



50 years of ATR – from catalog association to global player

Auto-Teile-Ring GmbH is celebrating its 50th anniversary in June 2017. It is now the world's oldest and largest trade cooperation for automotive spare parts.

Stuttgart, May 2017 – 2017 marks a milestone in trade cooperation ATR's history. In June 2017, it is celebrating not only its 50th anniversary – thus making it the world's oldest trade cooperation in its sector – but also the fact that it has a presence on all continents. Since the start of the year, ATR has been represented around the world with the new shareholders GPC Asia Pacific in Australia and New Zealand, and in Asia with BSB Junrose in the Philippines, EAT Euro America Trading in South Korea, and GOLDENLINK AUTO in Singapore.

Now with 34 shareholders and 251 trading firms in 60 countries and sales by ATR members of over 20 billion euros, ATR can look back on half a century of rapid development and can look forward to an equally successful future.

Formation

As early as the 1950s, a catalog association involving a number of wholesalers existed on the spare parts market in Germany. Leading the way were Matthies in Hamburg and STAHLGRUBER from Munich, which are still ATR shareholders to this day. In the mid-1960s, oil companies Esso and BP pushed their way onto the market with car accessory shops at service stations, thus creating considerable competition for the established companies on the spare parts market. The established companies therefore decided to pool their resources



on the procurement market for car parts, car accessories and workshop equipment by founding a purchasing cooperative to strengthen their market position. And so in 1967, Auto-Teile-Ring GmbH, or ATR for short, was created. The founding members were wholesalers Auto-Steiger in Stuttgart, Matthies in Hamburg, Merkur in Wuppertal and Wessels in Osnabrück, joined soon after by STAHLGRUBER from Munich.

Growth

ATR developed into a significant trade cooperation in the 1970s and 1980s. Throughout this time, the ATR partners consistently pursued a philosophy of offering customers a full range of products with original branded parts and garage equipment, and expanding the network of sales locations. With the launch of ATR's own brand Cartechnic in 1995, it also became possible to offer high-quality products as inexpensive alternatives. At the start of the 1990s, ATR also took its first steps toward internationalization, accepting partners from France and Spain. This led to the vision of international shareholders enjoying equal rights and became a reality in 1999 with the founding of ATR International AG (with ten members from eight countries). ATR International AG is a stock corporation that is not listed on any stock exchange. The wholesalers are shareholders of ATR and have equal rights.

National/international workshop concepts

The ATR association was a pioneer in major developments in the industry such as the electronic parts information system and the resistance to protection of designs. As a result of the structural change on the German spare parts and repair market in the 1990s, the focus was also placed on marketing and sales, thus giving rise to the Meisterhaft workshop concept in 1997. The autoPARTNER and AC AUTO



CHECK concepts followed in 2000 and 2001. Over 1,500 professional, expert and competitive concept companies are now under the umbrella of ATR SERVICE GmbH, founded in 2008. The ACC AUTO CHECK CENTER international workshop concept has also been in existence since 2005 and now has over 270 facilities in Rumania, Hungary, Greece, the Czech Republic, Croatia, Portugal and Turkey.

Internationalization

In 2004, just five years after ATR International AG was founded, the network comprised 20 European trading firms from 18 countries (Austria, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Slovakia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, the UK and Ukraine). The international trade cooperation took a further key step in expanding its market position by developing the IPAS concept. IPAS stands for International Preferred ATR Supplier. ATR used this concept from 2005 onwards to build up a standardized supplier portfolio for the top-selling product groups, thus consolidating the collaboration between the parts dealers and industrial suppliers. Success wasn't long in coming, as by 2006 ATR already had 28 shareholders with operations and branches in 35 European countries. Sales with IPAS suppliers in particular grew at above-average levels.

ATR International AG developed rapidly in the following years – 2007 saw as the first member to join from overseas – IMC –, in 2009 the first shareholder in the Middle East – Aaron Montecchio – was welcomed, and in 2011 further shareholders opened up the markets in Central and Southern Africa and South America. They were followed by Central Asia, Canada, North Africa, Australia and Southeast Asia. Despite its size, ATR is still an association of strong and equal partners. It is able to consolidate and expand the competitive position of



all shareholders through targeted purchasing and marketing strategies. It has achieved the aim of becoming a market leader in Europe and being represented on all continents. Now the focus is on pressing on with the expansion of services and strengthening ATR partners in the global marketplace. In the words of Roland Dilmetz, Managing Director of Auto-Teile-Ring GmbH and chairman of ATR International AG:

“Socrates is reputed to have said: ‘He who believes he is something has stopped becoming something.’ That’s why ATR will continue to constantly set itself new goals, develop, and face the challenges of the industry.”

Caption:

50 years ATR: Roland Dilmetz (sixth from the right), Managing Director of ATR with his team, sees ATR well prepared for future challenges. (Picture: ATR)



About ATR:

The market association ATR (Auto-Teile-Ring) was founded in 1967 when five leading independent automotive parts dealers in Germany joined forces to form a strong collaboration.

ATR International AG, based in Stuttgart, was founded in 1999 and is the continuation of this idea and a response to the changing societal and market structures in Europe. Some 34 shareholders with 251 trading firms in 60 countries are currently members of ATR International AG and generated external sales of 20 billion euros in 2016. The member companies are market leaders in their home countries. Further information is available at www.atr.de.

**If you require any further information,
please do not hesitate to contact us:**

Edith Pisching
ATR SERVICE GmbH
ATR International AG

Tel.: +49 (711) 918979.26
Fax: +49 (711) 918979.70
E-mail: episching@atr.de

Jan Peters
Communication Consultants
GmbH Engel & Heinz

Tel.: +49 (711) 97893.15
Fax: +49 (711) 97893.44
E-mail: peters@cc-stuttgart.de

**Approved for publication -
please send a copy to:**

Communication Consultants
GmbH Engel & Heinz
Breitwiesenstrasse 17
70565 Stuttgart
Germany