

MAJOR TYRE MANUFACTURERS IN INDIA

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Madras Rubber Factory

	
Type	Public
Industry	Manufacturing
Founded	1949 (Chennai)
Headquarters	Chennai, India
Products	Tyres
Website	www.mrftyres.com [1]

Madras Rubber Factory, popularly known as **MRF**, is a major tyre manufacturing company located in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India. MRF is mainly involved in making vehicle tyres. It is India's largest tyre manufacturing company, and among the dozen largest worldwide. It exports to more than 65 countries.

History

1946

A young entrepreneur, K.M.Mammen Mappillai, opened a small toy balloon manufacturing unit in a shed at Tiruvottiyur, Madras (now Chennai).

1949

Although the factory was just a small shed without any machines, a variety of products, ranging from balloons and latex-cast squeaking toys to industrial gloves and contraceptives, were produced. During this time, MRF established its first office at 334, Thambu Chetty Street, Madras (now Chennai), Tamil Nadu, India.

1952

MRF ventured into the manufacture of tread rubber. And with that, the first machine, a rubber mill, was installed at the factory. This step into tread-rubber manufacture, was later to catapult MRF into a league that few had imagined possible.

1955

MRF soon became the only Indian-owned unit to manufacture the superior extruded, non-blooming and cushion-backed tread-rubber, enabling it to compete with the MNC's operating in India at that time.

1956

The quality of the product manufactured was of such a high standard that by the close of 1956, MRF had become the market leader with a 50% share of the tread-rubber market in India. So effective was MRF's hold on the market, that the large multinationals had no other option but to withdraw from the tread rubber business in India.

1960

The Company was incorporated as a private limited company on 5 November. The Company Manufacture automobile, aircraft, cycle tyres and tubes in collaboration with the Mansfield Tire & Rubber Co., Mansfield, Ohio, U.S.A. The tyres are sold under the trade name Mansfield Tyres (MRF). The Company also produces other industrial products made of rubber like conveyor belt, hoses etc. It took over the entire business of the Madras Rubber Factory as a going concern as from 16 November, for a consideration of Rs.25 Lakh.

1961

The Madras Rubber Factory Private Limited was converted into a public company on 1 April, and additional capital was issued in order to start the manufacture of automobile tyres and tubes in collaboration with the Mansfield Tire & Rubber Co., Mansfield, Ohio, U.S.A. The Company was given permission to export tyres having Mansfield trade mark to all world markets except U.S.A. and Canada. : 2,49,650 shares allotted without payment in cash. 350 shares subscribed for by the signatories to the Memorandum of Association. 2,50,000 shares reserved and allotted directors. 5,00,000 shares issued to public in April 1961. The balance 2,50,000 shares allotted to collaborators as payment for machinery.

1962

The main plant for production of tyres and tubes were commissioned on 4 December.

1963

Nylon Hot-Stretch Unit of the latest design was commissioned in November.

6,25,000 Right Equity shares offered at par in the proportion 1:2.

1964

With the commissioning of the main plant in 1964, MRF also made progress in the export of tyres. An overseas office at Beirut

(Lebanon) was established to develop the export market, and it was amongst India's very first efforts. This year also marked the birth of the now famous *MRF Muscleman*.

1967

MRF became the first Indian company to export tyres to USA - the very birthplace of tyre technology.

1970

In March, 5,62,500 bonus equity shares issued in the proportion 3:10.

1973

MRF scored a major breakthrough by being among the very first in India to manufacture and market Nylon tyres.

1975

During September, 12,18,714 bonus shares issued in proportion 1:2. (Only 12,18,689 shares were taken up).

1978

The Company finalised a technical know-how collaboration with B.F. Goodrich Co., U.S.A., which became fully operative in early 1980-81.

This agreement was revalidated for further five years.

1979

The Mansfield Tire & Rubber Co., U.S.A. offered for sale out of its holding 3,74,250 No. of Equity shares of Rs 10 each of the Company at

a premium of Rs 4 each as follows: 3,63,786 shares as rights to the existing shareholders in the proportion 1:8 and 10,464 shares to the employees of the Company.

1980

The Company crossed several milestones in its history. It went into technical collaboration with BF Goodrich Tire Co., USA in the year.

The name of the Company, Madras Rubber Factory Ltd. was changed to MRF Ltd in the year.

1981

Mansfield Tire & Rubber Co. of U.S.A., offered for their balance shareholding of 3,55,537 No. of Equity shares of Rs 10 each in the

Company at a premium of Rs.4 per share as follows: 3,29,587 shares to the existing resident Indian shareholders and non-resident Indian shareholders (on non-repatriation basis) in proportion 1:10 and 25,950 shares to the Indian employees, business associates and dealers of the Company.

2,00,000 No. of Equity shares allotted in Feb. 1982 to IFCI at a premium of Rs 5 per shares on conversion of loans.

1983

The Company finalised a technical collaboration agreement with M/s. Marangoni TRS SPA, Italy for the supply of know-how for the manufacture pre-cured tread rubber for retreading industry.

1984

Sales crossed INR two billion. MRF tyres were the first tyres selected for fitment onto the Maruti Suzuki 800 - India's first small, modern car.

1985

A letter of intent was obtained for the manufacture of conveyor belts and hoses in collaboration with Industrial Pirelli SPA, Italy. Plans were also on hand to go in for a joint venture with the aero tyre division of B.F. Goodrich & Co., for retreading and subsequently for manufacturing aircraft tyres.

1986

The Company issued 15% non-convertible debentures of Rs 100 each (II Series) for Rs.8 Crore as rights to the existing shareholders to raise finances for modernisation of the Company. Under Cumulative interest payment scheme, these debentures are redeemable in 3 annual instalments of Rs 35 each commencing on 8 May, 1993 at a premium of 5% in the first instalment. Under the non-cumulative interest payment scheme, the debentures are redeemable in five equal annual instalments of Rs.20 each commencing from 8 May 1991 at a premium of 5% which will be paid on 8 May, 1993.

1987

(18 months), The Company obtained MRTP clearance and a letter of intent for the manufacture of pre-cured tread rubber up to 6,000 tonnes per annum by using indigenous technology developed by the Company. MRTP clearance was also obtained for setting up a new plant at Tada in Andhra Pradesh for manufacture of 1.5 million number of tyres and tubes per annum.

The Company entered into a collaboration agreement with Vapocure of Australia to manufacture polyurethane paint formulations that can be rapidly cured at room temperature and would also help in the manufacture of shatter-proof glass. The plant with an installed capacity of 10,000 tonnes per annum was being set up at Gummidipoondi in Tamil Nadu.

Funskool (India), Ltd. and 'Crystal Investment and Finance Co. Ltd.' became subsidiaries of the Company. Funskool (India), Ltd. was promoted in collaboration with Hasbro International, U.S.A., the World's largest toy makers.

1988

The MRF Pace Foundation was set up, with international pace bowler, Dennis Lillee as its Director. Not long thereafter, pace bowlers

trained at the Foundation were selected for the Indian Cricket Team.

1989

The Company was identified as 'Star Exporter', a status that enables the company to get priority treatment in several areas concerned

with Customs, RBI, etc.

Aero tyre division of B.F. Goodrich Co., USA was taken over by Michelin Cie of France.

