

## ebm-papst uncovers Chinese counterfeiting network

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ebm-papst, leading manufacturer of fans and motors headquartered in Mulfingen, Germany, is once again demonstrating its tireless commitment to protecting its customers and safeguarding its brand reputation. In September 2024, investigators uncovered a Chinese factory selling counterfeit ebm-papst products. About a year ago, the company successfully raided a counterfeiting factory. Every year, counterfeiting and the associated investigations cause several hundred thousand euros in economic damage and total costs for ebm-papst.

At the beginning of July 2024, ebm-papst again received a report from a long-standing customer who had received products from the company that were of low quality compared to previous purchases. Ralf Duceck, Vice President Intellectual Property of the ebm-papst Group, and his international team responded immediately to this suspicion of product counterfeiting and tried to find out further details.

“Counterfeit products pose a significant threat to the integrity of our brand and the safety of our customers. Counterfeit products may contain inferior materials and may not meet the strict quality and safety standards that we guarantee for our original products. We are therefore committed to fighting counterfeiting and protecting our customers,” explains Duceck.

Despite several hurdles, such as false addresses, extensive investigations led the team to a suspected counterfeiting workshop in Foshan that was pretending to be an ebm-papst branch. The suspicion against this workshop was confirmed after counterfeit ebm-papst labels were found in the waste. Further investigation revealed that the operator of this counterfeiting workshop was already responsible for the factory closed by ebm-papst in 2023 and had now relocated and significantly expanded his company premises. The operator in question was able to evade the Chinese authorities in 2023, but was already known to the police, having been caught engaging in similar activities in 2016.

Based on the investigation results and the resulting burden of proof, the Foshan Public Security Bureau (PSB) was informed. In September, the PSB decided to carry out an unannounced raid together with the ebm-papst team. The raid was successful, and those responsible for the counterfeiting operation were arrested.

The activities of the counterfeiting operation in Foshan included the purchase of used, original ebm-papst fans from overseas, which were reconditioned and then relabeled. The reconditioned fans were sold as new, original products. A total of four people were arrested in the raid, including the operator of the counterfeiting operation and his wife. With this arrest, ebm-papst was able to take down a professional counterfeiting network. In addition, over 300 fans and 500 ebm-papst labels were seized during the raid. Investigators were also able to secure products and labels from manufacturers in similar industries.

Hauke Hannig  
Pressesprecher  
ebm-papst Unternehmensgruppe

Telefon: +49 7938 81-7105  
Mobil: +49 171 36 24 067

[Hauke.Hannig@de.ebmpapst.com](mailto:Hauke.Hannig@de.ebmpapst.com)  
[www.ebmpapst.com](http://www.ebmpapst.com)

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The case has now been handed over to the public prosecutor's office in China. It can be assumed that a fine and prison sentence will make it almost impossible for the counterfeiter to open a workshop again.

“Combating counterfeiting is a top priority for protecting our brand reputation. Our customers rely on the quality and reliability of ebm-papst products, and it is our aim to maintain this trust. The successful investigations underline our commitment to protecting our customers from inferior imitations. Our goal is to ensure that they always receive the quality and performance they expect from ebm-papst – no compromises, no counterfeits,” emphasizes Dr. Klaus Geissdoerfer, CEO of the ebm-papst Group.

Hauke Hannig  
Pressesprecher  
ebm-papst Unternehmensgruppe

Telefon: +49 7938 81-7105  
Mobil: +49 171 36 24 067

[Hauke.Hannig@de.ebmpapst.com](mailto:Hauke.Hannig@de.ebmpapst.com)  
[www.ebmpapst.com](http://www.ebmpapst.com)

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## **About ebm-papst**

The ebm-papst Group, a family-run company headquartered in Mulfingen, Germany, is the world's leading manufacturer of fans and motors. Since it was founded in 1963, the technological leader has set international industry standards with its core competencies in motor technology, electronics, digitalization, and aerodynamics.

ebm-papst offers sustainable, intelligent, and tailor-made solutions for virtually every requirement in ventilation and heating technology. ebm-papst sets the benchmark in almost all sectors, such as ventilation, air conditioning and refrigeration technology, heating technology, information technology, mechanical engineering, intralogistics, and medical technology.

In the 2023/24 financial year, the Group generated a turnover of EUR 2.408 billion. It employs just nearly 14,000 people at 30 production sites including in Germany, China, and the US, as well as 50 sales offices worldwide.