



The brand. The company.

Schwalbe. The German word for “Swallow”: a songbird notable for its swift, graceful flight. It represents happiness, longing, freedom. For us it symbolizes the joy of cycling. Being carefree and dynamic, natural and independent as we travel the world.





“Let us project ten years into the future. Who will be cycling how and where in the world and how often a day? That is something no one can know. But I dare say that more people will be cycling and doing so more frequently. After all, beyond all the economic imponderables, society views the bicycle as signifying encouragement and growth. Urbanization, energy efficiency, sustainability, healthier lifestyles, personal goals ... it does not require much reflection to discover the “pro bicycle” dynamics behind all these topical buzzwords.

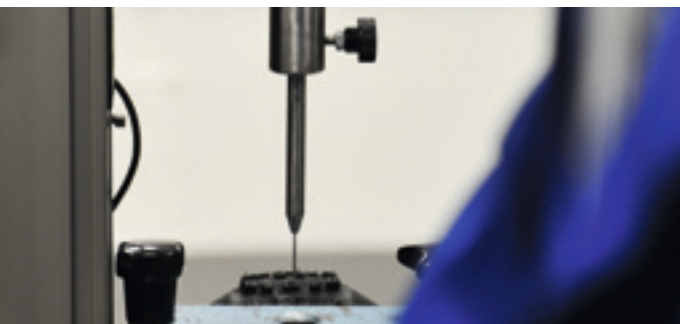
Everyone at Schwalbe loves bicycles. My family’s connection with bikes is over 100 years old. What makes bikes so fascinating is their ingenious simplicity coupled with their amazing versatility – through improved technology, in creative designs, as new sports disciplines. We play our part in all of this, with our indomitable enthusiasm – as the world’s leading bicycle tire specialist.



There was a time in the bike industry when quantity was more important than quality. It was then that my father, with visionary foresight, decided that the key to success was to concentrate on one product and work passionately to improve it. And there was something else he established once and for all as a ground rule for the Schwalbe brand: being fair in business dealings with all the people who place their trust in us – partners, employees and customers, bicycle manufacturers, dealers, consumers. We believe that innovation and quality will win through – and quality must be maintained, come what may. That is the philosophy that inspires our market leadership.”

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Frank Bohle".

Frank Bohle, CEO and Spokesman of the Board

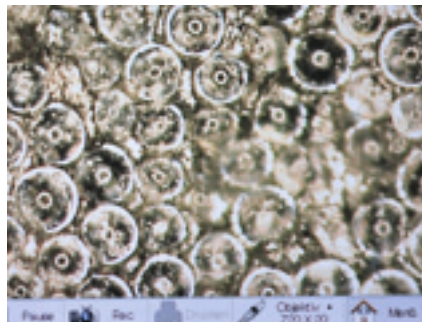
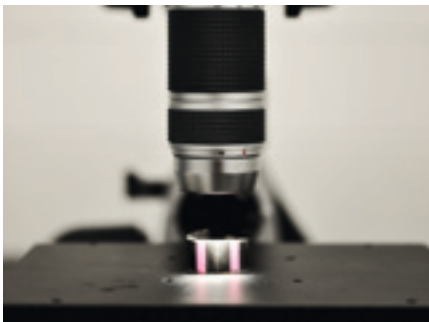


Holger Jahn, Managing Director Technology. Head of product development. Keen cyclist. Whenever possible, he rides in the Schwalbe TourTransalp in the summer – seven days over the Alps.

Innovation

Squaring the circle. Building a bicycle tire that cannot be improved upon. This tire would have to combine superlative properties that are essentially contradictory: maximum grip, optimum mileage performance, most reliable puncture protection, best possible rolling behavior, minimum weight. The ideal can never be achieved. But that is no reason not to try. On the contrary: constructing tires is a wonderful challenge. Creativity and intelligence are the foundations. Precision and experience are indispensable. And nothing is possible without passion and endurance in the face of adversity. Coping with innumerable series of tests, continuing the search or starting again from scratch, but never giving up: modifying ingredients, varying design principles, finding new combinations of materials, refining treads ...the creative interplay of all options is the essential ingredient of a new tire.

