

## Edscha Trailer Systems

# Robust Hybrid Technology

**The sliding roof specialist Edscha, which recently moved its headquarters to Moers, is putting new products on the market despite a difficult economic environment.**

Edscha is a brand name like Tempo. Tempo was the first branded tissue in Germany and it has long since become a generic name, as branding specialists term such products. This means that when we say 'Tempo' we are often not referring to a certain product, but rather to paper tissues in general. And 'Edscha' stands for sliding tarpaulin roofs in general. However this generalisation can also sometimes be more of a curse than a blessing. It means that all sliding roofs that follow the Edscha system carry this honourable name, independently of their manufacturer. Many companies would like to use Edscha technology for trailer orders but would like it at the lowest price possible. As a supplier of high-quality systems Edscha is currently suffering under this trend because the market is highly price sensitive at the moment. And then all brand name manufacturers are under pressure if they are not able or willing to go along with any price.

Edscha is not doing badly at all, despite the price pressure and the generally difficult market situation. According to the parent group VBG, Edscha Trailer Systems is supplying 50 percent of the world market for sliding roofs – a good 50,000 pieces per annum – and this means they are still the global market leader. Besides Edscha and its subsidiary Sesam other renowned competitors are the German company TSE and the Belgian company Versus Omega. This company, based in Moers, achieved turnover equivalent to 28.9 million € (-14.5 %). Of this 18.4 million € were achieved in Germany alone, which is not surprising as the largest trailer manufacturers, namely Schmitz Cargobull, Krone and Kögel/Humbaur, are also located here. Profit was the equivalent of 1.11 million € (2011: 2.58 million €). VBG explains the negative developments in the results of the group subsidiary in its annual report for 2012 with a drop in production of trailers of approximately 10%, which inevitably also affects the component manufacturers.

Despite this the company continued to invest in new products; a total of 3.44 million € in 2012. Some of the current innovations are the Edscha Dry System, the Edscha TailWing and finally the Edscha Ultraline Heavy Duty (UL/HD), a reinforced steel version of the already well-known Ultraline roof system. Payload is very important for trucks. It is limited by the net weight of the vehicle and/or its bodies. Accordingly each component manufacturer is interested in including the highest performance products with the lowest possible net weight in their range. Edscha is no different to its competitors in this way. In a way the team in Moers is moving against the trend with its new product Ultraline Heavy Duty and is taking a step backwards – for good reasons. That is because the new reinforced steel hybrid structure of the CurtainSider UL/HD stands for more ruggedness and reliability and thus increases its range of possible deployments for all transportation, above all those with particularly difficult loading conditions. HD stands for Heavy Duty. The HD models are designed for paper transportation and also for universal and volume transport and deployment in the beverage and automobile industries. By hybrid structure the roof specialists mean the combination of plastic and metal. Thus the entire roller carriage is made of steel, for example. These sliding roofs are thus more stable overall and have higher load capacities while remaining very flexible because of their malleable plastic joints. The sliding roofs are fitted with internal rollers and guide rollers.

Their internal position means that they are protected from corrosion. Edscha states that smooth running is guaranteed, thanks to improved structure, kinematics and a bow interval of 650 mm – "even with high side tarpaulin tension on roof straps that are turned to the outside". The HD kinematics also guarantee easy handling of the sliding roof with little effort, in a similar way to the purely UI models. The HD roof can therefore be easily opened and closed. The operation can be carried out by one person on the ground, as with the other roofs. Up to 85 % of the trailer sidewall can be opened.

If desired the tarpaulin can also be pushed to the back. To be successful on the market with Heavy Duty roofs it is, however, necessary to provide more advisory services. That is because this product is heavier and therefore goes against the trend towards consistently lighter products. It is also more expensive than the standard roofs on the market. Its strength lies in its ruggedness and therefore its durability under constant use. That is why Edscha is planning to start more intensive dialogue with the final customer through additional field staff. In this way Edscha aims to persuade the shippers of the quality of its products.

## **Edscha**

### **View back into History**

In 1969 a patent formed the foundation for the Edscha business with sliding truck roofs. After 36 years Edscha (Remscheid) sold the smallest of its five business sectors, precisely the sliding truck roof sector, to the Swedish VBG Group, a manufacturer of truck trailer couplings. The old German Edscha Group has been concentrating on its core customers since then: automobile manufacturers. The subsidiary Sesam Schiebeverdecke has also been part of Edscha Trailer Systems GmbH (Moers) since 2000. While Edscha is primarily represented on the market with very high quality products and takes individual customer wishes into account. Sesam offers a range of uniform components for self-build sliding roof kits and also complete, assembled sliding roofs. However 85 % of all deliveries are Edscha products. The company only moved into the office in Moers in August 2012 with approximately 30 employees. Approximately 70 further colleagues work in the Czech production facilities in Kamenice nad Lipou. Sales and distribution is currently handled by six sales representatives.

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