

Press Release No. 2026/01

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March 2026

Strategic Focus on Retail KOHL Group to part ways with AC Schnitzer at the end of 2026

Aachen: At the end of 2026, the KOHL Group will part ways its AC Schnitzer division and cease its operations as a manufacturer of tuning parts for BMW and MINI. Going forward, the Group will focus more than ever on the retail and service of vehicles and motorcycles.

A rational decision regarding an emotional brand

At the end of this year, the KOHL Group's involvement as a manufacturer in the tuning world under the AC Schnitzer brand - a brand that has become a globally recognized synonym for sporty driving - will come to an end. However, various factors have made it no longer economically viable to operate the tuning products business in Germany.

Steadily rising costs in the development and manufacture of parts are creating competitive disadvantages. In particular, however, the extremely long approval process for parts in the German system has caused AC Schnitzer to fall further and further behind its non-German competitors.

"If we can only bring aftermarket parts to market eight or nine months after the competition, that speaks for itself," explains Rainer Vogel, Managing Director of AC Schnitzer, outlining the background. On the demand side, changing consumer behavior, deteriorating international market conditions, and the gradual phase-out of the internal combustion engine further exacerbate the situation.

"Making a rational decision regarding a business segment that is so emotionally charged is not easy. But as a family-owned business, we always think in terms of the entire KOHL Group and its stable future," Rainer Vogel continues.

Whether it's tariffs in the key U.S. market, rising global raw material prices, highly volatile exchange rates in international currencies, or the demise of suppliers on the supplier side: every development has left its mark on the balance sheet. The same goes for the general reluctance to spend, which, amid a global economic downturn that has now lasted four years, has also caused the domestic market in Germany to collapse.

It is also true that buyers of vehicle enhancements through aftermarket parts are often portrayed in the media as eccentrics or posers. Nevertheless, high attendance figures at the leading trade shows in the tuning industry demonstrate that interest remains undiminished. "It is certainly also true that we - like other tuning companies - have not succeeded in inspiring young customers to enjoy sporty driving with our brand to the same extent as their fathers' generation did," adds Vogel.

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The KOHL Group is in talks with parties interested in acquiring the AC Schnitzer brand. But regardless of the outcome of these discussions, existing inventory will be sold off by the end of the year.

This offers fans of the brand and the international dealer network the opportunity to once again purchase the distinctive products for BMW and MINI across all product categories—from engine tuning and exhaust systems to suspension upgrades, aerodynamic add-ons, and the iconic forged wheels. And all this with full assurance regarding warranties and after-sales support, which the KOHL Group guarantees beyond the end of 2026.

AC Schnitzer recommends:



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