

Southern Africa

TREADS DIGITAL

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SUPA QUICK - setting the pace in Retail and Sustainability

WAR IN UKRAINE
IMPACTS EUROPEAN
TYRE MAKERS

FALKEN TYRES NOW SOLD
WITH EIGHT-YEAR LIFE
WARRANTY

INNOVATION AWARDS
FOR AUTOMECHANIKA
JHB 2022 NOW OPEN

BRIDGESTONE TO SUS-
PEND MANUFACTURING
ACTIVITIES IN RUSSIA



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Editor's Corner

The war in Ukraine is having a massive impact across the globe, pushing up oil prices and disrupting supply chains. Dozens of western companies have pulled out of Russia, in response to their invasion of their neighbour nation, among them, tyre manufacturers. Our lead story on page 8, delves deeper into this, with SA TREADS European correspondent, John Stone. Long-term effects of this catastrophic world event will undoubtedly be felt across the entire global tyre business, especially if the conflict runs into months, or perhaps even years, as experts are predicting. In South Africa, this is likely to place further pressure on the hard-pressed consumer as fuel and tyre prices surge, squeezing margins for both tyre makers and retailers alike.

As it is, with the retail market largely saturated, fitment centres are fighting to survive in a highly competitive market. Business Development Manager for the Supa Quick franchise group, Adeshni Sewbaran, explains some of the ways the company is planning to meet the current demands and challenges, via a succession of strategic initiatives, aimed at promoting growth and raising brand awareness.

Supa Quick's management team (half of which is made up of females) - as a result of a dedicated drive to promote gender diversity within the company - is adopting some refreshingly creative measures to provide value-add to their customers, alongside remaining relevant and sustainable in the market. This exclusive interview on page 2.

Similar initiatives are popping up, with tyre dealers and importers going the extra mile for their customers. Stamford Tyres, distributors of the Falken brand in South Africa, are one such example, having just introduced a life warranty on their product. You can read all about this exciting new product offering on page 10.

A mix of relevant stories from other parts of the world wraps up our April/May issue.

Happy reading!

Liana

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SUPA QUICK

**SETTING THE PACE
IN RETAIL AND
SUSTAINABILITY**

**FRANCHISE CHAIN FIRST TO
ACHIEVE GENDER DIVERSITY**

With 50% of the senior management team made up of women, the current line-up at Supa Quick can be described as young, dynamic and ambitious in its aims to change the face of retail as we know it. We caught up with Adeshni Sewbaran, Business Development Manager for the franchise chain, who let us in on some of the secrets behind the Group's success and offered a sneak preview of what's to come.

Tell us a little about yourself Adeshni, where you come from and your current role within Supa Quick.

Now two years with Bridgestone, my previous experience lies in equally male-dominated industries, among them Distribution, Retail, Manufacture, Mining, Automotive (where I spent 14 years), Gas and Oil.

Of course, the principles of Retail remain the same, irrespective of the industry you find yourself in. One of my current portfolios is to source new business opportunities and possible partnerships within a highly competitive retail sector, but also to grow brand awareness so that Supa Quick becomes the first choice to come to the mind of a prospective entrepreneur looking to buy a franchise.

Identifying and securing business partnerships is vital in a world that is ever changing, if we are to differentiate ourselves from our competitors in the market. This is another one of my current roles within Supa Quick, to find those differentiators that create brand relevance in the consumer's mind.

Not an easy feat in this market. How do you go about convincing the consumer to spend his money at one of your stores, when there are so many opposition stores? The market is saturated.

As a team, initially put together by our Franchise Director, Morne Dreyer, we are continuously exploring possible new value

offerings for our customers so that they not only receive a reputable product and quality service, but a number of value-add services as well, that will entice them to support our stores.

That four out of the eight members of our senior team are female, has created a diversity pool within the company, bringing with it a different perspective of thinking which is useful in our quest to remain relevant in a market that is constantly evolving.

Our new Slogan, 'More than a Tyre Expert', sums up the direction that Supa Quick is headed in.

Identifying and securing business partnerships is vital in a world that is ever changing.



Supa Quick Head Office team

Each of our 196 stores across the country conduct minor services, and we are in the throes of building a dedicated academy that will also enable them to branch out into major vehicle services. This, in addition to providing a complete underbody service offering that includes tyres, brakes, shocks, batteries and so on.

Our franchisees are dedicated to working towards this common objective, to provide a full-fledged solution to our customer base, alongside superior service across the entire chain of stores.

Tell us about some of the value-adds you are currently offering.

One example is our 'Free Tyre Damage Guarantee' on the Firestone product, which is exclusive to Supa Quick. This is a powerful marketing tool for us. The Firestone brand is well known and highly respected in South Africa. Now backed by a tyre damage guarantee which the consumer will not have to fork out for during these difficult economic times, it is an important value-add, and one that is paying off.

In a bid to go further and beyond what our competitors are offering, we recently also partnered with a licence renewal partner, which offers our customers the opportunity to apply and renew their vehicle licences at our stores, while their vehicle is in the fitment bay.

Via a unique QR code, which is given out at the entrance to the store, the consumer can now complete the entire renewal process online, at a fraction of the cost of what similar service providers in the market are charging.

This is an exciting development, Adeshni. Will this service be available throughout your stores?

We are beginning the roll-out in Gauteng first, in April. This will be followed by Mpumalanga, Limpopo, Kwazulu-Natal and the Cape.

We have 11 Area Managers established around South Africa who are providing the right support structure from a Franchisor perspective, physically helping and supporting our franchisees at grass roots level, to alleviate the frustration of dealing with the Franchisor, a strategy that is working well.

So, what sort of feedback are you receiving from your franchisees on the current service levels they are receiving from Head Office?

