

GENERAL INFORMATION

Banner.

The brand battery “Made in Austria”.

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1. DATA – CORPORATE FACTS AND FIGURES

Foundation:	1937 in Rankweil/Austria (A)
Executive management:	Andreas Bawart – Commercial CEO Mag. Thomas Bawart – Technical CEO
Business units:	Automotive – OE / IAM Energy Solutions
Annual sales:	4 million starter batteries (FY 04/2023 to 03/2024)
Sales revenues:	EUR 302 million (FY 04/2023 to 03/2024)
Workforce:	750 employees, Banner group total 475 employees, Headquarter Linz-Leonding 25 employees, Thalheim-Wels location 250 employees, sales companies
Export quota:	Over 95% to more than 70 European, African and Asian countries
R&D expenditure:	EUR 10 million p.a.
Investments:	> EUR 25 million in the last 3 years
Sales companies:	13 national companies with a total of 22 branches in Austria, Germany, Switzerland, France, UK, Denmark, Poland, Czech Rep. Slovak Rep., Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria and Spain
References:	Aston Martin, Audi, BMW, Bomag, Caterpillar, Daimler LKW, Kässbohrer, Knaus Tabbert, KTM, Kubota, Liebherr, Mercedes, Mitsubishi, Porsche, Rammox, Rolls-Royce, Rosenbauer, Skoda, Suzuki, Volvo, VW, Wacker Neuson
Cooperations:	Joint venture with the US battery manufacturer East Penn, cooperation with Moura Accumuladores, Brazil
Licensee:	Europe: Duracell Automotive since 2013
Licensor:	China: LEOCH Battery since 2023
Website:	bannerbatterien.com

2. Banner THE POWER COMPANY

The Banner Group consists of two business units:

1. AUTOMOTIVE with two operative market segments, which constitute core business and provide a 90% share of total sales revenues
 - First fitting (OEM) including accessories with approximately 25% (Leonding)
 - Aftermarket (IAM) including accessories with approximately 65% (Leonding)
2. ENERGY SOLUTIONS – with a roughly 10% share of total sales revenues (Thalheim)

Positioning in Europe. The European market absorbs a total of around 65 million starter batteries annually of which around 48 million relate to the aftermarket. On the basis of its sales figures, Banner is one of the five largest manufacturers in Europe and through its Automotive business unit supplies starter, electrical system and leisure batteries to the OEM and IAM market segments. In the past 2023/24 financial year, the Banner plant in Leonding produced and sold 4 million batteries and the company's consolidated sales revenues amounted to EUR 302 million euros.

Further development of the Energy Solutions business unit. The primary focus of the new business unit is on further advances in the traction, semi-traction and stand-by product areas. Charging technology, accessories and services round off the unit's portfolio and are sold to the most important European markets. So the company recently invested around ten million euros in the creation of a new unit location with the aim of developing solutions precisely tailored to individual customer requirements. The batteries of Energy Solutions can be used in a wide variety of applications, ranging from electric forklift trucks and aerial work platforms to leisure vehicles such as golf carts and caravans.

Brand strategy. The company's recent successes underline the wisdom of Banner's sales strategy of consistent, qualitative growth in the premium segment of the market and the positioning of the company as a quality brand with top products and first class service. Banner listens closely to the wishes of its customers and as reflected by its positive results, offers competent full service and recognised quality.

Foundation and family ownership. Banner was founded in Rankweil, Vorarlberg, Austria in 1937 by Artur Bawart. Since 1953, production has been based in Linz-Leonding and in 2004, Banner emerged as Austria's only starter battery manufacturer. The concern is owned by the Bawart family and managed by Andreas Bawart, the Commercial CEO and Thomas Bawart, the Technical CEO. As a consequence, throughout its history Banner's business activities have been characterised by a common thread formed by the underlying values of continuity and independence.

3. THE CURRENT FIGURES

EUR 302 million in sales revenues from 4 million starter batteries sold. The entire, global automotive industry is undergoing a process of paradigmatic change. Nevertheless, the Banner Group has been able to again achieve success with a notable increase in both consolidated sales revenues and volume. The decisive factor in this positive development was the strong demand for the quality products in the North American and Asian regions.

