



## COMPANY PROFILE

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# ABOUT US

AutoX is a leading South African automotive lead-acid battery manufacturer, supplying local and selected African and European markets with our well-known battery brands: Willard®, SABAT® and HiFase®. We are also the official distributor of VARTA® in South Africa and other selected African countries.

AutoX batteries deliver high performance in tough African conditions. Based on robust battery technology, we have built a successful track record of consistent performance and value for money. Serving both the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) and aftermarket replacement market sectors, AutoX provides a wide range of batteries including automotive car and truck batteries, industrial batteries, as well as motorcycle and leisure batteries.

# PROUD HISTORY

Our proud evolution dates back more than 60 years and can be traced as follows:

**1954**

Willard® Batteries, distributed in South Africa since the 1920s, are manufactured in Port Elizabeth, South Africa for the first time under licence from ESB International Corporation.

**1967**

First traction and stationary batteries are produced and SABAT® Battery Company is established.

**1983**

Powertech Industries acquires the Lucas Battery factory in Roodepoort.

**1998**

Powertech Industries acquires the SABAT® Battery Company.

**2001**

Willard® Batteries and SABAT® Batteries receive ISO 14001 Environmental Management System accreditations.

**2012**

Sealed Maintenance-Free (SMF) batteries are introduced to the market.

**2018**

AutoX becomes the distributor for VARTA® batteries in South Africa and selected African countries.

**1966**

Willard® Batteries introduces industrial batteries and produces its first locomotive-starting batteries.

**1981**

100% of Willard® Batteries' shares are acquired by Power Technologies, a division of Altron Limited (later Power Technologies would become a division of Powertech Industries).

**1987**

Willard® Batteries becomes the first South African manufacturer to be awarded the South African Bureau of Standards (SABS) Quality Management System 0157 Part II for its automotive production facility in Port Elizabeth.

**1999**

Powertech Industries acquires Battery Technologies (est. 1990) and enters into the stationary and stand-by power system and rectifier market for the telecommunications industry.

**2011**

The majority stake in the industrial batteries operation is sold to EnerSys, world leader in motive and reserve batteries.

**2017**

Trinitas Private Equity Group acquires AutoX from Altron Limited. This occurred after the Powertech Battery Group was consolidated into AutoX which includes the South African and Namibian operations.



# AUTO X BRANDS

With our advanced manufacturing capabilities, product expertise and extensive distribution network, AutoX produces and offers reputable household brands for South Africa and beyond. Our range of branded batteries for all vehicle and motorcycle types and leisure applications is complemented by an inclusive service offering, which fully supports customer and market requirements.



Rooted in the hearts of South Africans, Willard® Batteries combines technology and a quest for perfection resulting in a battery of unrivalled standing.

Our Willard® product range is manufactured in Port Elizabeth. With a presence in South Africa since the 1920s, local production started in 1954. Today, the factory reflects the true South African spirit of combining imported state-of-the-art technology with solid South African ingenuity and know-how.



SABAT® Batteries was established in 1967, with its first factory in Johannesburg. Through its sponsorship of local motorsport and its distinctive red colour scheme, SABAT® has become known as South Africa's fastest moving battery brand. Building on this legacy, SABAT® is now a renowned lifestyle brand, enjoying strong support and brand loyalty from motorists, including sports and outdoor enthusiasts.



Established more than a century ago, the VARTA® brand has come a long way and distinguished itself as the leader in automotive battery innovation. Manufactured by Johnson Controls, the world's largest manufacturer of automotive batteries, this brand has extended its market presence in Africa through a partnership with AutoX, who is now the official distributor of VARTA® Batteries in South Africa.



AutoX's HiFase® brand, manufactured in our Port Elizabeth manufacturing facility, is exclusively aimed at our export market.

Durable and resilient, the HiFase® product range is designed to withstand harsh environmental conditions. Enduring high temperatures and severe road conditions, it is ideally suited for markets in Africa. In the colder UK and European markets, its durability is legendary. In these markets it is sold under the HiFase® brand or other house brand names.



Battery on Call® is a mobile battery delivery service for AutoX consumers and retail customers. Consumers who require mobile fitment can be assisted through the scheduling of an appointment with a mobile technician to replace their battery, whether at home, stuck on the side of the road or in a parking lot.