Realistically, it is impossible to please everyone, but given the disconnect of the recent past, where the franchisee did not feel 'heard', Morne Dreyer and the team have put a strong structural support in place, in order to rebuild trust with the



Our 'Free Tyre Damage Guarantee' on the Firestone product is exclusive to Supa Quick.



network. This is making a big difference and I am starting to see a major shift, with franchisees more willing to share data and information. More important, we are getting lots of referrals by way of store conversions, which demonstrates that trust barriers are being mended.

How do you feel about some of your store owners flaunting multiple brand alliances?

We don't have a problem with it. Putting unnecessary restrictions in place is not helpful, as we understand that they need to make things work in their businesses, in a highly competitive environment. Our network is made up of intelligent, entrepreneurial men and women and we respect that.

Obviously, in return, we expect a certain level of confidentiality. Trust is a two-way thing.

That being said, bear in mind that Supa Quick now also has a multi-brand, open channel strategy in place, with only 50% of their sales geared towards the Bridgestone/Firestone brands.

For the remaining 50%, they are welcome to market and sell competitor brands. One of my duties is negotiating

national deals on competitor brands.

We will also be introducing a 'fighting brand' very soon, which will enable them to provide the hard-pressed motorist with a less expensive, but credible Chinese brand, that is exclusive to Supa Quick.

So, does this mean this brand will no longer be available through any competitor stores?

Correct. This particular partnership – now almost eight months in the making – is a significant game changer for us, and we are very excited to announce it and roll it out in the next few weeks.

What is more, we are also looking at tying up with a 4x4 partner in the near future, while also growing our mobile fitment van contingent which piloted in Mpumalanga last year.

As you stated earlier, the South African retail market is largely saturated, and this has led us to doing a lot of research in cross-border markets, with us currently exploring possible business opportunities in a few SADAC areas.

We have stores in Swaziland and Namibia but we have engaged in the above regions and investigating sites in Mozambique and Botswana.

“

Supa Quick also has an open-channel strategy in place.

”



Supa Quick Mbombela

So, are you actively looking to grow your current footprint of stores?

Nine new stores are in the pipeline for this year, and this is only the beginning. For the past two years, we focused primarily on building internal relationships, but our focus is now shifting.

Bear in mind that Supa Quick pioneered franchising in the tyre retail sector. We have come to realise that we need to become a disruptor in the market, once again, via strategic positioning, if we are to regain our former position as market leaders.

I am personally working very closely with property developers who are becoming aware of Supa Quick's growth path and objectives to be represented in strategic key areas, and this too, is having results.

We were once close on 300 stores. While we are not actively striving towards that number, perhaps 250 stores, that are strategically placed to bring value to the market, would be a good number to strive for.

More important, we want Supa Quick to regain its former position in the market, to be viewed as the number one choice in retail fitment, for both the consumer and the entrepreneur.

What are you doing to attract prospective entrepreneurs to your Franchise?

Internal investment is one way we are approaching this. The Graduate Programme, led by Bridgestone, has benefited us greatly. Four suitable candidates have already come from this, with two being offered permanent positions.

Externally, we are focusing heavily on digital transformation via the use of social media in order to attract the 18-35 age group. Thanks to our team of young dynamic managers and the help of our agencies, who keep bringing new ideas to the table, we are creating and increasing brand awareness. This is evident from the growing number of enquiries we are getting from various social media channels.

I would add, the new look and feel of Supa Quick has attracted a growing number of

young professionals, particularly females. The tyre trade is no longer seen as a dirty backyard operation, but rather, an exciting and dynamic work space that offers a myriad of career opportunities.

How are individuals in this age group able to raise the necessary finance to buy into the Supa Quick franchise?

As we are not looking to set up our businesses for failure, we ask for 60% un-incumbent, together with some exposure in franchising. Many of these prospective new partners have had previous experience with franchising via family connections, and this is vital in the selection process.

We recently partnered with Nedbank to negotiate a discounted structure, in order to make it easier for young entrepreneurs looking to acquire a franchise to access funds.

What are some of the personal and professional challenges you are facing in this position?

The multi-brand aspect of the business coupled with ongoing efforts to obtain competitive pricing on a national level, is very challenging.

Secondly, the digital transformation that is needed on e-commerce platform, is proving challenging with the network, which tends to cling on to more traditional methods to conduct business. The world is moving in this direction, however, so we will continue to highlight the need to meet growing e-commerce demand from customers.

Thirdly, and as previously mentioned, differentiating ourselves from our competitors takes a deal of planning, strategy and patience. Thankfully, we have an amazing team. It's been a long road but we are beginning to see the rewards.

On a personal front, juggling the demands of my working career with motherhood and the needs of extended family, remain a challenge, but one that I'm willing to face head-on. The Supa Quick family has rewarded me where I feel empowered everyday to do better and be greater.

We are focusing heavily on digital transformation via social media.

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OR SCAN ME



European tyre markets forced to adapt production and materials supply due to **UKRAINE CONFLICT**

By John Stone

The tragic and totally illegal Russian invasion of Ukraine has had a serious affect on the tyre industry throughout Europe with all leading international manufacturers closely monitoring the situation on a daily basis. SA Treads contacted many of these producers to get a reaction on how the conflict has damaged their current activities in both Ukraine and Russia.

The tragic and totally illegal Russian invasion of Ukraine has had a serious affect on the tyre industry throughout Europe with all leading international manufacturers closely monitoring the situation on a daily basis. SA Treads contacted many of these producers to get a reaction on how the conflict has damaged their current activities in both Ukraine and Russia.

Fortunately no leading tyre manufacturer owns or operates a tyre production facility in Ukraine but every single leading brand currently has factories in Russia.

It seems one of the worst affected is Nokian who currently generate Euros 336 million sales from its plant in Vsevolozhsk, Russia. Whilst their facility near St Petersburg which produces 17 million tyres a year and employs over 1600 people has activated contingency plans to lessen the financial and operational impacts including transferring production of selected key product lines from Russia to Finland and North America.

