

BRIDGESTONE



AN INTRODUCTION TO
BRIDGESTONE EUROPE

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BRIDGESTONE EUROPE



Mr Takashi URANO, Chairman, CEO
and President of Bridgestone Europe NV/SA.

Bridgestone Europe (BSEU) is a key regional division of Bridgestone Corporation, the world's largest tyre and rubber manufacturing company.

PART OF BRIDGESTONE CORPORATION

DESIGN AND MANUFACTURING IN EUROPE



- With six European production plants and a major R&D centre, BSEU develops and manufactures a wide range of tyre brands and products in Europe, both as original equipment to the vehicle industry and for the replacement market;
- The company distributes more than 20 million tyres a year all over the continent through 17 national sales subsidiaries and two distributors. Products are also exported outside Europe, including to Japan;
- BSEU employs directly over 11,743 people in the continent, with many thousands employed indirectly as suppliers to subsidiaries.

MANAGEMENT IN BRUSSELS

The European office of the Bridgestone Corporation was set up in Belgium in 1972. After the global Bridgestone/ Firestone merger in 1988, management for the entire European operation was brought together in Brussels.

Today, a staff of 250 local and expatriate specialists is responsible for the region:

- Setting pan-European policies, budgets and plans;
- Supervising R&D, manufacturing, sales and marketing;
- Supporting local operations with financial, IT, Human Resources-Legal, advertising and specialist services.



Company:	Bridgestone Europe NV/SA
	Web site: www.bridgestone-eu.com
Chairman, CEO and President:	Mr Takashi URANO
Employees in Europe:	11,743
Subsidiaries:	17 sales companies
Plants:	6
Technical Centres:	1
Proving Ground:	1

BRIDGESTONE CORPORATION



Bridgestone Corporation, headquartered in Tokyo, is one of the world's largest manufacturers of tyres and rubber products with annual net sales of \$22.8 million (2005).

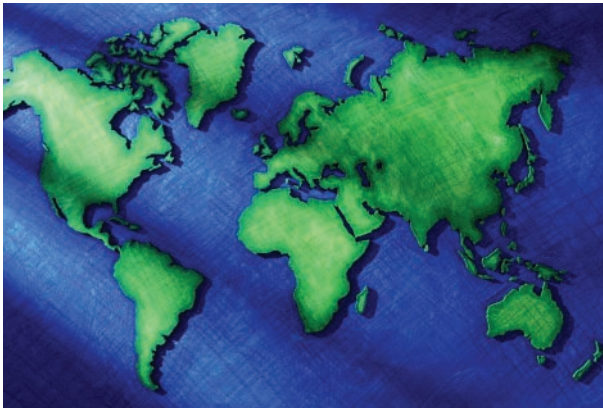
A WORLD LEADER

ACQUIRED FIRESTONE GLOBALLY

In 1988, Bridgestone Corporation acquired Firestone, the second-largest tyre manufacturer in the USA and a renowned world brand. The two companies' operations were merged together in the Americas and Europe.

Bridgestone and its subsidiaries now operate nearly 140 plants around the world and sell products in more than 150 countries.

BRIDGESTONE GLOBAL PRODUCTION FACILITIES



Area	Tyre	Non-Tyre
USA	11	26
Canada	1	1
S. America	7	1
Europe	6	2
Africa	4	0
Turkey	1	0
Asia (excl. Japan)	8	14
Oceania	2	2
Japan	9	43
TOTAL	49	89



THE BRIDGESTONE WAY

Bridgestone's founder, Shojiro Ishibashi, defined the company's mission when he started making tyres in 1931... **"serving society with superior quality"**. Every employee at Bridgestone is committed to achieving this goal, working with what we call the Bridgestone spirit of trust and pride.

It is the trust we earn from customers and the community, through providing superior products and services, that gives us the pride we feel in our products, companies and each other. This is the Bridgestone way, building a better company for tomorrow.

**TRUST
&
PRIDE**

OUR PRODUCTS

TYRES:

One in five vehicles in the world drive on the company's tyres. From design and development to manufacture and distribution, the Bridgestone Corporation provides tyres for almost everything that moves on wheels:



- passenger cars, trucks and buses
- all types of commercial, construction and mining vehicles
- tractors and agricultural machinery
- motorcycles, scooters, racing cars and karts
- aircraft, subways and monorails...

