engines up to engines for marine and industrial applications. Furthermore, MAHLE develops and produces all important valve train components and manufactures filters and filter systems for vehicles as well as filter devices for industrial applications.

The St. Michael plant produces filters and filter systems. The product range comprises among others oil filters, fuel filters, air filters, cabin air filters as well as intake manifolds.

Research and development in St. Michael

The added value of the St. Michael plant is granted through the profound manufacturing process as well as the technical know how established for many years. An own service center with special

purpose machine building, tool building for injection die casting and a training workshop brings additional synergy advantages.

The plant's innovation capability was further strengthened in 2004 by a modern research and development center for the liquid filtration division. 45 highly qualified employees are working there in sophisticated development projects. By establishing this center, the system competence of the location has been broadened and confirmed. Thus, the complete product development process can be conducted locally for certain projects, from basic research in the filter media segment, via testing and construction up to series start. Therefore, the plant has grown from a mere "prolonged workbench" to a competence center for liquid filtration.

New innovation project „Mechatronic“

A further innovation project was conducted in 2005: The newly established location in Wolfsberg deals with the development and the production of mechatronic components – another step into a successful future of MAHLE Filtersysteme Austria GmbH. The close cooperation with HTL in Wolfsberg ensures the need-oriented training of the mechatronic specialists required in the future. The profound basic knowledge in the areas engine building, electrical engineering and informatics enables the graduates to essentially configure the development of new high tech products.

Training workshop – assuring future needs for skilled workers

Initially, skilled workers were required. In order to cover these needs, an integral training concept was developed which is being executed in the MAHLE-owned training workshop. Four full-time instructors have trained more than 300 apprentices since 1980 in the professions tool building, engine building and synthetics technician, electric and process technician, mechatronic technician as well as technical tracer. Three quarters of the internally trained workers decide to continue their career at MAHLE, a fact that shows the high quality of the training and the good working atmosphere. The training is production-related, the apprentices work from the first day of their apprenticeship in projects for and in production. A variety of additional courses complement the training concept methodically, such

as English language or engine training courses. 100 young people are currently working as apprentices at MAHLE Filtersysteme Austria.

Since 2005, there is the additional possibility to participate in the pilot project „Apprenticeship with A-levels“. This training concept enables secondary-school graduates to combine the classic apprenticeship with the university-entrance diploma. Thus, the future needs for qualified workers are met and, at the same time, an internal “talent pool” with strong production focus is created for the middle management.

Innovation as „Daily Business“

The close combination of R&D and production creates the advantage that the total process from systematic planning, via the implementation, up to control of innovative projects is carried out direct at the plant. This makes innovation visible for every employee – every day and for every new project!

This again creates positive feedback, which actuates new innovations – the fast responsiveness to this loop is one of the secrets of the company’s success – besides the highly qualified employees.

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