# MARKET SEGMENTS SERVED

## Product Applications

AutoX provides a complete range of branded batteries suitable for all vehicle types and other applications. Our brands are trusted by our customers for their premium quality and high performance, including Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) and consumers in the car battery and automotive replacement markets. The AutoX battery range includes world-class, lead-acid batteries and products with start-stop technologies for efficient application in four different categories: Automotive, Industrial, Motorcycle and Leisure industries.

### Automotive



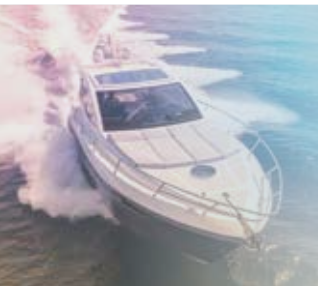
Automotive batteries are developed and manufactured for application in passenger vehicles including sport utility vehicles (SUVs), small bakkies, light commercial vehicles, as well as heavy-duty trucks. Automotive lead-acid batteries include Sealed Maintenance-free batteries (SMF), Enhanced Flooded Batteries (EFB +C) and Absorbed Glass Matt (AGM) batteries. AutoX AGM batteries are supplied under the premium VARTA® brand. This brand, renowned for its high performance, is predominantly utilised in the OEM market.

### Motorcycles



AutoX provides two types of motorcycle batteries, namely valve-regulated lead-acid (VRLA) maintenance-free and vented batteries. These products are also utilised in all-terrain vehicles (ATVs) and quad bikes. Our VRLA maintenance-free batteries are permanently sealed and do not require refilling.

### Leisure



The majority of batteries used for starting and powering leisure equipment, including marine and sports mobiles, are based on deep-cycle technology. The main difference between leisure batteries and normal starter batteries is that leisure batteries have more cyclability. Some leisure equipment utilises batteries based on standby power technology, such as boats, golf carts and caravans, among others.

### Industrial



AutoX supplies industrial batteries for various applications. These include batteries for Reserve Power (stand-by/back-up power and solar power) and Motive Power (leisure vehicles, traction and materials handling equipment). Battery types include flooded lead acid cells and valve-regulated lead-acid (VRLA) AGM and GEL cells.

AutoX can assist you with tailor-made solutions for your applications and requirements.

# OUR OPERATIONS

## Manufacturing

- Since 1954, when the first battery was manufactured in Port Elizabeth, we have developed our production processes and upgraded our manufacturing facility to meet increasing market demands at the highest level of battery standards possible.
- We use high-grade lead alloys and specialised additives with active ingredients developed by AutoX.
- Our paste-mixing methods are controlled to improve stability during the manufacturing process and enhance consistency from one batch to the next.
- We have customised our curing processes and apply patented moulding processes for lead straps that deliver lightweight, but highly robust, current connectors.
- Through innovations such as these, we ensure that AutoX batteries meet the demands of the most extreme conditions.
- We apply sophisticated testing procedures to ensure the quality of each battery before it leaves the factory.
- AutoX batteries consistently outperform international specified standards for lead-acid batteries.
- Our manufacturing facility was the first battery production plant in Africa to achieve ISO 9001 quality management accreditation, and our manufacturing facility is certified according to multiple national and international standards.

## Research and Development

- We continue to optimise production efficiencies and address capacity constraints in order to introduce new technology products.
- Our in-house R&D facility often partners with industry and industrial research organisations in the development of innovative technologies and methodologies.
- We have built strong working relationships with South African universities and sponsor post-graduate students to conduct research, the findings of which are made available to the public.
- AutoX has established a partnership with the Nelson Mandela University and contributed to the establishment of an independent test facility to develop processes for OEM purposes.
- We have produced several patents and designs as well as pioneered innovative charging algorithms that have set an international benchmark in the industry.
- AutoX is committed to evolving our battery brands and pushing battery boundaries where possible, while maintaining our record of accomplishment as a battery brand of technological repute.

**AutoX has partnered with Nelson Mandela University as an extension of our R&D platform.**





## Standards and Accreditations

AutoX subscribes to the highest quality standards in the South African industry as well as to international standards relevant in European markets. We benchmark our products against the best in the world. In 1987, the company's Port Elizabeth production facility became the first in South Africa to be awarded the SABS Quality Management System for battery manufacturing. Since then, both pillar brands, Willard® and SABAT®, carry the SABS Mark of Approval. In 2018, AutoX became the official distributor of the high performance international battery brand, VARTA®. The VARTA® brand is certified according to European Battery standards and complies with all European quality standards.