Government approved the technical collaboration with Uniroyal Goodrich Tire Co., U.S.A., a subsidiary of Michelin Cie., France,

for imparting latest technology for bias ply/radial aircraft tyres for a period of 5 years.

1990

The Aruna Leathers & Exports Ltd. was amalgamated with the Company. As per the scheme one equity share of Rs 10 each of MRF Ltd. was allotted for every 10,000 shares of Rs.10 each fully paid-up held in ALEL. Accordingly, 25 equity shares were allotted to the erstwhile shareholders of ALEL.

The Company introduced 'Vapocure' colours in the market.

(6 months), the Company privately placed 15,00,000 - 14% non-convertible debentures of Rs 100 each (III Series). The debentures

are redeemable - at a premium of 5% in three annual instalments of Rs.35 each commencing from 31 July, 1997.

The Company privately placed with SBI Mutual Fund 10,00,000 - 14% debentures (IVth Series) which are redeemable at a premium of 5% on

26 June, 1998.

During the year 5,00,000 - 14% debentures were also privately placed with Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services, Ltd. These

debentures are redeemable in three annual instalments at a premium of 5% commencing from 23 July, 1997.

1991

The Company promoted a new Company viz. MRF International, Ltd., in view of the tremendous growth potential in the export market.

3,85,000 of equity shares issued at a premium of Rs.242 per share to the foreign collaborators M/s. Asia Trading Services, Hong Kong.

1992

The Company has formed a new Company, viz., MRF INTERNATIONAL LIMITED and the Company has received the certificate of commencement of

business.

1993

K.M.Mammen Mappillai was awarded the Padma Shri Award of National Recognition for his contribution to industry - the only industrialist

from South India to be accorded this honour. MRF also became the first tyre company in India to cross the INR 10 billion mark. In addition, the company was voted by the Far Eastern Economic Review, as one of the ten leading Corporate Groups in India and a Leader in Asia, and by readers of the A & M magazine, as one of India's most admired Marketing Companies.

1995

The Company has received the Top Export Award for the year from All India Rubber Industries Association.

1996

The Company has received an award from CAPEXIL - Certificate of Merit based on the export performance for the year.

The Far Eastern Economic Review Award was presented to MRF for the fourth year in succession in recognition of excellence.

1997

MRF Ltd has been assigned a credit rating of `PR1+' (superior) for its proposed Rs 100 crore commercial paper (CP) programme by Credit

Analysis and Research Ltd (CARE).

MRF is setting up a new plant in Pondicherry for the production of radial tyres.

The company set up the Arakkonam plant in Chennai to produce bicycle tyres and tubes.

MRF began manufacturing tyres and tubes in technical collaboration with Mansfield Tire and Rubber Company, USA.

MRF has launched Nylogrip Zapper, a high performance tyre for new generation bikes.

The company tied up with Uniroyal Goodrich Tire Co. of USA, a subsidiary of the French Tyre giant Michelin, which held 9.8 percent

stake in the company.

1998

MRF Tyres has signed an OEM (original equipment manufacturer) alliance with Siel Honda Motors and Hindustan Motors.

MRF has launched a market sampling operation for the MRF Zigma.

1999

MRF Ltd has decided to set up more such clinics in Northern and Western cities.

The Company has entered into agreements with the Depositories viz., National Securities Depository Ltd. [NSDL] & Central Depository

Services (India) Ltd.

AIRIA Highest Export Award was given in recognition of our outstanding export performance in respect of Auto Tyres & Tubes during

the year.

2000

The Company has set up shop in Dubai to target markets in the UAE as part of its export thrust.

MRF has launched a steel-belted premium radial tyre variant called `MRF ZVTS'.

2002

MRF was ranked highest in customer satisfaction along with multinational Bridgestone in a study conducted by JD Power Asia Pacific.

MRF Tyres Ltd sees slump in commercial vehicle tyre market and passenger car growth has also declined.

High court dismisses the writ petition filed by MRF Employees Union challenging the order of dismissal of a worker, who was the secretary of the union.

Advertising Standard Council of India Quashed the objection raised by MRF by upholding J K Industries claim of being India's Number one tyre maker in the four wheeler segment.

MRF Ltd has obtained the 'Outstanding Corporate Sports Initiative' award from the Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

2003

MRF and Bridgestone are ranked highest in a tie for the second year in a row in customer satisfaction with original tries according to JD Power Asia Pacific.

Shri K.M. Mammen Mappillai, Chairman and Managing Director expired on March 2nd.

Mr. C.D.Khanna has ceased to be the Director of the company. And Mr. K.S.Narayanan has resigned from the board of MRF.

Mr. N.Kumar and Mr. Ranjit Issac Jesudasen have been appointed as the directors of the company.

Mr. K.S.Narayanan ceased to be director of the Company with effect from April 17, 2003, consequent to his resignation from the Board of

Directors.

MRF Ltd. has informed the Exchange that at its meeting held on December 19, 2003 the BOD have re-designated Jt. Managing Director

Mr. Arun Mammen as Managing Director of the Company w.e.f April 1, 2004.

2004

MRF Ltd. has informed that Mr. Ravi Mannath has been appointed as Additional Company Secretary of the Company w.e.f. January 5, 2004.

MRF received the highest rankings in the study in four of the five factors determining overall satisfaction with tyres appearance,

durability, traction and handling.

MRF Tyres is the biggest consumer of natural rubber in India during 2002-03

Ties up with Maruti Udyog to boost motorsports in India

2007

MRF Ltd launches premium truck tyre Super Lug 50-FS.

Present

It is also involved in a range of other activities via subsidiaries. Funkskool India, a Joint venture between Hasbro and MRF, is a major toy manufacturing company in the country. MRF Pretreads offers world class precured tyre retreading service, and MRF Musclex is involved in making conveyor belts. It is presently under the leadership of Vinoo Mammen, son of the late K.M.Mammen Mappillai.

Sports

MRF has been involved in the development of cricket through its sponsorship of many cricketers and MRF Pace Foundation. At one point of time, MRF was the bat sponsor of world-class batsmen including Brian Lara, Sachin Tendulkar, and former Australian captain Steve Waugh.

After Waugh's and Lara's retirement from international cricket, on 4th September 2009, MRF's contract with Sachin Tendulkar too expired. Sachin now uses Adidas bats, and MRF are currently sponsoring Gautam Gambhir and Rohit Sharma two other members of the Indian cricket team.

At IPL 2010, MRF got the charge of the moored balloon^[2] floating above the cricket grounds. It contained a high-definition camera recording live actions of the cricket match.

