

120 Years

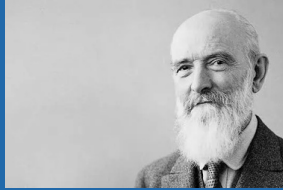
Bosch in South Africa | 1906 - 2026



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Editorial



Since 1906, the story of Bosch in South Africa, and indeed, across the African continent, has been one of a lasting relationship between technology and humanity.

Not only do we celebrate 120 years of our presence, but we also take the opportunity in this moment to honour all the employees, partners, and customers, who have helped shape the Bosch brand and business in Mzansi.

This year also marks another important milestone: 60 years of Bosch Rexroth in South Africa. Together, we celebrate a double anniversary that reflects the strength and longevity of our commitment to this continent.

*Today's event is an invitation to (re)discover the Bosch world through our technologies and solutions *Invented for life*.*

Looking ahead, Bosch Africa moves forward with the same conviction: that cooperation, innovation, and trust will continue to drive shared progress.

The past 120 years are not only a legacy to celebrate; they are a source of inspiration as we imagine the next 120 together.

Collective success founded on trust, innovation, and respect.

Markus Thill

President Region Africa

Robert Bosch

The man and entrepreneur



The man who founded Bosch and gave the company its name was a multifaceted individual: a freethinking cosmopolitan with solid roots in his southwest German homeland, a champion of technology whose heart nonetheless belonged to nature, a political thinker prone to outbursts of emotion, a father figure and a model of circumspection. The mark he left on both the company and the Robert Bosch Stiftung, a charitable foundation, survives to the present day. It is mostly thanks to his compelling personality that the legacy of Robert Bosch lives on.

Above all, he was respected, since people knew he was a careful thinker, a keener observer than many of his peers, and someone who kept his word.

“I have always acted according to the principle that I would rather lose money than trust. The integrity of my promises, the belief in the value of my products and in my word of honor have always had a higher priority for me than a transitory profit.”

Robert Bosch

Robert Bosch

His origins

The house where Robert Bosch was born: the “Zur Krone” inn in Albeck, near Ulm, as it looked in 1931



On October 10, 1887, Robert Bosch married Anna Kayser (1864–1949), the sister of his friend Eugen Kayser. The picture dates from 1886.



Robert Bosch was the eleventh of twelve children. This studio photo of Robert Bosch with his younger sister Maria was taken in 1871.



Anna and Robert Bosch had four children, one of whom, Elisabeth, died at just two years of age. Pictured here in 1903 (from left to right) are Paula (1889 – 1974), Margarete (1888–1972) and Robert Jr. (1891 – 1921).



Robert Bosch with some of his associates at the Stuttgart plant

As discerning as Robert Bosch was in choosing business partners, he was particularly astute in selecting the people he worked with in his company. He seemed to have a “Midas touch” when trusting associates with senior positions; a crucial talent when building any successful industrial enterprise.

Rather than simply earning a wage, Robert Bosch wanted his associates to feel they were a part of the bigger picture, fully integrated into the business. He wanted “to cultivate eager associates by letting each individual work independently as far as possible while at the same time delegating the responsibility that goes with the task.”

“I don’t pay good wages because I have a lot of money; I have a lot of money because I pay good wages.”

Robert Bosch

Robert Bosch

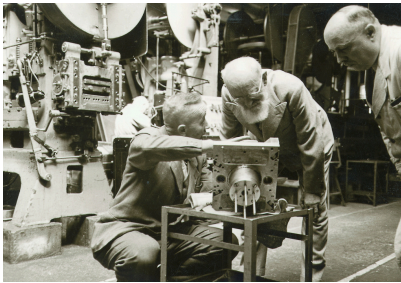
“Associates”, not wage earners



Robert Bosch checks out the work of an apprentice, 1936.



At the official opening of the Robert Bosch Hospital in 1940, Robert Bosch (third from left) proudly showed the building.



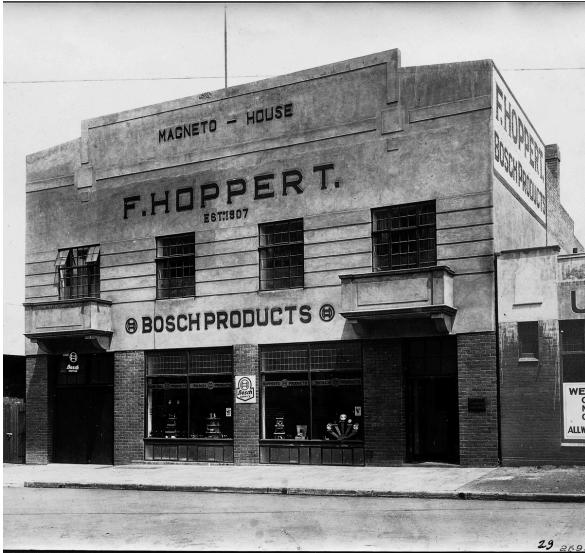
Robert Bosch was interested in the processes and associates in his company. During a tour of the Feuerbach plant, the 80-year-old has everything shown and explained in detail.



