

Bossard reports continued growth

Bossard Group enjoyed significant growth in the third quarter of 2016. Sales rose year-on-year by 4.8% to CHF 169.7 million (€156.3 million) despite challenging conditions in some markets.

Business in the Americas was particularly dynamic, increasing 13.3%. Europe and Asia also contributed to positive developments in the quarter. Group sales grew by 3% to CHF 513.3 million (€472.9 million) in the first nine months of 2016.

Quarter 3 European sales rose 2.3% to CHF 97.9 million – driven by major markets such as Germany, France and Denmark. For the first nine months European sales climbed 3.7% to CHF 305.6 million. In Switzerland, where the appreciation of the Swiss franc continues to be felt in the industrial sector, demand remained at a low level.

Bossard America's business is in a sharp upswing even though a major customer remains in a dry spell caused by the economic situation. Third quarter sales rose, primarily due to the increasing production volume of the leading US electric vehicle manufacturer. Subsequent to publication of its third quarter results, Bossard Group announced that its "close and mutually beneficial cooperation" with this customer has been extended until 2020, successfully continuing a relationship started in 2010. The "intensive cooperation" involves not only logistical supply directly to the production line but also active

collaboration in all aspects of fastening technology, as well as in the development phase of new models. American sales in the first nine months rose by 3.5% to CHF 130.8 million.

Asian business is also showing dynamic growth as a result of structural investments made in these markets in previous years. Sales in the third quarter rose by 1.1% to CHF 27.4 million. In India and Taiwan Bossard recorded double-digit growth. Activities in Malaysia and Singapore also contributed to this positive business development. In China, Bossard's most important market in the region, slight third quarter growth was recorded following two quarters in which sales were below the previous year's levels.

Bossard believes the business development in several major markets confirms the validity of strategic decisions made in previous years. Demand is expected to remain positive in Europe, and Asia, and Bossard is particularly confident because of the dynamic demand in America – where it expects above average growth in the fourth quarter.

Bossard expects full year sales to reach around CHF 675 million, up from CHF 656 million in 2015. +

Bulten Q3 profits improve despite sales fall

Bulten reported Quarter 3 2016 sales of SEK 601 million down 2.7% on the same quarter 2015 (SEK 618 million). EBIT was SEK 39 million (Q3 2015: SEK 36 million) corresponding to an operating margin of 6.5% (2015: 5.8%). Earnings after tax were SEK 30 million (Q3 2015: SEK 22 million).

Net sales for the nine months year to date were SEK 2 billion (2015 nine months: SEK 2.027 billion) down 1.2% year-on-year. EBIT was SEK 148 million (2015: SEK 118 million) corresponding to an operating margin of 7.4% (2015: 5.8%). Nine months earnings after tax were SEK 109 million (2015: SEK 87 million). Nine month order bookings totalled SEK 1.973 billion, down 1.4% on the same period 2015.

President and CEO Tommy Andersson commented: "Bulten is reporting strong results with an operating margin of 6.5% despite a fall in volumes. The rate of sales was slightly weak, mainly at the start of the quarter, but recovered during September. The results were due to completed optimisation and good flexibility in the business."

"Volume development and order bookings deteriorated slightly due to model shifts by our customers, lower export volumes to China and heavy vehicle production, and some effects of 'Brexit'. We still expect 2016 to be a year of growth in-line with expectations for European vehicle production with the exception of export volumes, which are expected to be weaker than last year."

"Bulten's prospects for gaining further market share is very good from the second half of 2017, based on signed contracts and also on ongoing discussions with customers. During the quarter there was a breakthrough for our business in Russia when we signed an agreement with a significant vehicle manufacturer."

