

Specialissue

autoExpert

Automotive Aftermarket

Endless Possibilities

Having nothing to hide is a sign of honesty and maturity. This is a very important sign for partners, both existing and potential. autoExpert's experience shows that such companies and brands win in the end. Interview with Ilona Wilms, Director of Duran Lubricants & Chemicals GmbH, we are opening a series of materials about the **FOSSER** trademark. Duran, founded in 2005, is part of a group of West German companies that own modern facilities for oil refining, production and packaging of oils and technical fluids. FOSSER is the front brand of the company. This is a new, innovative, beautiful brand of goods of the highest quality.



Duran Lubricants & Chemicals GmbH

Rodderheide 3-7
33824 Werther (Westf.) Germany
tel. +49 5203 901 510
www.fosser.de, info@duran-oil.com

FOSSER®

Motor Oil from Germany



ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES



• Blumenstraße 14 • D-33824 Werther • Germany • info@duran-oil.com • www.duran-oil.com



Endless Possibilities

Having nothing to hide is a sign of honesty and maturity. This is a very important sign to partners, both existing and potential. autoExpert's experience shows that such companies and brands win in the end. This interview with **Ilona Wilms**, co-owner and director of Duran Lubricants & Chemicals GmbH, will be the first one in a series of articles about the FOSSER trademark.



- Frau Wilms, would you please tell us about Duran Lubricants & Chemicals.

- Duran Lubricants & Chemicals GmbH, founded in 2005, is a part of a group of West German companies located in Lower Saxony and owning modern facilities for refining, production and packaging of oils and technical fluids.

Duran Lubricants & Chemicals was established as a trading house that would export and promote certain brands of goods on the German and foreign markets.

FOSSER is the front brand of Duran. This is a new, innovative, very beautiful brand of the highest quality goods. The name is consonant with the words "further", "faster" and "forward". FOSSER is a brand for successful, well-to-do athletic active people. The motto of the brand is "Endless Possibilities".

All of our oils are made only from base oils refined from crude oil. We have oil approvals for passenger cars as well as trucks from leading manufacturers: DB, BMW, VW, MAN, Volvo, Renault and others.

In Germany, we are the undisputed leader in the packaging of products - oils, antifreeze, washers, brake fluids, demineralized water. Customers of many other brands wait at least 5-6 weeks for their goods. And our finished products are shipped either immediately, or within a maximum of two weeks after ordering. We provide very fast logistics for large volumes of goods. We are able to dispense a huge amount of motor oils and other fluids, ranging from 250 ml (brake fluid) to 1,000 liters.

- Your company is an example of the globalization trend, when, in order to withstand the competition, enterprises are forced to specialize, to enlarge, singling out separate directions into independent operating businesses ...

FOSSER®

МОТОРНЫЕ МАСЛА ИЗ ГЕРМАНИИ



ПОДБОР ОНЛАЙН



www.duran-oil.com



ЗА ГРАНЬЮ ВОЗМОЖНОГО



- Yes. Not all refineries and oil blending plants have such large capacities for bottling and packaging products as we do. They can produce a lot, but not pour into bottles. Therefore, companies such as ours are created - specialists in packaging and logistics. Specialization allows us to respond quickly to absolutely any customer requests.

This is the trend nowadays.

- **From the experience of the companies with which autoExpert works: a distributor, starting to work with a brand (spare parts, oils - or anything), estimating the quality of spare parts, range and price, he says: "I'm ready." He starts to work and runs into the human factor, poor logistics, a low percentage of shipment of the ordered goods ... And says: "To hell with that quality and prices, if I can't find a common language! They don't hear me there!" There is both a language barrier and other inconveniences. The system does not work well. There are the goods, there is a factory and the brand is good ...**

-... but there is no mutual understanding and fast delivery. This is what we have. We also hire Russian-speaking employees. All our managers who work with the former Soviet Union speak German, Russian and English. Therefore, there is no language barrier. Of course, we try to find managers living in Germany who feel the mentality of people from partner countries. This is the first thing.

The second is our quick response. It never happens that we haven't delivered something. We do not give a shipment date if we don't have something. Basically, we always give our customer 100% satisfaction.

- **Your managers have the mentality of the territory with which they work. And what about the Arab or the Latin American countries? Are there managers from those countries?**

- Not yet. We employ people who speak German, English, Russian, French, and we are thinking about Spanish. But, as a



Credo of the company and brand FOSSEER - **"Endless Possibilities"** - merchandise for sports and successful people!

rule, for the bulk of requests (and they came to us even from China), English is enough.

