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 Service Partner

# Competence Center for e-mobility

By Andreas Prillmann, Director Operations, Formel D GmbH

115,000 m<sup>2</sup> of parking spaces for around 5,750 vehicles, a technical center measuring 1,500 m<sup>2</sup> with professional equipment and good water, rail and road connections: Since 2016, Formel D has set benchmarks with its Verification and Campaign Center (VCC) in Ahlhorn, North Germany. Now, the Group is gradually expanding the location into a Competence Center for electromobility to meet ever-growing customer demand.

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Based on this and other global trends in the automotive industry, the key to success and sustainability more than ever lies in the optimization of quality assurance processes. This is where Formel D comes into play, offering tailored solutions to OEMs and suppliers along the entire automotive value chain.

## Successful projects in product development, production and aftersales

One key location is the VCC in Ahlhorn. For three years, Formel D has implemented successful projects in product development, production and aftersales for customers here. The location's portfolio includes value-adding services in the areas of vehicle post-processing, vehicle verification, testing and validation, vehicle refurbishment, pre-delivery inspection and control unit programming. With this large

range of services, paired with a variable capacity, the VCC also provides an answer to the growing OEM trend of increasingly outsourcing floor space.

Today, Formel D is already focusing on electric vehicle operations in Ahlhorn. Among other things, the service provider performs work on high-voltage batteries, electric motors, drive shafts, axles and control units. Measuring 1,500 m<sup>2</sup>, the Technology Center is equipped with nine two post lifts, one four post lift, one axle alignment stand and a driving assistant workstation. The lifts are designed for vehicles weighing up to 3.5 tons, so they offer enough carrying capacity for electric vehicles with heavy batteries. Equipment for assembly/disassembly, transport and storage is already in place, meaning the service provider can respond to a wide range of customer requests.

Electromobility is now at the top of almost every manufacturer's agenda – a development set to accelerate rapidly in the years to come. In focus are topics such as extending the range through lightweight design and more powerful batteries, expansions to the charging infrastructure and further vehicle networking – both within the vehicle and with other road users. On top of that, both major OEMs and small-series manufacturers are more and more often relying on electromobility.

## Advancements in personnel, equipment and infrastructure

To transform the VCC into a true Competence Center for electromobility, Formel D is gradually implementing different measures in terms of personnel, equipment and infrastructure. The Group attaches great importance to continuous employee training and development. Currently, eight car mechanics/mechatronics specialists are trained for high voltage level 2. All mechanics and mechatronics specialists are trained in high voltage and a majority of them are already certified ESD specialists. In the future, not only will all operational employees be certified to high voltage level 2 – a certain percentage will even be specialized in high voltage level 3. This ensures that there is a capable specialist with the required expertise on every shift. Furthermore, the team is also able to take on high-voltage jobs off site. Consequently, customers can rely on the competence of seasoned experts without having to qualify their own employees.

In terms of space and equipment, there is potential to expand at the VCC. For higher volumes of cars, Formel D can offer an additional hall measuring 2,500 m<sup>2</sup> with privacy screen; further halls are also available as needed. Short-term plans include additional storage space for batteries and axles, a fiber-glass network for the entire location and an optimized charging infrastructure with up to 160 kW charging current. The buildings also offer enough space to continue conventional retrofit business. Whether storage, care measures, technical reworking, shipping and handling or logistics support: The customer gets professional services from a single source.

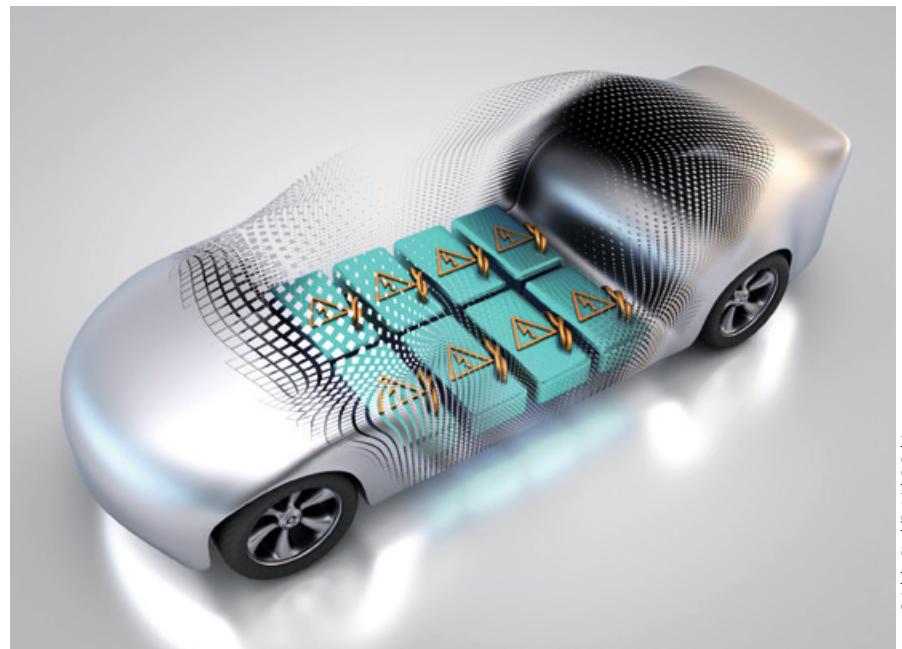


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### Good water, rail and street connections

The business environment rounds off the list of the location's attractive offerings. The VCC Ahlhorn is located in the middle of the Bremen-Oldenburg region, meaning it is near the three large sea and export ports of Hamburg, Bremerhaven and Wilhelmshaven. Important highways and rail connections for freight transport are also in the immediate vicinity. The VCC site even has rail access.

With all these premises, the VCC meets the requirements for a modern, viable location. As

a reliable partner at its customers' side with expertise, equipment and the appropriate infrastructure, Formel D is pleased to develop concepts for the changing requirements in the automotive industry. ■

#### Website

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