



Alexandra Herrmann, Product and Marketing Manager of Fritzmeier Systems GmbH

## **From biking to construction sites, Fritzmeier CABS guarantees safety and comfort**

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LECTURA Press asked Alexandra Herrmann, Product and Marketing Manager of Fritzmeier Systems GmbH, a series of questions about the company's smart solutions, industry trends, bauma 2019 impressions and sports equipment development.

### **Were you satisfied with the construction machinery trade fair bauma 2019? Did it meet your expectations?**

The bauma is the most important trade fair for our company. And for Fritzmeier CABS it is even something very special: for the tenth time we were represented at bauma and it was a great success for us. For the second time we were nominated for the bauma Innovation Award. This time in the category Research / Science together with the consortium TU Munich, Fritzmeier,

MTS and Vemcon. And we won for the second time. We are very proud of that. It is well known that bauma has broken all records this year. All our customers and business partners were there and we are very happy about the positive feedback.

## **However, these large events cost the companies a lot of money. What is your opinion on future trade fairs and exhibitions in terms of the financial side? Could the companies come up with new presenting strategies or would the trade fairs still play a key role?**

I can only agree on this point. Trade fairs are extremely expensive and as known according to surveys the biggest amount of costs within the companies' marketing budget. In the case of bauma we do have a "home advantage" as we are located only 30 km south of Munich. But the bauma remains one of the most expensive trade fairs.

However, close observation reveals a tendency in terms of concentration on leading trade fairs. In addition, we see a high number of specialist forums coming up and getting established. Local, small trade fairs will certainly have a harder time in the future.

In addition to the construction industry, the material handling sector is a very important trade fair for us. Unfortunately, there are no viable trade fair offers for us, OEM suppliers. We see a need for action here.

With regard to bauma: there is nowhere else the possibility to meet and get to know the entire global construction industry, customers and potential new business partners in such a concentrated form for a week. It is an amazing place to present and see innovations and to observe the market development.

Therefore, in the near and medium future we believe that trade fairs will definitely remain one of the most important marketing tools. However, we hope that the leading trade fair, such as bauma, will not be too inflationary and Munich will remain the main trade fair.

## **Which vehicles are your cabins suitable for?**

Fritzmeier CABS is a leading system supplier for manufacturers of off-highway and utility vehicles, and makes complete cabs, system modules, and metal and composite cladding components. Our development and production operations are aligned towards the central benefits of safety, ergonomics, comfort, economy and integration capability. To best serve our

customers worldwide, Fritzmeier Cabs has several manufacturing locations in Europe, a joint venture in India and cooperation partners around the globe.

## **How many cab models do you offer overall and which one is the top-selling product?**

Our core market is the off-highway industry. Within this market, Fritzmeier has a large variety of different models. Our strength lies here in the complex variance and the options that Fritzmeier CABS can map and thus respond individually to the customer's wishes as a development and production partner. With a 60% share of the market in the material handling sector, the top selling products are also in this market.

## **What are the advantages of an aluminium lightweight cabin?**

Manufacturers in the off-highway sector are usually under high cost pressure. It is therefore of great importance to be able to implement cab projects economically. We offer solutions tailored to the respective product and the planned quantities. Aluminium offers the possibility of redesigning profiles for every application.

Although aluminium is only half as strong as steel in terms of tensile strength, this disadvantage can be compensated for using intelligent development solutions. We work with multi-chamber design, i.e. we draw braces into the profiles. This allows the aluminium to absorb much more deformation energy so that standards-compliant safety structures can be implemented.



## What exactly is so smart about the Smart CAB?

Based on a multifunctional cab for self-propelled vehicles such as harvesters and field sprayers, the CAB Concept Cluster demonstrates what is possible today and in the future. We transfer major trends such as serial-tested modularity, x2x-usability and smart farming into real added value for our customers: flexibility, future reliability, and profitability. Flexibility has become a key notion in development and production today.

For the Smart CAB, serial-tested modularity is therefore a key component of the cab concept. All indicated innovations are near start of production or have been serial-tested, can be flexibly combined and adjusted to various machine types. The Smart CAB is based on a serial-tested product (FRITZMEIER) integrating all CCC innovations. The modular design ensures flexible operational capacity for different vehicles. For the customers, this means: great quality, low development and equipment costs and quick production start without risks.

## **HMI in cabins is getting more and more important. How does FM see the trend?**

The complexity of machine control is increasing, as is the number of HMI variants. Operators often work with multiple machines, which makes orientation much more difficult. To address this, the HMI Cluster and VDMA have joined forces to create a uniform standard. We set up the cluster together with the construction company Leonhard Weiß, because we felt that a cross-manufacturer standard would be very important going forward.

This starts with the use of the same symbols per operating group, continues with the positioning of the operating groups and extends to the redundant control of safety functions. At bauma 2019, the first drafts were presented by Fritzmeier. Meanwhile, the HMI Cluster is an official part MiC 4.0 – Machine in Construction (working group, initiated by VDMA to meet the challenges of digitization). We welcome any company to join our cluster, in order to shape the future of HMIs.

## **The largest plant of the company is situated in Vyškov, Czech Republic. Why have you chosen this country and what are the advantages?**

At the time of its foundation in 1992, the choice of location was due to cost pressure and a shortage of skilled workers. Like other companies, this issue has now caught up with us. In order to counteract rising labour costs and skills shortages, we have already continuously invested in automated processes. This applies to all Fritzmeier Group locations.

## **What market (region) seems to be the most interesting for you in the near future?**

Central and Eastern Europe is and will remain an important market for us. In Germany, the most off-highway machines are produced by far. Therefore, Europe, with a focus on Germany, continues to be an important location for the Fritzmeier Group. Globally, Fritzmeier founded a joint venture with Motherson for cabin construction in Chennai, South of India in 2002. India is also an important and constantly growing market for us.

## **I assume only few people know that Fritzmeier produced the first full plastic skis between 1975 and 1980. Have you recently been thinking about the development of another**

## revolutionary sports equipment?

Yes that's right. Rosi Mittermaier, nowadays rather known as the mother of the ski racer Felix Neureuther, celebrated numerous successes. As the first top athlete, "our Gold-Rosi" recognized the potential of the first full plastic ski as a two-time Olympic champion – Fritzmeier's first pioneering achievement in the world of high-performance sports. Fritzmeier produced surfboards in the 70s and 80s. Just as legendary as the successes of Robby Naish are the boards of the cult brand Mistral – founded in 1977 by Fritzmeier.

Today, the Fritzmeier Group is once again a pioneer in the bike segment. As a bike manufacturer M1-Sporttechnik founded in 1990, we specialize in the development, construction and distribution of the highest quality carbon e-bikes. In 2015, our already legendary SPITZING revolutionized the e-bike sector as the world's strongest e-mountain bike. And just in time for the 25th anniversary, we have set a new milestone in e-bike development with the SPITZING Evolution. Continuation to follow - promised!

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### Company overview

**Fritzmeier CABS** provides complete cabs solutions and components for off-highway and utility vehicles and also holds the position of world market leader in forklift cabs. Fritzmeier focuses on safety, ergonomics, comfort and integration capability. The company currently reports over 1460 employees and 8 manufacturing locations, seven in Europe and one joint venture in India. Nevertheless, Fritzmeier has cooperation partners all around the globe.

Source: LECTURA Verlag GmbH; Patrik Eder

