



Expanding the Nürburgring – from dream to reality

In the twelfth century, Count Ulrich would never have dreamed that at the foot of his patriarchal Nürburg there would one day lay the queen of all racetracks that would attract suitors from all the lands. With new ideas and its expansion as a recreational and business destination, even in future, Nürburgring will be running at full speed.

In the twelfth century, Count Ulrich would never have dreamed that at the foot of his patriarchal Nürburg there would one day lay the queen of all racetracks that would attract suitors from all the lands. Very soon after its grand opening in 1927 it had become clear how much economic drive these early examples of commercialized recreational activity would have on the entire region. Restaurants offering rooms for tourists became hotels, pastures with grazing cows became parks, the races were the grace of a region that belonged to one of the poorest areas in Germany. Eight decades have passed since then, in which Nürburgring has made a name for itself in the history books and around which numerous stories have revolved. Many generations of race drivers and race fans have been fascinated by it and, ultimately, it has become the economic engine of an entire region.

"Long before I had ever heard of the Cologne Cathedral on my trips to Europe, long before I even knew how good sauerkraut tastes accompanied by a Bavarian beer, I already knew the number of curves Nürburgring had, the words "Karussell" (carousel) and "Schwalbenschwanz" (dovetail) were terms I knew well, even if otherwise I couldn't speak a word of German." These words expressed by the Australian race driver Alan Hamilton, speaking for many of his colleagues and motor sports fans around the world, perfectly describe the charisma of Europe's most traditional and successful racetrack.

Experience, tradition and routine are a firm foundation on which to build on. With new ideas and an expanded concept, over the last few years, Nürburgring GmbH has been venturing into new business ideas with the intention of keeping motor sports the main area of interest for its fans and at the same time attracting new visitors. Since 2006, a new logo also symbolizes the new approach, the modern graphic design of which is homage to the last eighty years of the Northern Loop, otherwise known as the Nordschleife. Under definition are four new business segments – racing, business, adventure and holiday travel – with which in future concepts will be developed to reach out to new target groups. The main focus in this approach is based on the growth visible particularly in the field of corporate events, the booming market segment being termed "confertainment". The demand for tailored events and incentives is at this time already larger than what can actually be supplied at Nürburgring. On the other hand, plans also include expanding the range of services being offered in the field of tourism and the field of fun and action based short trips. In order to implement these plans, Nürburgring GmbH, along with private

funding partners, will be investing close to 150 million € over the next two years in an infrastructure suitable for a leading recreational and business center.

The starting signal for these plans was given with their announcement at a press conference held on May 5, 2004. Business advocates and politicians alike expressed a great deal of enthusiasm for the project. Prime Minister of the state of Rhineland-Palatinate Kurt Beck, for example, placed emphasis on how the expansion of the Nürburgring will bring with it new income opportunities for the people of the region.

Close to two million people visit the numerous events on offer or take advantage of the numerous recreational opportunities involving the Nürburgring. The Nürburgring expansion plans center on this potential and will build on them.

In the European-wide invitation to bid on this project, Tilke GmbH, a company from Aachen, Germany, was awarded the contract. "Nürburgring has always been much more than just a racetrack. People's fascination with it is just as much the result of its eventful history as are the stories of people's lives, which were written here, in addition to the challenging racetrack and its beautiful location" says Hermann Tilke, overjoyed by the award. "Being allowed to play a part in the future of this legend is certainly a major highlight in the course of our company's history." Hermann Tilke's team of employees is working full speed to implement the concept. Initial architectural visions had already been developed by mid October 2005 and were then presented to an international audience at the International Commercial Property Exposition Real in Munich. At the end of 2005, the basic concept for the plan's architecture was presented to Nürburgring GmbH's Supervisory Board and ultimately approved. At around the same time, the decision was made by the Supervisory Board, environmental impact studies were completed. Construction is due to begin in the fall of 2007.

The concept models at a glance:

The Boulevard – Nürburgring's main adventure mile

Nürburgring's Boulevard is a place for visitors to indulge themselves in the fascination of the world of automobiles and motor sports. Leading manufacturers from the automotive industry, including automotive equipment and accessories specialists in the field, entice visitors to explore the exciting world of brands.

Included in the exciting things to visit, an arena approx. 4,000 m² in size located smack in the middle of the Boulevard used as a stage for spectator events such as monster truck shows, indoor trials and even concerts. 4,500 roofed seats and a direct connection to yet another event hall, also containing 2,500 m² of open space, offer opportunities to realize a wide variety of events.

An entirely newly designed indoor theme park geared towards entertaining visitors plays a central role. The theme park is located on the Boulevard itself and is closely linked with the image and the positioning of Nürburgring as the fun loaded action-packed and recreation model of the concept.

The themes are closely coordinated to match the adventure world of brands offered by the automotive manufacturers and the automotive accessory manufacturers. The theme park is

designed in such a way that each year, several hundred thousand additional visitors are drawn to it, while it is a main attraction for day visitors, guests staying for several days and especially for those repeat guests.

A new hotel is being constructed to create urgently required hotel capacity at Nürburgring. Business customers and demanding private guests alike are offered approx. 400 beds in the Dorint Hotel at Nürburgring, a four star and four star plus class location. Theme related shops and restaurants round off the offer on the adventure mile, increasing the quality of the trip and encouraging visitors to stay a bit longer.

The business grandstand

After tearing down the main grandstand T3, it is to be replaced by a state of the art roofed main grandstand with 5,000 available seats. At the upper level, the business grandstand will house a lounge area for up to 600 people, in which both hospitality as well as VIP arrangements during large events plus tailored incentives will be implemented.

The Motor Sports Village

Only a few meters away from the Boulevard, the site for the new Motor Sports Village is being designed. The core element is a bungalow vacation village, designed to thematically match the motor sports vacation site and which will thus be one of its kind in the marketplace.

Here, families that come to join the adventure as well as guests, who love to take part in sports activities, are offered overnight accommodations and can take advantage of the numerous sports and recreational activities the hotel offers as well as its wellness area. Numerous outdoor sports activities for both the summer and winter season round off the wide range of fun on offer at the Motor Sports Village.

The Ring will remain loyal to its race sports roots

The Ring and the region are closely intertwined – "Nürburgring 2009" will link the tourist attractions of the Eifel region with the fascination for motor sports. At the same time, investing in the future is a sign of showing responsibility for the region.

The entire region will profit: "Nürburgring 2009" is an additional highlight to the touristic profile that is already so appealing today. It will secure jobs and create new ones plus it will attract even more investors.

Conclusion: "Nürburgring 2009" is in this regard a win-win situation for all involved – in the sports, business and tourism sectors.

The Ring itself will remain loyal to its race sports roots: "Even in the future, the race track and the topic of motor sports will be the core brand and the most important image factors at Nürburgring", stresses Dr. Walter Kafitz, the head general manager of Nürburgring GmbH.

The upcoming projects are evidence of the fact that Nürburgring will continue to adapt to the challenges each era presents it with. In this way, Nürburgring will be well equipped for the next 20 years and will then look forward to a really huge anniversary celebration for its 100th birthday.