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28 years Europa-Park - a success story made by Mack

Already three years ago, Europa-Park celebrated its 25th anniversary and it can look back upon a very successful history. In 1975 it was opened with the attractions Fairy Tale Alley, Dwarf City, Panorama Train, Jungle Rafting, Miniature Golf, Monza-Run, Mississippi-Steamer, and Monorail - 250.000 people visited Europa-Park during the first season. By now, it has been honoured several times and is - with over 3 million visitors per year - the market leader among German leisure parks. Over 100 attractions and international shows, spread over an area of 65 hectares, guarantee boundless fun for young and old alike.

The development of Europa-Park, which today is one of the most beautiful leisure parks in the world, is a typical success story. Already in the 18th century, the workshops in Waldkirch were famous for their ability in making carriages. In 1870, they moved on to the fairground business and started producing roundabouts. By 1915, the company was official supplier of the "Zirkus Krone" and the first roller coaster followed in 1921. After 1930, the family business specialized in the production of fairground attractions, roundabouts, ghost trains and roller coasters. In 1951, Mack built the first wooden bob run and just one year later the business entered the US market. Under the direction of Franz Mack the company became well-known all over the world. The reasons for this continuous success are the innovative conceptions in the field of attractions, but as well the venturing into the leisure park business.

When Europa-Park was first opened in 1975, it was designed as a show-case for the products manufactured by the company Mack in Waldkirch. Under the management of Franz Mack and his sons Roland and Jürgen, a perfect combination of park grounds, entertainment, culture and the thrill of the attractions (almost all of them built by the parent company Mack in Waldkirch) was created.

But not everybody believed in the success of the leisure park in the beginning. "What happens to the leisure ruins in Rust?" is just one of the

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headlines, that reflect the skepticism which was brought toward the idea of the family Mack to build a leisure park in Rust.

But the continuously growing number of visitors proved that the family Mack made the right decision: 250.000 came in 1975, one year later already 700.000 people visited Europa-Park. An important step was the opening of the Italian themed area in 1981; and with this the realization of the European themed concept together with stage designer and film architect Ulrich Damrau.

Today, the Mack brothers ensure in the 8th generation, that the leisure park is being extended continuously - so far without government subventions. They attach great importance to fixed constructions and massive materials and they want to prove, that a leisure park can be more than a world of plastic and papier-maché and also that it can definitely emphasize cultural features. Their efforts have been successful: more than 55 million people have visited Europa-Park since its opening in 1975.

Already in 1996, the "Stiftung Warentest", an independent product testing foundation, came to a definite conclusion: "All in all, Europa-Park offers the widest range of high-class activities at a justifiable price - especially in comparison to Disneyland Paris." Prof. Dr. Horst W. Opaschowski, a German expert of tourism from Hamburg, even went one step further: "Experience your life - this is the forecast for the future. But here in Rust, the future has already started a long time ago."

During the past 28 years, a world of adventure for young and old alike has been created here in the Upper Rhine area. It combines modern leisure technology and appealing architectural designs with a beautiful historical park. Embedded into the castle grounds of the 550 year old "Balthasar Castle", Europa-Park offers boundless fun for everybody.

Accordingly, Europa-Park today is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Germany. In 2000, the park initiated over 400.000 overnight stays in the Black Forrest region and approximately 500.000 Black Forrest vacationers paid Rust a visit during their stay. With the larger capacities of hotel rooms, the number of visitors who are staying more than one day is increasing rapidly. In 2002, approximately 200.000 overnight stays could be registered in the two Europa-Park hotels.

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But what is a popular tourist destination without perfect traffic communication? In 1995, a new motorway exit for the BAB 5 near Ringsheim was approved. The construction works of the new road from Ringsheim to Rust started already in 1999, so that now, Europa-Park can be reached even faster by taking the exit "Rust" (57b).

And also in the future, the managers of Europa-Park have big plans. This means especially, that in addition to the improvement of already existing facilities, the park will be continuously expanded. Leisure industry of tomorrow - invented, developed and realized by Mack today. A concept that guarantees success also in the 21st century. The satisfied visitor is one of the most important factors for success. This means, that the managers of Europa-Park will continue to improve the quality of the activities consequently. Managing director Roland Mack: "Our visitors deserve the best, and this is exactly what they get here."

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