

Belgium

Market Environment

On December 31, 1991 Belgium had a population of 4.7 million vehicles of which 3,928,906 were passenger cars. In 1991 452,360 new cars were sold and 49,412 new trucks.

Some 11.6% of the total Belgian household budget is spent on the purchase and maintenance of a private vehicle. Cars in Belgium have a relatively short average lifespan of 4.8 years. The average car mileage does not exceed 10 to 12 thousand km per year. Most Belgians replace their cars after 50 to 60 thousand km.

The compulsory annual inspection of all automotive vehicles in Belgium is a factor that very positively affects the demand for automotive service equipment. So does the high accident rate in Belgium.

In 1990 the total investment in automotive service equipment was estimated to be US \$ 81.5 million. The import market was shared by the USA 14%, Germany 23%, UK 18% and France 10%.

Belgian auto repair businesses try to maintain older cars but avoid expensive labour costs by investing in labour saving, state of the art equipment.

Potential end users are:

-garages	10,000
-service stations	1,500
-importers, distributors, retailers of tools, workshop equipment	1,678
-body repair shops	1,624
-tire specialists	568
-carwashes	495
-specialized shops (brakes, shock absorbers)	277
-engine rebuilders	85
-supermarket sales and service outlets	60

Auto repair and maintenance services are mainly provided by authorized car dealers followed by independent garages and service stations.

There are a few domestic manufacturers in Belgium and most of them manufacture handtools. Consequently the market for maintenance and repair equipment is largely an import market.