



A super athlete which also demands absolute maximum performances from Porsche suppliers: The new 911 GT2



# “Suppliers Also Need a Helping Hand”

*Sebastian Fischer, head of supplier management at Porsche, has contacts with around 700 suppliers. He spoke to Caracho about the rating, development and right choice of suppliers and the role of Porsche Consulting.*

*Mr. Fischer, shouldn't the first concern of a vehicle manufacturer be its customers? After all, suppliers are actually paid to supply the right part at the right time to the right place.*

**Sebastian Fischer:** “Of course our customers take priority. They expect a top-quality state-of-the-art product at the agreed time, particularly from Porsche, but that only happens if the supply processes mesh together smoothly. The chain has to operate both ways.”

*So is it really important for Porsche to obtain the right part from the right producer?*

**Fischer:** “Due to our size and business model, we have specific overall conditions. Based on three model ranges, we can today offer the customer a wide range of models and virtually unlimited options for individualization. This means high variance with small numbers of items for the bought-in parts. At the same time, however, the proportion of the external added value is around ▶



85 percent. This includes Porsche's high quality demands and the use of innovative technologies and materials that set our vehicles apart from the competition."

*How is this goal achieved with 700 serial suppliers?*

**Fischer:** "Imagine a teacher with 34 students in the class. There are no problems at all looking after thirty children, but the other four require special attention."

*Is there not any possibility of selecting just model students for the Porsche class?*

**Fischer:** "Supplier management has an important role to play in this respect. Before we select a new supplier,

we put it through intensive tests. In this "audit" for deciding on suppliers, five people from different departments go through a list of 157 questions on site and ultimately produce an A, AB, B, or C. The first two categories have passed, B suppliers need a little help and C suppliers are not really suitable for us."

*Right. Does that mean there are exceptions?*

**Fischer:** "Yes, for example there is a case in which we wanted a specific component from one supplier because it was the only one that met our technical specifications. However, in the audit we rated it only a C supplier. We were therefore forced to do something. Since then, the



## The Fastest of All the 911s

The new Porsche 911 GT2 was able to flex its muscles for the photos accompanying this interview. The fastest of all the 911s is based on 530 hp at the rear, obeys the commands of a manual six-speed gearbox, and reaches a top speed of 329 km/h. The powerful engine is based on the six-cylinder boxer engine of the 911 Turbo, which is optimally supplied with air by two exhaust turbochargers with variable turbine geometry. The clincher is that for the first time, the turbo unit has been combined with an expansion suction system—a revolution in supercharged engines. The GT2 has a very modest consumption. According to the New European test cycle (NEDC), the *Kraftprotz* with the distinctive rear spoiler only needs 12.5 liters per 100 kilometers.

first cars have been delivered, the customers are happy and the supplier was rated AB.”

*Does the networking come to an end if the vehicle has passed through the Start Of Production (SOP) and into serial production?*

**Fischer:** “Not at all. We divide it into a total of three phases: the Product Creation Process (PCP), which lasts up to the Start Of Production, large-scale supply, and after-sales. During PCP, we carry out two assessments, then the results are checked on a half-yearly basis by the specialist departments. In the supplier guidance group which meets every four weeks, we collect together all the

assessments and decide on the next steps on an interdepartmental basis. In this way we get an overview, and should a supplier have problems in various areas, we can coordinate any action.”

*What happens if a supplier slips down in the internal assessment during large-scale production?*

**Fischer:** “Temporary problems are resolved with the supplier by the specialist department, but if the problems are more long-term and systematic support is needed, then supplier management is brought in. In the meantime, we have developed six instruments that we use according to the project phase and degree of escalation.” ▶





Sebastian Fischer, Head of Supplier Management at Porsche: 157 questions to all new partners

tor and on the other they tackle a problem pragmatically yet think conceptually and sustainably.”

*This means that suppliers who run the risk of not fulfilling their order correctly are supported by the requisite input from Porsche. How is that viewed by the partners?*

**Fischer:** “The aim is good and fair cooperation with our suppliers. The thing is to adhere to dates and procedures. If we have to help out our partner to achieve our goals—for example with support from the Porsche consultants—then we do it.” ◀

*Do you also use the help and expertise of Porsche Consulting?*

**Fischer:** “With two instruments in particular we use the help of Porsche consultants—with kick-off supplier integration and with supplier integration projects. Kick-off situations involve ensuring at the beginning of the collaboration in the Product Creation Process that, for example, communication between Porsche and the supplier is working, deadlines are coordinated and the specifications are finalized. This is a purely preventive measure. With a supplier integration project which is also set up during the product creation process, we pick up issues that have already been assessed critically and try to trace them back to the target corridor.”

*Why do you need Porsche Consulting consultants and why in critical situations do you not carry out the measures yourselves?*

**Fischer:** “The idea behind this is shaped by lean thinking. We use the right people precisely when we need them at a specific point. This makes us flexible. The consultants from Porsche Consulting are ideal for this. On the one hand they take on the role of a neutral modera-