

## **Leipzig BMW plant report**

**To:** Carl Storz  
**From:** Antoine Vernier  
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**Re:** Visit of the BMW factory in Leipzig

### **Summary**

I attended a visit of the brand-new BMW plant in Leipzig at the end of November during a study trip in Germany. This visit was conducted by a BMW employee specialized in this task. The visit's aim was to teach us the global way of work of this plant which is the pride of the mark.

This plant aim is to completely build car chassis, paint them, integrate engines and assembly insides of the cars.

### **An automated production**

This high technological factory is characterized by the very low number of human worker. Indeed the production is mainly done by industrial robots. In this way the human work force has become skilled programming engineers instead of workers. This plant built in 2005 uses nowadays about 800 robots.

### **Production organization**

The production is organized in order to reduce any handling. Indeed the plant is composed of two floors: the first for production and the second for handling, here an automatic assembly line elevate the cars in production to the second floor to improve moving in the plant.

Moreover, the Leipzig plant is the intersection of BMW production. Here suppliers bring parts from everywhere in order to build finished cars.

### **A versatile assembly-line**

The force of this plant is that it is versatile: in an only huge assembly-line several models of BMW are built "a la carte". Each car in construction is assigned a barcode referring to a specific car ordered by a customer. The customer could choose the model, the colour, options, the engine... Thus the assembly line determines the handling to provide each part for the good car thanks to the barcode.

### **Conclusion**

To sum up, the Leipzig plant is the main point of the building process of several BMW models: construction, handling, assembly.

Given current condition, the BMW choice to made-to-order and therefore in lean production allows to streamline costs and thus achieve substantial savings.