It is a thoroughly evolutionary process. That is why we have given the range of high-end products we have developed a new name: EVO. Evolution. A new tire is in development: construction designs have to be calculated, variant simulations have to be run, formulations have to be analyzed in the laboratory, test results have to be recorded – all these processes are part of every Schwalbe innovation. It takes the brains and hands of many individuals to make it happen. After all, these processes are not just carried out once, but several times. Not just by the research and development team in Germany, but also, identically, by our technical colleagues at our production facility in Indonesia. This highly productive teamwork that transcends national and cultural borders is an essential element for Schwalbe. A method that is now termed “global work sharing” is something that we, in an equal partnership, have been practicing for over 30 years.





Marcus Lambertz. Productmanager Wheelchair, Scooter and Tubes.

What does a tire have to deliver? When is it the best in its class? That is not something decided by the developers. It is decided by those who ride on those tires. So we listen, we ask, we discuss, we learn. We want to build tires that really do fulfill our customers' wishes, tires that are truly better than their predecessors. And before an innovation is ready to go into production, it is tested again and again and again as part of the Schwalbe "First Ride" development program – by professional riders and keen cyclists who are uncompromising in telling us the truth.



René Marks. Product Manager Trekking and Tour. World traveler by bike.

Innovation is one side of the coin. Quality assurance is the other. We are convinced that only a combination of the two deserves to be called brand quality. That is why Schwalbe does not have a hierarchy of countries and sites, one for high-end tires, the other for mass production. That is why all Schwalbe products have to pass the same, extremely rigorous, double quality assurance system. Quite independently, the finished tires are tested at the production plant and again in Europe before they are released onto the market.



Markus Hachmeyer. Chief Developer. In his head: thousands of ideas about how to improve tires. In his legs: thousands of kilometers of MTB racing.

Cycling is both a pastime and a sport – with many different disciplines. Cycling represents individual mobility for the present day – in urban traffic, in tourism and a leisure activity. Cycling is trendy. And: cycling is more varied and demanding like never before. As creative bicycle tire engineers, we are facing great challenges. That is something we relish.



Developing what the market needs. Take the 6-level puncture protection system as an example: tires with the blue puncture protection belt are the only ones that can truly be called “flat-less”. Then there are the Twentyniners: as demand increased, Schwalbe was very rapidly in a position to supply a wide range of models in the new tire size.



Many components are assembled here to make a tire that has its own special size and features: the “green tire”. This production stage clearly illustrates that despite all the automated support processes, every tire still requires high-precision dexterity .

Production

In the beginning there was an entrepreneurial vision. It is the nineteen seventies and no one thinks of bicycle tires as a quality product. For bike manufacturers they are fast-wearing parts to be purchased as cheaply as possible. Cyclists mostly associate tires with one particular kind of unpleasant experience: a puncture. Ralf Bohle, Schwalbe's founder, has a different vision. He believes that bicycle tires of a consistently high quality can establish themselves in the market and that bicycle tires have great potential. He also foresees quite clearly that it will be almost impossible to continue to mass-produce such products at a competitive price in Europe.

The Bohle family business based in Reichshof, 60 kilometers east of Cologne, has been involved in the bicycle sector for decades, and has traditionally had good contacts in Asia. In 1973 Ralf Bohle began his collaboration with Hung-A, a Korean family business, that was already producing tires in Korea, and would later start up production in Indonesia as well. From day one this early European-Asian joint venture between two SMEs was based on respect and trust. After all, they shared one major, common objective: jointly to develop, produce and market a new type of high-quality bicycle tire.



Jung Yong Wan (left) and Jung Sung Won (right), Managing Directors of Hung-A.



Every tubular tire is handmade – from start to finish. There is a separate production unit for this very special technology. From the carcass to the final seam – responsibility for each operation lies in the hands of the most experienced workers.



An efficient and precise workflow is a key element in ensuring a consistently high quality. The production lines at the Schwalbe factory are organized so that only a minimum of retooling is required, despite the wide range of products.

A leap in time: almost half a century later. The next generation runs the joint venture of these family-owned businesses. All Schwalbe tires are made at the Schwalbe plant in Jakarta, Indonesia. Every year more than 14 million tires leave the factory, and the trend is upward. That means job security for more than 3,000 people.

