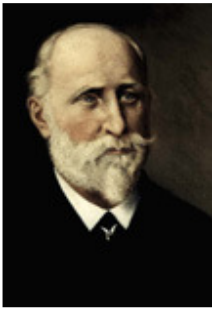


## Opel History 1862 -1899

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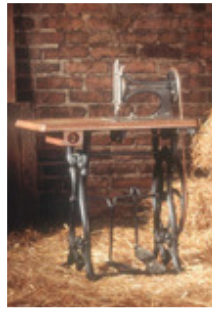
- 1862 After years of employment as a journeyman metalworker, Adam Opel goes into business in his hometown of Rüsselsheim: he builds his first sewing machine, laying the foundation for the Opel company.



Company founder Adam Opel, born May 9, 1837; deceased September 8, 1895.



The first Opel sewing machine, 1862.



Adam Opel builds his first sewing machine in 1862.



The oldest existing Opel company logo, in neoclassicist style. An "A" for Adam and an "O" for Opel, 1862.

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- 1863 The company expands: Adam Opel hires his first employee, taking on his first apprentice two years later. With an ad in the regional newspaper Groß-Gerauer Kreisblatt, Opel begins promoting his product.



On April 10, 1863, Adam Opel advertises his sewing machines for the first time, in the Groß-Gerauer Kreisblatt.

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- 1868 The sewing-machine business flourishes. Adam Opel moves into his first factory building, an industrial hall with attached living quarters. A year later, he introduces steam power into the manufacturing facilities. In 1868, Adam Opel marries Sophie Scheller, the daughter of a factory owner. Five sons are born in the years that follow: Carl on August 31, 1869; Wilhelm on May 15, 1871; Heinrich on September 22, 1873; Friedrich on April 30, 1875; and Ludwig on January 1, 1880.



The first factory building, 1868



Sophie Opel, née Scheller, in the year of her wedding, 1868.



The five sons of Sophie and Adam Opel, in 1884. Left to right: Carl, Wilhelm, Heinrich, Friedrich and Ludwig.



Group photograph of the sewing-machine assembly workers, 1875

1872 Adam Opel establishes a factory health insurance plan.

1886 By entering the booming business of bicycle manufacture, Opel secures a second foothold for his company. The Opel sons are enthusiastic cyclists, winning several hundred races on Opel bicycles in the years up to 1898. In less than forty years, Opel becomes the world's largest bicycle producer.



Cover of a bicycle brochure from the period.



Excerpt from a bicycle catalog, 1909.



Bicycle racing: Wilhelm Opel helps a fellow athlete get started.



Opel manufactures bicycles for five decades (1886–1937), becoming the world's largest bicycle producer in the 1920s.



Bicycle production, 1912



The word "Blitz" (lightning bolt) is used as a product name for the first time at the end of the 19th century. The emblem graces the bicycle's head tube.

1895 Adam Opel dies at the age of 58. His wife Sophie assumes responsibility for running the business, with the support of her sons.

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1899“Opel Patent Motor Car, System Lutzmann” is the name given to the first Opel automobile. It marks the beginning of production in Rüsselsheim, and forms the basis for building the first utility vehicles. Within the year, the company makes its international motor sport début.



Bicycle advertisement in the art nouveau style of the period, 1899.



The first Opel: the Patent Motor Car, System Lutzmann, 1899.



Advertisement for the Opel Patent Motor Car, 1899.



Automobile manufacture begins. Opel is the first brand name in car production.



Opel's first utility vehicle, based on the Patent Motor Car. Popularly known as the "Koloss von Rüsselsheim" (Giant of Rüsselsheim).