DIVERSIFIED PRODUCTS:

While Bridgestone Europe focuses on tyres, thousands of companies around the world rely on the Bridgestone Corporation's wide range of diversified products:

- industrial rubber products (including the world's largest inflatable rubber dam in The Netherlands)
- chemical products for the construction and office equipment industries
- sporting products, including Precept golf equipment



BRIDGESTONE WORLDWIDE ACTIVITIES

- Bridgestone Corporation Worldwide headquarters: Tokyo
- Bridgestone Europe NV/SA Holding company for Europe: Brussels
- Bridgestone Americas Holding Inc. Holding company for the Americas: Nashville, Tenn.
- Three major R&D centres: Tokyo, Japan; Akron, USA; Rome, Italy
- 49 tyre plants
- 89 plants for diversified products
- Sales networks in more than 150 countries

TECHNOLOGY AND R&D



A new proving ground (right) was added to the current Technical Centre (left) in June 2004.

DEVELOPED AND TESTED IN EUROPE



Mr F. ANNUNZIATO
Managing Director, TCE

RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT AT TECHNICAL CENTRE EUROPE

Technical Centre Europe (TCE), near Rome in Italy, is the driving force behind Bridgestone's European activities. It is where our winning Formula One technology is applied to passenger-car tyres; where innovative run-flat technology is raising safety and fuel efficiency standards; and where new Bridgestone tyres are developed and tested to the limits.

LEADING ROLE IN THE COMPANY

Our 350 engineers, chemists, technicians, test evaluators and support personnel have three main responsibilities:

- Tyre design, development and testing for all types of vehicles;
- Process and equipment design for our manufacturing plants;
- Quality systems to meet QS-9000, ISO/TS-16949 and ISO-14001 standards.

FACILITIES AND RESOURCES

Within the total complex of 32 hectares, approximately 17,000 m² of covered floor-space house a self-sufficient range of design and development facilities:

- chemical, physical and technical laboratories for analysis of tyre materials;
- 3-D computer-aided design and engineering technology for curing moulds and tyres;
- a pilot plant for the manufacture of prototype experimental tyres;
- an indoor drum tyre-testing complex.



YEAR-ROUND TRACK TESTING



Outside, tyre and vehicle tests are conducted year-round on our fully equipped 8-km proving ground. Braking, noise, comfort, skid resistance, straight and cornering hydro-planing; all performance aspects are tested on a wide range of different surfaces, with a sophisticated watering system for wet-testing.

WINTER TESTING NEAR THE ARCTIC CIRCLE

With a well-established market in Nordic countries, winter tyres are now gaining popularity in central European regions. BSEU tests its full range of studded and lamellen products in the far north of Sweden, with a team of specialist engineers and drivers working right through the long winter – on ice and snow – to ensure that Bridgestone products meet the highest performance and safety standards.

MANUFACTURING

MADE IN EUROPE

QUALITY THROUGH CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

Bridgestone Europe operates six manufacturing plants, producing a wide range of different types of tyres under Bridgestone, Firestone and house-brand labels.

All BSEU tyre plants are certified by Lloyds to QS 9000 and some to ISO/TS-16949 quality standards. The facilities are fully modernised and committed to the "Kaizen" philosophy of continuous improvement in all areas of the manufacturing process – including safety, product quality, productivity and costs.

EVER HIGHER ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS

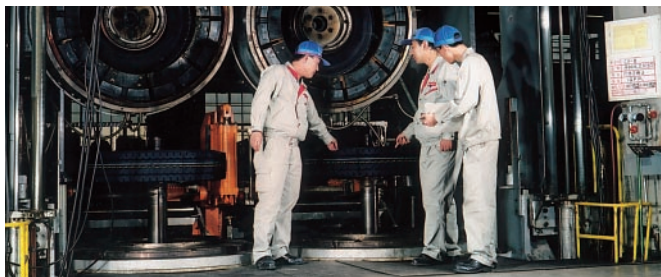
Bridgestone plants operate to a strict environmental policy focused on the reduction of waste materials and energy consumption, combined with increased recycling and reuse of materials. It is this commitment that has enabled BSEU factories to obtain ISO-14001 certification from Lloyds.