AutoX is certified to the following quality standards:

- ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management Systems
- ISO 14001:2015 Environmental Management Systems
- ISO 45001:2018 Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems
- SANS2:2013 SABS Certification Mark
- IATF 16949:2016 Automotive Quality System

## Distribution Network

We are proud to supply a number of OEMs and more than 3 000 automotive retail outlets across South Africa and in selected African countries. These outlets include parts retail stores, fitment centres, resellers of batteries in the 'Do It Yourself' (DIY) and the 'Do It For Me' (DIFM) markets, including our dedicated Xpress dealer channel.

This extensive distribution footprint caters for the needs of our customers, even in the most remote areas of South Africa. We also export automotive and leisure batteries to the United Kingdom.

We have long-standing relationships with our logistics partners who also assist with our outbound and inbound logistics.

**Willard® and SABAT®  
batteries carry  
the SABS mark of  
approval.**

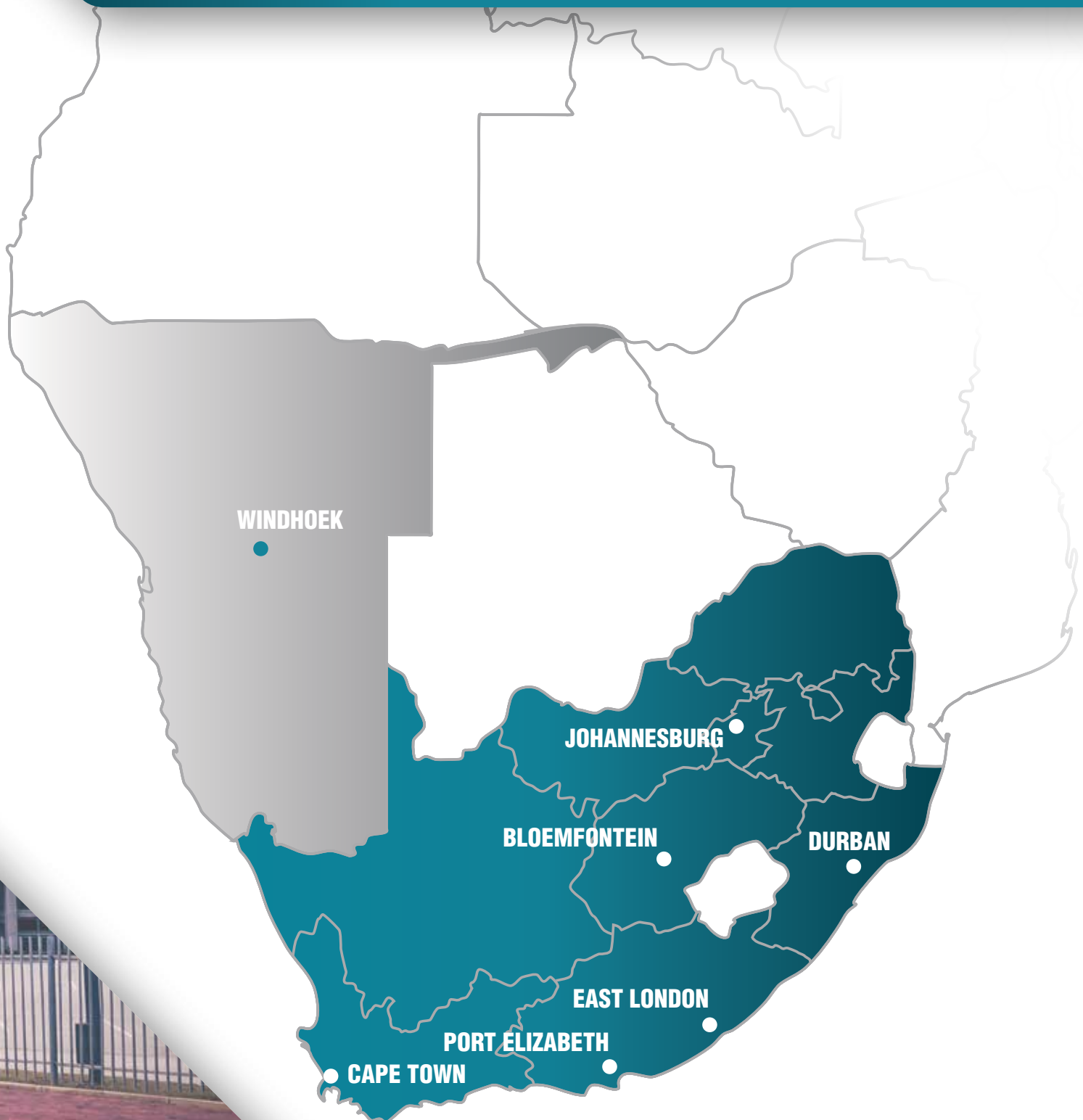




## Branches

At AutoX, we take care of our customers and their local and regional requirements. To meet our customer's service and delivery needs, we have well-established sales and warehouse operations throughout South Africa and Namibia.

Our AutoX branches also offer the service of collecting scrap, rotations and warranty returns at all customer delivery points.



## Retail Partners

We take pride in our long-standing relationships with our major recognised automotive retail specialists, including car battery fitment specialists, workshops and spares retailers. These include:



In addition, AutoX supplies all recognised co-ops and several independent chains, some of which are based in remote areas in South Africa, ensuring that we have all geographical areas covered for our customers.



# SUSTAINABILITY

## Our People

AutoX's employees, who number over 600 countrywide, are the cornerstone of our sustainability and success. We strive to be considered an employer of choice by living our values and providing ongoing employee development initiatives at all levels.

### VALUES

The following shared values keep us on course towards our objective of ensuring a culture of both passion and performance:



### Code of Conduct

AutoX is a South African company which is committed to upholding the highest ethical standards in our operations and business dealings. We operate and conduct our business within the framework of applicable laws, professional standards and based on our shared company values. We have developed a Code of Conduct that articulates a high standard of performance and service delivery.

