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Germany's most successful three-wheeler

On September 25, 1928, the sales company Vidal & Sohn was established to distribute the three-wheelers of the brand Tempo in Hamburg. The name Tempo was attributable to the patented three-wheeler design of Gustav Ehlers. Although the cooperation of both parties ended quite quickly, Vidal & Sohn brought its own three-wheeled trucks on the market after a short space of time. The competition was enormous but it turned out that both Hamburger had the right sense for the needs of petty traders. After only two years, in November 1930, the completion of the 1000th Tempo three-wheeler was celebrated.

In 1936 a new type, designated with the abbreviation E400, was introduced. The number 400 signified the rounded up capacity of exact 396 cc and the letter E stood for "Eisen" (German for Iron). In plain terms the new letter gave information about the state of the car body. The former mixed construction of the driver's cabin and the chassis out of

plywood and steel made way for a complete construction out of steel. Beside the choice of materials also the tire size was amplified by 1 inch to 18 inch in total. With his brothers – the E200 and E600 – the sales could be additionally pushed and Vidal & Sohn were pleased with full order books. The E 400, also known and available under the name Athlet at the dealers, was fitted with a water-cooled two-cycle engine, which was mounted on the steering. The engine had performance of 12,5 hp, which was transferred through a 3-speed gearbox and a chain to the single front wheel.

Although the E400 was very popular it could not reach the success of its small Brother; the E200. Totaled up 3,311 three-wheeler of the E400 were produced at the works in Hamburg during 1936 and 1938.

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