As for the Arab countries, we also work with them, and most of the people there speak English on a sufficient level for doing business. But we are studying their mentality, you can read about it in various sources ... So far, we have not had any questions regarding mentality. I would like to say that it is often easier to work with Arab and Asian clients than with potential clients from the post-Soviet countries.

- **In which countries do you already work?**

- More than 45 countries. Iraq, Pakistan, Lebanon were added recently. We are constantly receiving new requests.

- **This is already a quarter of the world. Not bad! So, oil with "Endless Possibilities", the best possi-**



ble quality of oil ... This motto should work in the niche of inexpensive oils like 10W-40...?

- Definitely! This motto applies to all oils we produce. Even if we take a line of synthetic oil, I can responsibly declare that on the markets, especially in post-Soviet countries, there are a lot of oil brands that can be driven only for 5-7 thousand kilometers at best !!!, after which they simply need to be changed - because they already worked out their resource. The quality of our base oils and additives allows you to drive safely up to 30,000 km, even in countries with less than ideal fuel. I am absolutely calm driving my diesel Mercedes for 30,000 km in Germany.

Can you imagine the savings I make on engine oil and car-service?! Yes, we are more expensive, we belong to the premium group. But calculate how much money you are saving! Cheap oils never end up being cheaper.

Moreover, our products have very strong wear additives. We have a group of oils for heavy vehicles, with which the car manufacturer recommends driving up to 120,000 km.

- What are the advantages of your oil production line?

- Our oils are produced at a full-cycle refinery. To begin with, all base oils are paraffin-free. In general, few people know how to do it efficiently - at least I'm talking about Germany. I have not seen such installations in other factories.

All of our base oils are made from crude oil only. We work only with Kuwaiti oil. We categorically do not take used oil as our base.

- Is there a law in Germany that obliges you to use a certain amount of the base from "waste oil" in production?

- I don't know such a law. In Germany, the law prohibits the discharge of oil into nature, the law obliges us to collect used oil from those to whom we sell to and hand it over to a plant that specializes in the production of base oil from the waste oil.

- Do you have oils with added PAO, esters?

- Yes, of course. In addition to high-quality oils based on Group III, we have a line of oils that are produced with the addition of Group IV and V base oils - PAO (polyalphaolefins) and esters.

- It can't be seen in your catalog ...

- The fact is that initially, when working mostly for the European market, such marketing is not required. We simply gave a description of the oil, its approvals and specifications, and proceeded from the certificates. But the eastern market is demanding. Therefore, now we, of course, will describe the presence of PAO and esters in the catalog to meet "multiple requests" of our consumers.

- When we first met, you said that you were the initiator of the birth of the FOSSER brand. All about the brand: canister design, visualization materials - is very beautiful! So as Dostoyevski once said: Beauty will save the world?!

- Yes. This is my idea. Let me explain why. In Germany, as in one of the most motorized countries, there are a lot of German brands, the Germans are used to ...

... to utility and quality.

- Yes. They are used to everything being absolutely neat, a simple canister, an inconspicuous label. Even German oil man-



ufacturers did not understand that in the foreign markets people not only buy based on knowledge and trust, like it is in the case when you are 100% sure of the quality, but also buy with their eyes. And this is true not only for women who go for a Prada or D&G bag, but for men as well. They also react positively when they see a good looking jerrycan.

Firstly, FOSSEER has a very good and handy canister. It is designed so that it does not slip in the hand, so that it is comfortable for the consumer to hold and carry it, and so that it is easy to pour from. All those features were integrated in the canister from the beginning.

The label was developed in a beautiful color scheme, a very high-quality hologram was made, which really enhances the protection against counterfeiting.

We decided to use in our canisters as many protection levels as possible. Because in my experience with other brands, there were many cases when others tried to counterfeit their oil. And the more colors there are in the label, the more "bells and whistles", constrictions (gradients), elements on the canister, the less profitable it is for them to produce, and a fake will be easily noticeable. As we can see, fortunately, our canister is very popular, and have not yet met a single fake.

I negotiate with almost all of our clients, and many say to me: "Your oil is more expensive, but, perhaps, I'll take it from you, because I like yours much more: because of the canister, the label, the service, the appearance, etc. I will check it in the laboratory, and if your oil is of good quality, I will only work with you, I am ready to pay."