India

- Sachin Tendulkar
- Rohit Sharma
- Gautam Gambhir
- Narain Karthikeyan

West Indies

-  Brian Lara

Australia

- Steve Waugh

External links

- Official website of MRF Tyres ^[3]
- Cricket Bats ^[4]

References

[1] <http://www.mrftyres.com/>

[2] <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Blimp>

[3] <http://www.mrftyres.com>

[4] <http://www.mrfcricketbats.com>

Apollo Tyres

Type	Public
Industry	Tyres
Founded	1976
Headquarters	Gurgaon, India
Key people	Onkar S Kanwar (CMD) Neeraj R S Kanwar (Vice Chairman & MD)
Revenue	INR 5036.80Crores as on March 2010
Website	http://www.apollotyres.com

Apollo Tyres Ltd is a high-performance company and the leading Indian tyre manufacturer. Head quartered in Gurgaon, a corporate-hub in the National Capital Region of India, Apollo is a young, ambitious and dynamic organisation, which takes pride in its unique identity. Registered as a company in 1976, Apollo is built around the core principles of creating stakeholder value through reliability in its products and dependability in its relationships. Apollo Tyres Ltd is the fastest growing top tier tyre manufacturer, with annual revenues of over US\$ 1.8 billion (2009-10). Its first plant was commissioned in Perambra in Kerala state. It commenced its production in 1977 under the leadership of Raunaq Singh. In 2006, the company acquired Dunlop Tyres International of South Africa. The company now has four manufacturing units in India, two in South Africa and two in Zimbabwe. It has a network of over 4,000 dealerships in India, of which over 2,500 are exclusive outlets. In South Africa, it has over 900 dealerships, of which 190 are Dunlop Accredited Dealers. "Apollo Tyres Ltd." has been pioneer in the implementation of "Six Sigma" among all the tyre companies in India, and is in the list of top 15 tyre manufacturers of the world in terms of Revenues. The construction of fully automated plant at Chennai with an initial capacity of 6000 TBR and 8000 PCR is under progress.

The company currently produces the entire range of automotive tyres for ultra and high speed passenger cars, truck and bus, farm, Off-The-Road, industrial and specialty applications like mining, retreaded tyres and retreading material. These are produced across Apollo's eight manufacturing locations in India, Netherlands and Southern Africa. A ninth facility is currently under construction in southern India, and is expected to commence production towards the end of 2009. The major brands produced across these locations are: Apollo, Dunlop, Kaizen, Maloya, Regal and Vredestein.

In the three domestic markets of India, Southern Africa and Europe, Apollo operates through a network of branded, exclusive or multi-product outlets. In South Africa the branded outlets are called Dunlop Zones, while in India they are variously named Apollo Tyre World (for commercial vehicles) and Apollo Radial World (for passenger cars). Exports out of these three key manufacturing locations reach over 70 destinations across the world, with key comprising Europe, Africa, the Middle East and South-East Asia.

Apollo Tyres has acquired the Netherlands-based Vredestein Banden BV (VBBV) for an undisclosed sum from Russia's bankrupt largest tyre manufacturer Amtel-Vredestein NV.^[1]

Apollo is one of the largest corporate investors in developing sporting talent through its Mission 2018, which is focused on nurturing and training youngsters in the sport of tennis to enable an Indian to win a Singles Grand Slam Championship by the year 2018.^[2]

External links

- Official site ^[3]
- Dunlop Tyres South Africa website ^[4]
- Apollo Tyres Acquires Vredestein Banden BV ^[5]

References

- [1] http://abclive.in/abclive_business/apollo_tyres_vredestein_banden_bv.html Apollo Tyres Acquires Vredestein Banden BV
- [2] http://www.apollotyres.com/india_about_glance.htm
- [3] <http://www.apollotyres.com>
- [4] <http://www.dunlop.co.za>
- [5] http://abclive.in/abclive_business/apollo_tyres_vredestein_banden_bv.html
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CEAT Limited

	
Type	Public BSE: 500878 ^[1]
Industry	Tyres & Tubes
Founded	1958
Headquarters	Mumbai, India
Key people	R. P. Goenka , Chairman H. V. Goenka Vice Chairman, Paras K. Chowdhary Managing Director
Revenue	Rs 2760 Crore
Employees	~5,384 (as on 31st March 2006)
Website	www.ceattyres.in ^[2]

CEAT Limited is a tyre manufacturing company based in Mumbai, India. CEAT is an abbreviation for **C**avi **E**lectrici **A**ffini **T**orino (Electrical Cables and Allied Products of Turin). Founded in Italy as *CEAT Tyres* by Virginio Bruni Tedeschi, the company established its manufacturing in India in 1958 and was sold to Pirelli by Virginio's heir Alberto Tedeschi (Carla Bruni's grandfather^[3]) in the 1970s. The company's Indian division was then taken over by RPG Enterprises in the year 1982 which also got the rights to the CEAT brand and renamed the company as CEAT Limited. Its tagline is "Take it on".

CEAT is one of the largest tire manufacturers in India and Sri Lanka with an annual turnover of Rs 2,760 crores and has about 20% of the local truck and light truck tyre market.^[4]

Locations

The company is headquartered in Mumbai. It has manufacturing plants in Mumbai and Nashik. CEAT owns:

- 4 Manufacturing plants - 2 in India and 2 in Sri Lanka
- 10 outsourcing units for tyres, tubes and flaps
- 3 dedicated 2-3-wheeler plants controlled by CEAT

Products

CEAT manufactures a wide range of tyres for various customer radials for Indian vehicles and caters to various user segments including

- Heavy-duty Trucks and Buses
- Light Commercial Vehicles
- Earthmovers
- Forklifts
- Tractors
- Trailers
- Cars
- SUVs

- Motorcycles and Scooters
- Auto-rickshaws

It exports to over 110 countries across the world.^[4] In April 2007, the de-merger of its investment business to a separate investment and finance company was approved. CEAT is the only tyre company to be awarded the ISO/TS 16949:2002 certification.^[4] It is also the 1st indian tyre company to get a TUV certificate.

CEAT Cricket Ratings

CEAT Cricket Ratings (CCR) was formed in 1995. It is the first International Cricket Rating System to reward and recognize the performances on annual basis. CEAT has also introduced the CCR Best Bowler, CCR Best Batsman, CCR Best Cricketer and CCR Best Cricket Team as well as CEAT Under 19 & T20 ratings.

Achievements & Awards

- CEAT receives Reader's Digest Trusted Brand Gold Award for 2009.
- The 2007-08 Raid de Himalayas 2 wheeler Rally was won on CEAT Tyres.
- CEAT was the no 1 in exports amongst all tyre companies in India..... Source ATMA Report 2007-08.
- CEAT Shoppe wins Best Innovation Award 2007-08 (* Franchisee Association of India).
- From a 2 wheeler tyre to a Car Tyre to a Giant OTR Tyre, CEAT makes the entire Range of Tyres.
- CEAT won the Employer Branding Award for "Excellence in Training 2007-08" (* Awards by the Asia Pacific HR congress).
- CEAT has adopted a village "Tirad Seth", near Nasik as part of its CSR activities.
- ICQCC Distinguish award for Quality Circle in 2002 at Lucknow India.
- NCQC Distinguish award for Quality circle in 2004 at Mumbai.
- NCQC Distinguish award for Quality circle in 2006 at Kanpur India.
- CCQC Mumbai Chapter Distinguish Award for Quality Circle in 2007.
- Best case study award from CII in 2005.
- RPG Best TQM Team Award for CFT in 2005 and 2006.
- Recognized with RPG BTT Six Sigma Team Award in 2005-06.
- Winner of RPG Quality award in 2003, 2004 & 2006.
- Certificate of merit in RPGOE in 2005.
- 100 percent vendors are ISO certified
- Rated amongst top four auto ancillaries.
- National Exports Award (CAPEXIL) - 13 times.
- Best Exports certificate of merit - 7 times in the last 20 years.