Also Bridgestone has announced it will be suspending its manufacturing activities in Russia until further notice with a company spokesman adding, "We have been deeply affected by the war in Ukraine which has impacted our own employees and partners and has prompted us to make this difficult decision."

Whilst Continental has a plant in Kaluga, western Russia which has a listed capacity of 3 million annual units and employs around 1300 staff is also closely monitoring the situation and states that current plans include further implementing safety stock levels and using alternative suppliers of production products.

Meanwhile Michelin Group has suspended all its industrial manufacturing activity in Russia and stopped all exporting of tyres into Russia for the time being.

Michelin's Davydovo factory near Moscow currently employs 750 people and produces passenger car tyres and retreaded truck tyres up to 2 million units a year mainly for the local Russian market.

Yokohama also owns a plant in Lipetsk south of Moscow in partnership with Itochu with an estimated production level of around 8,000 tons of product units for both OE and the Aftermarket, and Pirelli operates two tyre plants in Kirov deep in central Russia and at Voronezh with annual production levels of 6 million units and 2.3 million units respectively. To date neither of these two major tyre manufacturers has issued statements regarding their current activities in Russia.



The Ukraine conflict is causing the European tyre market serious problem.

There are also four tyre producers based in Ukraine – CJSC Rosava, Dneproshina JSC, Eurotire Incorporated and Valsa Bila Tserkva with no information on whether they are still operational or even destroyed by the Russian shelling.

Apart from the actual production of tyres, there is another equally important issue to contend with – a growing, severe materials shortage especially from Russia where logistic operations have virtually come to a standstill. It seems that Carbon Black is at

the highest risk of becoming 'unavailable' if the conflict becomes a long term situation. With carbon black recognised as a difficult material to handle and process and prone to degrading when it travels. If tyre manufacturers move away from using Russian carbon black then prices will fall (due to lack of demand) meaning prices elsewhere will inevitably rise. Russia currently exports over 750 kt of carbon black and a further 200kt is sourced from Ukraine so the industry will be forced to find up to one million tonnes of additional carbon black from other international suppliers.

Finally it is also widely considered that significant changes in future materials supply chains will become evident in the future. Assuming there is no swift conclusion to Russia's invasion of Ukraine the European tyre industry will seriously consider cancelling any business connection with Russian materials supply chains and look towards sourcing their needs elsewhere in the world.



A Nokian tyre production plant in Russia.



Michelin Group has suspended all its industrial activity in Russia.



FALKEN TYRES

NOW SOLD WITH AN EIGHT-YEAR LIFE WARRANTY

The Falken tyre brand, distributed in South Africa by Stamford Tyres, will now be sold to market with an astonishing eight-year life warranty. According to the holding company – Sumitomo Rubber South Africa (SRSA) - this exciting initiative is part of its commitment to manufacturing quality tyres and providing peace of mind to customers.

José Romero, General Manager, Stamford Tyres SA, said: “We care about our customers’ safety and we are committed to providing them with quality tyres. Falken tyres are designed with award-winning cutting-edge technology that rivals the best.

According to Romero, the 4D Nano Technology is a cutting-edge propriety simulation technology, which supports the development for high-quality, high-performance Falken Tyres. “With this kind of technology we are confident in the quality of the brand and we would like for our customers to have peace of mind when purchasing Falken Tyres”, added José.

In addition to the 4D Nano technology, Sumitomo Rubber Industries made a break-through in the automotive industry with the Sensing Core technology. Available in other markets, this innovative technology can detect various conditions related to the tyre, including pressure, load, and road conditions, and now adds tyre wear to its capabilities.

This eight-year tyre life warranty is a manufacturer's warranty against defects in material and/or workmanship. All Sumitomo Rubber SA tyres (including Falken) purchased from Falken dealers come with the warranty.

What is warranted?

1. Every tyre is warranted against defects in material and/

or workmanship for the usable life of the original tread, ending when any part of the tyre has worn up to the tread wear indicators (TWI) or for a duration of eight (8) years from the date of manufacture (“Tyre Life”).

2. If a tyre becomes unserviceable due to such defect within the legal remaining tread depth, it will be replaced free of charge with a comparable Sumitomo Rubber SA tyre, on a pro rata basis calculated on the remaining pattern depth
3. Pro-rated adjustment credit to the customer will be given based on the percentage of remaining usable tread depth, down to the tread wear indicators. Where no tread wear indicator is present, there will be no credit due.
4. A claim for ride discomfort will be accepted for adjustment only during the first 10% of the original tread depth. Such tyre claim will be replaced free of charge with a comparable Sumitomo Rubber SA tyre. A set of four (4) tyres from the same vehicle will be evaluated individually and adjusted according to each outcome.
5. The Tyre Warranty shall be Transferable for the life of the tyre – Note that those tyres presented for a warranty claim by someone other than the original purchaser, can and will enjoy the benefit of the Tyre Life Warranty for the residue of the period from the date of manufacture only.
6. Special Note to the duration of Tyre Life as defined above – paragraph (a)

This Tyre Life Warranty came into effect in January 2020 and all tyres produced on or after January 2018 will for the duration of eight (8) years from the date of manufacture, be covered by the Tyre Life Warranty.

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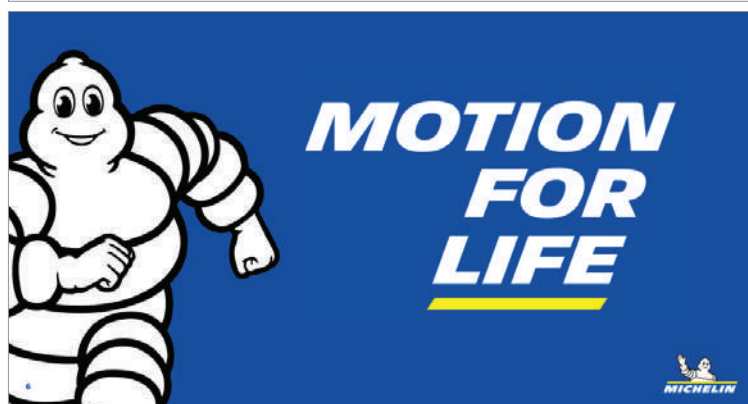
Overjoyed is one way to describe Zak Ally, winner of the Michelin Agilis Campaign, which ran from July to December 2021.