- What is your personal experience in oils?

- I gained my experience in oils at the largest German oil company. I worked there for about 14 years, including in the

export department. And all the experience that I have accumulated there, and with other brands, brought me to our new company. And I tried to make the brand as good as possible for the consumer.

My task was not just to make a canister that is different from everyone else, looks great on the shelf, fits comfortably in the hand, and is protected from fakes. But, also the task to make such a mold so that the canister produced in it would never break! Because when a container travels many thousands of kilometers, anything can happen...

All molds were made in Germany. We did not order them somewhere cheaper in China, Bulgaria or the Czech Republic. We made them at the most expensive German enterprises. Molds - with 2-4 sleeves. This means that the machine produces much more canisters per unit of time than if the mold were with one sleeve. Those who are familiar with the production of canisters will understand me.

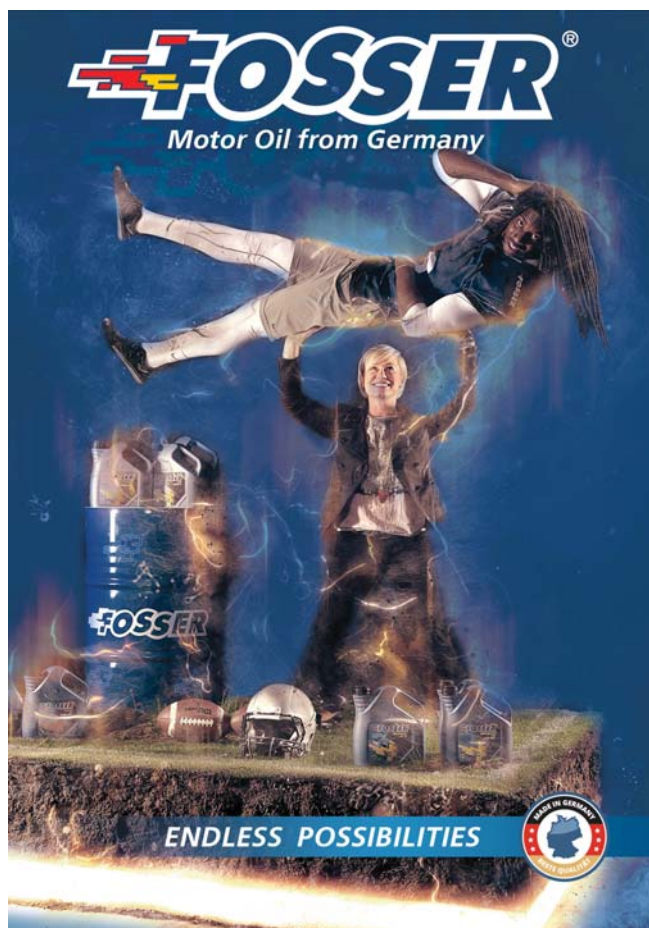
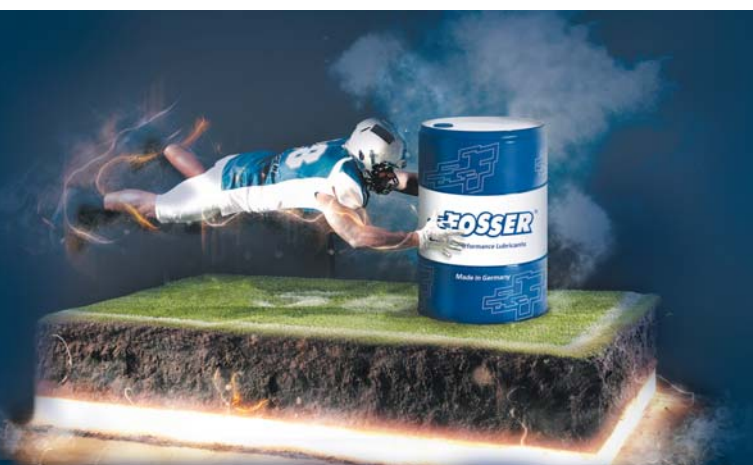
Our mold is made of metal designed for large-scale production. Because when the mold is worn out, it must be returned for repair. And that's where, you run the risk of a failure in packing and shipping goods. Such a thing is impossible in our production line.

We have been working with our molds for over 15 years. Yes, there were some parts that needed to be changed - for example, the neck was getting worn out. But this was quickly fixed.