### Employee Development

Our investment in people is aimed at developing high-performing employees, capable of meeting current and future business requirements. Business transformational activities provide opportunities for all employees, with a special focus on developing the potential of those from previously disadvantaged backgrounds.

Leadership is an important character trait not only for managers but for employees at every level in the company. We therefore prioritise the implementation of leadership programmes companywide and encourage our employees to exercise leadership in their areas of responsibility. People development initiatives include:

- Performance management
- Succession planning
- Leadership programmes
- Learnerships
- Apprenticeships
- Employee part-time studies
- Manufacturing-related training
- Sales and services-related training
- Continuous improvement training

**We value leadership as an important character trait. Priority is given to the implementation of leadership programmes and we encourage employees to lead in their areas of responsibility.**

For those employees who wish to further their tertiary education, we offer non-refundable financial assistance. AutoX has also introduced Management and Supervisory Development programmes such as Best Practices in Team Effectiveness, Selling Skills and Sales Management.



## Our Community

### **Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment**

As a local South African manufacturer, we view Broad-based Black Economic Empowerment (B-BBEE) as a strategic imperative for AutoX. We comply with South Africa's B-BBEE Codes of Good Practice and currently possess a Level 4 Contributor status.

Through skills development and CSI initiatives, AutoX plays a significant role in contributing particularly to transformation in the Eastern Cape, where there are high levels of poverty and unemployment.

### **Skills Development**

AutoX has a very constructive relationship with the Chemical Industry Education and Training Authority (CHIETA) and has received a number of discretionary grants and numerous awards as a result. We continue to spend considerable funds on employed as well as unemployed and disabled learners.

### **Enterprise Development**

We have identified and developed a number of small enterprises that are supplying services to the company. We provide business funding and support to help them grow and sustain their businesses.

### **Supplier Development**

AutoX has partnered with Inyosi Empowerment and makes significant contributions to various black-owned companies all over the country. Over the years, we have assisted our local suppliers, including JD Chemicals, AJ Machine Services, Mlamli Transport, and Rihayo Occupational Health Services CC.

