

# Fleets are in need of assistance

**SOLUTIONS BY BRIDGESTONE.** Someone who is considering the transport industry's growth rates per year in the new and extended Europe and is adding the 50 % predicted in the next 10 years, might draw the conclusion that haulage companies and the transport industry have the »golden key« to a splendid future. However, competition has, as a matter of fact, become more vigorous than ever before by the so-called »harmonization«. Medium-sized forwarding companies are very much threatened by insolvency, as the burden for German trucks is by taxes and charges the third highest in the whole of Europe.

**B**ridgestone as a tyre producer offers the carrying trade solutions and concepts helping to maintain profitability and to be up to face a rigid competition. Innovative products and intelligent services, partly developed in cooperation with partners and made available throughout Europe, are the most important ingredients of this offer. Excellent marks awarded in tyre tests by renowned magazines of the transport sector acknowledge the very high quality level of the truck tyres coming from the Bridgestone group. In addition to tyres with a long service life and high driving comfort for the use on urban, medium- and long distances, Bridgestone has developed in the last years a tyre system, combining a reduction in costs with an increase in safety. The ultra wide-base tyre Greatec Mega Drive (GMD) with an aircept-run-flat-system for heavy semitrailers and heavy trucks in the size 495/45 R22,5 replaces the twin tyres of the size 315/70 R 22,5 on the driving axle. The reduction in weight and in rolling resistance has the effect of a markedly reduced fuel consumption, whereas at the same time more load can be carried. Assuming a fuel reduction of 1.5 l per 100 kilometres in comparison to tyres, which have no optimized rolling resistance, savings of more than 1,900 € can be achieved per year, additional costs are quickly amortized.

The system Greatec Mega Drive with Aircept has been developed together with DaimlerChrysler. It keeps in the case of pressure loss the tyre stable by an

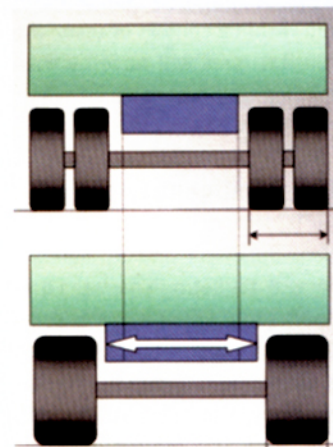
inner tube and grants the continuation of the truck's journey at a maximum of 60 km/h, covering a distance of at least 25 kilometres. The driver and the carried products are in a much safer position than before. By the ServiceEurope system of emergency calls, a net of highly qualified, service-orientated companies is made available, which grant the repair or the replacement of impaired tyres at fixed prices within the shortest time possible. By the alliance of tyre dealers in the shape of the European dealer association, TruckPoint, the constant availability of Bridgestone and Firestone truck tyres is granted throughout Europe. TruckPoint came into being by the decision of providing the growing numbers of »Pan-European« fleets with a reliable service net which is available throughout the whole Europe. Chief aim of Bridgestone is a high standardized, uniform product and service quality level supplied by the truck tyre dealers. For the time being, more than 1,900 tyre dealers have joined the TruckPoint-net. A comprehensive training programme is binding for the TruckPoint dealers. They also form by a major part those dealers, who keep the service vehicle for ServiceEurope ready, it is here that both systems TruckPoint and ServiceEurope interface each other.

In the most important European markets Bridgestone settles accounts with fleets and dealers through a central invoice system. Two year after its start in Germany, Konrad Bartels, the sales manager for truck fleets at Bridgestone, strikes a balance in



*Truck Point fits the super wide base Greatec Megadrive (GMD) with the Aircept run-flat system at the location of the fleet operator. The Greatec replaces the twin tyres on the driving axle.*

favour of its introduction, as many fleet have recognized the advantages. The system functions by several steps. When the vehicle of a fleet, which has a supply agreement with Bridgestone, comes to the yard, the tyre dealer examines the state the tyres on the vehicle are in and after a glance into the agreement the fleet operator has been able to arrange according to his individual requirements, the dealer knows the type of service, which products to supply and which procedure to pursue in this case. After that he carries out all necessary work on the vehicle, which is documented in the form provided for the vehicle check. Bridgestone examines the entries, makes out the account and sends it to the local dealer, who passes it on to the fleet operator in question. The advantage for the fleet operator is that all his drivers are served at all Truck Point Service-stations according to uniform standards and a service fixed beforehand. In addition, there is only one central partner, who can be addressed in regard to the invoice.



*The reduction in weight of the Greatec Megadrive, in comparison to the twin tyres, and in the rolling resistance have the effect of less fuel consumption.*

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