A Bosch department on a staff outing met the head of the company by chance.

Bosch in South Africa

First Bosch sales office in Africa



The Hoppert Bosch sales office in Johannesburg (1929)

In 1906, Bosch had around 600 associates working in Stuttgart, where the company originated. The company had been expanding in Europe since 1898, but now took its first step onto another continent, opening its first sales office in South Africa; a move that practically coincided with the opening of its first office in the U.S. Friedrich Hoppert & Co. of Hamburg, which had an office in Johannesburg, was contracted to sell products from Stuttgart. It continued to work for Bosch for the next 40 years.

The two world wars had a severe impact on business in South Africa, with the Second World War proving particularly damaging because of the destruction of the company's production facilities in Germany. By 1950, Bosch sales and the size of its workforce had exceeded pre-war levels, but activities outside Germany accounted for just 10 % of total sales. Bosch responded to this situation by re-establishing its international activities.

In South Africa, Technical Supplies Company (Pty.) Ltd. in Johannesburg was granted exclusive marketing rights in 1950.



Striking advertisement for Bosch spark plugs (1977)

A popular advertising gift!
Scene in a South African Bosch Service Center (1977)



The year 1985 also saw a great deal of reorganization, this time with the merger of Diesel-Electric-South-Africa and Auto Electrical & Engineering Co (Pty.) Ltd. to form Robert Bosch (South Africa) (Pty.) Ltd., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Robert Bosch GmbH. This company coordinated all activities from production through to sales. In 1998, the new sales center was opened in Midrand, 70 kilometers from Brits, bringing sales into line with the needs of the market in South Africa.

Bosch in South Africa

On-site for customers at the Cape

1976, Bosch opened its first regional production plant in Brits, South Africa. Once an agricultural centre, the small town soon became a key industrial hub for automotive equipment. With the confident slogan “Bosch is best!”, the company established its leadership in a rapidly expanding market.

The creation of Robert Bosch South Africa (Pty.) Ltd. in 1965 had already laid the foundation for a consolidated sales structure and future local manufacturing. As brands such as Toyota, BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Volkswagen, and Alfa Romeo set up operations in the 1970s, Bosch seized the opportunity to invest in its own production lines.

In the following decades, Bosch South Africa’s revenue tripled, expanding its portfolio from traditional electrical systems to electronic control units for engine management and ABS technologies. Today, the Brits plant stands as a symbol of Bosch’s expertise and long-term commitment to Africa’s industrial development.





The Brits location in an aerial photograph approximately 1985: Some areas of the development site, which Bosch gradually built up to meet increasing customer demand, are still free.

A sense of new beginnings

In the mid-1970s, Bosch strengthened its automotive presence by acquiring Electrical Equipment (AEE), an Italian-rooted supplier whose production facility in Brits was already largely completed. Quickly adapted to Bosch standards, the site began production on July 1, 1976, enabling the company to respond rapidly to growing customer demand.

The expansion coincided with a sharp rise in global car production, supported by long-standing partnerships with major manufacturers such as Alfa Romeo, BMW, Mercedes-Benz, Volkswagen, and Toyota.

From the 1970s onward, increasing vehicle sales significantly boosted Bosch South Africa's growth, with revenues tripling between the 1980s and early 2000s. The Brits site expanded its activities beyond traditional automotive electrical systems to include electronic control units, marking electronics as a key new product field. A dedicated production hall completed in 1989 enabled the manufacturing of digital engine management and ABS control systems for the local market.



Production began in Brits in July 1976. Here, workers manufacture components for automotive technology. Photo from 1981.