On the bottom, we made an imprint of a "flying" F. The more details there are - the higher the chance that the counterfeiters miss something.

Nowadays, many refuse holograms, because they are expensive in production. But I think this is an advantage for our clients.

The bottom of the canister is ribbed and very stable. All stiffeners have been thought out and calculated well - our



canisters can be stacked on a pallet of 7-8 levels, and they will not break. As a result, a larger number of pallets fit in the truck. If, for example, a pallet of oil is an added load to a lightweight freight, a client is able to bring a larger volume of goods at the same cost.

- All the nuances are clear about the canister. And what about the barrel? After all, more than half of your volume is sold in barrels ...

- Yes, lots of.

- It is also difficult to protect oneself there. Say, they sold the oil from your barrel, filled it with something else - and sell it again as "FOSSER" ...

- We put this on the shoulders of our distributors - it is in their interests to control it. In fact, if a distributor or a regional dealer takes such offenses seriously, they find the illegal traders quickly and shut down such an operation.

And if a complaint comes in, we react immediately and check the suspicious oil in the laboratory. It is always clear that the oil is not ours.

- Are you ready for a blind test in any European laboratory with any competitive brand?

- Of course! We have conducted laboratory tests in several labs around the world.

There are many countries, especially in South America, in particular Paraguay, in which, according to the law of their state, they do not accept a container until they themselves do an extensive laboratory analysis. And only after that the client gets the permission to import the goods into the country. Moreover, when each next container arrives at port, samples are taken again and a re-expanded analysis is done again. This

is a mandatory requirement, otherwise it is generally impossible to obtain a license to sell oil in the country.

In some countries, it is impossible to import lube oil without SGS control (SGS S.A., Societe Generale de Surveillance is a Swiss company providing independent inspection, verification, testing and certification services. - rem.). It is a worldwide system of product quality verification and proof. They take samples, submit them to an independent laboratory OELCHECK, receive an analysis result and only then give permission to export the container from, for example, Germany and import it into another country. They check every container!

That is why I say that we have passed many checks, and I am not afraid - so you are always welcome to check, compare our oil for yourself.

We fall not only into the range of approvals for each quality class, where we always strive to be closer to its upper limit. It happens that SGS control and an independent laboratory checks and issues us a different quality certificate, of higher class than what we have initially stated. We are not greedy when it comes to additives nor save on base oil!

- Do you have GTL (Gas-to-liquids) oils?

- Sure. First of all, there is our, legendary among rally racers, FOSSER Drive RS 10W-60 oil. It is a fully synthetic oil made using this technology.

However, it does not cost a preposterous amount of money. If the oil is made entirely on the basis of PAO, it will be very expensive. And GTL is full synthetics that "pleases" your car and which the consumer can afford.

In general, what is the peculiarity of all our products: they delight the wallet, the heart of the buyer, and the car. This is what we mean when we say - "Endless Possibilities!"

- The visualization of the FOSSER brand is associated with athletes, powerful men.

- Yes, these powerful men visualize our motto "Endless Possibilities". In general, as I said, when the FOSSER brand was born, the concept was such that it was for fit and successful people. As a rule, everyone involved in sports is successful. Today the face of our company is the Bielefeld Bulldogs team - they are famous American football athletes who are situated in our city. These are not some kind of fiction athletes and not a purchased photograph - these are true athletes from our city of Bielefeld with whom we cooperate.

I have a picture of me holding a huge football player with my arms stretched ... Once again beyond the bounds of possible!

All over the world we hang up posters, billboards with athletes, and help to put our stickers on delivery vehicles. Across Europe, there is now a trend towards ecology, bio-products, proper nutrition, daily sports ... And we are trendy.

Though, there are countries, including Ukraine, where our salesmen also like to show the canister to make it clearer.

Meet them halfway.

By the way, we cultivate the trend of health and sports in our company. We have expensive chairs for our employees so that they watch their bodies, stretch their spine if they sit at the computer all day. Additionally, we pay for any sport for them: if somebody wants to do sports, we are pay for a gym membership, and say go for it!

And one more thing - on the topic of ecology. We are honest in everything and we have nothing to hide or understate. Let me comment on some of the rumors about the GVO. Like, if there is no GVO logo on the label, the oil is created specifically for foreign markets and is necessarily of inferior quality.

This is not correct and a manipulation.

Everyone can go to the official GVO website - www.gvoe.de, and read the following in general.