Focusing exclusively on their network of retailers, dealers who purchased 50 tyres or more were entered into a lucky draw, standing the chance to win a brand new Bakkie.

"Thank you, Michelin, for this awesome prize. I am proud to be associated with such an amazing brand," said Ally.

The campaign focused on Michelin's premium tyre, the Agilis 3 RC, which according to a Michelin spokesman, is being dubbed as a market leader with respect to mileage performance, improved wet braking as well as new and worn, lower rolling resistance. All of this, courtesy of a myriad of technological features such as under tread rubber, stone ejectors, sidewall shields, innovative polymer, U shape grooves, full depth sipes.

The winner was chosen on 23 February 2022, with the handover taking place on 29 March 2022.



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AUTOMECHANIKA Johannesburg 2022 Innovation Awards Entries Now Open

Searching for the next big thing in the automotive aftermarket. Entries now open for 2022 Innovation Awards

The Automechanika Innovation Awards have been a highlight of the local event since it was first held in 2009. Pioneering products and innovations will once again be celebrated when Automechanika Johannesburg – South Africa's premier trade fair – returns to National Exhibition Centre, Nasrec, Johannesburg between 7 and 10 June 2022.

Says Michael Dehn, Managing Director of Messe Frankfurt South Africa, the organisers of Automechanika Johannesburg: "We are proud to announce that entries for the 2022 Innovation Awards are now open. Manufacturers, suppliers, and distributors are invited to submit automotive products they deem to be innovative and pioneering in their respective fields for scrutiny. "The trade fair serves as a gateway for the growing African automotive aftermarket, targeting visitors from sub-Saharan Africa, and is respected as the largest event of its type on the African continent. There is no better way to gain industry and consumer recognition than taking part in a highly respected competition that aims to award the best of the best in terms of innovation and forward thinking," Dehn continues.

Over the years the finalists and winners in the Innovation Awards have been showcased in a special exhibit at the show and have garnered huge interest from industry representatives and the public alike. Winners have been able to successfully harness their achievements in the competition to bolster their marketing programmes and – as a result – have tasted local and international success. After many successful years as convener of the Innovation Awards, industry stalwart Wynter Murdoch has handed over the reins to Liana Reiners. No stranger to the automotive and related industries, Reiners has 32 years' experience as a journalist; most notably a 22-year stint at Wheels Motoring Annual and senior positions at publications such as Car & Leisure, Accelerate and – most recently – AutoLive.

"The aim of the Innovation Awards is to find the best aftermarket products in



South Africa from a selection of categories and utilise Automechanika Johannesburg as the platform to honour the pioneering prowess of each winning item," she explains. "Entries will be judged by an independent jury of highly qualified and respected automotive experts representing recognised organisations and representative bodies within the industry. Names of jury members and the organisations they represent will be made public once the panel has been finalised. "They will score products on a predetermined list of criteria. These include design, quality, efficiency, functionality, practicality, value for money, environmental friendliness and – of course – innovation.

The cut-off date to enter is midday on Friday, May 6th 2022." In keeping with the latest automotive trends, the categories of the 2022 competition have been streamlined. The 10 categories are: 1. Parts 2. Accessories & Customising 3. Driver Assistance & Safety 4. E-mobility 5. Data & Connectivity 6. Diagnostics & Tuning 7. Repair & Maintenance 8. Original Equipment Products & Services 9. IT & Management 10. Service Station & Car Wash equipment Prospective entrants must submit photographs and a detailed description of any automotive aftermarket or original equipment product they have developed, manufactured, imported, or distributed in South Africa. There is no entry fee. The description of each product must include its country of origin, when it was introduced to the South African market, the category of the aftermarket in which it competes, as well as the following: Perceived innovative quality The solution the product aims to provide Its functionality and user benefits Perceived economic efficiency Safety aspects it promotes Environmental aspects it promotes Its relevance to the automotive sector in which it competes Based on the photographs and descriptions – which must include information relating to the technical characteristics and relevance of

each product, jury members will score and rank each item.

Products that achieve the highest marks on a collective basis will be deemed to be finalists in the competition. Representatives of the companies whose products have been selected will be asked to submit – on Monday, May 23rd – two examples of the items for physical scrutiny by jury members. Following physical evaluation, winners will be determined on the basis of highest marks scored. Gold, silver and bronze certificates will be awarded to the top three products, while the remaining finalists will receive highly commended certificates. Winners will be announced at an awards ceremony which will form part of the trade fair's official opening on Tuesday, June 7th.

Messe Frankfurt South Africa, organisers of Automechanika Johannesburg 2022, will arrange for an exhibit of all the finalist products to be highlighted in a special display at the show under an Innovation Awards banner.

HOW TO ENTER

To enter Automechanika Johannesburg's Innovation Awards Competition, entrants are requested to submit by e-mail on or before midday on Friday, May 6th 2022, their product motivations, along with hi-resolution pictures of at least 1 Mb in size of the items. Each entry must include the e-mail address and telephone number of the person responsible for the submission, along with details of the company he or she represents. Entries must be sent to the competition's convener, Liana Reiners, at the following e-mail address: reinersliana@gmail.com. Queries or requests for additional information on the Innovation Awards, contact Liana Reiners on 083 407 4600 or via e-mail at reinersliana@gmail.com. For more information on Automechanika Johannesburg 2022, please visit our website www.automechanikasa.co.za

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TIGER WHEEL & TYRE is going solar

Tiger Wheel & Tyre is driving the green initiative with the launch of the company's first solar-powered store.