Continuity of employment for skilled workers is a key factor for success. The company is constantly investing in the factory with a view to enhancing opportunities in the global marketplace. Schwalbe relies on total exclusivity in production. No tires or tubes are outsourced from other production plants. And not even a single batch is manufactured for outside brands. Every stage of production is carried out under one roof. We have short. Dependence on subcontractors is extremely low. The manufacture of every product is fully controlled by Schwalbe – from start to finish. It is truly and literally “guaranteed Schwalbe quality”.



Thousands and thousands of products leave the Schwalbe factory every day. They all meet the high requirements expected from a branded product. This also means that settings, materials, components and semi-finished products must be constantly controlled.



Ralf Bohle (1935-2010). Managed the family-owned business for over 45 years. Founded the Schwalbe brand. His vision, his courage and the example he set are the sources of success.

1922

Two brothers, Eugen and Willy Bohle, started their business exporting bicycle components, made in Germany and other European countries, all over the world. Most of the countries of destination are in Asia. One family member had already devoted himself to bicycles before that. In 1911 Ernst-Wilhelm Bohle had been a co-founder of Phillips Cycles Limited in England. The company is destined to become Britain's second biggest bicycle manufacturer.

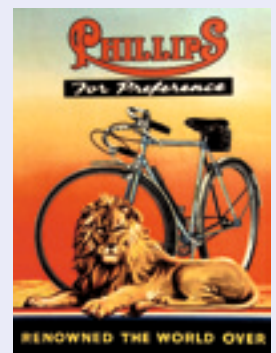
1939 The export business grinds to a halt with the start of World War II. Hardly any bicycle parts are being produced in the war-time economy and can only be sold within the national borders.

1951 The Bohle brothers again obtain an export license.

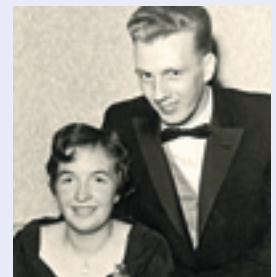
1955 At just 20 years old, Ralf Bohle joins the company founded by his father, who dies soon afterwards. Major global upheaval has begun. Colonies are becoming independent states, import destinations are becoming



Eugen und Willy Bohle 1922



Phillips: Co-founded by Ernst-Wilhelm Bohle



The young Ralf Bohle with his wife Ute in 1955



The family home in Bergneustadt, also the workplace of the first employees

countries with their own industrial production.

Bicycle parts from Germany cannot survive such competition in the long term. Instead of exporting, increasing numbers of products are being imported. “These were really tough years where everything was in flux,” is how Ralf Bohle remembered those times.

1970 Ralf Bohle employs his outstanding expertise and contacts in the Far Eastern economic area and begins to import specific bicycle components for domestic bike manufacturers.

1973

The Schwalbe brand is born. Ralf Bohle decides: “We will specialize exclusively in bicycle tires.” In the Korean Hung-A family enterprise he finds a partner with whom it is possible to guarantee a consistently high quality. After just two years the five-year target of three million tires per annum that they had set themselves has been reached.

1983 Everyday travel by bike



In the eighties: “Swallow” turns into “Schwalbe”.



In the nineties the cactus symbolizes the new puncture protection.



2000: The “Shark” is chosen as advertising symbol – its grip is as powerful as the MTB treads.

is gradually increasing again in our motorized society. A tough on-road test as part of a world cycling trip helps with the development of a new tire – the Marathon. The tire possesses a mileage performance that has never been known before. It is the first tire for touring and everyday bikes that is absolutely uncompromising as regards quality. The Marathon range has been setting standards in this class ever since.

1995

The logistics center for global distribution is inaugurated. It is also the corporate headquarters and workplace for 100 employees – when the Schwalbe brand was set up in Germany, there were just seven employees.

2000 The next generation joins the company’s management team: Frank Bohle (CEO) Holger Jahn (Technology) and Andreas Grothe (Finance) are appointed as Managing Directors.

2011 Direct brand presence is extended to 43 countries.



Mobility



Carsten Zahn. Head of Global Marketing. The reason why his dream of crossing Asia by bike is rationed to annual holiday stages.



