

= Nokian Tyres =

Nokian Tyres plc (Finnish : Nokian Renkaat Oyj) , headquartered in Nokia , Finland , produces tyres for cars , trucks , buses , and heavy @-@ duty equipment . Known for its winter tyres , Nokian operates the only permanent winter tyre testing facility in the world . The company 's Hakkapeliitta brand name is recognised in Finland as a reputable trademark .

Nokian Tyres concentrates on the consumer car and vehicle tyre replacement and premium snow tyre markets ; they do not supply automobile manufacturers tyres for new car production . The greater prices consistently found in those markets result in higher profitability compared to the rest of the tyre industry . The company also produces retreading materials and tyre pressure monitors . It also previously manufactured bicycle tyres but currently licenses the Nokian name on bicycles tyres to another Finnish company . The Vianor retail tyre store chain , which services cars in addition to selling tyres , is owned by Nokian Tyres PLC .

The company traces its history to a groundwood pulp mill established in 1865 . Car tyre production began in 1932 by Suomen Gummitehdas Oy (Finnish Rubber Works Ltd) . A three @-@ company merger formed the Nokia Corporation in 1967 ; Nokian Tyres Limited was established in 1988 as a joint venture company split from the conglomerate as Nokia Corporation started focusing entirely on the mobile communications business . Nokian is " Nokia " in the genitive , thus Nokian renkaat meaning " Tyres of Nokia " . The European subsidiary of Japanese tyre company Bridgestone is currently the largest minority shareholder .

= = History = =

Early corporate predecessors of Nokian Tyres are the Nokia Aktiebolag (Nokia Company) and Suomen Kumitehdas Oy (Finnish Rubber Works Ltd .) . In 1865 , mining engineer Fredrik Idestam established a groundwood pulp mill on the banks of the Tammerkoski rapids in the town of Tampere , in southwestern Finland . In 1868 , Idestam built a second mill near the town of Nokia , 15 kilometres (9 @.@ 3 mi) west of Tampere by the Nokianvirta River , which had better resources for hydroelectric production . In 1871 , with the help of his close friend , the statesman Leo Mechelin , Idestam renamed and transformed his mills into a share company , founding the Nokia Company .

Suomen Gummitehdas Oy was founded in 1898 and began manufacturing car tyres in 1932 . The Hakkapeliitta tyre name was introduced in 1936 , and some tyres sold under the Nokian tyre name still use the Hakkapeliitta brand name . Hakkapeliitta is a (Finnish) historical term used for a Finnish light cavalryman in the service of King Gustavus Adolphus of Sweden during the Thirty Years ' War (1618 ? 48) . In 1967 , Suomen Kumitehdas Oy (originally called Suomen Gummitehdas Oy) merged with Suomen Kaapelitehdas (Finnish Cable Works) and the forest and power industry company Nokia Aktiebolag to create Nokia Corporation .

Nokian Tyres (which had manufactured tyres under the Nokia brand ; Nokian is the genitive) was split from the Nokia Corporation when Nokian Tyres Limited was created in 1988 as a joint venture company . Nokian Tyres PLC shares were floated on the Helsinki Stock Exchange (OMX Helsinki) in 1995 . Nokia , which became the largest mobile telephone manufacturer in 1998 , ended its ownership interest in Nokian Tyres in 2003 , selling its holding of 2 million shares to Bridgestone Europe NV / SA , a subsidiary of the Japanese tyre manufacturer Bridgestone , for U.S. \$ 73 @.@ 2 million . This made Bridgestone the largest shareholder , with an 18 @.@ 9 % stake , later diluted to 16 @.@ 8 % . Bridgestone announced that Nokian Tyres would be operated independently , but it would consider complementing the company 's product development , testing , and distribution .

Production of bicycle tyres and inner tubes started in 1974 in Lieksa , Finland . In 2004 , Nokian Tyres sold its bicycle tyre business to Suomen Rengastehdas Oy for ? 3 @.@ 6 million . This successor company remains one of the few manufacturers of tungsten carbide @-@ studded snow tyres for bicycles . Suomen Rengastehdas continues to produce bicycle tyres , including all Nokian @-@ branded bicycle tyres .

Nokian Tyres set up a joint venture , Ordabasy ? Nokian Tyres JSC , with Ordabasy Corporation JSC , a multi @-@ industry Kazakh company , to manufacture passenger car tyres at a planned

new factory in Kazakhstan . The venture started in 2007 , but the manufacturing project was put on hold in early 2009 . Nokian Tyres was to provide technical expertise in tyre manufacturing , and the products were to be sold in Kazakhstan , Central Asia , Russia , and Eastern Europe . In 2009 , the Nokian Hakkapeliitta tyre model line received the " List of trademarks with a reputation " status by the National Board of Patents and Registration of Finland .