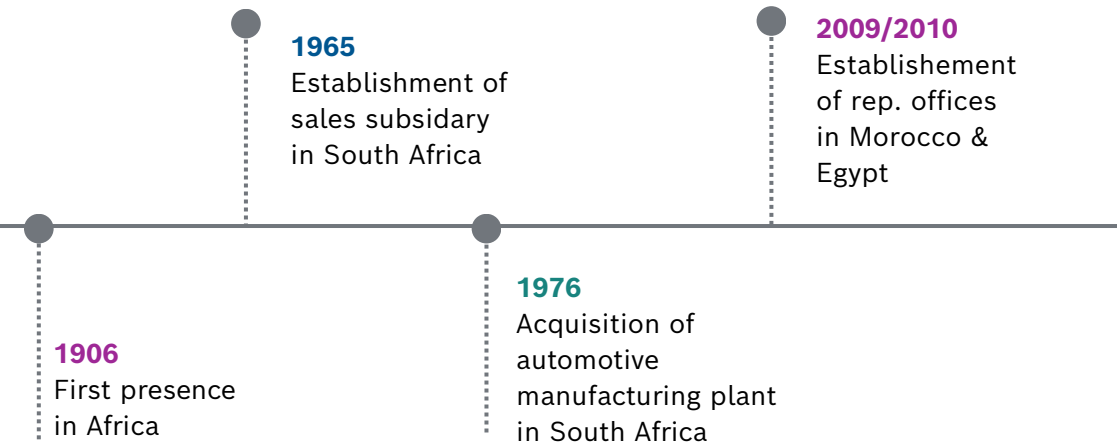
The enormous illuminated clock that Bosch had installed on a high-rise building in Johannesburg quickly became known throughout the city as the “Bosch Clock.” Photo from 1972

Bosch across Africa

Present since 1906

Bosch has been present in Africa since 1906 through its network of partners and distributors. Since 2010, Bosch has expanded its subsidiary footprint in the continent where we have offices in 11 countries.

Today, all four Bosch business sectors, **Mobility Solutions, Industrial Technology, Consumer Goods, and Energy and Building Technology** have operations on the continent.



Bosch Across the continent

Present since 1906

2014

Establishment of sales subsidiary in Kenya

2018

Acquisition of the South African company. Hytec

2013/2014

Establishment of rep. offices in Angola, Ghana, Mozambique & Nigeria

2016

Change to sales subsidiaries. Angola, Egypte, Ghana, Morocco & Nigeria



Bosch Across the continent

Present since 1906

2020-2024

Establishment of Bosch Rexroth subsidiary in Egypt & Ivory Coast

2025

Opening of BSH home appliances factory in Egypt

2021

Opening of new Bosch offices in Morocco



Mobility

The mobility of the future has always been a very exciting topic. The reliable transportation of people and goods is essential to a functioning society and economy and has constantly evolved. Railroads and automobiles pointed the way forward toward mobility for the masses.

By the mid-20th century, traffic density and environmental awareness were driving innovation. Today, autonomous, connected, and electric driving is at the heart of research and development.



62%

share of Bosch
Group sales



56.0

billion euros
sales revenue



222,900

associates
(approx.)

Consumer goods

Home Appliances

Bosch designs and manufactures a full range of reliable, durable, and energy-efficient home appliances—from ovens and microwaves to hobs and beyond—engineered to make everyday life easier.

Combining smart functions with advanced digital technologies, Bosch appliances offer seamless convenience—from consumption monitoring to remote operation via the Home Connect app. Users can optimize energy performance, personalize settings, and enjoy intuitive control at their fingertips. Comprehensive after-sales support ensures lasting customer satisfaction.



Consumer goods

Power Tools

Bosch Home & Garden is the competent partner for all work around the home. We offer powerful and reliable power tools, measuring technology, hand tools, garden and cleaning equipment, with which DIY or garden projects can be put into practice with passion and creativity. In addition, our tools and services are distinguished by premium quality and highest safety standards.

AMPShare is a shared 18V battery

System for professionals in industry and trades, enabling flexible use of tools across multiple brands with a single battery.

The power for All Alliance

Provides one battery for a wide range of home devices, helping users save time, money, and space while supporting a more eco-friendly



22%

share of Bosch
Group sales



19.9

billion euros
sales revenue



72,200

associates
(approx.)

Energy and building technology

Africa is marked by a wide range of climate conditions, infrastructures and energy priorities – and our presence reflects this diversity. Demand centres on reliable air-conditioning and water heating solutions, with a strong emphasis on affordability and durability.

To meet these varying needs, we offer a broad portfolio across Africa – from air-to-water and air-to-air heat pumps to hybrid systems, as well as oil and gas appliances. This regional flexibility ensures that we can deliver the right climate comfort solution for every market.



Bosch, Buderus, Hitachi and YORK are our global brands – and, like our strong regional brands, they are all built on the same foundation: high-quality products and comprehensive service expertise.



9%

share of Bosch
Group sales



8.4

billion euros
sales revenue



42,700

associates
(approx.)

Industrial Technology

Drive and control technology

Bosch Rexroth is a globally active partner, with a one-of-a-kind portfolio for mobile applications, factory automation, and process plant engineering that features cutting-edge technology and matchless industry expertise. Our experienced associates work continuously to develop safe, versatile and resource-conserving solutions worldwide. Both machinery manufacturers and end users benefit from our multifunctional innovations, which are also designed for use in connected manufacturing environments.



7%

share of Bosch
Group sales



6.5

billion euros
sales revenue



33,900

associates
(approx.)