The bike on which Wolfgang Reiche rode round the world.

Marathon is the name of the best-known Schwalbe tire. Today it is on millions of bikes. 1986 was the first year it was seen on the road. This had been preceded by the most work-intensive and relentless product development ever seen for a bicycle tire. For several years Wolfgang Reiche, the adventure cyclist, traveled round the world by bike. No one was better suited to testing the engineer's ideas under the toughest conditions. New test tires from Germany waited for him at each of his stopping points and he sent in his test reports from wherever he was – so the first Marathon matured from continent to continent.

Both the cycle and the Marathon tire of that time are certainly no longer state of the art. But the philosophy behind the name has remained: durable, reliable, almost indestructible – the best tire for individual, independent mobility by bike. It is a long time ago since there was only one Marathon tire rather than the Marathon range now available – different tires, treads and fitments to suit a wide range of requirements, for major expeditions and leisurely touring, for the hustle and bustle of urban traffic and for maximum everyday puncture protection, for icy roads in winter and for off-road rides.

Since 2001 the Marathon family has also included the only bicycle tires that can truly be called “flat-less”. Schwalbe developed special puncture protection to series maturity. Anyone riding with this flat-less puncture protection finds that what used to be the greatest annoyance on the road has become just a distant memory. This trailblazing innovation from Schwalbe has made a considerable contribution to the rediscovered attractions of cycling.





Cycling is becoming an alternative mode of urban transport throughout the world.

At Schwalbe we have always been convinced that cycling is an irreplaceable element of our everyday culture – despite the many decades of emphasis on individual motorization – quite simply because it is a natural form of people-friendly mobility. Today there are very many countries, and especially major cosmopolitan cities, where cycling has been rediscovered or where it is a newfound alternative, even if only to counteract the threat of gridlock and rising energy prices.

The bicycle is proving to be an extremely clever and highly practical mode of individual transport worldwide. That is why it has such enormous potential. That is why the typology of bikes and riding styles is as varied as never before. That is why the demands voiced by increasingly distinct user groups are growing. That is why we back the future of the bike with our head and our heart, by constantly inventing new and better tires.

However, there is a motorized version of modern mobility on two wheels. Scooters – and no doubt the new type of E-scooters in future – are part of it. Schwalbe has been manufacturing the typically compact tires for this special vehicle type for many years now.



Manuela Zahn. Passionate about the needs of wheelchair users and responsible for the associated product management.

Mobility on wheels is an existential issue for everyone using a wheelchair. It is the basis for their quality of life and independence. We at Schwalbe can also do our part. That is why we have been developing special solutions since the nineties and why we have positively revolutionized the technology and design of wheelchair tires.



Specializing in meeting particular requirements: Energizer is the name we have given our tire range for E-Bikes. The high-volume Big Apple tire started the Balloonbike trend. Schwalbe also manufactures two-wheel tires for scooters, including a retro design featuring white walls.



Sport



Doris Klytta. Public relations and events. Former member of the national road race team. Rode in the Tour de France.

Eurobike, the world's largest sports bike show. Every year, thousands of the latest mountain bikes can be admired in Friedrichshafen, a German city on the shores of Lake Constance. Adorning these bikes can be found wide tires with names such as Nobby Nic, Racing Ralph, Big Betty, Dirty Dan, Muddy Mary, Fat Albert, Hans Dampf all picked out in silvery white letters. There can be no doubt about it: all these tires belong to the Schwalbe product family. European, North American and Asian bicycle brands put their trust in Schwalbe, in tires with a legendary reputation gained in innumerable races, tests and by being ridden by millions of mountain bikers throughout the world.

It was in the mid-1990s that Schwalbe's newly developed off-road tires first caused a stir, because the German brand had, until then, been renowned primarily for excellent touring tires, but scarcely for ones noted for their sporting performance. Just a few years later Schwalbe became the "Best Brand" for mountain bikers. Ever since 2002 the readers of Europe's largest circulation mountain bike magazine have regularly awarded this undisputed accolade to the tires with the characteristic names.



Olympic Games. Sabine Spitz wins a gold medal on Schwalbe.

