

## BLAUPUNKT | THE CAR RADIO

● **BLAUPUNKT** There were two exciting technical innovations in the 'Golden Twenties' of the last century: the mass production of automobiles brought the dream of personal and comfortable mobility within reach, and the invention of the radio marked the beginnings of long sought-after mass communication. With the development of the car radio in 1932, Blaupunkt bridged the gap between these two dreams.

The Autosuper AS 5 – the name of the first car radio in Europe – did not have much in common with today's high performance devices. Occupying a volume of ten litres, the bulky appliance for short and long wave took up as much space as a small suitcase, so the device could not be situated within arm's reach of the driver. This problem was solved with a remote control on the steering column, a solution that was reserved for radios of the top class. There weren't any special aerials either; normal aerial wire was used and laid under the car roof or the running boards. The reception strongly depended on the weather and the location of the automobile and left much to be desired. Besides this, listening to the radio was a costly pastime. The Autosuper cost more than 450 Reichmarks – in 1932 that equalled one third of the price of a small car. The device, however, heralded the development from the simple radio to today's automotive sound systems with integrated hands-free system, navigation system and CD-player – and naturally with the blue dot.

In Berlin the company named 'Ideal' was founded in 1932, the same place and year the first German broadcaster officially took up operations in Voxhaus. 'Ideal' started out manufacturing headphones. Each and every product was carefully tested by technicians and marked with a blue dot. It wasn't long before the customers started just asking for the headphones with the blue dot, so the company registered its seal of quality as a trademark in 1924. The development of the car radio fired the starting shot for the worldwide success story of the brand, after which the company was named in 1938.

Even the simplest modern car radios are equipped with numerous technical features that make listening to the radio while driving enjoyable. Most customers don't know the names of these features and take for granted the functions in the background. They are usually the result of technical innovations of the brand with the blue dot.

From Autosuper all the way to the newest top-model Woodstock DAB 54, the engineers in Hildesheim have always played a decisive role in the development of radio on wheels. Shortly after ultra short wave began to be used in 1952, the first car radio in the world with VHF-receiver was introduced on the market – of course it bore the blue dot. In 1969 the company introduced the first stereo car radio, in 1974 the first car radio with ARI-receiver followed. Navigation technology has also been being developed since the '80s and was ready for start of production with the TravelPilot in 1989. In 2002 the engineers created the model Woodstock DAB 52, the first radio in the world with two digital technologies in one casing: the Digital Audio Broadcasting DAB and the playback of internet music encoded in the MP3 standard. The newest development with the blue dot is called the Bremen MP 74. This normally-sized car radio is equipped with a formidable technical arsenal such as a double-tuner, a self-adjusting band equalizer and a time alignment function. A full graphic display allows simple and intuitive operation. These innovations solidify Blaupunkt's reputation as the market leader in Europe when it comes to "car multimedia", as well as navigation systems, e.g. the new TravelPilot E2 with MP3. There is a certain amount of uncertainty about which technological innovations will survive on the market in the future, but they will probably also be adorned with the blue dot.



Company name  
Blaupunkt GmbH

Classic product  
Autosuper  
(since 1932)

Employees  
7,500 worldwide

Awareness  
96 %

Distribution  
worldwide

Annual sales  
1 billion euros