Business success through future-oriented, start-stop batteries. Battery technology as a whole has reached a fundamental turning point. Already today every tenth battery installed in vehicles is designed for start-stop technology. This share has risen steadily in recent years and in the long-term the start-stop battery is clearly en route to driving the conventional lead-acid battery out of the market.

Successful cooperation with the global, Duracell starter battery brand. For almost 12 years, the sale of starter batteries under licence to Duracell, the world's leading manufacturer of alkaline batteries, has constituted a genuine success story. The focus of sales is on continental Europe, with a share of around 80%, while the Middle Eastern and African regions contribute some 20% of sales. Duracell starter batteries "Made by Banner" are currently sold in 36 countries.

Top ratings underline the quality brand strategy. Thanks to a consistent brand strategy that has been employed for more than eighty years, Banner is now one of the best-known battery makes in Europe. This fact was also confirmed by the latest reader surveys published by German trade magazines such as "auto motor und sport" (Best Brands - No. 7/2024) or "Auto Bild" (The Best Brands - April 2024). In both surveys, the Banner brand occupied an excellent third place.

4. GROWTH AND TARGETS

An ambitious investment programme at the Leonding and Thalheim locations. Despite all its internationality, Banner is firmly rooted in Upper Austria and regarded as an important employer in the province's central region. Over 25 million euros have been invested in the development of the Leonding location in the past three years in order to adapt production capacities to increasing sales. Moreover, in June 2021 a location was opened in Thalheim near Wels specifically for the new Energy Solutions business unit. This initiative involved investments of around 10 million euros in further advances in the production of traction, semi-traction and stand-by energy storage solutions. It is through its two business units that the Banner Group seeks to secure both continuous further development and existing jobs.

Growth through exports. Banner already generates more than 20% of its sales with starter batteries outside continental Europe. A figure to which strategic sales co-operations in North and South America and the Middle East make a significant contribution. Meanwhile in Europe Banner's business in the Mediterranean region, which focuses on Italy, Greece and the Western Balkans, is developing dynamically.

R&D is a major priority. Banner is undertaking numerous research projects for the further advancement of its AGM and EFB technologies. The aim is to improve current absorption and output levels through optimised cell design, additives to the active mass and various construction-related measures. As a result of these product developments, in future drivers should be able to recuperate even more braking energy in their cars and commercial vehicles and also employ the battery for increased torque support. For full hybrids and vehicles powered solely by e-motors, the automotive industry sees lithium-ion technology as possessing the greatest future potential. Nevertheless, the sales figures for these vehicles continue to be very modest. Therefore, for the time being Banner has not launched its own development project in the lithium technology field, preferring instead to participate in know-how transfers regarding alternative battery systems as part of its worldwide "network of competence".

5. INNOVATIONS

The general situation. Especially in the conventional drive segment, “green” vehicle technologies remain high on the list of priorities of car manufacturers. One reason for this fact is that in view of the consequences of global warming and the looming shortage of fossil fuels, European legislators have issued binding regulations for producers. Moreover, as no precise, valid target values exist for fleet consumption across all new vehicles produced since 2021, percentage CO₂ reductions of 15% from 2025-2029 and 37.5% from 2030 have simply been formulated and adopted (source: Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety - EU Regulation 2019/631). In response, the European automotive industry has set itself ambitious targets for reducing CO₂ emissions and is currently making the most significant progress in reducing fleet consumption through the use of so-called micro-hybrid drives, which employ optimised combustion engines equipped with a start-stop function and partial braking energy recuperation.

AGM and EFB technology. As a rule, the automotive industry currently employs two different, advanced lead-acid batteries in both the car and commercial vehicle market segments. These either utilise Absorbent Glass Mat (AGM) or Enhanced Flooded Battery (EFB) technology and the battery type used in each individual vehicle depends upon the fuel and CO₂ savings to be achieved, as well as the corresponding demand for electrical energy.

Absorbent Glass Mat (AGM) technology. Today, premium class manufacturers rely primarily upon the AGM battery for their mid-range and premium class vehicles because it combines the start-stop function with partial braking energy recuperation. The abbreviation AGM indicates the use of non-woven glass mats in the battery design and this efficient technology constitutes the logical further development of the lead-acid battery, as it enhances both the flexibility and scope of energy management in modern vehicles. The AGM Running Bull power pack stands out due to improved cold-start characteristics, a massive increase in vibration resistance and a cyclical lifespan, which is three times longer than that of conventional lead-acid batteries. Moreover, owing to a closed system and maximum protection against leakage, the battery also offers zero maintenance.