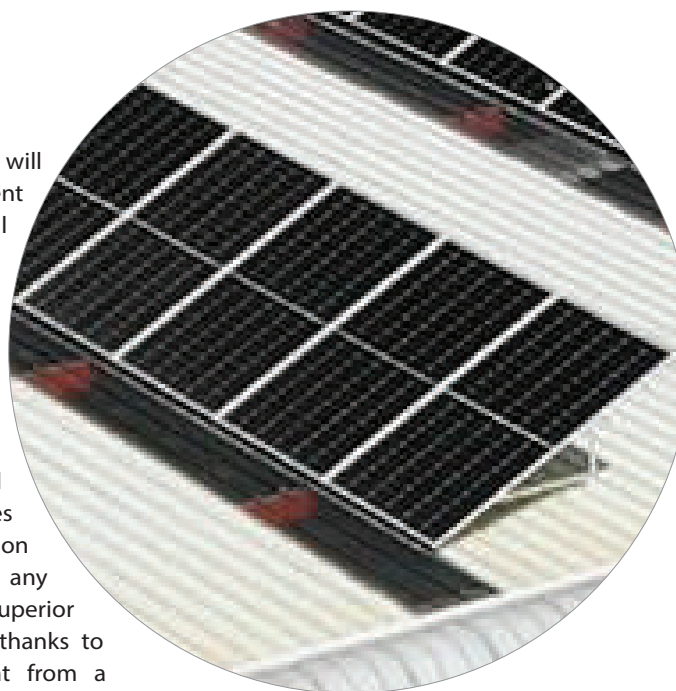
The Tiger Wheel & Tyre brand marks another milestone in its journey towards a healthier environment – and its drive for carbon neutrality.

The Company's Fourways store is very proud to be the first of the Tiger Wheel & Tyre family to complete the move to solar power. This is just the first store to go solar, as the Company continues its mission to prioritise a carbon-neutral footprint, with all stores running on solar energy within the next three years. Tiger Wheel & Tyre's other fitment centres are currently in various phases of this transition. The Company cemented its decision to use renewable energy for a number of reasons. The most important of these is the brand's stated responsibility to ensure a healthier future for generations to come. Other important factors that informed this decision include soaring energy prices, and the uncertainty of loadshedding in South Africa.

Alex Taplin, TiAuto Investments CEO, is passionate about the project. "Society, and that includes us, our shareholders and financiers have a duty to take active steps towards using clean renewable energy sources to lessen our impact upon the environment. State-of-the-art technology that embraces sustainability is now readily available, so it would be highly remiss of us were we not to incorporate these technologies and obvious benefits into our everyday operations." "The advantages of solar power are tangible and measurable. By way of example, if we take just the initial Fourways store pilot project, we're looking at a reduction of over 28,000kg of reduced CO² emissions per annum. That's the equivalent of 64 trees saved." "And that's just one store! Once we have fully executed stores in Phase 1 to solar

power, representing 16 stores, we will be reducing emissions equivalent by over 560,000 kg of CO², as well as reducing our oil equivalent by 80,000 litres a year. That's the same as saving 1,200 trees a year. We call on other businesses to move to sustainable energy, as we will all benefit in the end."

According to Taplin, Tiger Wheel & Tyre's solar solution is all the more impressive as it enables stores to continue full operation at normal capacity, without any reduction in our product or superior service offerings. What's more, thanks to being increasingly self-sufficient from a power supply perspective, Company's power system is now even more stable, and in a small way we can assist by reducing reliance on an already overburdened Eskom Grid. Taplin was very complimentary about Tiger Wheel & Tyre's solar power service provider's delivery – Easy Power. "A flawless job. They had the system fully operational within 14 days. Highly recommend them."



Tiger
Wheel&Tyre



TIGER WHEEL & TYRE to brew up a whole Latte Love

Tiger Wheel & Tyre, have recently launched Tiger Beans – an ED (enterprise development) program aimed at offering customers a fresh and satisfying cup of coffee; while also providing unemployed South Africans the opportunity to help develop a small business for themselves that sustains a steady income flow.

“Hospitality was one of the hardest hit industries during the pandemic, with over 3000 Baristas losing their jobs. As part of our ongoing Corporate Social Investment (CSI), Tiger Wheel & Tyre have teamed up with König Coffee to provide budding businessmen and businesswomen the skills and equipment required to maintain their very own coffee stand inside selected Tiger Wheel & Tyre stores”, said Farishta Singh, Group Marketing Executive – Tiger Wheel & Tyre.

Continuing, “We are absolutely percolating with excitement! This has been such a great opportunity for us to pay it forward through these hard-working and committed individuals who see the long-term potential that these small businesses have to offer.”

“All training, equipment, product, and operating costs are covered by Tiger Wheel & Tyre. This essentially affords the baristas a sustainable work environment with zero set up costs to work for themselves, while garnering a monthly



remuneration, a share in the growth of the business and invaluable experience.”

The next time you stop by your local award-winning Tiger Wheel & Tyre fitment centre for some much-needed love for your vehicle, don't forget to refuel, recharge and refill with a freshly brewed cuppa for only R20 while you wait – it's for a great cause!

Currently, there are two pilot stores that have incorporated the Tiger Beans initiative, namely, Tiger Wheel & Tyre Claremont, Western Cape and Tiger Wheel & Tyre Midrand, Gauteng. Expansion plans

are set to roll out at another six locations in the next two months, with additional sites to follow, so look out for the Tiger Beans logos in store and please support the young men and women as they develop their very own businesses, and grab your delicious caffeine fix as you go

For more information log on to www.twt.to or find them on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram using the handle @TigerWheelnTyre

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BRIDGESTONE to suspend manufacturing activities in and export to Russia

Over the last weeks, we have been deeply affected by the war in Ukraine and its impact on many innocent people including our own employees and partners. We condemn any form of violence and hope that peace can quickly be re-established. Our primary concern in this crisis, is the safety of our employees and their families. This according to global manufacturing giant, Bridgestone.