Bridgestone is a leading producer of carbon black which strengthens tyre rubber.



Synthetic rubber is another important raw material in tyres.



	Béthune (France)	Bari (Italy)	Bilbao (Spain)	Burgos (Spain)	PSM (Spain)	Poznan (Poland)
Employees	1,235	963	1,276	1,253	602	1,140
Established in	1960	1962	1932	1967	1965	2000
Products	PSR tyres	PSR tyres	TBR tyres conveyor belts Rubber tracks	PSR tyres	CVR tyres TBR tyres AG tyres	PSR tyres
PSR = Passenger • TBR = Truck and Bus • CVR = Commercial Van • AG = Agricultural						

SALES AND MARKETING



ORIGINAL EQUIPMENT MARKET

New cars seen in car-dealer showrooms are fitted with “original equipment” tyres. Designed to meet performance specifications laid down by the automobile manufacturer, these tyres are supplied directly to the vehicle constructor.

ALWAYS YEARS AHEAD IN THE PASSENGER-CAR TYRE DEPARTMENT

DESIGNED FOR THE FUTURE

To see how tyres will perform tomorrow, just take a look at the Original Equipment (OE) being designed today. Developed in parallel with new vehicles, OE tyres are individually approved for vehicle makes and models up to 1 year before they come onto the market.

TECHNICAL CHALLENGES

Working successfully in this “future” time frame demands design and technical leadership, matching ever-increasing vehicle performance. The need for an improvement in environment issues such as lower weight, reduced rolling resistance and lower noise levels.

Safety issues, such as dry-braking distances, higher wet performance and the continuous search for lifetime cost efficiency, also need constant attention and improvement.

STRONG BSEU MARKET POSITION

BSEU has met these formidable challenges and built a leading reputation as OE supplier to major manufacturers of cars, in Europe. The objective is to continue share and volume growth, by expanding the customer base and penetration in premium tyre segments.

REPLACEMENT MARKET PULL-THROUGH

Bridgestone's OE strength provides numerous benefits for the replacement tyre business. In addition to the general feed-through effect, OE gives us new channel opportunities with manufacturer dealer networks, fleet markets and vehicle importers. Longer term, the aim to integrate OE and replacement product line-ups will provide the company with significant design, manufacturing and marketing efficiencies.

TOP CUSTOMERS IN THE EU (ALPHABETICAL ORDER)



Automobiles:

Audi, BMW, Daimler Chrysler Group, Ferrari, Fiat Group, Ford, General Motors, Honda, Land Rover, Mitsubishi, Nissan, Peugeot, Porsche, Renault, Suzuki, Toyota, VW Group.



Motorcycle:

Aprilia, BMW, Ducati, Honda, KTM, Suzuki, Triumph.



Trucks & Buses:

Daimler Chrysler, Iveco, MAN, Paccar (Daf, Leyland, Foden), Renault V.I., Scania, Volvo.



Agriculture:

Caterpillar, Carraro, Case, Claas, Goldoni, JCB, John Deere, Kubota, Massey Ferguson, New Holland, Same.



Off-the-road:

Caterpillar, Kalmar, Komatsu, Liebherr, Tamrock, Terex, Volvo.

REPLACEMENT MARKET

When a vehicle's tyres need changing, the owner enters the replacement market. This includes all tyres sold through retail channels, such as tyre dealers, auto centres, gas stations, hypermarkets and car dealers.

STAYING CLOSE TO CUSTOMERS

NATIONAL SALES SUBSIDIARIES, THE VITAL LINK

BSEU Sales and Marketing provides the policy and planning for pricing, channel development, sales promotion and advertising across Europe, as well as centralised product planning and field engineering. But it is the 17 national Bridgestone sales subsidiaries – distributing tyres throughout Europe – that keep the company close to the market.

Sales-force training is the foundation for our marketing activity. That is why we make full use of facilities across Europe – in the Technical centre, in factories, and of course in the Bridgestone European Training Centre in Béthune – to train both our personnel and our partners to achieve better sales and better service.

To further underline the strategic importance of training, we have built the European Education Centre, housed within the European proving ground near Rome. From here, a dedicated team of professionals provide training courses for partners and dealers, as well as for Bridgestone Group staff.