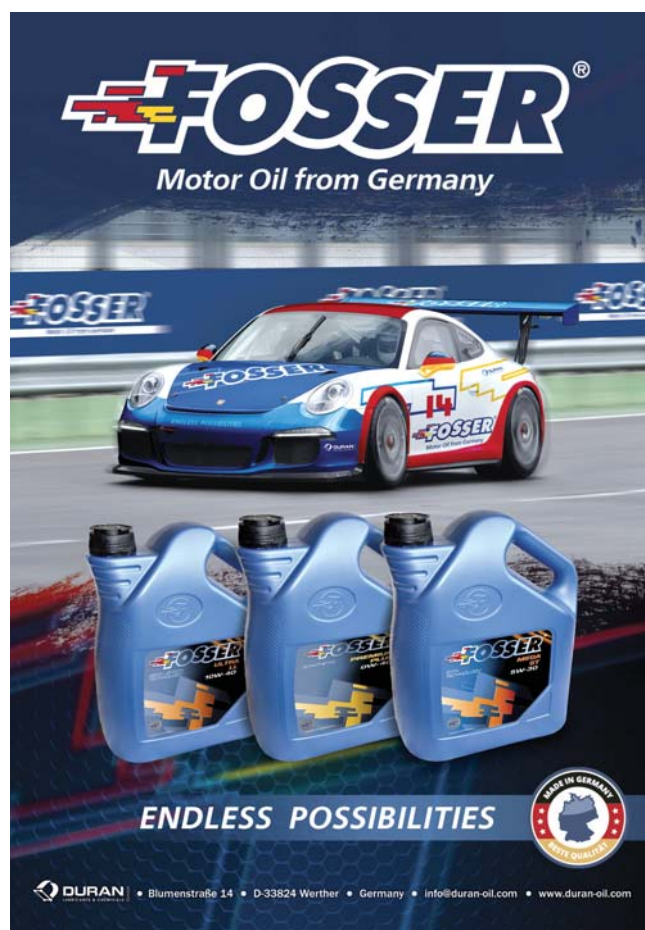
GVO stands for **G**ebinde-**V**erwertungsgesellschaft der Mineral**o**lwirtschaft (company for the recycling of containers (cans) from petroleum oil industry). GVO takes care of the collection of used, completely empty industrial packing up to 65 l / kg all over the country (Germany). The GVO system is funded by licensing partners (us, manufacturers and brand owners). A license agreement with GVO allows us as a bottler and distributor of oil containers to apply the GVO label. The license fee (our contract fee) covers the costs of returning, processing and documenting oil containers (cans) entering the German market. The license agreement with GVO frees us from collecting and recycling used, completely emptied oil containers. So, we transfer our tasks to a reliable partner. That's all!

According to German law, it is one of our tasks to collect and properly dispose of empty cans, we are obliged to do this. But we can transfer this task to another company. And all this applies **ONLY** to the territory of Germany. And if we transfer this function to a contractor company, then we pay them for every liter of oil and antifreeze sold **ONLY** in Germany. Therefore, as a company that knows how to count money, we print the labels for sale in all countries, except of Germany without the GVO logo and, accordingly, do not pay them for using their trademark.

- What is your price range?

- We are not insanely expensive. A little more expensive than the common "Made in Germany" - because it is impossible to make an absolutely high-quality product for little money. If people sell a "quality" product cheaply, one has to ask, what is poured there? Better yet, check it out.

Naturally, Prada cannot cost 20 Euro. Why? Because they have better designers, better craftsmen, the best materials,



expensive and precise equipment ... And if you take a similar Chinese "leather substitute", from which nothing sensible is obtained, except as a low-quality and a not wearable product! We know about cases of children poisoning themselves with toys due to the content of harmful substances in the material from which they were made.

Our company is doing everything possible to change the world for the better! We want honest oil of excellent quality to be available to all people in the world, not only in Europe. And, as I have already said, not only a car owner, but also a car itself enjoys it.

It is appropriate to say here that for different regions of the world we produce oils adapted to every possible temperature conditions.

- What is your distribution policy?

- One country - one or several distributors, depending on the population size and the presence of distinct regions.

- What do you do with those companies that want to cooperate with you, but there is already a distributor in that country?

