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Strategic stake acquired

Rheinmetall Automotive strengthens expertise in lightweight engineering and production

Automotive supplier Rheinmetall Automotive, a member of the Technology Group Rheinmetall, is systematically expanding its longstanding expertise in automotive lightweight engineering. Through its subsidiary KS Kolbenschmidt GmbH, the Neckarsulm-based company has now acquired a 24.9-percent stake in Carbon Truck & Trailer GmbH, Stade/Germany.

Carbon Truck & Trailer (CarbonTT) is a start-up company founded in 2013 with currently 12 employees, until now family-owned. The company, which is located in the 'CFK Valley Stade' competence network, develops and manufactures innovative load-bearing structural components made of carbon fiber-reinforced plastic (CFRP). CarbonTT is focused on the cost-effective series-production of CFRP chassis for light commercial vehicles.

CFRP is up to 70 percent lighter than steel and 30 percent lighter than aluminum. This weight reduction permits less fuel consumption, increased payload, and/or a greater range for battery electric vehicles. CarbonTT managing director Gerret Kalkoffen: "Lightweighting will be a major contributor to reducing vehicle emissions and supporting e-mobility. Our production technology allows OEM's to cost-effectively utilize CFRP components, improving vehicle efficiency and creating value for their customers. We are excited to welcome Rheinmetall Automotive onboard and to grow the business together."

For Rheinmetall the aim of the cooperation is to support CarbonTT to industrialize the production process to OEM standards and to organize the corresponding quality system. In addition, the contribution of other Rheinmetall techniques and products opens up a strategic option for the development of additional lightweight applications as well as integrated modules and systems.

The Hardparts Division of Rheinmetall Automotive is contributing its more than one hundred years of experience in the demanding implementation of automotive manufacturing processes to the cooperation and at the same time diversifying into a new material and field of business. Helmut Freiermuth, head of Rheinmetall Automotive's Hardparts division, commented: "This new commitment not only strengthens our existing expertise in designing and manufacturing structural parts, but also expands and diversifies our lightweight engineering activities to include the use of CFRP materials, that will become increasingly important in the future against the background of further necessary weight savings and the shift to electromobility".

About Rheinmetall Automotive

Rheinmetall Automotive AG, which represents the Mobility sector within Germany's Rheinmetall Group, has annual sales of 2,930 MioEUR (2018) and ranks among the 100 biggest auto-industry suppliers worldwide. Some 13,000 employees at around 40 production plants in Europe, the Americas, Japan, India and China develop and manufacture components, modules and assemblies for the drive systems of present and future vehicles.

This first-tier supplier, present on the international automotive markets, consists of three divisions: Hardparts, Mechatronics, and Aftermarket. Clustered under the Kolbenschmidt brand is the Hardparts division comprising car and commercial vehicle pistons, large-bore pistons, engine blocks, cylinder heads, and structural parts in aluminum. Also included are other castings, plain bearings and continuous castings.

Under the Pierburg brand, Rheinmetall Automotive's Mechatronics division specializes in modules and assemblies for emission control, solenoid valves, actuators and valve train systems, oil, water and vacuum pumps for cars, trucks and offroad vehicles.

Last but not least, the Aftermarket division under the Motorservice brand embraces the global aftermarket business in the Group's and third-party products in over 130 countries. As a foremost supplier of engine components Motorservice offers its customers an extensive line-up of engine parts from a single source.

About CarbonTT

Carbon Truck & Trailer GmbH is a start-up company that develops innovative carbon fiber reinforced plastic (CFRP) components to make commercial vehicles lighter, more economical and more sustainable. With a unique team of engineers from the aviation, automotive and production industries, the company is focused on the economic industrialization of CFRP component production. CarbonTT holds patents and know-how in the design of CFRP components, reproducible adhesive applications, and low-cost serial production.



Helmut Freiermuth, head of the division Hardparts of Rheinmetall Automotive (left), and Gerret Kalkoffen, Managing Director of CarbonTT in front of a delivery vehicle with a CarbonTT chassis made of CFRP.

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