Bridgestone has been carefully assessing the impact of this challenging situation. As a result, we decided to suspend our manufacturing activities in Russia, until further notice. The decision will take effect next Friday 18 March after the necessary preparations. The company has also decided to freeze any new investments and suspend all exports to Russia with immediate effect.

We continue to care for our more than 1000 employees in our passenger tyre production plant in Ulyanovsk and our sales offices. Therefore, we will support our employees financially at this time.

As the situation further unfolds, Bridgestone's global and regional management will continue to closely monitor the situation and flexibly adapt plans when needed. We expect manufacturing output outside Russia to remain stable in the coming weeks.

The last two weeks have transformed the world with more than two and half million people having already fled their homes. Many of our employees have participated



in spontaneous volunteer activities to support the refugees from Ukraine. Bridgestone EMIA has made a 1 million Euro donation to the Red Cross, in addition to the 2.5 million Euro donated by Bridgestone Corporation to UNHCR (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees), and we will continue to evaluate how we can help alleviate the humanitarian crisis.

**BRIDGESTONE**

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X CITING ADVENTURES AWAIT



By John Stone

For the past two decades Sapphire Media has supported the worldwide tyre and automotive industry as a unique Business Media Consultant delivering professional editorial and marketing/PR services to a global client base and as a regular columnist in leading publications.

CONTINENTAL Once Again with Top Performance in International Sustainability Rating

For 2021, Continental was awarded the highest grade by the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP) for the fourth time in a row as a global leader in the implementation of measures and strategies to reduce emissions in the supply chain ("Supplier Engagement Rating"). This makes Continental one of the eight percent of companies that have been awarded 2021 leadership status by the international non-profit organization CDP for supplier commitment to climate change.

In all, more than 13,000 companies and organisations worldwide were considered. The assessment is based on data provided by the respective companies on corporate governance and Scope 3 emissions as well as on supply chain management as a whole. CDP pays particular attention to strategies and measures that help to make environmental risks and emissions measurable along value chains in order to minimise them. Continental's holistic approach of working closely with its

suppliers to achieve comprehensive improvements by involving as many stages of the supply chain as possible was recognised.

"We look at the entire value chain of our products, from material sourcing to recycling. This is the only way we can achieve truly sustainable supply chains that conserve resources and support important climate protection goals at the same time. Continental's goal is to achieve fully sustainable supply chains by 2050 at the latest," says Claus Petschick, Head of Sustainability at Continental Tires. "We're involved in many projects and initiatives to integrate suppliers into our supply chains. Innovative technologies and digitalisation are the primary tools we use to make environmental risks transparent and to reduce these risks within our complex supply chain."

Projects of Group Sector Tires demonstrate a holistic approach to sustainability

To minimise environmental risks and emissions in its natural rubber sourcing, Continental has defined



clear responsibilities and obligations for all parties involved in its sourcing policy. Continental also employs third-party partners to evaluate its suppliers based on verified self-reports. For example, since 2017, Continental has been working with EcoVadis, the world's leading provider of sustainability ratings for companies and global supply chains. In other projects, such as a collaboration with the German development organisation Gesellschaft

für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), the company has been promoting a digital system for the traceability of natural rubber from the project region in Indonesia's West-Kalimantan on Borneo since 2018.

By optimising the supply chain and offering training in the sustainable cultivation of natural rubber, smallholders are able to increase quantities, quality, and yields, thereby improving their incomes. A cultivation strategy based on sustainability also prevents logging and deforestation, conserving valuable resources. Following a successful pilot project, the number of smallholders integrated into the main project is expected to increase from 450 to around 4,000 by 2024. The use of sustainable raw materials for tyre construction and the commitment to their production and processing have long been a high priority at Continental. For example, Continental and its partners are intensively researching in Anklam (Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania, Germany) the industrialisation of the use of so-called Russian dandelion (*Taraxacum koksaghyz*) for the extraction of natural rubber.

In the future, the aim is to be able to grow part of the natural rubber required close to the company's own tyre plants in order to reduce CO2 emissions caused by long transport routes and to conserve valuable resources. The use of sustainable raw materials also includes the use of recycled polyester from recycled plastic bottles, which Continental is currently introducing into the series production of its tyres, as well as the use of silicate from the ash of rice husks, an agricultural waste product. Plant-based oils and resins also reduce the proportion of crude oil-based materials already today. Continental's goal is to successively use 100 percent sustainably produced materials in its tyre products by 2050 at the latest.

Continental has been participating in the annual reporting and disclosure of climate protection-relevant data for the CDP assessment for more than 10 years. In addition to top rating for supply chains, the company was honoured with a "B" rating for its efforts in the field of climate change mitigation. In the category of sustainable water management, Continental's actions and data also scored a "B."



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NOKIAN Looks for Additional Capacity Amid Russian War in Ukraine

With a manufacturing plant in Russia and Ukrainian employees at war, Nokian Tyres has issued frequent updates on how the Russian invasion in Ukraine is impacting its business. This past month, Nokian issued a statement saying it is looking to diversify its geographic footprint in its manufacturing operations and is actively looking for additional manufacturing capacity.

In the update issued March 22, Nokian says, "We hope for a quick diplomatic solution to this tragedy," as it maintains daily contact with its Ukrainian team. "Over half of our Ukrainian employees are male and cannot leave the country, but we assist them in any way possible given the current situation. In addition, Nokian Tyres has made a donation to UNICEF to help the children in the war zone in Ukraine."

The company also said it is using "all possibilities" to accelerate the increase of capacity in its factories in Finland and in the U.S. Earlier in the month, Nokian said all tires sold in the Nordic countries in the future will be produced in Nokia, Finland, and all tires sold in North America in the future will be produced in Dayton, Tennessee and in Nokia, Finland. All Nokian Tyres' heavy tires are designed and manufactured in Finland, and tires for trucks and buses are designed in Finland and produced in the EU. Nokian said it is not accepting orders for heavy tires from Russia.