External links

- <http://www.ceattyres.in>

References

- [1] <http://www.bseindia.com/stockreach/stockreach.htm?scripcd=500878>
- [2] <http://www.ceattyres.in>
- [3] "Carla Bruni – Cantautrice e moglie di Nicolas Sarkozy" (<http://argomenti.ilsole24ore.com/carla-bruni.html>). Il Sole 24 Ore. . Retrieved August 4, 2010.
- [4] CEAT Tyres - About us (<http://www.ceatyres.com/aboutus/index.htm>)

Bridgestone

	
Type	Public TYO: 5108 ^[1] OTCBB: BRDCY ^[2]
Industry	Manufacturing
Founded	1931 (Kurume, Fukuoka)
Headquarters	Kyobashi, Tokyo, Japan
Key people	Shoshi Arakawa, CEO
Products	Motor vehicle tyres
Revenue	▲ US\$ 29.7 Billion (2007)
Operating income	▲ US\$ 2.1 Billion (2007)
Profit	▲ US\$ 1.5 Billion (2007)
Employees	133,752 (As of December 31, 2007)
Website	www.bridgestone.com ^[3]

Bridgestone Corporation (株式会社ブリヂストン *Kabushiki-gaisha Burijisuton*) (TYO: 5108 ^[1], OTCBB: BRDCY ^[2]) is a multinational rubber conglomerate founded in 1931 by Shojiro Ishibashi (石橋正二郎 *Ishibashi Shōjirō*) in the city of Kurume, Fukuoka, Japan. The name **Bridgestone** comes from a calque translation and transposition of *ishibashi*, meaning "stone bridge" in Japanese.

Bridgestone is currently ranked No.2 tyre manufacturer in the global tyre market, with Michelin leading, Goodyear third, and Continental fourth as of January 2009. As of the end of 2005, production facilities belonging to the Bridgestone Group have increased to 141 spread throughout twenty-four nations of the world. In order to attain this level of globalization, the company established a new set of corporate policies in the year 2001. In continuation of this, company's Brand Vision was also established in 2003.

History

Origins

The very first Bridgestone tire was produced on April 9, 1930, by the Japanese "Tabi" Socks Tyre Division (actually made *jika-tabi*). One year later on March 1, 1931, the founder, Shojiro Ishibashi, made the "Tabi" Socks tire Division independent and established the Bridgestone Tire Co., Ltd. in the city of Kurume, Fukuoka Prefecture. "Bridgestone" was named after the name of the founder, Shojiro Ishibashi (*Ishi* = Stone, *Bashi* = Bridge).^[4]

Foregoing dependence on European and North America technology, the Bridgestone tire Co., Ltd. set its eyes on manufacturing tires based solely on Japanese technology. The founding company experienced many difficulties in the areas of technology, production and sales in the early days. Eventually, improvements were achieved in quality and manufacturing processes which led to the business rapidly expanding on both the domestic and overseas markets.



Head office in Tokyo.

Challenges during and after World War II

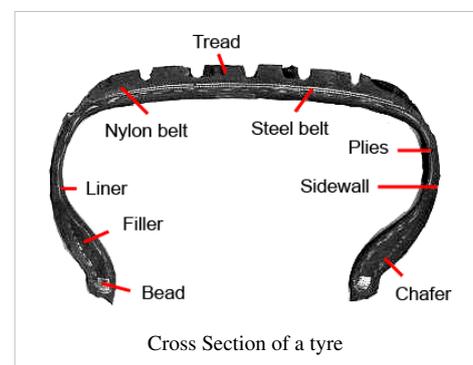
Wartime regulations were in effect throughout the whole of Japan, and tires also came under the jurisdiction of these regulations. This resulted in nearly all of the company's output being used to satisfy military demand. 1945 saw the end of armed conflict, but the company was devastated by the war. The Tokyo Headquarters building was destroyed during an aerial bombing raid, and all overseas assets were lost. Fortunately, the plants in Kurume and Yokohama escaped unscathed, and production was able to resume immediately after the war ended. Brushing aside the problems caused by a labour union strike that lasted for forty-six days, the foundations of the company were further reinforced after this.

After World War II Bridgestone started manufacturing motorcycles, but its main income was from supplying tyres to its rival motorcycle makers such as Honda, Suzuki and Yamaha and it was later decided to cease motorcycle manufacturing.

Technological innovation

In 1951, Bridgestone was the first company in Japan to begin selling rayon cord tyres, and a five-year project to modernize production facilities was started. This year also saw another Bridgestone building opened in Kyōbashi, Tokyo, which contained the Bridgestone Museum. Sales surpassed ten billion yen in 1953, placing Bridgestone at the top of tyre industry in Japan, and celebrations were held to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the company's foundation in Kurume.

The sale of nylon tyres was started in 1959, and work forged ahead with the construction of the new Tokyo plant, which was opened in 1960, in order to cope with the fast-expanding market for motorization.



Cross Section of a tyre

Radial tyres and overseas expansion

The company issued shares and was listed on the stock exchange in 1961, and moved across to a new system of administration with Shojiro Ishibashi as the chairman, and Kanichiro Ishibashi as the president. As part of the transition across to administrative reform, the Deming Plan in honour of W. Edwards Deming, which involves overall quality control activities, was adopted, and the company was awarded the prestigious Deming Prize in 1968.^[5] Also, additions were built onto the Tokyo plant in 1962 to house the new Technical Centre, and a progressive system of research and development was established. On the product front, 1967 saw the sale of first ever radial tire, the RD10.

Bridgestone's first overseas plant since the end of the war was opened in Singapore in 1965, and production was also commenced in Thailand in 1969. The 1960s for Bridgestone was an era of overseas expansion that also included the establishment of Bridgestone America in the United States in 1967 to act as Bridgestone's USA representative sales branch.

At the start of the period of Japan's economic stagnation, brought about by the first oil shock, the company was placing even more emphasis on establishing its own technology for the manufacture of radial tyres, and it was also at this time that further domestic plants were constructed and fitted out. Its Super Filler Radial was placed on the market in 1978, and in 1979 the company introduced the high-performance POTENZA radial tyre, which gets its name from the Italian word *potenza* which means power.

The company was actively engaged in overseas expansion activities at this time, and in addition to starting up production in Indonesia and Iran in 1976, it was also invested in a Taiwan tyre manufacturer and purchased a tyre plant and a plant for diversified products in Australia in 1980. The founder, Shojiro Ishibashi, died on September 11, 1976.

On March 1, 1981, the company celebrated its 50th anniversary since its foundation. At the same time, the company initiated activities to strengthen its home base that supported overseas expansion strategy with the aim of being ranked as one of the world's top three manufacturers of rubber products. New production facilities were also established in Thailand, India, Poland, China, the United States and other countries. The company changed the name from Bridgestone Tyre Co., Ltd. to Bridgestone Corporation in 1984.

Firestone purchase

In 1988, Bridgestone purchased the Firestone Tire and Rubber Company. Placing considerable financial and personnel resources into rebuilding Firestone after the purchase, Bridgestone achieved surplus annual profits for the year 1992 with BFE (*Bridgestone Firestone Europe*) and again in 1993 with BFS (*Bridgestone Firestone USA*). The Firestone Tire and Rubber Company and Bridgestone Tire Company Ltd USA were amalgamated in 1990 and became "*Bridgestone Firestone North American Holdings Ltd*". In order to increase the Firestone subsidiary's brand awareness, *Bridgestone Firestone NAH Ltd*, re-entered the Firestone brand into IndyCar racing in 1995, and in 1997 *Bridgestone Corporation Japan* entered the Bridgestone brand into F1 racing.