- Yes, as of right now we receive a lot of requests from different countries: "We need high quality oil, please." And if we already have a representative for FOSSER, then in order not to lose these customers, we have recently developed and created a second brand - ASTRON. It has not yet been advertised anywhere, but it is already starting to sell well. People received the first trucks, the first containers and are very satisfied with the quality.

*Interviewed by Alexander Kelm
autoExpert-Consulting, Ukraine
Kyiv - Werther - Kyiv*



Where do **quality** & **speed** come from ?

Duran Lubricants & Chemicals GmbH from Werther is a part of the group of companies from Lower Saxony. The autoExpert magazine visited two of the largest companies in the industry in Germany: the oil production, and the bottling plants of the final products. We saw where and how **FOSSER** and **ASTRON** oils are produced and bottled.

Production from A to Z

FOSSER and ASTRON oils are manufactured in the largest and most innovative lubricants plant in Germany. Here, a full cycle of motor oils production takes place from prepared crude oil up to the final product, bottled in consumer containers.

The plant is one of the most high-tech and modern enterprises of its type. Today it focuses on the production of high-quality special petroleum products. Tremendous success has been achieved in this area. The heavy fractions of the crude oil left

over from the production of fuel are subjected to high-tech processing. An important product for the plant are white oils, which are used as raw materials from the medical, up to the food industry. A particularly important group of products is performed by paraffins, which are used in more than a hundred industries. A new generation of low-emission oils is used in the production of automobile tires.

In total, the plant produces more than 700 types of products. And almost every company operating in the chemical or pharmaceutical industry in Germany is a customer of this plant.

Both the separation and the purification of products are

based on physical and chemical processes. The success of these processes is ensured by temperature differences, pressure differences, the addition of solvents and the use of catalysts. These processes are carried out in a total of 11 different sectors of the plant.

Separating the wax from the oil is a particular step in the manufacturing process. Dewaxing takes place in large drum filters where the temperature drops to -30 degrees Celsius. This temperature is achieved using a special cooling unit.

Paraffin increase the pour point of oils. Dewaxing, on the other hand, lowers the pour point of the base oil.

The oil is mixed with a mixture of two solvents. Then when cooled, paraffin crystals precipitate and are separated by filtration, and the solvent is distilled off from the oil and a dewaxed oil is obtained with improved properties: with a lower pour point, increased viscosity index, improved fluidity at low temperatures. A by-product, slack wax, is used as a raw material for catalytic hydrocracking, which can produce high quality base oils.

All processes at the plant are electronically controlled around the clock. Huge amounts of information from more than 11,000 measuring circuits are processed in the control center.

The plant laboratory is equipped with the cutting edge measuring instruments and systems.

This group of companies constantly invests in the production processes optimization. State-of-the-art systems allow you to consistently reduce emissions and save natural resources.

Due to the fact that this plant produces nearly any oil for all the famous brands, it's not possible to go into many more specifics when it comes to the oil itself.

In the most modern motor oil, base oils of Group IV and V are also used, which makes it possible to achieve impeccable quality, lengthen oil service intervals even with low-quality fuel, and withstand high loads in racing or drifting. Production volume of fast flowing low viscosity oils 0W-20 and 0W-16, which are mainly used in Japanese cars, is growing. And there are more and more of them on German roads.

Filling and logistics

FOSSER and ASTRON lubricants are bottled at the second facility of the group of companies, the main reason for this being is that the blending facility at the oil production plant is significantly exceeds the bottling capacity. But also for other reasons, which I will discuss below.

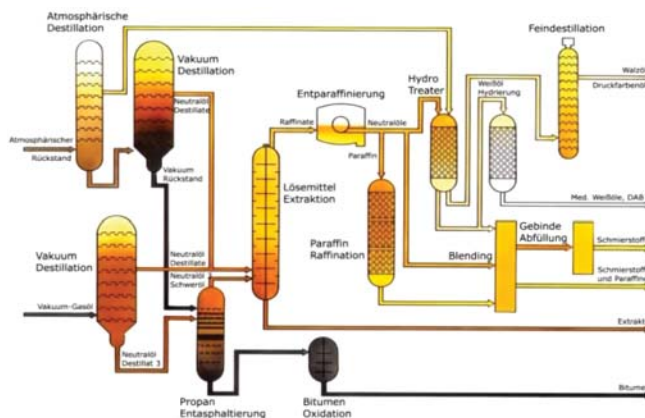
This specialized enterprise allows the most flexible and fast satisfaction of logistics demands, and also allows bottling oils in any volumes demanded by the market. I will tell you about it in more detail, because this is the first time I've seen such a scale of bottling and storage capacities in this market sector.