However, Nokian said by continuing to operate its passenger car tire factory in Russia, the company wants to ensure that the factory is operated and controlled by Nokian Tyres in the future. "We no longer invest into the Russian production," the company said.

Nokian says, "We do not want to speculate on how the situation in general will evolve. We will announce any material direct impacts to Nokian Tyres as appropriate and



in a timely manner. We continue to assess the situation and are prepared for rapid responses when needed."

Nokian added in a statement issued March 8 that its crisis management team meets daily, and it is prepared for different scenarios. The company is also monitoring sanctions and potential counter-sanctions, and it has activated its contingency plans to mitigate any financial and operational impacts to its business.

"For example, we are shipping tires closer to our customers, securing the raw material supply to our factories, transferring production of selected key product lines from Russia to Finland and to the U.S., and securing transport capacity from Russia with existing and new service providers," Nokian says.

Currently, Nokian said its Russian operations are impacted by transportation capacity and availability. Lead times to customers have also increased, the company said. "The operations can be further impacted by raw material supply. We have been able to

fulfill the customer orders despite the supply chain challenges, and continue to do our best to serve our customers and to deliver as agreed with them," Nokian says.

"For us the safety of our employees is number one priority. We will do everything we can to support our Nokian Tyres team in this situation. We have been operating in Ukraine since 2006, and during those years have built many long-lasting relationships with Ukrainian colleagues and customers," the company said in its March 8 update. "We have some 20 employees in Ukraine. We are in daily contact with our Ukrainian team, and as a first priority, we have taken measures to secure their and their families' safety as best as we can and we will continue our help to them, both on a personal level and as an employer."

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PIRELLI Reveals its First Replacement Tyre for EVs

Pirelli introduced its first replacement tyre developed specifically for electric vehicles: the P Zero All Season Plus with the "Elect" marking.

Pirelli says the Elect marking offers a number of advantages like low rolling resistance, which is designed to increase the driving range while reducing consumption.

Another key advantage of the Elect marking is noise reduction, says Pirelli. In electric cars, the engine is no longer the primary source of noise, so reducing sound frequencies produced by the tyres is key.

Finally, Pirelli says the immediate grip, designed to bite into the asphalt instantly, is another advantage.



According to Pirelli, the new P Zero All Season Plus also features the Pirelli Noise

Cancelling System (PNCS), a technology designed to reduce interior vehicle noise.

YOKOHAMA Acquires Trelleborg's Wheel Systems Business

Yokohama Rubber Co. Ltd. entered into a share purchase agreement with the Swedish-based Trelleborg AB to acquire all outstanding shares of Trelleborg Wheel Systems Holding AB, a company engaged in the manufacture and sale of off-highway tyres (OHT) for agricultural and industrial machinery. The acquisition is valued at over \$2 billion and is scheduled to be completed in the latter half of 2022, after the completing mandatory procedures required by the competition laws of the European Union and other countries.

Yokohama says its acquisition of Trelleborg Wheel Systems (TWS) will provide it with a more complete product brand structure, strengthen its service network, broaden its regional sales network and boost its



sales of OE tyres. It will also allow the company to cover different market needs in the agricultural, construction, material handling, mining and two-wheels market segments with the addition of Trelleborg, Mitas, Maximo, Cultor and Interfit brands to its portfolio.

Yokohama says its service network will be strengthened by TWS' proprietary tyre maintenance service that provides after-sales service for industrial-use tyres at 82 locations in 21 countries. Yokohama plans to expand that service to agricultural tyres. TWS has also been developing a remote system for monitoring tyre air pressure and temperature, which the two companies will be able to collaborate on, Yokohama says.

Under Trelleborg's ownership, TWS

has more than doubled in size and substantially increased its profitability, growing its business through important acquisitions and strategic investments over the past few years, Trelleborg says.

Yokohama says the addition of TWS's strong sales network in Europe will complement its strengths in Japan, North America and Asia. The addition of TWS will also open the door to new customers for Yokohama's OE tyres, with TWS supplying upwards of 30 OEMs.

"Personally, I am extremely grateful to Trelleborg, which has over more than 100 years created one of the most successful off-highway businesses in the world, and which continuously invested in our growth and technological leadership," says Paolo Pompei, president

of Trelleborg Wheel Systems. "At the same time, I am really excited to join a leading rubber company that will keep investing in our future and support our successful onward journey. I am confident that we will continue to flourish with The Yokohama Rubber Co., Ltd. as a strong owner."

YOKOHAMA
Off-Highway Tires

TRELLEBORG

MARANGONI a Finalist in Six Categories at Recircle Awards



Marangoni announced that it is, directly or through its subsidiary companies, in the running for six categories at the Recircle Awards 2022: Best Tread Rubber Supplier, Circular Economy Award,

Best Tyre Retreader, Best Retreading Equipment Supplier, Spirit of retreading award and Employee of the year.

Marangoni says the Recircle Awards is a global

event established in 2021 to recognise the importance of the contribution to the circular economy of organisations and people that deal with the retreading or recycling of tyres.

Sharp increase of interest in **ENVIRO'S** recovered materials as a result of the war in Ukraine

Since the Russian invasion of Ukraine on February 24, Enviro has noted a sharp increase of interest in purchasing the carbon black and oil that Enviro recovers from end-of-life tyres. The increased interest has been observed among old and new customers, but the company cannot yet assess what this will mean in terms of specific orders or supply agreements.

"The increase in interest entails that we will need to set priorities carefully, while it also confirms that we were wise not to be in a hurry to sign long-term supply agreements connected to our expansion plan," says Thomas Sörensson, CEO of Enviro.

According to a U.S. market research company, Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus produce a significant part of all carbon black used in Europe. At the same time, Europe wants to reduce its dependence on Russian oil and, because oil is a raw material used in carbon black production, this could also influence supply.

