# Dacia grows and remains true to itself

Von Walther Wuttke

The Romanian Renault offshoot Dacia can look back on a successful first half of the year. In the first six months, the brand sold 358,497 vehicles, an improvement of 3.8 percent compared to the previous year. And this despite two model changes. In addition to the new Duster, which is currently arriving at dealerships, Dacia also updated the Spring city electric car, which will be available at dealerships in the fall and will also be offered on the British market for the first time.
"We are still one of the top four brands among private customers," explains Head of Sales and Marketing Xavier Martinet.

The undisputed bestseller in the Dacia range is the Sandero, which attracted 165,000 customers in the first six months, followed by the Duster (114,000 registrations) and the Jogger with 51,000 models sold. The Spring weakened in the face of the launch of the new model, reaching 12,000 units. Initial figures show that the Duster's success story will continue with the new model. "We have never had so many orders for a vehicle that customers have not yet seen," Martinet sums up. An additional bonus: "87 percent of customers choose the two top equipment levels for the Duster and 30 percent choose the hybrid drive."

However, Dacia is no longer alone in the market for affordable vehicles. The Stellantis brand Citroën in particular has been competing with Dacia in recent months with an aggressive pricing policy. "That is the best compliment they could pay us. We remain true to our strategy of delivering the best possible value for money," assures the Head of Marketing. However, the cheapest electric car on the European market is under threat from the European Union. The city car produced in China is subject to the planned Brussels customs regulations, but despite this, "there will be no brutal price increase for the model. Then the Spring would no longer be a Dacia," assures Martinet. Since its market launch three years ago, the Spring has found 150,000 customers in Europe.

According to Martinet, the price gap between Dacia and the other brands has narrowed from 25 percent to ten percent in recent years. "Today, we offer additional value, so that we are now one of the top five brands among private customers in Germany," explains Martinet. "People used to buy a Dacia because of the low price, today 76 percent of customers come to us from other brands, and 68 percent of Dacia customers buy a Dacia again. That is significantly higher than the average."

And what does the future hold for the brand? Over the next three years, Dacia will launch three new models in the next higher C-segment. The first to be launched next spring will be the Bigster, which will be unveiled at the Paris Motor Show. Two further vehicles will follow in 2026 and 2027, about which no information has yet been released. Like the Duster, the Bigster will also have a hybrid drive, among other things, and the brand will also remain loyal to LPG fuel, which currently accounts for 30 percent of the model range. Diesel has had its day, at least in Europe. "We only offer diesel in Morocco," explains Xavier Martinet.

Even with the new models in the new segment, Dacia remains true to its strategy of offering good value for money, even if this has an impact on the rating in the European NCAP test. "We achieve top scores when it comes to protecting occupants and pedestrians or cyclists, but we don't want to overload our vehicles with things that are not mandatory," says Martinet, describing the brand's strategy. (aum)

## Images for article

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Dacia Spring.

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