Underground there are about 100 containers for storing finished oils and liquids with a total volume of approximately 10 million liters! This is more than 150 railway tanks or 2 trains! Now you can imagine the scope of the activity. But can you imagine that these containers are also periodically washed, of course, with special compounds. Everything is always washed three times. All pipelines that go to the containers are also washed out with a special detergent. All this is regularly monitored by DEKRA.

Tanks are located throughout the territory underground, under the industrial buildings. Relatively small containers for brake fluid are the only one on the surface.

It turns out that bottling brake fluid is not an easy issue. It is necessary that there is no water vapor in the canister. There is a special technique that does not allow moisture from the air to enter the canister before sealing.

There is always a stock of oils of all possible types in the





above-mentioned tanks. Pipelines are readjusted quickly. Such a speed of response to a customer's order can never be ensured at the plant that produces oils, - they have a completely different rhythm of production life there. Therefore - specialization objectively rules!

The territory of the enterprise is constantly expanding. Fortunately, there is space. And this is contrary to the general opinion that the consumption of automotive oils should decrease with the sales growth of electric vehicles. So far, it is only going up. Globalization is not only happening "at the top", it is everywhere. The demand for perfectly functioning businesses is growing and they are consolidating, while imperfectly organized ones are losing volumes and positions.

The business of producing oils and the business of bottling them are separating and specializing. Increasingly, oil refineries are stating: "We cannot bottle, store and ship a lot, can you bottle it for us?" The facilities of this enterprise are the largest in Europe.

With 9 ramps, 18 trucks can be loaded at the same time. For maximum customer satisfaction, the company also has a large

An **automatic oil bottling line** costs 4 million euros! And all of them, incl. and semi-automatic - 15!



fleet of its own heavy-duty vehicles both for the transportation by tanks and finished packaged products.

Electricity here is their own, from solar panels on the roofs, surplus is sold to the city. This is how the whole of Germany tries to work. You may ask yourself: "They often have a surplus of electricity. Well, why do they need gasoline and diesel cars at all?" :)

There is its own fuel station on the territory of the industrial complex, which operates 24 hours a day.

Four bottling lines are fully automatic, capable of filling more than 6,000 canisters per shift each. And in total, incl. the semi-





automatic lines, there are fifteen of them!

One of the lines for bottling antifreeze is on two-levels, and it dispenses 54,000 pieces per shift. No matter whatever you may need: 4-5-liter canister or one-liter bottle.

It should be said here that the antifreeze production is also a rather specialized business in Europe and it also has its own leaders producing large volumes. And a lot of marketing-wise successful brands buy finished antifreeze from these leaders and bottle it at their facilities.

It is easier with the window washer fluids. They are easy to produce on site. They are produced here and bottled in decent quantities either ready to use or in concentrates. Different smells and "tastes" (just kidding). One shift - 14,000 cans, by two people.

Naturally, there is an automated line for the production and packaging of distilled water.

Of course, the FOSSER and ASTRON range includes antifreezes, glass washers, and other technical fluids.





The quality of the packaging is carefully controlled. If, for example, the label on the canister is stuck crookedly, it is thrown away. This happens on all lines, without exception. If weighing reveals underfilled canister it is also put aside.

Cartons are assembled automatically and sealed not with tape, but with molten plastic. Scotch tape is not reliable.

Barrels 20, 60, 200 l. also bottled on conveyor lines, and automatic lines.

Automatic and semi-automatic capacities for "smart" storage are amazing. Every cubic meter of storage space is used. Pallet warehouse has three levels. Automation allows to work three times faster.





The automatic carts are programmable, electrically powered. The batteries that are charged at night. In total - eight of them for the entire warehouse. They are rearranged if necessary with a Forklift.

Palletizing system is also automated.

There are four such warehouses. The cost of each is very





high. But cubic meters of space are used to the maximum!

In 2018, a separate huge warehouse for cardboard packaging was built.

So, this is not just a bottling enterprise, but a complex logistics center.

Everything for the convenience of the client!

The slogan of Duran Lubricants & Chemicals GmbH and FOSSER is "Endless Possibilities". The scale and level of both enterprises are fully consistent with this phrase.

Alexander Kelm

autoExpert-Consulting, Ukraine

Kyiv - Werther - Kyiv



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