



Several yachts undergoing a refit at the Lürssen facilities in Hamburg.



Full docks at Lürssen in Hamburg

Whilst yachts being launched after a refit don't always make the headlines, the past few years have seen some very notable yachts enter one of the many shipyards Lürssen has and leave as transformed vessels, with 12 yachts between 70 and well over 100-metres undergoing work last year alone. The Lürssen group comprises a total of eight shipyards in northern Germany, an array of covered sheds and drydocks and a manpower of over 3,300 people including over 700 engineers and naval architects. This enables the company to build new yachts and transform existing ones alongside each other, using the same skilled workers and machinery, and dedicating the same facilities and expertise as they would to a brand new Lürssen.

"We know it's quite unusual for a large yacht builder to also dedicate its time to refit operations, but it's actually a big advantage for our clients," says Perrone. "Our workforce is used to extremely complex and time-consuming builds, so we are much better prepared to overcome any surprises. Our time management is world-renowned, and the workforce is very disciplined in the practice of finding the right solutions, of doing things the right way, which is a crucial advantage when it comes to problem solving on refits, where there will likely be unknowns." There is also the inevitable outcome of five and ten-year-old Lürssen yachts needing to undergo their scheduled surveys, and being able to take them back to the high-performance workforce that built them has obvious advantages.

"In order to strengthen our service and refit activities we founded our own refit company, Lürssen Yacht Refit & Services, so we can ensure our yachts achieve their full potential and life expectancy over the years," says Perrone. "It enables us to meet our clients' needs better, look after the yachts like we know how and has the added benefit of enabling us to improve and expand our service business." All this alongside Lürssen's yacht management offering ensure that, should they want it, clients are able to view Lürssen as their one-stop-shop for all running and maintenance projects, which benefits from practicalities in both efficiency and discretion.

Lürssen has also invested in a think tank that dedicates itself to finding solutions to yacht building and maintenance problems before they even arise. This proactive stance also cuts down the time a yacht spends out of the water, which can be a big selling point to owners who like to spend as much time on board as possible. This, coupled with German engineering and timekeeping, gives many owners peace of mind when they take their yachts back to Lürssen.



"A refit is not just about necessary maintenance, it can also be a way to completely transform a yacht," says Alberto Perrone, Refit Sales Director at Lürssen. Whilst the shipyard is known globally for its many new build superyachts, the refit side of the business is just as exciting and challenging for the skilled workforce. "We enjoy the very complex rebuilds and refits, we like when owners come to us with problems to solve, we want to do the things that other yards steer clear of," he says.



Kaos ex Jubilee in one of the floating docks at Lürssen in Hamburg.

Why yacht owners invest in refits varies, ranging from the mandatory five or ten-year special surveys, to owners who have bought a brokerage yacht and want to make it their own. The past two years have seen record yacht sales, both new build and brokerage, and many shipyards are now unable to provide a new build slot for up to five years. This leaves a large gap in the market for owners who are looking to purchase a boat, but don't want to wait to set sail for several years. In this instance, a refit that can be measured in months not years of a boat that has already been built looks very inviting. "If there is a yacht out there that broadly works for someone, then we have the capabilities to make it their perfect yacht," explains Perrone. "Whether it's cosmetic interior changes, paint jobs, hull extensions or complete rebuilds, we can do it all in a fraction of the time it would take them to build a new yacht. For some people it's the fastest route to getting a new yacht."

And of course, it's not only Lürssen yachts that the yard will take on. "We will discuss refit options with owners who own a yacht from any shipyard. We encourage enquiries because understanding what we do is key to the building of trust between shipyard and client."

One such recent success story was the refit of 110-metre Kaos, who enjoyed a substantial refit both on the interior and exterior after passing into new ownership. At peak times there were around 150 people at one time working on Kaos, and she was relaunched to her delighted owners a completely different yacht. Another iconic yacht to enjoy the Lürssen treatment was the 126-metre Octopus, proving no yacht is too big or too complex for the world-renowned Lürssen workforce.

The explorer yacht style has always been around but exploded into the wider market a few years ago and is set to stay that way for a while. "The yacht conversion potential is huge and untapped," says Perrone. "Many commercial boats are built on amazing platforms, for example the oil drilling vessels are incredibly stable even in big seas, because they had to be in their previous lives." Many of these vessels are only a couple of years old but have been taken out of service due to the changing energy



Kaos leaving floating dock.



Quattroelle undergoing an extensive refit at a yard in Trieste under the management of Lürssen.

## About Lürssen

German yacht builder Lürssen has earned a leading international reputation as a specialist for exclusive, customised yachts of outstanding technical mastery. The development of sustainable technologies and innovations in yacht building are firmly anchored in Lürssen's DNA.

The privately owned company was founded in 1875 and is now owned by the fourth generation of the Lürssen family. With 3300 employees, the Lürssen Group maintains eight state-of-the-art production facilities in northern Germany. Lürssen also offers unique facilities and unrivalled potential for carrying out multiple refits simultaneously - whether a yacht is a Lürssen yacht or one built by another shipyard.

Their connection to shipbuilding is as deeply rooted and individual as only family ties can be; the commitment is deep, the approach individual. Even the company's founder Friedrich Lürssen said: "Leading in quality and performance that shall be the reputation of my company," thus expressing the values that Lürssen upholds to this day.

sector and demand for oil in the North Sea. "Many commercial vessels are large, extremely stable and comfortable and already come with diesel electric propulsion, so the potential if someone wanted to transform one of these boats is definitely worth exploring, and it's a challenge that Lürssen would be excited to take on."

Sustainability has been an important focus in yacht building for the past few years, and for current owners who want to move towards living more eco-conscious lives, a Lürssen refit can also help make that a reality. For many years, Lürssen has been developing and including sustainable options on its new builds, including reducing emissions through intelligent energy management thanks to an artificial intelligence system that analyses the yacht's usage, monitors and visualizes the yacht's power supply and energy consumption and even performs automated power management tasks. Making a yacht more energy efficient can be as simple as changing fluorescent lights to LEDs or as complex as installing a heat recovery system that saves energy by using the heat loss from the generators to heat the pool. Other successful solutions in the past have included introducing motion sensors to reduce light consumption and installing heat-insulating foil-coated windows to keep the yacht cool and reduce AC usage. Including modifications such as these mean that yachts can enjoy the many luxuries of life on board in a more sustainable way than ever before, and a refit is a viable way of turning a current yacht into a yacht fit for the next decade.

Over the last few years refit has quietly developed into a core part of the business for Lürssen and the know-how continues to grow, making now a better time than ever before for yacht owners and buyers alike to investigate the possibilities. A yacht doesn't have to be a Lürssen to benefit from the Lürssen world-class facilities, and they can choose whether they make their way to the Lürssen hub of Hamburg or benefit from the shipyard's global reach and enjoy the Lürssen refit experience outside of Germany. Although refit projects will always differ in size and style, the ultimate outcome will always be the same: that the yacht's life expectancy and performance will be undeniably increased and comparable to that of a new build, and that the core value, whatever that happens to be for the owner, will be enhanced. A refit at Lürssen breathes new life into yachts so that they can once more be enjoyed by their owners for years to come.

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