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Automechanika 2026: VDIK Puts Branded After-Sales Services in the Spotlight

As part of Automechanika Frankfurt, taking place September 8–12, the Association of International Automotive Manufacturers (VDIK) will present three thematic forums on the brand after-sales business, featuring high-profile speakers and expert panels. The central hub for member companies, industry experts, and guests is the VDIK Lounge in the Festhalle (Hall 2.0).

For the first time, AUTO BILD, Automechanika, and VDIK will present the Automotive Aftersales Award (AAA) for the best and most innovative service in brand-specific aftersales across six categories.

VDIK President Imelda Labbé: "At Automechanika in Frankfurt, the VDIK is committed to promoting the aftersales sector to create a forum for showcasing the services offered by the market. Strong service builds customer loyalty and is a key source of revenue for manufacturers and repair shops. Through the after-sales panels, we bring experts together and provide new impetus for the important after-sales business of our member companies."

The VDIK will kick off its series on the future challenges facing the brand-specific after-sales business on Tuesday, September 8, with an after-sales forum on the Academy Stage in Hall 8. Arnd Franz (CEO of Mahle), Koray Yazici (Porsche Consulting), and Oliver Schieritz (Renault) will discuss potential for collaboration, future prospects, and service strategies for brand-specific service. In addition, after-sales managers Daglef Seeck (BYD), Nadine Busch (Toyota), and Matthias Bönner (Skoda) will present their best-practice examples during a panel discussion.

On Thursday, September 10, the VDIK Lounge in the Festhalle (Hall 2.0) will focus on fleet services. What challenges do large fleets face, and what opportunities exist for the aftermarket? With insights from Dr. Thilo Wagner (DAT) and Frans Ditmer (Fixico). Leading fleet decision-makers will also discuss the customer requirements of large fleets: Dr. Olga Nevskaya (Deutsche Telekom), Frank Hägele (Deutsche Leasing), Michael Kurda (Bilfinger SE), and Vinzenz Pflanz (Sixt).

As part of Automechanika's Fleet and Insurance Day on September 11, the VDIK Lounge will focus on the opportunities presented by after-sales service in collision damage management. Karsten Crede (Crede Consulting), Michael Nöldge (Dekra), and Julian Burkhardt (Volkswagen Group Info Services) will discuss cost optimization through collaboration, claims management through data integration, and claims control.

The Automotive Aftersales Awards (AAA) ceremony, recognizing the best and most innovative service in brand-specific aftersales, will take place for the first time on Tuesday evening on the Hightech4Mobility stage in the Festhalle (Hall 2.0). The award is presented jointly by AUTO BILD, Automechanika, and VDIK. The winners were selected through a three-stage selection process. The best service was determined by a reader poll conducted by AUTO BILD, supplemented by the Dealer Satisfaction Monitor from the Institute for

Automotive Economics (IfA) and a high-caliber panel of experts. Numerous German and international automotive brands participated with their most innovative aftersales concepts.

Awards will be presented in six categories: Workshop and Service Concepts, Battery and High-Voltage Services, Maintenance and Repair Solutions, Digital After-Sales Services, Innovative Customer Loyalty, and the Newcomer category. There will also be a special surprise award.

As part of Automechanika, several of the association's committees and panels will meet at the convention center. There will also be supplementary expert presentations by network partners in the VDIK Lounge. In addition, on the first day of the trade show, there will be a guided tour of the most interesting booths for VDIK members and guests.

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The Association of International Motor Vehicle Manufacturers (VDIK) has represented the interests of international passenger car and commercial vehicle manufacturers in Germany since 1952. Over 50 brands from 14 countries belong to the VDIK. International manufacturers sell around 1.2 million cars in Germany every year. This corresponds to a market share of around 43 percent. In addition, there are around 120,000 commercial vehicles. The international manufacturers generate an annual turnover of 50 billion euros in Germany and secure 100,000 jobs at the 12,000 affiliated dealerships and sales centers. The VDIK member companies cover the entire technological spectrum of drive variants and offer around 200 battery-electric vehicle models alone (130 battery-electric and 70 plug-in hybrid models).