Bridgestone's global locations

Bridgestone has major manufacturing plants in many countries around the world. As of 2007, Bridgestone has 57 tyre plants, 98 diversified product plants, and 4 major technical centers globally. Some of the major plants are located in:

EUROPE	AMERICAS	ASIA/OCEANIA	MIDDLE EAST/AFRICA
Italy	North America	Japan	Iran
Hungary	Argentina	Australia (closing by April 2010)	
Poland	Brazil	New Zealand (closed December 2009)	South Africa
Spain	Costa Rica	China	Liberia (raw materials)
France	Puerto Rico	India	
Belgium	Mexico	Indonesia	
Turkey	Venezuela	South Korea	
	Chile	Taiwan	
	Canada	Thailand	
	United States	Malaysia	
		Bangladesh	

Australia

Bridgestone Australia began as the SA Rubber Mills in 1939. In 1980 Bridgestone took over the Australian plants which were at that time operated by the Uniroyal Tire Company. Bridgestone Australia^[6] has three major manufacturing plants in Australia: a tyre factory located in Salisbury, South Australia (slated to close by April 2010^[7]); an Automotive Components Division located at Edwardstown, South Australia (operated under the BSTG company name which is a joint venture with Toyoda Gosei); and the third plant in Dandenong, Victoria. The Dandenong plant is a manufacturer of Bridgestone Brand (Airstep) Carpet Underlay. Bridgestone has State Offices in all states of Australia, and has a large number of retail outlets across the country.

In 2002 Bridgestone Australia Ltd purchased the BANDAG Retreading plant and its operations in Australia. Bandag Manufacturing Pty Limited^[8] has 35 franchised Bandag dealers across Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Nouméa.

Bandag Manufacturing Pty Limited is a wholly owned subsidiary of Bridgestone Australia Limited, and operates under license to Bandag Incorporated.^[9] In 2006 Bridgestone purchased Bandag Incorporated, which is now a subsidiary of Bridgestone Corporation.

From the purchase in 1981, The Australian operations of Bridgestone have been run as a publicly listed company on the Australian Stock exchange. Bridgestone Corporation has maintained a majority share holding. As of mid 2007 the Australian operation was delisted from the Australian Stock exchange and became a solely owned Division of Bridgestone Corporation (pending minority shareholder approval as per Australian Corporate Law).

Following the cancellation on Friday, 11 May 2007 of all shares held by minority shareholders, Bridgestone Australia Ltd. became a wholly owned subsidiary of Bridgestone Corporation of Japan. The selective capital reduction and subsequent privatisation which cost \$49 million was approved and completed. Bridgestone Australia Ltd was delisted from the ASX on 30 May 2007.

The decision to close Australia's last tyre manufacturing plant has been described as the death of another of the nation's industries.

Bridgestone's Australia and New Zealand manufacturing operations were announced on 23 October 2009 that they were to close. The announcement affected 600 people in the Adelaide, Australia plant and a further 275 jobs in Christchurch, New Zealand. Bridgestone's Australasian jobs in sales, marketing and technical support have not been compromised.^[10]

Europe

Bridgestone EU has its head office in Brussels, Belgium and was set up in 1972. There are 7 production plants in the region and a 32 hectare research and development centre near Rome, Italy. The company distributes more than 25 million tyres a year through 17 national sales subsidiaries and 2 distributors. They directly employ over 12,000 people with the CEO being Mr. Tsuda.

At present there are national headquarters in the following locations: Vienna, Austria; Prague, Czech Republic; Hinnerup, Denmark; Vantaa, Finland; Fresnes, France; Bad Homburg, Germany; Athens, Greece; Budapest, Hungary; Dublin, Ireland; Milan, Italy; Moerdijk, Netherlands; Oslo, Norway; Warsaw, Poland; Alcochete, Portugal; Madrid, Spain; Sundsvall, Sweden; Spreitenbach, Switzerland; and Warwick, UK.

Bridgestone EU run a continent wide scheme called Truckpoint wherein fleets can take their vehicles to any Bridgestone approved garage throughout Europe and get Bridgestone specialist work carried out on their tyres.

There are no Bridgestone factories in the UK but there is a technical bay at which tyres returned by dissatisfied customers are inspected in Coventry.

North America

As part of reinforcement plans, the company purchased a plant in Tennessee from the Firestone Tire & Rubber Company, its first manufacturing plant in North America, and started the production of radial tires for trucks and buses in 1983. Bridgestone also has a steel cord plant in Clarksville, TN named Bridgestone Metalpha. Metalpha is currently ranked as the top provider in the global steel cord market.

In May 1988, a take-over bid of America's No.2 tire manufacturer Firestone Tire and Rubber Company was successful, and Firestone was placed under the Bridgestone umbrella as a subsidiary company. This purchase brought a large number of Firestone global production sites into the Bridgestone organization. These sites included North America, Central and South America, Europe, New Zealand and other locations. Bridgestone also commenced production in Turkey.

Nashville-based Bridgestone Americas Holding, Inc. (BSAH) is the U.S. subsidiary of the Bridgestone Corporation. BSAH and its subsidiaries develop, manufacture and market Bridgestone, Firestone, Dayton and associate brand tires for consumers, automotive and commercial vehicle original equipment manufacturers, and those in the agricultural, forestry and mining industries. The companies also produce air springs, roofing materials, synthetic rubber and industrial fibres and textiles and operate the world's largest chain of automotive tire and service centres.

Bridgestone and Formula One racing

See also: Formula One tyres.

Bridgestone has supplied tires in Formula One since 1997, although the company one-off produced Formula One tires at the 1976 and 1977 Japanese Grand Prix for Japanese entrants such as Kazuyoshi Hoshino's Heros Racing and Kojima.



Schumacher in practice at the 2005 United States Grand Prix. Note the Bridgestone branding on the rear wing endplate, the Bridgestone's 'B' logo on the front wing, just under the nosecone and on the side winglet just before the rear wheel.



Bridgestone used a Ligier JS41 as test bed during 1996.

The Japanese company decided to supply tires for Formula One in 1995, backed-up by the CEO Yoichiro Kaizaki, aiming to improve company's name value in European market which was greatly inferior compared with Michelin, the archrival for Bridgestone. Though it was scheduled to enter the championship in the 1998 season at first, this schedule was changed to 1997 because the engineering section led by Hirohide Hamashima has quickly advanced development. Thus, Hiroshi Yasukawa, the General Manager of Motorsport Department, also made the best use of the experience and networks in Europe since the Bridgestone's European F2 era (1981–1984) and constructed

logistics for Formula One at once.

The first title was acquired right away in the second year, 1998 by Mika Häkkinen and McLaren-Mercedes. And Bridgestone users took five Drivers' championship titles and five Constructors' championship titles (1998, 2001–2004) for the period that competed with Goodyear (1997–1998) and Michelin (2001–2006). Especially, cooperation with Scuderia Ferrari and Michael Schumacher functioned well in this period.