Defending this title is hard work. After all, mountain biking – an Olympic discipline since just 1996, the first gold medal on Schwalbe having been won in 2008 – is a young and creative sport. The off-road courses vary widely in nature. Given the increasingly sophisticated bike construction, tires are an immensely



Events: The spectacular stage race for everybody, the Schwalbe TourTransalp, takes place in summer. Thousands of visitors flock to the Schwalbe stand at the Eurobike international bike show in September.



Downhill World Champion Danny Hart on his "Dirty Dan" tires.



Tire support at events.

important factor when it comes to the performance of these racing machines. Completely new disciplines are evolving, and athletes are making increasingly ambitious demands. So our tire engineers have to deliver innovations to exact specifications: for instance when Schwalbe developed a special tire for the young English Downhill World Champion Danny Hart, a tire on which he accomplished a spectacular ride in pouring rain and an unbelievable winning margin of 11 seconds. Or when the market had to be supplied with a high-quality tire in extra-fast time because new frame geometries for the bikes and new tire sizes were causing a sensation. Or when the best "Tubeless Ready" tires had to be developed within a single season so that the tires, combined with latex fluid, made tubes superfluous. Mountain bikers know that when people become passionate about tire innovations, Schwalbe will be behind it.

Racing. There has been a battle for the yellow jersey of the Tour de France for over 100 years now. Schwalbe is much younger. But it is not just the august stages of the world's most famous tour that have been won on Schwalbe. After all, we are just as ambitious when it comes to pointing the way in this sport



Nico Simons. Sales Manager
OEM.

that is steeped in tradition. We have been equipping international teams for years. Our own-brand race support is there during the races and the training sessions. The feedback we get from the athletes constantly inspires our new developments. Since 2006 Ultremo is the name of our range of race tires. There are versions to meet all kinds of requirements: folding tires, tubeless tires, time-trial tires, rain tires, triathlon tires and tubular tires, all made by hand in our own factory.



Ultremo in action. Just as popular for one-day classics as for the great tours.



Bernd Hopp. With the company from the start. Head of Global Sales.



Anne Konrad. Head of Purchasing and Planning.

Distribution

Branded products need a perfect distribution system. That is why one rule has applied ever since the first Schwalbe tire was sold: Schwalbe products are only available from specialist dealers. Because it takes professional advice, a wide selection, attractive presentation and good technical service to win people over to cycling for good.

The products themselves take the most efficient route via wholesalers. However, our sales consultants carry our know-how directly to the retail trade. They provide direct support – free from perational sales – on site and at the same time they act as sensitive “sounding-boards” to in discovering any new market requirements.

An example to illustrate this partnership: 2003 was the year we first introduced a modular shop-in-shop system. This can now be found in innumerable outlets. Never before have tires been sold so transparently, successfully and in such variety. That is why increasing numbers of specialist dealers are choosing



Andreas Grothe. Managing Director Finance.

this method, this clear brand identity and consistent service. And it is many years ago since this only applied in the “bicycle countries” of Germany and the Netherlands rather than the whole of Europe. Schwalbe is the leading bicycle tire brand in Europe. Schwalbe tires are now available on every continent – as the brand is represented by subsidiaries or sole agencies in over 40 countries. Cycling has a global future. We are more than ready to do our part.



Stock turnover in the bicycle industry is subject to major seasonal fluctuation. The greatest possible output is demanded in the shortest possible time. Reserve capacities in our worldwide logistics center are accordingly designed to be flexible. And the high standards that we have set ourselves in terms of quality control and service continue to apply – without compromise.



Ralf Bohle GmbH. Headquarters and Logistics Center for world-wide distribution. Opened in 1995.



Schwalbe UK. Office and Logistics Center for bicycle manufacturers and wholesalers in Great Britain and Ireland. Opened in 2008.



Schwalbe Nederland. Office and Logistics Center for bicycle manufacturers and wholesalers in the Netherlands. Opened in 2004.

And in Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Hong Kong, Hungary, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Korea, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Malta, Mexico, Montenegro, New Zealand, Norway, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Singapore, Slovenia, Slovakia, Spain, South Africa, Sweden, Switzerland, Taiwan, Thailand, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, USA.

