

# DISCOVERING MERCEDES-BENZ VANS



The decision to build a new, full van manufacturing facility in South Carolina represents the culmination of a decade of success for Mercedes-Benz in our state. Since 2006, the company has assembled Sprinter vans in its North Charleston plant. Now faced with the expanded training requirements of a full manufacturing facility, Mercedes-Benz Vans (MBV) turned to readySC™ for assistance.

Düsseldorf, Germany



readySC representatives traveled to Düsseldorf, Germany to tour the Mercedes-Benz production facility and assess the company's training needs.

To begin assessing the extent of the company's training and recruitment needs, a readySC Discovery team traveled to Daimler's Mercedes-Benz plant in Düsseldorf, Germany in December 2015. Comprised of SC Technical College System and readySC leaders, curriculum developers, instructors and project managers, the team met with Daimler training and human resources managers to observe and collect data on the plant.

Some 6,000+ workers at Daimler's Mercedes-Benz plant in Düsseldorf produce approximately 160,000 vehicles

per year with the help of hundreds of industrial robots. Daimler representatives took the team on a process tour of the facility, including paint, body, assembly and finish shops.

The team observed a variety of processes, assembly techniques and flow paths. They also met with key subject matter experts (SMEs) from the facility to discuss their jobs and related tasks. Technical

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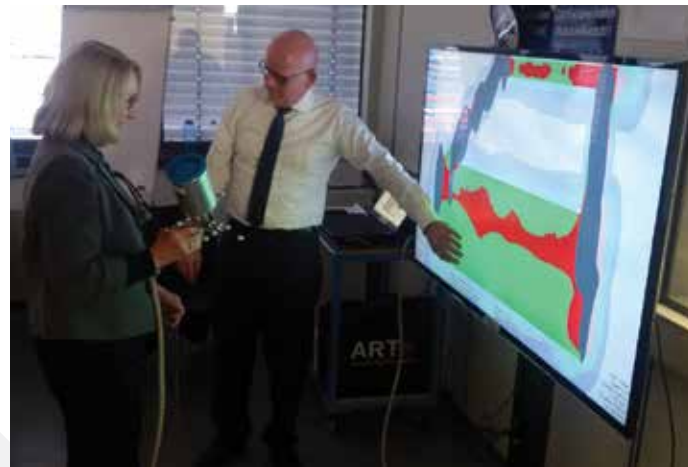
apprentices offered demonstrations for the various workstations and presented the major product from each production line.

During the tour, three skill levels ranging from entry-level to highly-skilled were identified. The type and length of training necessary for each skill level will be determined during the Design phase of readySC training development. Any unique tooling observed during the tour will also be considered when developing any subsequent, hands-on training sessions.

As part of discussions on company culture, Daimler revealed a few of the qualities that the company values in an employee: tidiness, cleanliness, staying calm under pressure and working well with others. In addition, the team learned about Daimler's four-step pre-hire assessment process that all potential shop floor employees must go through.

Important takeaways from the trip included training materials, pre-hire assessments, process and tooling information. Safety issues were identified, including lifting requirements, overhead welding, working with arms raised at or above shoulder height, repetitive movement cautions and working in backward motion. Since safety is important to the process, safety awareness will be integrated into any training program and emphasized as a goal for everyone.

The next step is to use the team's findings from the trip to design and deliver a customized training and recruitment plan for Mercedes-Benz Vans. As part of the Discovery Team, readySC area director Terrance Rivers is eager to get started: "readySC is understandably excited about the Daimler expansion. We're looking forward to showing Daimler that readySC is very capable of providing the trained employees they need."



Mercedes-Benz Vans, a division of Daimler, will establish a

**NEW, FULL MANUFACTURING OPERATION IN NORTH CHARLESTON**

**\$500 MILLION,  
1,300 NEW JOBS**

**THE SPRINTER IS THE WORLD'S LEADING LARGE VAN,**

and the U.S. represents its second-largest sales market

**"The region has very highly-skilled workers, a dense network of reliable suppliers and an outstanding logistics infrastructure that includes good transport connections to the nearby harbor."**

— VANS VOLKER MORNHINWEG,  
HEAD OF MERCEDES-BENZ



**Mercedes-Benz**



## Mercedes-Benz Vans to invest \$500 million in new South Carolina manufacturing plant

With the official announcement of its new South Carolina facility in 2015, Mercedes-Benz revealed that it will expand its current assembly operation in North Charleston to full van manufacturing. The plant will be the first Mercedes van factory in North America and will supply the North American market with the next-generation Sprinter van. Mercedes-Benz Vans, a division of Daimler, plans to invest \$500 million in the new manufacturing plant and create 1,300 jobs over the next several years.

Construction of the new factory is scheduled to begin in 2016 and will include a completely new body shop, a paint shop and an assembly line. "This plant is key to our future growth in the very dynamic North American van market," said Vans Volker Mornhinweg, head of Mercedes-Benz. "Charleston is an excellent location for our new plant. The region has very highly-skilled workers, a dense network of reliable suppliers and an outstanding logistics infrastructure that includes good transport connections to the nearby harbor."

The Mercedes-Benz Sprinter is the world's leading large van, and more than 2.8 million Sprinters have been delivered to customers in 130 countries worldwide. In 2014, the company delivered approximately 26,000 Sprinters to U.S. customers, making the United States the company's second-largest sales market behind Germany. The Sprinter has been available in the U.S. since 2001 and today holds approximately 9 percent of the country's large van market. The company has operated its current van assembly operation in Charleston County since 2006.