STRONG PARTNERSHIP APPROACH WITH RETAILERS

In addition to company owned tyre stores in Germany, France, Spain, Switzerland and the Netherlands, Bridgestone has developed strong retail-support programmes, providing market muscle for independent tyre dealers:



- The First Stop chain for car and commercial-van tyre dealers, with over 1,215 members in 21 European countries;
- The Truck Point network with over 1,900 specialist dealers in 21 countries providing pan-European truck fleets with 24-hour on-the-road service and effective cost/km tyre management off the road;
- The Agri Point program with over 700 dealers in 13 European countries, specialised in agricultural tyres, providing expert advice and delivering responsive service and support.

SHARPER MARKETING WITH E-BUSINESS



The Internet is a formidable marketing tool, bringing customers and suppliers together in real time. BSEU has invested heavily, both with consumers through the Net and with tyre dealers via Bridgestone's extranet Tyre Link.

Operational in all European markets, the Bridgestone Tyre Link helps dealers run their businesses faster and more efficiently with on-line ordering, delivery status, account statements and product information. BSEU's followed this with the launch of brand new European internet, intranet and extranet services.

BRIDGESTONE NO 1

MOTORCYCLE TYRES

- 2002 marked the successful return of Bridgestone to GP racing and the ascendancy of our Battlax brand to No 1 motorcycle radial tyre in Europe. Bridgestone has exciting plans in this dynamic market, where tyre safety and performance are such vital factors in the driver's mind.



OFF-THE-ROAD

- Bridgestone is the world's No 1 tyre manufacturer for off-the-road vehicles, which include earthmovers, loaders and dozers, graders, highway cranes and industrial port vehicles. The key to success? Technical excellence, development in partnership with vehicle manufacturers, after-sales service and technical support.



INNOVATIONS



GREATEC
AIRCEPT

AGRICULTURE

- Ever since Harvey Firestone created the first pneumatic tractor tyre in 1932, the Firestone brand has been a pioneer in agricultural tyres. In 2001, Firestone introduced its first high-speed tractor tyre (R9000 Evolution), responding to the needs of modern farmers for comfort, stability, smoothness and even wear at road speeds of up to 65 km/hour.



TRUCKS AND BUSES

- Bridgestone is leading the development of wide single-wheel fitments for commercial vehicles with the Greatec Mega Drive, providing increased economy, higher load-carrying capacity and environmental benefits for many commercial vehicles currently using double wheel configurations. Now with unique new AIRCEPT technology, an inner-ring system that expands instantly to support the load on the tyre if there is a sudden loss of pressure, Bridgestone has added safety to the list of benefits.
- Focusing on the growth of inter-country EU transport, BSEU has set up Mega-Fleet: a pan-European approach for large operators that includes centralised ordering and invoicing.
... Another real answer for truck operators.



- Safety is right at the top of the motoring agenda and tyres with Run Flat Technology (RFT) are proving to be the next step forward in car safety. Within the specified speed and distance limits (typically 80 kph for up to 80 km), the driver can complete his journey with no worry about having to change a flat tyre: RFT provides more comfort and convenience for the motorist. Indeed it eliminates the need to carry a spare tyre and therefore create more storage space. The latest vehicles available with RE050 RFT are the Ferrari 612 Scaglietti (factory option), Maserati Quattroporte and the BMW 5 series. The new 1 series of BMW is also available with a Bridgestone RFT tyre, namely the Potenza RE050 RFT or, Turanza ER300 RFT depending on rim sizes. The new BMW 3 series leaves the factory on Bridgestone ER300 RFT tyres.

LOGISTICS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE



Bridgestone Logistics Europe (BSLE)

INNOVATIONS

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION NOW A STRATEGIC ASSET

Product quality alone is no longer sufficient. Customers today demand rapid and precise delivery, providing consumers with optimum products while minimising stock levels. For dealers across Europe, especially multi-franchise outlets, logistics is now a key factor in brand selection.

Bridgestone Europe has met this challenge with a new, dynamic logistics and delivery strategy :

FASTER ORDER FULFILLMENT

- our new European e-commerce program gives dealers fast-track ordering and immediate confirmation;
- our integrated SAP platform has transformed inventory control and order replenishment rates at regional distribution centres;
- call centre operations have been rationalised to provide a quicker and more accurate response to customer enquiries.