= = Financial information = =

Nokian Tyres ' three principal activities are the manufacture of passenger car tyres , heavy commercial tyres , and retail tyre sales . As of 2008 , the Company is the most profitable tyre manufacturer in the world , at up to 18 % earnings (before taxes and interest) relative to sales , compared to 14 % at Bridgestone , 8 % at Michelin , and 9 @. @ 6 % at Continental .

In 2010 , Nokian Tyres profits were ? 167 @. @ 9 million on sales of ? 1 @. @ 058 billion , an increase in revenues of 32 @. @ 5 % on the previous year . The company had revenue growth of 18 % annually in the 2003 ? 2007 period . Nokian Tyres is also publicly traded on the Berlin Stock Exchange . Kim Gran has been the President and Chief Executive Officer since 1 September 2000 , having previously served as a Vice President for five years .

= = Products = =

= = = Passenger car tyres = = =

Nokian Tyres produces tyres for passenger cars , SUVs , and vans . Nokian branded tyres are sold in over 60 countries . Nokian Tyres designed the first winter tyres in 1934 and has more winter tyre patents than any other manufacturer . Nokian Tyres is known for its winter tyres , not to be confused with all @- @ season tyres . Nokian winter tyres have been described as a favourite of critics and have been well received in winter test results by several publications . Nokian also has designed some winter tyre models with low rolling resistance , offering lower fuel consumption . Nokian was the first company to produce a tyre that allowed for year @- @ round use by having different tread patterns on the lateral and medial aspect of the tread . One pattern is optimised for winter and another pattern is designed as an all @- @ season pattern .

Nokian Tyres was the first tyre manufacturer in the world to fully eliminate high @- @ aromatic oils from its production process . Used as plasticising agents in tread production and to facilitate the compounding of rubber , they contain polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) , a carcinogen , and have been replaced by low @- @ aromatic oils . In 2006 , Nokian Tyres received a commendation in the Finnish round of the European Business Awards for the Environment .

The demand for Nokian tyres is seasonal , as a high percentage of the company 's sales are of winter tyres , but it has reduced seasonal fluctuations by its development of summer and all weather tyres . According to the company , more than 80 % of its passenger car and van tyre sales are winter tyres . Winter tyre sales have a strong seasonal characteristic with 30 % of retail sales occurring in the ten days after the first snowfall , thus presenting challenges in production and delivery .

Nokian Tyres does not sell to automobile manufacturers , but instead concentrates on the more profitable consumer tyre replacement and premium snow tyre markets . Nokian Tyres has the highest market share of the Finnish passenger car tyre market . The Finnish , Swedish , and Norwegian markets contributed over 40 % of Nokian Tyres ' corporate net sales in 2008 .

The Russian market , Nokian Tyres ' largest , contributed 34 % of the net sales and captured 26 % of the Russian winter tyre market . CEO Kim Gran describes the Russian consumer as having a " love affair " with the Nokian brand citing that it stems from tyres which fits the local weather conditions and a genuine need in the market . The use of winter tyres , which has softer rubber compounds than all @- @ season tyres , results in improved starting , stopping , and steering performance . The Hakkapeliitta brand was , at one time , the only Western tyre brand in Russia

having entered the market during the Soviet era in 1964 . In contrast to having a Russian tyre factory to benefit from lower tariffs , another tyre company , Continental AG , abandoned Russian tyre production and hopes for Russian membership in the World Trade Organisation will result in lower import tariffs .

In 2009 , the North American market accounted for over 10 % of the company 's net sales . Nokian Tyres has a tyre subsidiary based in LaVergne , Tennessee (USA) . In that market , Nokian Tyres sell only to independent dealers , some of whom use the tyre products to fill in gaps in their product lines instead of an exclusive or majority share . This results in some dealers being knowledgeable about specific tyres but not Nokian Tyre 's full tyre product range .

= = = Commercial vehicle tyres = = =

Nokian Tyres manufactures truck and bus tyres sold under the Nokian Hakkapeliitta brand . Steer , traction , and trailer tyres are marketed . Nokian Heavy Tyres Ltd is a manufacturer of special tyres for forestry , industrial machinery , and agriculture . Its products are sold as original equipment as well on the replacement tyre market . Nokian Tyres produces a number of product lines , including the Tractor Industrial 2 and Country King . Nokian Tyres is a world market leader in forestry tyres , which are a key product of the Nokian Heavy Tyres subsidiary . Nokian forestry tyres include the Skidder and Cut @-@ To @-@ Length model lines . The Skidder tyres have a 25 degree bar angle and the Cut @-@ To @-@ Length tyres have a 35 degree bar angle . Bar angle is a tyre tread measurement . Smaller bar angles are associated with higher traction at the expense of increased mud accumulation .

= = = Tyre @-@ related products = = =

Nokian Tyres also produces materials for retreading and refurbishing used tyres . Nokian Noktop and Kraiburg , an industry competitor , produce most of the retreading materials for the European market . The RoadSnoop Pressure Watch , a tyre pressure monitor for race cars , is also produced by Nokian Tyres .