From 2008 to 2010 Bridgestone was due to be the sole tire supplier to the FIA Formula One World Championship.^[11] However, because Michelin chose to conclude its Formula One tire program at the end of the 2006 season, all teams have used Bridgestone tires since the 2007 season.

On November 2, 2009 Bridgestone announced that they will not be renewing their contract to supply tires to Formula One teams after 2010. The company said it was "addressing the impact of the continuing evolution of the business environment"^[12]

Tire Record Table - Races Won

Pos	Tire	Seasons	Starts	Wins	Only supplier	WC Drivers	WC Constr.
2	● Bridgestone	1976 ^[13] – 2010	237	168	109	10	10
5	🇺🇸 Firestone	1950–1975	121	49	11	3	3

Diversified products

The predecessors of Bridgestone began making diversified products^[14] in the 1930s, soon after they started making tires. Today, Bridgestone diversified operations encompass automotive components, industrial products, polyurethane foam products, construction materials, parts and materials for electronic equipment, bicycles and sporting goods. Diversified business generates about one-fourth of total sales in the Bridgestone Group.

Automotive parts are an especially large line of business for Bridgestone in diversified operations. Bridgestone supply automakers with vibration-isolating components, such as engine mounts. Bridgestone also supply air springs for trucks, automobiles and train carriages. Bridgestone market aluminium wheels and other automotive accessories, too.

Industrial products

Bridgestone's industrial products span a vast range of items. They include polyurethane foam for automotive seats and interiors, for bedding and furniture and for insulation and sealing in appliances and buildings; water hoses; marine hoses for loading and unloading oil tankers; specialty precision hose products, such as wire-blade hose for construction equipment and machine tools; conveyor belts; and rubber tracks for crawler tractors. Additionally, they make retreaded tires for aircraft. Their corporate headquarters for the Bridgestone Aircraft tire division is located in Miami, FL.

The Bridgestone product line in construction and civil engineering materials is similarly broad. Bridgestone supply Multi-Rubber Bearings for installing in foundations to protect buildings from earthquakes, inflatable rubber dams for managing waterways (no longer manufactured - 2008), marine fenders for protecting wharves, additives for pavement, waterproofing sheet, rubberized ceiling and roofing materials, panel tanks for storing water, bath fixtures and residential flooring, air and water systems.

Bridgestone's line of products for electronic equipment includes precision rollers for office machines and functional films for solar cells and plasma displays. In sporting goods, Bridgestone market golf balls and clubs and tennis balls and rackets. Bridgestone's line of bicycles is Japan's most extensive - see above information re-Anchor Cycles.

Bandag

On December 5, 2006, Bridgestone Americas and Bandag Inc. announced a merger agreement which will see Bridgestone acquire Bandag, a leading tire (mainly truck) re-treader with over 900 franchised dealers worldwide. Bridgestone's president in Tokyo explained:



Bandag Company Logo.

“Higher fuel prices are prompting customers to cut costs [by using retreads]. It takes time and costs to develop this size of business. We were able to get that all at once.”

The transaction is valued at approximately US\$1.05 billion.^[15] On 31 May 2007, Bridgestone Americas acquired the outstanding shares of Bandag Stock for US\$50.75 per share. Bandag is a world leader in the retreading business and is based in Muscatine, Iowa. The name of new company has become Bridgestone Bandag, LLC and Saul Solomon has been appointed to the position of Chairman, CEO and President of Bandag. Previously, Solomon served as Vice President and General Counsel of BSAH. Bandag's headquarters will remain in Muscatine.

Bicycles



Kabuki head badge.

The Bridgestone Cycle Co Ltd^[16] originated in 1949. It offers bicycles under its own brand and under the Anchor brand.^[17]

At one time, Bridgestone marketed bicycles under the name Kabuki.^[18]

The U.S. marketing director of the Bicycle division, Grant Petersen, developed a reputation for resisting popular trends in the bicycle industry and instead followed his own personal philosophy of building dependable and comfortable bicycles. Peterson applied this approach to Rivendell Bicycle Works after Bridgestone stopped marketing bicycles in the U.S.

The company was an innovator in the nascent mountain bike scene, designing mountain bicycles with shorter chain-stays and steeper frame angles than was currently popular. This made the bicycle more nimble and a better climber.

Bridgestone is currently building frames in Japan for keirin track racing under Nihon Jitensha Shinkokai approved standards. They are also currently producing non-NJS frames to the Japanese market as well.

In Japan, it is known as a manufacturer of utility bicycle, mountain bike and road bike for racing are sold by the brand of Bridgestone Anchor only in Japan.

Bridgestone has also collaborated with Dr. Alex Moulton to produce the Bridgestone Moulton Bicycle and marketed their own folding bicycle, the Bridgestone Picnica.

Bridgestone Aircraft tire

Bridgestone Aircraft tire (USA) is a manufacturer of aircraft tires as well as retread servicing. Bridgestone America's Holdings announced in May 2006 that it would be moving its Miami, FL aviation operation to its new 160000-square-foot (15000 m²) facility located in Mayodan, NC, this move is expected to be completed by mid 2007 and will create approximately 95 new jobs. CEO and President of Bridgestone Aircraft tire (USA) Joe Rayna is quoted as saying; "*This move allows us to continue to prepare for a changing market, both in demand and in product mix, New modern aircraft, such as the Boeing 787 Dreamliner and Airbus A380, arrive fitted with new Bridgestone technology aircraft tires, and this new facility will complement that technology*".^[19] Bridgestone Aircraft tire (USA) has been a major supplier of aircraft tires and retreads to the aircraft industry for over 70 years and has sister aviation facilities in Tokyo, Hong Kong and Belgium.

Golf Products

Precept Golf is a division of Bridgestone,^[20] and is the brand name under which Bridgestone's Golfing Products are marketed. Bridgestone has been producing golf-related products since 1935. The Golf division of Bridgestone currently produces both clubs, balls and accessories.^[21] Along with technical developments in tire technology came breakthroughs in golf ball technology that have led Bridgestone to be the number one golf ball producer in Japan.

Design and production of golf clubs followed in 1972 propelling Bridgestone to a leadership position in the current marketplace.

Bridgestone has global coverage of its golfing products with major divisions in USA (Bridgestone Golf USA)^[22] Australia (Bridgestone Golf Australia)^[23] and Korea (Sokio Corporation).^[24]

Bridgestone e-Reporter

Bridgestone e-reporter is a pan-European competition for aspiring young sports journalists, open to all students aged 18–30, who are in full-time education.

Now in its fifth year, Bridgestone e-reporter^[25] continues to provide up-and-coming writers with first hand experience, interviewing GP2 drivers and issuing race reports from a European GP2 race weekend.

The 2008 competition was officially launched on 1 February 2008 with the deadline for entries at 12.00 GMT on 31 March 2008.

Bridgestone is the sole tire supplier for the GP2 series, an open-wheeled racing championship that is widely regarded as the feeder series for Formula One.

