

LYING AND STEALING: HOW VOLKSWAGEN STARTED

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Everyone knows the name of Henry Ford. He was famous for his desire to make a cheap, affordable car for the masses, which he really achieved. But few people know that there was a man who also dreamed of creating a people's car. It was Adolf Hitler. There was a huge portrait of Ford in his office. And since Hitler idolized Ford, he also wanted to repeat his achievement: to create a people's car for the German nation. It must be said that a politician who promised the people that they would soon have their own personal car acquired a huge political success. In the 1920s and 1930s, a personal car was an impossible dream and it was a smart move from the point of view of establishing control over the population.

The development of the car was entrusted to Ferdinand Porsche. The task was as follows: it was necessary to create a car that could drive safely 90-100 km/h on the autobahn, so that 5 people (2 adults and 3 children - an average German family) could fit in it and that it cost 990 Reichsmarks. It is much more difficult to create a cheap car than an expensive one because you need to come up with a design that will be viable, but at the same time simple, reliable, maintainable. So that there is a minimum number of spare parts and that all this together is worthy of being called the dream of the German people. And Porsche completed the task. His car was produced from 1938 to 2003 with a total amount of 21 and a half million cars. But the Porsche Volkswagen Beetle was stolen, not entirely, but in parts. A year before the first prototypes appeared, Hans Ledwinka in Czechoslovakia had created a prototype Tatra V570. Porsche took the idea and design from Tatra. And when the Volkswagen Beetle was already preparing

for release in 1937, Tatra sued Porsche, who took away 10 patents and his car from them. But Hitler intervened in the case, who conquered Czechoslovakia in 1938 and the trial stopped.

But in the post-war years in 1967 Volkswagen had to pay 3 million marks as compensation. It is worth noting that before the Beetle became the most massive car in the history of people, it became the most massive military vehicle in Germany. Hitler needed the Volkswagen plant only for the production of military vehicles. As a result of the Second World War, the Volkswagen plant lay in ruins. There could be no question of any production of a people's car. The remains of the plant went to the British.

Thanks to a lucky coincidence, drawings and several prototypes remained at the factory. And the first order that arrived at the Volkswagen plant was for the British Army. It was necessary to release 20 thousand Beetles. The restoration of the plant has begun. And by 1947, orders from other countries began to arrive. But at that moment, the British and Americans made the biggest mistake in the history of the automotive industry. The head of Ford at that time said that the plant has no value. And in 1949, the British decided to give the plant back to the Germans.

We could now observe how the company that inspired Hitler to create a people's car would own the results of his activities. But history does not tolerate the subjunctive mood. In 1961, the plant produced its millionth car. And in 1972, 27 years after the end of the war, the release of the Volkswagen beetle will beat the Ford Model T in volumes.

The Volkswagen Beetle became the best-selling and most successful car at that time. This car certainly has one of the most interesting destinies among the other models of any automobile concerns. Volkswagen is the largest and most profitable concern in the world: a market share of about 15% and sales of 638,605 cars.