= = = Bicycle = = =

The Nokian brand of bicycle tyres , including studded winter MTB and touring models , is owned by Suomi Tyres Finland . See external links below for website .

= = Vianor tyre chain = =

Nokian Tyres owns 100 % of Vianor Holding Oy , which administers Vianor , a tyre chain of company owned and franchised stores . The Vianor name is derived from the Latin phrase " northern way " or " northern road " , and reflects the tyre chain 's image as a tyre specialist for winter conditions .

Vianor is the largest and most extensive tyre franchise in the Nordic countries with approximately 170 company @-@ owned retail outlets and around 800 outlets in total including franchises . Company @-@ owned outlets are located in the Switzerland , Russia , Norway , Finland , Sweden , and the United States . The twelve United States outlets are located in the American states of Vermont , New Hampshire , New York and Massachusetts . Countries with only franchised outlets include Ukraine , Estonia , Latvia , Lithuania , Kazakhstan , Armenia , Moldova , Georgia , Belarus , Poland , Germany , Czech Republic , Slovakia and Bulgaria .

Nokian Tyres has operated retail tyre stores in Norway since 1987 , when it acquired Larsen & Lund , and since 1998 in Sweden and Latvia . The Vianor name was launched in 1999 coinciding with the company 's expansion into Finland and Estonia .

Vianor sells two million tyres annually , including Michelin and Bridgestone brands as well as Nokian tyres . Car servicing and a tyre hotel , facilities for customers to store summer or winter tyres

during the off @-@ season , are also offered .

= = Tyre facilities = =

= = = Nokia , Finland production and testing facilities = = =

Nokian Tyres produces 23 @,@ 000 tyres per day at a factory in Nokia , Finland , and 200 @,@ 000 tyres a year under the Bridgestone brand name . The original factory was built in 1904 , the current one in 1945 ; it has expanded several times since then . Nokian Tyres has 27 assembly lines at its Finnish plant . The plant uses radio frequency devices to monitor the inventory of materials used to manufacture tyres , such as the 100 @-@ metre long strips of rubber tread . Shortages of rubber tread can halt production and so keeping an adequate supply of materials increases efficiency . Despite trade journals discussing this technique , Nokian declines to confirm its production methods .

The company has a 30 @-@ hectare (74 @-@ acre) testing facility in Nokia , where it road tests tyres between April and November . From November to May , tests are carried out at its Ivalo Proving Grounds in Arctic Lapland . The Ivalo Proving Ground is the only permanent winter tyre testing facility in the world . Because of the short summer in Finland , Nokian tests summer tyres at other locations . During the winter , the testing of summer tyres takes place in South Africa . Nokian also tests tyres at the Applus + IDIADA facilities in El Vendrell , Spain , and the ATP facilities in Papenburg , Germany .

= = = Vsevolozhsk , Russia factory = = =

Nokian produces approximately 6 @,@ 000 tyres daily and employs 510 employees at its factory in Vsevolozhsk , Russia near Saint Petersburg , and plans to increase manufacturing capacity to 10 million tyres annually by 2011 . The factory was established in 2005 . In 2006 , it expanded its facilities there , adding a mixing department and a 19 @,@ 000 @-@ square @-@ metre (200 @,@ 000 sq ft) warehouse capable of housing 600 @,@ 000 tyres . The new mixing department gives the factory the capability to produce rubber compounds on @-@ site instead of importing them from the factory in Nokia , Finland . The Vsevolozhsk factory manufactures Nokian @-@ branded car tyres , the majority of which are sold in Russia and countries of the former USSR . Nokian plans to build 300 housing units and sell them to employees at cost as part of the Russian factory expansion that is scheduled to be completed by 2011 .

= = = Contract production of tyres = = =

Nokian Tyres licenses production of its tyres to companies in the United States (Bridgestone , LaVergne , Tennessee plant) , Slovakia (Matador , Puchov plant) , Indonesia (PT Gajah Tunggal Tbk company) , and the People 's Republic of China (Giti Tire) , as well as contracts manufacture of agriculture and industrial tyres in Spain and India . In the past , some United States contract manufacturing was done by Cooper Tire 's Findley , Ohio plant . Contract manufacture by Giti Tire includes production of up to 500 @,@ 000 Nokian summer tyres with expansion up to 1 @.@ 5 million tyres per year . Some Nokian agricultural and industrial tyres were made under contract by the Tofan Grup in Romania for two years until December 1999 , when Nokian Tyres withdrew , citing quality standards . Contract manufacture of these types of heavy tyres was then undertaken by Michelin at its Polish plant in Stomil @-@ Olsztyn from 2000 until 2005 , when Nokian began to shift contract manufacture of industrial tyres to Bridgestone 's factory in Bilbao , Spain and agricultural tyres to Balkrishna Tyres in Bhiwadi , India . With an increase in tyre demand as a result of improving economies , Nokian is considering increasing production as well as outsourcing additional tyre manufacture in Asia .