External links

Main

- **(Japanese)** Bridgestone Corporation Japanese homepage^[26]
- **(English)** Bridgestone Corporation English homepage^[3]
- **(English)** Bridgestone Europe Headquarter, Brussels^[27]
- Bridgestone Broadcast Quality Video^[28] - The NewsMarket
- Yahoo! - Bridgestone Corporation company profile^[29]

MotorSport

- **(English)** Bridgestone Motorsport English homepage^[30]
- **(English)** Bridgestone e-reporter homepage^[25]

Bicycles

- Bridgestone: Beyond the Dream^[31] on MyByk^[32]
- article on Bridgestone Bicycles^[33] from Sheldon Brown's website

Motorcycles

- *Motorcycle Classics* article on the 1960s era Bridgestone 350 GTR motorcycle^[34]

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- [13] www.research-racing.de (<http://www.research-racing.de/Japan1976-1.htm>) The Wet Hell
- [14] http://www.bridgestone.co.jp/english/diversified/Diversified_Products
- [15] <http://transport.seekingalpha.com/article/21838> Bridgestone and Bandag to Merge, Shares Burn Rubber
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- [17] <http://www.anchor-bikes.com> Anchor Bikes
- [18] <http://www.sheldonbrown.com/japan.html#kabuki> Sheldon Brown: Japanese Bicycles in the U.S. Market: Kabuki
- [19] http://www.bridgestone-firestone.com/news/news_index.asp?id=2006/060510b Firestone News
- [20] <http://www.preceptgolf.com/en/corpprivacy.aspx> Precept Golf Corporate Website
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- [22] <http://www.bridgestonegolf.com> Bridgestone Golf USA,
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Dunlop Tyres

This article lacks an **infobox**. You may wish to add one, so that the article resembles the standard display for this subject. This talk page may contain the banner of a relevant project, that provides the standardized infobox for this type of article. See also Category:Infobox templates, and Wikipedia:WikiProject Infoboxes.

Dunlop Tyres is a British company owned 75% by Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company and 25% by Sumitomo Rubber Industries, which sells Dunlop branded road tyres in succession to the Dunlop Rubber Company.

In 1985, Dunlop Rubber was taken over by BTR plc, and Sumitomo acquired the rights to manufacture and market Dunlop branded road tyres. Sumitomo did not acquire any Dunlop company. In 1997 Sumitomo gained agreement to use the Dunlop name in its corporate name, and changed the name of its UK subsidiary to Dunlop Tyres Ltd^[1].

In 1999 Sumitomo and Goodyear entered into a joint venture, by which Sumitomo continued to manufacture all Japanese-made tyres under the Dunlop name, while Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company bought 75% of the European and North American tyre businesses of Sumitomo ^[2] ^[3].

The company has extensive manufacturing operations throughout the world. With the closure of the Washington plant in 2006, Goodyear Dunlop ceased mainstream car and lorry tyre production in the UK.

There is still a bespoke Motorsport manufacturing operation located on a corner of the original Fort Dunlop site in Erdington, Birmingham, opened in 1891. This factory supports specialised vintage, motorcycle and touring car tyre production, and produces around 300,000 specialised racing tyres per year which are then shipped all over the globe.

The Dunlop GP Racer D209 tyre has been repeatedly chosen as a control tyre for the R&G Racing GSX-R Trophy. It has also been chosen for Henderson Harley-Davidson XR1200 Trophy and Focused Events KTM RC8 Cup.

The main Birmingham site has been extensively redeveloped with a modern shopping centre (The Fort Shopping Centre), car dealerships and several logistics warehouses. The iconic former tyre storage building has been redeveloped into a combined residential, office and hotel complex. This can be observed between junction 5 and 6 of the M6, on the east side of the motorway.

Goodyear Dunlop still occupy a compact part of the site with their British head office. In the UK, the company operates as a sales organisation importing tyres from manufacturing plants around the world, including China, Slovenia and Poland.

The company is in an extremely competitive sales environment and has had to continually readjust to this pressure. Apart from the main Goodyear and Dunlop brands, tyres are also sold under the Fulda, Sava and Arrowspeed brand names.

The Goodyear Dunlop joint venture is managed from sites in Luxembourg and Brussels, which in turn reports to Goodyear in Akron, Ohio.

Dunlop Tyres is the sole tyre supplier to British Touring Car Championship for 2003 to 2006 and the V8 Supercars Championship from 2002 to date. Dunlop also supplies tyres to the Deutsche Tourenwagen Masters and the



Sport Tyres

American Le Mans Series.

See also

- Formula One tyres
- Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company
- Dunlop Rubber
- Dunlop (brands)

External links

- Dunlop Tyres website ^[4]
- Dunlop Motorcycle Tyres site ^[5]

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-

Michelin

	
Type	Publicly-traded Société en commandite par actions (Euronext: ML ^[1])
Industry	Manufacturing, publishing
Founded	1888
Headquarters	Clermont-Ferrand, France
Key people	Michel Rollier (General partner and CEO), Eric Bourdais de Charbonnière (Chairman of the board)
Products	Tyres, travel assistance services
Revenue	€14.81 billion (2009) ^[2]
Operating income	€450 million (2009) ^[2]
Profit	€106 million (2009) ^[2]
Employees	109,190 (2009) ^[2]
Website	www.michelin.com ^[3]

Michelin (French pronunciation: [miʃlɛ̃]; English pronunciation: /ˈmiɪ(t)ʃəlɪn/; full name: *SCA Compagnie Générale des Établissements Michelin*, Euronext: ML ^[1]) is a tyre manufacturer based in Clermont-Ferrand in the Auvergne région of France. It is one of the two largest tyre manufacturers in the world along with Bridgestone.^[4] In addition to the **Michelin** brand, it also owns the BFGoodrich, Taurus, Kormoran and Uniroyal (except in Australia) tyre brands. It is also notable for its Red and Green travel guides, its roadmaps, the **Michelin stars** that the Red Guide awards to restaurants for their cooking, and for its company mascot *Bibendum*, colloquially known as the Michelin Man.

Tyres and wheels

Michelin manufactures tyres for automobiles, heavy equipment, aircraft, motorcycles, and bicycles.

History

Two brothers, Édouard and André Michelin, ran a rubber factory in Clermont-Ferrand, France. One day, a cyclist whose pneumatic tyre needed repair turned up at the factory. The tyre was glued to the rim, and it took over three hours to remove and repair the tyre, which then needed to be left overnight to dry. The next day, Édouard Michelin took the repaired bicycle into the factory yard to test. After only a few hundred metres, the tyre failed. Despite the setback, Édouard was enthusiastic about the pneumatic tyre, and he and his brother worked on creating their own version, one which did not need to be glued to the rim.

Michelin was incorporated on 28 May 1888. In 1891, it took out its first patent for a removable pneumatic tyre which was used by Charles Terront to win the world's first long distance cycle race, the 1891 Paris–Brest–Paris.

Michelin has made a number of innovations to tyres, including in 1946 the radial tyre (then known as the "X" tyre).^[5] It was developed with the front-wheel-drive Citroën Traction Avant and Citroën 2CV in mind. Michelin had bought the then bankrupt Citroën in the 1930s. As of August 2008, this tyre is still available for the 2CV.

In the 1920s and 1930s, Michelin operated large rubber plantations in Vietnam. The Vietnamese workers were exploited pitilessly and brutally, which led to the famous labor movement Phu Rieng Do.^[6]

In 1988, Michelin acquired the tyre and rubber manufacturing divisions of the American B.F. Goodrich Company founded in 1870. Two years later, it bought Uniroyal, Inc., founded in 1892 as the United States Rubber Company. Uniroyal Australia had already been bought by Bridgestone in 1980.