"Accordingly, the war is likely to have a major impact on the supply of carbon black in Europe and globally, and it is obvious that this is causing concern among tyre and rubber manufacturers that shortages will occur," says Thomas Sörensson, CEO of Enviro.

According to Thomas Sörensson, the increased interest was apparent



more or less immediately after the Russian invasion. There has been a strong increase in the number of new and existing customers contacting Enviro to investigate the possibilities of receiving deliveries of carbon black from the company.

"Our expansion plan comprises the establishment of a total recycling capacity of 900,000 tonnes of end-of-life tyres by 2030. At the heart of the implementation of the expansion plan is the establishment of long-term supply agreements for recovered materials and end-of-life tyres. The strong rise in interest means that we now need to set our priorities carefully," says Thomas Sörensson.

Enviro is currently unable to assess the implications of the increased interest

for the company's future development. The interest applies to both deliveries of carbon black and recovered oil, referred to as pyrolysis oil. Since the company is conducting several discussions with investors, contractors, and partners regarding the planned facility in Uddevalla, the company wants to be transparent towards the capital market about the way in which interest in the company's recycling technology and recovered products has risen due to the war.

"Interest has increased in a way that we could not have foreseen, and it is important that the market understands this, although we are currently unable to say anything more specific about what it will mean for our business," says Thomas Sörensson.

THE TIRE COLOGNE 2022: wide-ranging congress and event programme provides additional impulses

In less than three months, the global tire and wheel industry will once again gather at an international communication and business platform for the first time since the introduction of restrictions due to the corona virus pandemic. The content

of THE TIRE COLOGNE 2022 will focus particularly on issues that have gained a considerable new impetus against the background of the pandemic – such as the continually growing need for greater sustainability. THE TIRE COLOGNE from 24 to 26 May 2022

will make trends and themes that are moving the industry experienceable. The event and congress programme, including star-studded conferences, theme areas and special events, will provide additional information and emotional inspiration.

TIRE STAGE

The "TIRE STAGE" is the stage on which the themes of relevance for the industry play: in cooperation with partners, "fleet management", "recycling" or "digitalisation", for example, will be treated and discussed in sessions. The entire programme of TIRE STAGE will be streamed live and will afterwards be available as video on demand at the website of THE TIRE COLOGNE.

The TIRE FLEET Lounge with lectures and discussion panels will take place in the context of TIRE STAGE on the afternoon of the first day of the fair. As already in 2018, the ETM Verlag 2022 will host a special fleet forum with interesting lectures and a panel discussion for fleet managers and workshop operators. In this context, the trade publishing house will consistently continue the content of the TIRE Fleet Days 2019 organised in cooperation with Koelnmesse and once again question the relevance of tires, trade and service for truck, transporter, bus and car fleets. High-level managers from the industry and renowned experts and practitioners will share their specialised knowledge. The TIRE Fleet Lounge thus enables an exclusive knowledge advantage for anyone responsible for fleets, at the same time offering an ideal platform for entering into a dialogue with potential customers.

The second edition of the Tire Recycling Forum will take place on Wednesday, 25 May 2022 between 12:00 and 3:00 p.m. on the tire stage. The forum, organised by the Tyre & Rubber Recycling journal in cooperation with Koelnmesse, consists of two seminar sessions, each of which will deal with an area of importance for the worldwide tire recycling community. Session 1 from 12:00 to 1:20 p.m. is entitled "The Role of Recycling in Tyre Manufacturing Sustainability" and deals with the increasing importance of sustainability for the new (the adjective "new" is confusing) tire manufacturers and the key role that recycling plays in this respect. Session 2 from 1:40 to 3:00 p.m. is entitled "Developing Technologies and Future Prospects in Tyre Recycling" and will be debated by managers discussing the importance of the latest developments in tire recycling technology for the entire market landscape. The sessions will be hosted by Ewan Scott, the publisher of Tyre & Rubber Recycling.

The theme of "access to vehicle data" provides the focus for the panel discussion



organised by the ZDK (central association of German automotive trades), wdk (German Rubber Manufacturers Association) and BRV (German Tyre Retail and Vulcanisation Trade Association) associations, which will take place on 25 May from 10:30-11:30 a.m. on the TIRE STAGE. For the participants of the automobile replacement market, including automotive workshops just as much as tire service companies, unrestricted access with as few hurdles as possible to vehicle and vehicle-generated data is a decisive competitive factor. However, without the appropriate regulation, the automotive industry has more leverage. Is it thus possible that service offerings like vehicle maintenance and tire service might in future become impossible for aftermarket participants? A volatile topic, on which high-level representatives from the tire industry, the automobile trade and the automotive industry will present their positions and discuss contradictory approaches.

"Digitalisation" will of course also still be an important theme in the event program of THE TIRE COLOGNE. After all, digitalisation affects all areas of the tire trade. On the procurement side: wholesale ordering of the goods, catalogue systems, availability, configuration of the products. On the sales side: from the customer address

through various digital touchpoints to the digitally supported customer dialogue at the point of sale. Under the title "Procurement, sales and customer communication – how digital is the tire trade?", Dietmar Winkler, Editor-in-Chief of asp – AUTO SERVICE PRAXIS, will discuss the question with guests of how far the trade has advanced up to now and where there is still some need to catch up.

BOULEVARD OF SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is the central theme of THE TIRE COLOGNE 2022, illustrated by the Boulevard of Sustainability, present for the first time. The central trade fair boulevard, the high-traffic axis of the trade fair, serves as a stage for placing the sustainable life cycle of the tire in the spotlight. Exhibitors and partners will address the individual phases at different focus islands and present approaches to solutions: the most innovative exhibits, the latest studies, the most important impulses. Visualised here is the comprehensive value creation chain of a tire – from the extraction of raw materials through tire production and the collection of end-of-life tires to retreading and subsequent recycling. All approaches will focus explicitly on the sparing handling of important resources, so that a stringent and sustainable picture emerges.

