

FAStplant® seven years on – Versatile and flexible assembly

Bietigheim-Bissingen, Germany, January 27, 2011 – The modular final assembly system FAStplant® from Dürr has proved itself since entering the market in 2004. The wide spectrum of applications for the system – ranging from automotive test plants to mass passenger car production and from pre-assembly of aircraft wings to motor cycle manufacture – demonstrates just how versatile it is. Ongoing development on the basis of practical experience means that today FAStplant® can be utilized more flexibly than ever before.

Daimler was the first to put its trust in FAStplant® when it built a six module pilot plant at Sindelfingen (Germany) in 2004. Further test plants followed for Toyota at Valenciennes (France), Ford at Cologne and VW at Zwickau (both Germany). This was because the rapid installation and high adaptability characteristics of FAStplant® make it particularly suitable for test programs involving a variety of models and prototypes.

The first customer, Daimler, relocated its FAStplant® system three times within a period of six years and is now utilizing it at its fourth location. Other OEMs, such as BMW and Audi, have opted for FAStplant® for smaller production series: Audi has been assembling the R8 sports car with the system at Neckarsulm (Germany) since 2006 and at Chennai (India) several different BMW models have been produced very flexibly on a CKD assembly line there since 2007. The first mass-production chassis line – incorporating 80 FAStplant® modules and including 58 hangers with infinitely adjustable height regulation – was built by GM at San Luis Potosi (Mexico). This American manufacturer has been producing 100,000 vehicles per year there since 2009.

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The FAS tp lant® system, which is based on a simple modular principle and allows pre-fabricated and tested modules to be combined freely to form assembly lines, is proving increasingly convincing in other industrial branches too. A motor cycle manufacturer is currently having new concept FAS tp lant® utilities modules installed so that work stations are uniformly equipped. This system user is introducing FAS tp lant® on a worldwide basis and is capitalizing on the system's strength – simplicity of production capacity adaptation around the globe.

FAS tp lant® is not affected by roof load restrictions so simple, low cost building concepts can be implemented irrespective of the size and weight of the product involved. A newly developed heavy duty module has made it possible to transfer FAS tp lant® technology to aircraft production. Two assembly lines, incorporating 130 modules and with a total length of more than 1.2 km, went into operation for Lockheed Martin at Fort Worth (USA) in March 2010. For the first time in aircraft manufacture wings are being assembled in pulse production there. The wings can even be turned on their own axis so that special assembly processes can be carried out.

The diversity of these FAS tp lant® projects shows just how vital it is for system users to be able to modify manufacturing lines easily and to adapt production quickly and optimally to suit changing market situations.

Dürr is a mechanical and plant engineering group that holds leading positions in the world market in its areas of operation. It generates a good 80% of its sales in business with the automotive industry. It furthermore supplies the aircraft, machinery, chemical, and pharmaceutical industries with innovative production and environmental technology. The Dürr Group operates in the market with two divisions. The Paint and Assembly Systems division supplies production and painting technology, especially for car bodies. Machinery and systems from the Measuring and Process

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Systems division are used in engine and transmission manufacturing and in final vehicle assembly, among other areas. Dürr has 48 business locations in 21 countries worldwide. The Group achieved sales of € 1.1 billion with approximately 5,700 employees in 2009.



Photo 1: Since 2006 Audi uses FASTplant® to manufacture the R8 sports car in Neckarsulm, Germany.



Photo 2: FASTplant® heavy duty modules for aircraft manufacture in operation at Lockheed Martin.

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