

*Washing as an event: Clean Car brings colour to the car wash*

*Manual pre-washing belongs to this at "Clean Car": simply wiser, customers build up trust*

*Sven Eggert is convinced. Favagrossa brushes touch the surfaces more gently, the structure increases washing power for many car paints.*

## **Touch the surfaces very gently**

"Clean Car" car wash facilities operates 28 car washes in the North.

*Twenty eight car washes in Northern Germany and two are added every year: "Clean Car" Autowaschanlagen GmbH und Co. KG from Elmshorn, directly adjacent to Hamburg, is expanding. The car washes are often smaller than usual with a length of 20 metres. This is due to the rural structure in Schleswig-Holstein, Mecklenburg Western Pomerania and Lower Saxony. Cities are the exception here. And this is how Sven Eggert, the Managing Director of "Clean Car", is orientating his philosophy, "We are trying to build where motorists live."*

For example, the express car wash "is not so popular in rural areas," he finds. It is better to pre-wash manually. Then you know the employees, the contact is significantly more personal, the customers build trust and they also enjoy good washing results, of course. And, of course, "Manual pre-washing is simply wiser for excellent cleaning results." Cars of today have so many corners and edges, the last particles of dirt can also be rinsed out better with high-pressure washers.

## **Customers are becoming older and lazier**

Especially in rural areas, there are 80 per cent regular customers which are naturally connected to birthday washes, bonus card systems and business cards. And another insight: simply no customer walkway. Well, they are still on four old car wash facilities: but they have no future. And this is for a simple reason according to Eggert: "Customers are getting older and lazier and prefer to pay for goods at the window." But not only that, young mothers or fathers or customers with dogs too are not keen to get out. And others want to use their smartphone during the wash and check their mails, for example.

Not least, dispensing with customer walkways is also better for safety. Older customers in particular made mistakes more often than average and it was better, for insurance reasons alone, if they remained in the car. Handouts were also distributed for older drivers to ensure they did everything correctly.

But one thing "Clean Car" dispenses with in Eggert's words is manual polishing. "We used to do that. I was also a fan of it, it looks like a good service, but it is pointless work." The water runs out of the gaps nevertheless.

*Managing Director Sven Eggert and the recognition logo: "Clean Car" runs 28 car washes in the North. Two are added every year.*

Around 100 permanent employees and 140 part-timers ensure the smooth running of operations. Every car wash has a station manager, technical field workers take care of ten washes on average and visit them weekly where possible, but at least fortnightly.

## **Washing with Alcantara brushes**

Attention is also paid to a new washing material from Italian company Favagrossa. According to company information, it is a completely new brush material and Sven Eggert was one of the first test customers in 2014. Favagrossa advertises that the brushes are high-performance. The Alcantara material has a surface structure very similar to soft leather and it therefore clings to surfaces especially well. The material is anti-static, resilient, elastic and breathable.

And, Mr Eggert, is everything the company promises true? “Yes, the material convinced us.” The cleaning characteristics are actually very good – as for textile material. Because the core is foamed, the water does not penetrate into the material, it is therefore lighter, the motors and gearboxes of the facilities are preserved. Less water is used. And it is also quieter.

## **Good for car paint**

Even more: the brushes are gentler on the surfaces. The structure increases the washing power for many car paints. According to Favagrossa, this is not least due to the structure of the washing brush: supporting cloths in the brush structure are smaller and stiffened the lateral structure more durably.

And another insight after more than three years of use, “Alcantara does not wear as quickly.” Evidence: “Clean Car” has been working with the first material in the facility in Rendsburg since 2014. On average, according to Eggert, the usage time has doubled; the so-called ‘standing time’ has doubled from one to two years. The costs are approximately as high as for classic textiles.

The advantage for customers is also obvious: a slight polishing effect is apparent. But the acoustics are crucial. The facility is considerably quieter overall and is therefore more relaxing for customers.

And yes, as a ‘test pilot’ for the novel F.A.C.E. material together with Favagrossa representatives they initially needed to try out a great deal until the result was suitable for the washing facilities. But now the material is convincing. The consequence: work takes place with Alcantara brushes in 27 out of 28 facilities.

## **Plastic drag chains**

But Eggert not only tries out new washing material. They use plastic belts for the chains. They are important due to the rim width of some cars and more gentle, “Earlier, with the classic metal belts some rims no longer came out well on the drag chains.”

Also, the breadth of 2.40 metres and the clearance height ensures that they fulfil modern requirements: SUVs and working cars should also be able to travel through the car wash. This is already possible in eight facilities and all newly built facilities are proportioned accordingly, “Many drivers therefore only come to us,” Eggert says.

And finally indoor vacuuming, as possible in Elmshorn, for example. 19 vacuum spaces, mat cleaners and compressed air supply – everything free of charge – ensure customer loyalty. Of course, this is only where there is sufficient space. And Elmshorn is a “flagship” there, Eggert emphasizes. Here, the car wash is 35 metres long and the hall is an old lubricant hall owned by the company.

This also refers to the company history. Hermann Eggert founded a coal trading company in Elmshorn on 1st April 1925. Two employees delivered coal to local customers with horse-drawn vehicles and later petroleum and lubricating grease. Today, the Eggert group companies concentrate on four core areas: special real estate, commercial real estate, residential real estate and project companies. And “Clean Car” car wash facilities have existed since 1990. In 2009, they were among the first companies in Germany to be certified by TÜV Nord according to ISO 9001 and 14001.