Michelin also controls 90% of Taurus Tire in Hungary, as well as Kormoran, a Polish brand.

As of 1 September 2008, Michelin is again the world's largest tyre manufacturer after spending two years as number two behind Bridgestone.^[7] Michelin produces tyres in France, Germany, USA, United Kingdom, Canada, Brazil, Thailand, Japan, Italy and several other countries. On 15 January 2010, Michelin announced closing of its Ota, Japan plant, which employes 380 workers and makes the Michelin X-Ice tyre. Production of the X-Ice will be moved to Europe, Asia, and North America.^[8]

Motorsports

MotoGP

Michelin participated in MotoGP from 1972 to 2008. They introduced radial construction to MotoGP in 1984, and multi-compound tyres in 1994. They achieved 360 victories in 36 years, and from 1993 to 2006, the world championship had gone to a rider on Michelins.

In 2007, Casey Stoner on Bridgestone tyres won the world championship in dominating fashion, and Valentino Rossi and other top riders complained that Michelins were inferior. Rossi wanted Bridgestones for the 2008 season, but Bridgestone was reluctant to provide them; Dorna threatened to impose a control tyre on the series, after which Bridgestone relented.

In 2008, Michelin's tyres continued to be perceived as being inferior to Bridgestone's, and Michelin committed errors of judgment in allocating adequate tyres for some of the race weekends. Dani Pedrosa's team switched to Bridgestones in the midst of the season, a highly unusual move that caused friction between Honda Racing Corporation and their sponsor Repsol YPF. Other riders also expressed concerns and it seemed that Michelin might not have any factory riders for the 2009 season, leading to rumors that Michelin would withdraw from the series altogether. Dorna and the FIM announced that a control tyre would be imposed on MotoGP for the 2009 season and Michelin did not enter a bid, effectively ending its participation in the series at the end of 2008.^{[9] [10] [11] [12]}



Michelin tyre plant in Waterville, Nova Scotia

Formula One

Michelin first competed in the 1977 Formula One season, when Renault started development of their turbocharged F1 car. Michelin introduced radial tyre technology to Formula One and won the Formula One Drivers' Championship with Brabham, before withdrawing in 1984.

The company returned to Formula One in 2001, supplying Williams, Jaguar, Benetton (renamed Renault in 2002), Prost and Minardi. Toyota joined F1 in 2002 with Michelin tyres, and McLaren also signed up with the company. Michelin tyres were initially uncompetitive but by the 2005 season were totally dominant. This was partly because the new regulations stated that tyres must last the whole race distance (and qualifying), and partly because only one top team (Ferrari) was running Bridgestones, and so had to do much of the development work. Michelin in contrast had much more testing and race data provided by the larger number of teams running their tyres.

Following the debacle of the 2005 United States Grand Prix where, because of safety concerns, Michelin would not allow the teams it supplies to race, Michelin's share price fell by 2.5% (though it recovered later the same day). On 28 June, Michelin announced that it would offer compensation to all race fans who had bought tickets for the Grand Prix. The company committed to refunding the price of all tickets for the race. Additionally, it announced that it would provide 20,000 complimentary tickets for the 2006 race to spectators who had attended the 2005 event.

Michelin has had a difficult relationship with the sport's governing body (the FIA) since around 2003, and this escalated to apparent disdain between the two parties during the 2005 season. The most high profile disagreement was at the United States Grand Prix and the acrimony afterwards. Michelin criticised the FIA's intention to move to a single source (i.e. one brand) tyre from 2008, and threatened to withdraw from the sport. In a public rebuke FIA President Max Mosley wrote *"There are simple arguments for a single tyre, and if [Michelin boss Édouard Michelin] is not aware of this, he shows an almost comical lack of knowledge of modern Formula One"*. Another bone of contention has been the reintroduction of tyre changes during pit-stops from 2006. Michelin criticised the move claiming *"this event illustrates F1's problems of incoherent decision-making and lack of transparency."*

In December 2005, and as a result of the difficult relationship with the sport's governing body, Michelin announced that it would not extend its involvement in Formula One beyond the 2006 season.^[13] Bridgestone has since then been the sole supplier of tyres to Formula One.

The last race won on Michelin tyres in Formula One was the 2006 Japanese Grand Prix, Fernando Alonso benefitting after the Ferrari engine of Michael Schumacher failed during the race. This gave Michelin a second consecutive Constructors' Championship win, with the 2005 and 2006, after Bridgestone's seven-year winning streak, and brought to a total of four the number of wins for Michelin since this event's inception back in the 1958 Formula One season; Michelin's other wins were in the 1979, and 1984 seasons.

Endurance racing

Michelin is involved in endurance racing such as the 24 Hours of Le Mans and the American Le Mans Series. In 2009 Michelin supplied tyres for 41 of the 55 cars entered in Le Mans.^[14]

Recent developments

- Pax System
- Tweel
- X One

Active Wheel

Active Wheel from Michelin includes in-wheel electric motors and a motorised suspension to free up space in the front or rear of the vehicle. This model also eliminates the need for other notorious space hogs like transmissions and exhaust systems. The wheels already have a vehicle ready to receive them, the Heuliez Will from Opel, and are also expected to come standard on the Venturi Volage sometime in 2012 ^[15].

Tyre retailer

Tyre retail in Europe with ATS Euromaster and TCI in the US

Other products

Tour guides

Michelin has long published two guidebook series, the Red Guides to hotels and restaurants, and the Green Guides for tourism. It now publishes several additional guides, as well as digital map and guide products. The city maps in both the Red and the Green guides are of high quality, and are linked to the smaller-scale road maps.

Maps

Michelin publishes a variety of road maps, mostly of France but also of other European countries, Africa, Thailand and the United States. They have recently embarked in e-commerce selling Michelin maps and guides directly to the public through, for example, their UK website [16].

Online mapping

ViaMichelin is a wholly owned subsidiary of Michelin Group, and was started in 2001, to represent Michelin's digital mapping services. As of August 2008, ViaMichelin generates 400 million maps and routes per month on its main website. ^[17]

ViaMichelin provides mapping and travel solutions for internet, mobile and satellite navigation products with street level coverage of Europe, USA, Australia, and parts of Asia and South America.

Michelin Challenge Bibendum

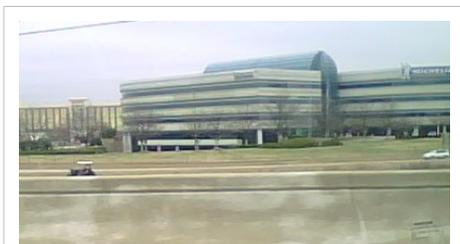
The Michelin Challenge Bibendum is an annual major sustainable mobility event.

Management

From 1999, the company was headed by CEO Édouard Michelin. On 26 May 2006, Édouard drowned while fishing near the island of Sein, off the coast of Brittany. ^[18] His death brought Michel Rollier a 2nd cousin of Edouard Michelin, to the head of the company. ^[19]

External links

- Official website ^[3]
 - Michelin guide website ^[20]
 - Michelin digital mapping services ^[21]



Michelin North America headquarters in Greenville, South Carolina, United States.

Data

- Yahoo! - Compagnie Générale des Établissements Michelin Company Profile ^[22]

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