Enhanced Flooded Battery (EFB) technology. Instead of AGM batteries, volume manufacturers frequently install less complex, start-stop systems in small cars because, as compared to premium class vehicles, the reduction in fuel consumption to be achieved is markedly lower. Producers such as BMW, Fiat, Toyota and VW also use cycle-resistant, liquid electrolyte EFB batteries in this segment. Therefore, in addition to its premium Running Bull AGM battery, Banner offers the Running Bull EFB line in the 60Ah, 65Ah, 70Ah and 95 Ah performance categories on the aftermarket. These cycle-resistant, liquid electrolyte batteries are based on proven Power Bull technology and are fitted with a lid of double design and calcium-calcium electrodes



manufactured using the expanded metal process. Moreover, modifications to the composition of the mass and a fleece cover on the separator make the Running Bull EFB significantly more cycle-resistant and thus ideal for use in conjunction with straightforward start-stop systems.

Powerful support – the Running Bull BackUp. The Running Bull BackUp disposes over the same trend-setting battery technology as the “big” Running Bull AGM and for this new AGM battery type even deep discharging poses no problems. The Running Bull BackUp is used primarily to support the starter battery as a second power pack in vehicles with extremely high energy requirements. In general such vehicles are fitted with start-stop systems, redundant safety systems (Volvo), or comfort consumers such as electric steering (BMW) and these are supplied with power by the back-up battery. As the batteries for such requirements are subject to severe cyclical loads, the decision in favour of modern AGM technology is only logical. Banner offers these back-up batteries for the aftermarket in 9Ah and 12Ah categories, and among other companies supplies Audi, BMW, Mercedes and Volvo with this product as original equipment.

The correct choice of replacement battery. The battery technologies used in start-stop vehicles may not be interchanged. Consequently, if for example an AGM battery was originally installed, the choice of replacement battery must be identical. This is because the fitting of a replacement battery other than a classic calcium battery or an EFB battery can radically reduce battery service life. Therefore, Banner supports its partners during the selection of the correct replacement battery with an up-to-date vehicle classification catalogue and a product finder on the bannerbatterien.com website.

6. PRODUCT RANGE EXPANSION

Enlargement of the Banner charging technology range. The Accucharger 15A and 25A offer a multi-stage charging programme that ensures the optimum performance and longevity of both starter and on-board batteries. Moreover, with seven charging stages, a 16 V boost programme and a maximum charging current of 15 A or 25 A, they guarantee unrivalled performance. The outstanding features of the Accuchargers include a supply mode that prevents the loss of vehicle data when batteries are changed and also delivers protection against splash water and overcharging. In addition, integrated cooling ventilation ensures maximum safety and efficiency. As compared to our previous chargers, the added value of the new versions undoubtedly lies in their versatility. The new Accuchargers are suitable for charging all batteries employing 12 V and 24 V technologies (standard, Ca, start-stop EFB/AGM and GEL), including lithium (LiFePO₄). This not only makes it possible to charge conventional vehicles, but also opens the door to charging e-vehicles such as e-scooters, e-carts and cars fitted with lithium starter/on-board batteries as well as long-term discharge batteries in the hobby and leisure sector.

Banner has further enlarged its battery range for vehicles with fuel saving systems. With its innovative AGM and EFB lead-acid batteries, the Running Bull product range is one of the most modern and comprehensive on the market. These battery types are used mainly in micro-hybrid drives that save fuel by means of brake energy recuperation and automatic start-stop systems. In addition, AGM batteries are also used as a back-up in dual battery concepts for hybrid and el-vehicles.

Innovative buffalo power for commercial vehicles. Banner's answer to the further increase in the demands of the long-distance, freight forwarding industry is the Banner Buffalo Bull EFB. This innovative on-board battery not only fulfils the comfort or "hotel" function in long-haul trucks, but when installed at the rear of the vehicle also provides outstanding vibration resistance. Banner offers this cycle-resistant starter battery in the three standard battery sizes (A, B and C boxes) and the 150 Ah, 190 Ah and 240 Ah performance categories. In particular, international hauliers in Central and Eastern Europe rely greatly upon the quality of Banner EFB batteries.