## **Corporate Social Investment**

We have a history of giving back and are committed to making a positive impact on the communities we serve. Our corporate social investment programmes include:

Support for the Quadriplegic Association of South Africa (QASA) through the sponsoring of SABAT® batteries for electric wheelchairs



Cooperation with Reach for a Dream where we aim to inspire hope, courage and strength in the lives of critically ill and vulnerable children



The adoption of St Thomas High School in Port Elizabeth, where we help to upgrade infrastructure and supply learning equipment such as laboratory equipment and computers



**St Thomas High School**

The sponsorship of ad-hoc initiatives through Good Morning Angels and Caring Daisies



## Our Environment

AutoX is fully committed to its environmental responsibilities. Given the nature of our products, we take our environmental stewardship very seriously. Sustainability starts with the raw materials we source and includes every step until the end of each product's life.

### Battery lead, acid and plastic are repurposed for new battery manufacturing and the savings achieved are passed onto our customers.

A lead-acid battery is 98% recyclable, and therefore AutoX has a scrap battery programme in place to optimise the collection and recycling of lead-acid batteries. We close the distribution network loop through a strict recycling programme where battery lead, acid and plastic are repurposed for new battery manufacturing or other useful products. Savings achieved through recycling are passed on to our customers.

#### As a responsible manufacturer, AutoX adheres to the:

- Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (No. 108 of 1996) – Chapter 2 – Bill of Rights Section 24 – Environment
- Occupational Health & Safety Act (No. 85 of 1993)
- Compensation for Occupation Injuries and Diseases Act and Regulations (No. 130 of 1993)
- National Environmental Management: Air Quality Act & Regulations (No. 39 of 2004)
- National Environmental Management: Waste Act & Regulations (No. 59 of 2008)
- Hazardous Substances Act & Regulations (No. 15 of 1973)
- Environmental Conservation Act & Regulations (No. 73 of 1989)
- National Water Act & Regulations (No. 36 of 1998)

## INDUSTRY MEMBERSHIPS

- **EUROBAT** – The Association of European Automotive and Industrial Battery Manufacturers



- **NAACAM** – The National Association of Automotive Component & Allied Manufacturers



- **AAMA** – The Automotive Aftermarket Manufacturing Association



- **Partinform** – Partinform, a sub-committee of AAMA



- **SABMA** – The South African Battery Manufacturing Association



- **MIOSA** – The Motor Industry Ombudsman of South Africa



- **RMI** – The Retail Motor Industry Organisation



# AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

As a leading manufacturer and supplier of Willard® and SABAT® batteries, AutoX has had some proud moments over the years, with our achievements recognised through a number of prestigious industry awards. We continuously raise the bar for ourselves and are always humbled when receiving these awards; it is indicative that we are doing something right in the eyes of our stakeholders. Highlights of the previous three years include:

## 2016

- **Altron** – Best Company Award Powertech
- **Midas/NAPA** – Supplier of the Year Finalist
- **AutoZone** – Best House Brand Award
- **OBARO** – Supplier of the Year Finalist
- **OVK** – Supplier of the Year Award


## 2017

- **AutoZone** – Runner-Up at Supplier of the Year Awards for Commodities and House Brand Category
- **Automechanica** – Gold Award
- **OVK** – Supplier of the Year Award
- **Midas/NAPA** – Finalist for the Best Supplier of the Year, Emerald Award
- **OBARO** – Supplier of the Year Finalist

## 2018

- **VKB** – Top Supplier Award and Business Representative of the Year
- **Midas/NAPA** – Best Supplier of the Year, Emerald Award
- **AutoZone** – Runner-up House Brand Supplier and 3<sup>rd</sup> place Best Supplier Award
- **OBARO** – Supplier of the Year Finalist
- **OVK** – Top Supplier of the Year



A photograph of two women in the foreground, smiling and clapping their hands. The woman on the left is Black with long dark hair, wearing a grey cardigan over a black and white patterned top, and a blue lanyard. The woman on the right is white with long brown hair, wearing a dark blue blazer. In the background, a man in a blue suit is visible, also clapping. The setting appears to be an indoor event or conference.

**Leading automotive battery manufacturer and supplier in South Africa.**

**Home to leading automotive brands, Willard®, SABAT® and HiFase Batteries and official distributor of VARTA® Batteries in South Africa and selected African countries.**

**Provider of excellent sales service to 3 000 automotive replacement retail outlets across South Africa and selected African countries.**



AutoX (Pty) Ltd – Co. Reg. No. 2016/475012/07

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