"We have taken further steps to becoming the industry's most cost-efficient producer of fasteners while safeguarding profitable growth through investment in a new surface treatment facility at our plant in Germany. This investment will provide added value and improved competitiveness through greater flexibility and control over our process." +

Currency exchange: At interbank rates 100 SEK = €10.3

ITW reports strong Q3 automotive growth

ITW has reported its Automotive OEM segment revenue, which includes fasteners, has grown 25% to US\$765 million (€696 million) in the third quarter of 2016, including 6.6% organic growth.

Automotive OEM segment revenue for the first nine months grew 9.2% to US\$2.09 billion (€1.9 billion), including organic growth at 4.4%. Operating income for the first three quarters was US\$512 million, with operating margin at 24.5%.

ITW completed the acquisition of the Engineered Fasteners & Components (EF&C) business from ZF TRW at the beginning of July 2016 for an approximate purchase price of US\$450 million. EF&C had operating revenue of US\$117 million for the three months to 30th September 2016.

Third quarter Construction Products revenue, which also includes fasteners, rose 1.6% to US\$415 million. Operating income was US\$94 million (operating margin 22.6%). Nine month Construction Products revenue grew 1.2% to US\$1.22 billion. Operating income was US\$278 million (operating margin 22.7%).

Third quarter overall group revenue increased 4% to US\$3.5 billion. Operating income grew 6% to a record US\$808 million. +

Report courtesy of GlobalFastenerNews.com

Fit for Industry 4.0 with Bossard Smart Factory Logistics

While many still discuss the term and meaning of Industry 4.0, Bossard Group has launched a concrete methodology that prepares manufacturers for change – Smart Factory Logistics.



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This typical Industry 4.0 technology enables the customer to optimise the supply chain and to improve planning.”

Increased economic demands are forcing companies towards leaner, faster, and better production. This has resulted in manufacturers focusing on customised mass production, real time automation and gap-free process transparency.

“A new type of factories, so called Smart Factories, are emerging worldwide,” explains Urs Güttinger, head of Smart Factory Logistics at Bossard. “Manufacturers require flexible production lines and sites. Smart technologies enable this agile production at a fraction of the cost and time.”

Bossard helps shape the future

This is where Bossard’s new Smart Factory Logistics methodology comes in. The holistic approach supports companies worldwide in further developing a lean and error free implementation. Bossard prepares companies for the next steps with the following three specific and field tested solutions:

- + Intelligent systems communicate along the supply chain:** Highly developed technical systems, such as SmartBin or SmartLabel, link the production and supply chain. Containers with integrated weight sensors continuously communicate the current demand at a customer’s production or in the warehouse. Bossard receives this data and delivers the respective replenishment automatically, even directly to the point of use. The customer only notices the consistent stock of B- and C-parts.
- + Customer specific solutions for all needs:** Bossard seeks to make the customer faster, better, and more productive on a daily basis. This does not only amount to the delivery of B- and C-parts. The Smart Factory Logistics approach includes a comprehensive logistics management analysis of delivery, supplier consolidation, operation and maintenance, and even encompasses strategic customer consultation.

“**Bossard Smart Factory Logistics delivers full production control.**”

- + Big data software creates transparency:** Bossard’s very own supply chain collaborative software, ARIMS, collects, processes and delivers big data on a large-scale. This core element of Smart Factory Logistics creates transparency and brings the customer closer to processes. Thanks to the latest ARIMS release, customers receive real time information online and can complete modifications, such as demand adjustments or container rearrangements, interactively. This typical Industry 4.0 technology enables the customer to optimise the supply chain and to improve planning.

“With these three core competencies, Bossard offers customers a complete package for tackling the challenges of the fourth industrial revolution,” states Urs Güttinger.

Bossard supplements these services with a comprehensive product portfolio of mechanical and electrical fasteners, along with engineering and consulting services for sustainable production and manufacturing process optimisation. Thanks to its global presence, Bossard can fully support internationally operating customers locally and globally at a consistently high-level of quality. +



Interactive visualisations show how Bossard Smart Factory Logistics makes customers faster, better, and more productive