AGM technology for commercial vehicles. The next logical advance in the Banner Buffalo Bull product range relates to AGM technology. As a result of a wealth of experience with regard to passenger car applications and cooperation with a prestigious truck manufacturer in Europe, a size C Banner Buffalo Bull AGM battery has been developed. This version of the Buffalo Bull AGM has been available in an exclusive design throughout Europe since 2022.

7. ENVIRONMENT-FRIENDLY PRODUCTION/RECYCLING

Banner is ready for the mobility of tomorrow. As one of Europe's most advanced battery manufacturers, sustainability and environmental protection are an essential element in Banner's corporate philosophy. For the starter battery producer it is therefore all the more important to provide the market with sustainable battery systems, which represent a key component in the mobility of tomorrow. Consequently, Banner has an intense focus upon related developments and is working systematically on the next generation of traditional starter batteries. This is vital because the fuel-efficient vehicles of the future will continue to require a reliable energy storage system and every e-vehicle is fitted with an additional lead-acid battery for the supply of its electrical system with power.

"Green" drive technologies are shaping the automotive industry. An established recycling loop with the highest collection rate amongst all the recyclable goods on the market means that the lead-acid battery constitutes a model resource-saving and sustainable product.

A closed loop from production to recycling. Banner began recycling used batteries several decades ago and the recycled material is reintroduced into the production chain of new products. New batteries are issued via workshops and distribution points and the spent batteries are stored in special containers to await collection by Banner. Valuable raw materials such as lead, sulphuric acid and polypropylene are thus returned to the production cycle. In specific terms, during the past 28 years the Starter Battery Environmental Forum (UFS), of which Banner Batterien Österreich GmbH is a founder member, has been able to recover more than 21.7 million dead vehicle batteries from across Austria. Almost 100% of the raw materials contained in these batteries, such as some 230,000 tonnes of lead, have been recycled at a specialist company in Austria. Consequently, as a product, batteries thus achieve the highest collection rate of all the recyclable goods on the market, i.e. above those for glass and paper. Banner is certified according to the latest ISO 9001, IATF 16949 and ISO 14001 quality standards, which also cover the implementation of maximum employee and environmental protection measures. Moreover, as a lead-processor, Banner takes its responsibility towards the environment extremely seriously and only employs recycled lead from the battery recovery process in its production.

The future belongs to innovative and resource-protective products. Companies bear a huge responsibility towards both people and nature and Banner demonstrates an acute awareness of this fact through a closed recycling loop for its products. Moreover, since its beginnings, Banner has geared its production in Leonding to the strictest environmental and safety standards and in future, innovations and investments will continue to be made in accordance with this guiding principle. Indeed for Banner a vehicle



battery is first truly “green” if, in addition to its use in fuel- and CO₂-saving drive concepts, the procurement and reprocessing of the resources employed are organised in such a way that only minimum waste results. In this respect, the lead-acid battery constitutes an object lesson that is unequalled among the alternative vehicle battery technologies.

A highly effective filter system “Made in Austria” für Banner’s production plant in Leonding. Banner regards the highest safety standards and the latest production technology as being of critical importance. Therefore, in cooperation with the Steyr-based company, Kappa Filter Systems GmbH, investments have been made in four filter systems. As a result, a globally unique and effective filter material is now being used in Austria.

The highest environmental and safety standards. This innovative filter technology reduces the already low, production-related emissions, which are well under the statutory limits, by another two-thirds. Moreover, this exhaust air purification concept is not only unique in the battery industry, but also guarantees the lowest possible emission values. Apart from high-grade fine dust filtration, a safety concept has been implemented that prevents emissions from escaping even in the event of a malfunction. Permanent monitoring of the quality of the filtered air and a police filter stage also ensure the highest plant safety and purity levels that far exceed the mandatory requirements.

8. PRESS PHOTOS



Photo 1



Photo 2



Photo 3



Photo 4



Photo 5

Photo captions

- 1) The Banner product range
- 2) A Banner production line
- 3) Banner's closed recycling loop
- 4) The Banner location in Leonding numbers among Europe's most modern battery plants
- 5) The company's executive management: Andreas Bawart, Commercial CEO (l.) and Thomas Bawart, Technical CEO (r.)

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