

Thomas Schäfer (*1970)

Thomas Schäfer was born in Marburg, Germany, in 1970.

He entered the automotive industry through a dual study programme at Daimler AG, which he began in 1991. In 1994, he graduated from the DHBW Mannheim with a degree in mechanical engineering, specialising in production technology. He then stayed with Daimler, holding various management positions in the areas of production and quality assurance in Germany, the USA and South Africa until 2002.



From 2002 to 2005, he was a founding member of DaimlerChrysler Malaysia as Board Member for Technology, responsible for expanding and restructuring the company's sales, production and supplier base.

At Daimler AG in Germany, Schäfer was responsible for vehicle deliveries, customer centres and the global CKD business in emerging markets between 2005 and 2012. In addition to establishing new plants, he was responsible for planning and strategy as well as international logistics for all foreign plants. In 2011, his main tasks included managing the Mercedes-Benz plant construction project in cooperation with BAIC in China.

In May 2012, Schäfer moved to Volkswagen AG, where he initially headed the Group's International Production and was responsible for CKD projects and negotiations on new production sites.

From 2015, he held the position of Chairman and Managing Director of Volkswagen Group South Africa and was responsible for the development of the Group brands in the sub-Saharan Africa region. Throughout his five-year tenure, he consistently promoted the expansion of the sales network, increased dealer profitability and led the Group brands Volkswagen, Audi and VW Commercial Vehicles to their highest-ever market share of 23.5 per cent.

Under his leadership, the Volkswagen Group was able to significantly expand and strengthen its position in the sub-Saharan Africa region. Building new production sites, entering into new cooperation agreements with importers and developing mobility concepts for Kenya, Nigeria, Rwanda and Ghana have also contributed to this.

Schäfer has been the Chairman of the Board at ŠKODA AUTO a.s. in Mladá Boleslav since August 2020.

Thomas Schäfer (*1970 in Marburg, Germany)

Chairman of the Board at ŠKODA AUTO a.s. (since August 2020)

Professional Career

- › Various managerial positions at Daimler AG in the areas of production and quality management in Germany, the USA, South Africa, Malaysia and China (1991 – 2011)
- › Head of the Group's International Production at Volkswagen AG; management of CKD projects and leading negotiations on new production sites (2012 - 2015)
- › Chairman and Managing Director of Volkswagen Group South Africa (2015 – July 2020)
- › Chairman of the Board at ŠKODA AUTO a.s. in Mladá Boleslav (since August 2020)

Additional professional commitments

- › President of the African Association of Automotive Manufacturers (AAAM) 2016–2020
- › Board member of the German-African Business Association
- › President of the Nelson Mandela Bay Business Chamber (2017–2018)