STREAMLINED DISTRIBUTION NETWORK

- each BSEU manufacturing plant has its own efficient distribution centre, while imported products are centralised at our Belgian Zeebrugge port facility, which doubled in size in 2003;
- tyres are then delivered to customers by specialist pan-European carriers.

CONTINUOUS MONITORING AND IMPROVEMENT

- by continuously tracking key performance indicators – such as delivery time to dealer and order accuracy rates – and setting ourselves strict targets for improvement, we have been able to keep on raising delivery performance.

With this new logistics program, Bridgestone Europe can give customers a warehouse-to-dealer order fill within 24 hours. Top quality products, delivered fast and efficiently, right across Europe... this is our vision of customer service.



Bridgestone Logistics Europe (BSLE)

BRIDGESTONE MOTOR SPORT

COMPETITIVE EDGE



DOMINANT FORCE IN FORMULA 1

Bridgestone's impact in Formula 1 has been nothing short of astounding. Entering motor sport's most demanding challenge in 1997, Bridgestone tyres have carried driver and constructor teams to victory in 7 consecutive years since 1998.

FROM TRACK TO STREET

Underlying Bridgestone's success in Formula 1 is a competitive edge in minimising tyre deterioration during wear, real expertise in compound development, and arguably the best wet-grip technology in the world. Formula 1 provides Bridgestone Europe with a formidable technology platform for improving consumer products.



ON TWO WHEELS

Renowned on racing circuits around the world – from Japanese GT and Formula Nippon to FIA GT and karting – Bridgestone is now looking for further success on two wheels in Europe. In addition to continued support for the Honda Cas works team in the motocross World Grand Prix series, Bridgestone entered Moto GP in 2002, supported by a major R&D programme with new technologies.

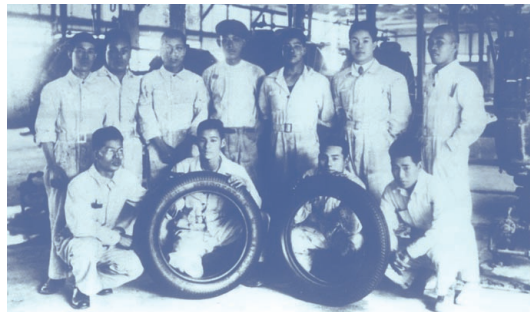


LANDMARKS

COMPETITIVE EDGE

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Everything. And Shojiro Ishibashi understood this well when he founded the Bridgestone Tire Co. Ltd in Japan, in 1931. At a time when foreign products were in high demand, he took the literal English translation of his name "Stone Bridge" and reversed it to create an international company name. A man with vision, ahead of his time.



The first Bridgestone tyres.



COMMUNITY SPIRIT AND MARKET GROWTH

Proving that public welfare can go hand-in-hand with profitable growth, Ishibashi celebrated the company's 25th anniversary by building the Ishibashi Cultural Centre in Kurume – where he had started his career making rubber-soled footwear back in 1925 – and then donating it to the city. By this time in the 1950's, Bridgestone had grown to be Japan's largest tyre manufacturer.



INTERNATIONAL EXPANSION

Having set up production in Malaysia in 1965, a marketing subsidiary in the USA in 1967, and a European representative office in Brussels in 1972, Bridgestone leapt onto the world market with the acquisition of a manufacturing facility in Tennessee, USA, from the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company in 1983. And it didn't end there. In 1988, Bridgestone acquired the entire Firestone company, the second largest tyre manufacturer in North America. Bridgestone was now a truly global operator.



TECHNOLOGY. THE DRIVING FORCE

Bridgestone's worldwide success can be attributed to its commitment to technology excellence, defined by the company motto "Serving society with superior quality". The list of firsts is impressive, from the development of the Multicell compound for studless snow tyres to the Potenza racing tyre that has carried Michael Schumacher and the Scuderia Marlboro Ferrari team to five consecutive Formula One championships.



FOCUSED ON THE FUTURE

And tomorrow? Bridgestone is working on exciting projects that promise increased safety for commercial vehicles and automobiles alike...

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