



The participants of the "Infinity Partners Day" are posing for the family album.

"INFINITY PARTNERS DAY" IN CHINA

New tyres for Europe

The brand Infinity Tyres has experienced a considerable boost in popularity in our country in the past months. The responsible people find their products located in the higher budget segment – a balanced price-performance ratio is the core element of Infinity's sales concept. During the "Partners Day" the Ecomax/Ecosis range of products was presented as a new tyre generation to the European traders. The Chinese tyre specialists of the brand Linglong are responsible for development and production.

Above all with regard to the specialised tyre trade, the responsible people of the brand Infinity Tyres have impressively beaten the advertising drum in the past months. The extensive media campaign was considered to be the starting signal for the introduction of the new tyre line, which is intended to stir up the budget segment in the European market – the Ecomax/Ecosis range of products is a further development of the INF 030 series. "Infinity Tyres loves innovation" is used as slogan for the advertising campaign of the tyre brand focussing on local markets. In contrast to other big brands, which follow a similar price and product positioning, Infinity developed an

advertising strategy concentrating on core markets which were identified at managerial level. This is supposed to pave the way for the introduction of the new tyre range of models which were presented with their completely new tread designs and dimensions to the partners and associated companies at the "Infinity Partners Day" in Beijing. The new product line will officially be presented at the international trade fair REIFEN 2012 in Essen from 5th to 8th June. The model range INF 030 which was launched in the year 2006 is meant to be replaced by this now more environmentally-friendly and more powerful range of products. According to the company, particularly the behaviour on wet roads



The whole range of Infinity products is produced and developed by specialists of the Chinese tyre brand Linglong.

was improved and an overall more balanced product could be produced at this new level of tyre evolution. The two series are said to have gone through intensive test cycles in the run-up of the market launch in order to guarantee that concerning the European regulations for labelling tyres a competitive product will be available.

Progress in development

A higher proportion of silicate is the core element of the optimised tyre series. According to Jorge Crespo, Managing Director of Infinity Europe, the range of models was developed "on the basis of the feedback of a high number of our European customers". An improvement of driving characteristics on wet road was in the focus. According to the development department, a big potential of wet grip, braking distance and aquaplaning resistance could be put into practice compared with the range of models of the predecessor. Moreover, the new range of models could be designed in a more environmentally friendly way. When producing all the tyres of the new range of products, procedures are made use of which pay attention to the EFFE company guidelines concerning environmental friendliness and fuel consumption efficiency. The environmental concern is also expressed by the new brand name Ecosis. "We decided in favour of the name Ecosis as this is an extremely eco-friendly tyre which illustrates our commitment to protection of the environment. Infinity focuses on saving energy and protection of the environment. These are guideline we feel obliged to. We are of the opinion that our EFFE procedures facilitate a "green" production with low CO2 emissions and thus, we offer the eco-friendly tyres that our customers demand nowadays" Crespo says.



The Infinity management team in the Forbidden City (from left to right): Nigel Hampson, Surrender Singh Kandhari, K.K. Singh, Clive Mansfield, Babu Mathews and Jorge Crespo

During the "Infinity Partners Day" in China partners and some journalists had the possibility of getting a first impression of the new tyre series. The Linglong production

units were among others also visited. The Linglong CEO, Wang Feng, and the Infinity Management around Surrender Singh Kandhari and Harjeev Singh Kandhari disclosed together the new treads and emphasized during this occasion the importance of the cooperation with the brand belonging to the Al Dobowi Group. "Infinity is a growing brand. Due to producing these tyres we could achieve sales of more than 100 million dollar last year" Wang Feng explained. Apart from this, he set the target for the European market of reaching a level of 30 million Infinity tyres.

The General Manager was less ambitious concerning the German market in a conversation with AutoRäderReifen-Gummibereifung: "It is our target to realise a market share of about one per cent in the next twelve months." Nonetheless, there is a target value of a market share from three to five per cent for markets on this continent which are more focussed on budget products. Crespo considers especially the introduction of



Der Besuch des Linglong-Werks war der Höhepunkt des diesjährigen Infinity Partners Day.



Linglong CEO, Wang Feng turned out to be an excellent host.

the EU labelling to be a big chance for the brand Infinity. He thinks that there is not such a striking quality gap between premium products and many tyres of the higher budget segment. The manufacturer will only have to expect negative effects for tyres with labels below category "B". Furthermore, the manager does not see any important relevance of the labelling for the end-consumer. The labelling, however, will play an important role for traders during price negotiations. These could expect qualitative development boosts from the brand Infinity in the future. According to Jorge Crespo, the company is concentrating on complementing the tyre portfolio at the moment as the development of a new winter tyre series is in full swing.

First test units carried out

The responsible people at Infinity are confidently looking forward to the upcoming introduction of the UHP series Ecomax and the HP series Ecosis. A few weeks ago, the first subjective tests were carried out at the IDI-ADA testing facilities. The team for integral performance tests were instructed to carry out a comparing test between the new tyre prototypes by Infinity, two big European premium brands and a less popular Asian manufacturer for the replacement tyre market. A BMW 320d was used as testing vehicle for the Ecomax prototypes and a GOLF MARK VI 1.6TDI Blue Motion was equipped with Ecosis. Both Infinity prototypes have the same style of construction, but differ with regard to the tread compound. Performance characteristics were supposed to be found out in the following categories: handling under



Partners and journalists could examine the new treads.

normal conditions, subjective handling under more critical conditions, wet handling, dry handling, noise development and comfort. According to the management of the company, the running of the tests was more than satisfactory. Especially concerning wet characteristics significant improvements could be achieved compared with the predecessor series. Jorge Crespo commented: "We assigned IDIADA with the tests of our new models in order to guarantee that the testing would be carried out by professionals in the best possible way and that these results would completely meet all existing requirements, guidelines and regulations. I am very pleased with the outstanding results of the Infinity prototypes. Now we will accelerate the development of our range of models on the basis of the data we received at these internationally renowned testing facilities." Unfortunately, the objective test data of the Ecomax/Ecosis tyres were not available before the editorial deadline. Nevertheless, the feedback of the dealers who were present in China was very positive. Frank van Leeuwen from EuroTyre expressed the demands of the European distributors: "All distributors would like to grow together with Infinity." Van Leeuwen, however, also used the "Partners Day" in order to raise questions concerning availability, extension of the range of dimensions and pricing. An intensive exchange about these parameters was also defined by further important trade partners as basis for a long-term partnership and sustainable success with Infinity products. (kle)



Multi-talented: Harjeev Singh Kandhari.



When the Infinity tourist group is on its way in China, it may happen that a complete road will be closed.