

125 years of Webasto: An anniversary marking a new beginning for the future

Since its founding in 1901, the company has reinvented itself several times. This innovative strength has made the automotive supplier great. And in view of current challenges, it is more in demand than ever.

Stockdorf – March 9, 2026 – The history of Webasto begins March 7, 1901 as a small craft business for sheet metal goods in Esslingen. Stamped parts, fittings, and parts for mousetraps are part of the portfolio of company founder Wilhelm Baier.

When the company moved to Stockdorf near Munich in 1908, it was given its current name, "Webasto" – an acronym formed from "Wilhelm Baier" and "Stockdorf." The pioneering spirit that still characterizes the company today was evident early on: in Stockdorf, Webasto quickly found its way into the mobility sector, manufacturing luggage racks and mudguards for bicycles, which were the primary means of individual transportation at the time.

When the automobile gained in importance in the 1930s, Webasto developed the first foldable fabric roof, followed shortly afterwards by the first vehicle heater. Webasto now also produces electric heaters and battery systems for electromobility, once again demonstrating how existing expertise can be successfully transferred to new technologies.

"Our company history shows that we have always been particularly strong when we had the courage to rethink things," says Werner Baier, great-grandson of company founder Wilhelm Baier and current member of the Supervisory Board. "Innovation is not a chapter of our past, but a living present and our foundation for the future."

An anniversary marked by realignment

Webasto, like the entire automotive industry, is undergoing profound change. "We are at a point where we need to do many things differently again," says Jörg Buchheim, CEO of Webasto. "We need to move faster and get closer to our customers in order to grow profitably. Our 125-year history gives us the confidence that we can successfully follow this path."

"125 years of Webasto means 125 years of courage, change, and innovative strength," said Werner Baier. "This attitude has made us strong and will continue to guide us in the future."

About Webasto

As a global innovative systems partner to the mobility industry, Webasto is one of the 100 largest suppliers to the automotive sector worldwide. In development, manufacturing, and sales, the company focuses on roof systems on the one hand and on vehicle electrification on the other hand. The product range includes openable and fixed roofs, electric high-voltage heaters and batteries, as well as thermo management solutions. Among the customers of Webasto are manufacturers of

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passenger cars, commercial vehicles, boats, as well as dealers and end customers. In 2024, the Group generated sales of around 4.3 billion euros and employed around 15,300 people at more than 50 locations. The headquarters of the company, which was founded in 1901, is located in Stockdorf near Munich (Germany). For more information, please visit www.webasto.com

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