

## All I want is a Jeep®!



Viele Grüße. My name is Andreas Ulber, President and Founder of FORTEC® and this is my story.

Like many of you, my love for Jeeps began at a young age.

I remember being fascinated with Jeeps as a boy growing up in Hamburg, Germany, especially the old CJ5 and CJ7 models. Even as a kid, I was struck by the elegance, style and symmetry of the Jeep® design.

Of course, being able to quickly jump in and out of the vehicle only helped to spur my young imagination about the types of adventures I'd one day have driving my Jeep®. While many fascinations from childhood eventually fade, my passion for Jeeps continued to grow over the years. But it wasn't until college that I had my first opportunity to turn my dream of owning a Jeep® into a reality.



The typical export model in the 80's

At the time, I was working for an auto importer based in the U.S. who was paying me to find high end cars in Germany before shipping them to Atlanta.

It wasn't long before I began thinking about reversing the process and having a CJ Jeep® imported from the U.S. to Germany.

Unfortunately, I didn't have the money to import and keep a CJ, but after talking with my father, I decided it was possible to cover the cost of importing a Jeep® by selling the vehicle shortly after it arrived in Hamburg.

I'm happy to say my plan was a success. Not only did I cover the cost of importing CJs to Germany, I even got to drive them for a while before finding a buyer. While it was difficult saying good bye so soon after acquiring each new CJ, I enjoyed every

minute I spent behind the wheel. Shortly before graduation, a friend expanded on my idea by starting his own Jeep® importing business. Working together, he and I made several trips from Hamburg to Atlanta in search of the finest CJs we could find.



Little did I know that my part time job working with my friend would be the start of a lifetime commitment to the Jeep® brand and everything it stands for.

## It all started in Hamburg, Germany during the early 90s

During these early days, we could only afford to buy a few CJs at a time. However, the demand for Jeeps was high in Germany, and we easily made enough money selling the CJs we imported to travel back to the U.S. each summer to do it all over again. Of course, we all know CJs need a lot of care and attention, which translated into a demand for parts and accessories for the Jeeps we'd been importing.

So in 1991, I moved into a friend's apartment with the idea of starting a parts and accessories company, and FORTEC® was born. The name came to me while taking a hot bath.



Those days of running FORTEC® out of our living room were a lot of fun. I still can't believe we actually sold 35" tires out of a fourth floor apartment in a building without an elevator!



1991: Our first business location on the 4th floor in an apartment building in Hamburg, Germany

As we looked to expand FORTEC® beyond our apartment, we began contacting U.S. manufacturers and distributors with outstanding reputations. Most of them had never considered shipping to Europe, and even fewer had ever heard of FORTEC®.

However, our hard work and determination eventually paid off when we were named an authorized RANCHO® Suspension distributor.

In our first year we sold 2,000 shocks. Not bad for two young guys just starting out, but a modest number when compared



Hunting for the best CJ's I could find. Gas prices were low.

to the major distributors in the U.S., most of which did that kind of volume in a single month. While FORTEC® didn't

start off competing with the big boys, the principles we used then are the same as we use now when selecting which suppliers to work with.

It has always remained our commitment at FORTEC® to only sell the best, most trusted parts and accessories in the industry. We only work with the top brands on the market that we have painstakingly selected using our years of experience.

From the beginning, we decided that if we wouldn't consider using a particular part or accessory on our own Jeeps, then FORTEC® would never sell it to the public.

With our commitment to quality firmly in place, we decided the time had come to make FORTEC® a multinational company.



## FORTEC®, Atlanta



1995: Our first shop in Atlanta, Georgia. The sign shows our old FORTEC® logo.



For the first couple of months, I worked from my father's basement using an old Costco Ping Pong table as a desk.

It quickly became obvious that the business would never survive by only selling parts and accessories to our own company in Germany. To solidify FORTEC®'s place in the U.S., we had to find more export customers around the world, while also developing some domestic business.



1994. Loading Jeep® parts for export to Germany.

Running a small import business overseas before the inception of the internet was a challenging and expensive proposition.

## FORTEC®, U.S.A.

To grow our company larger, the time had come to establish a foothold for FORTEC® in the U.S. While the idea of having a U.S. office was "way cool," we ran into one small problem.

No one who worked at FORTEC®, Inc. at the time actually lived in the U.S. Fortunately; a solution to our problem came from one of the

pillars upon which FORTEC® has always been founded – family. My father, Gerd, was retired and looking for a new challenge after my mother had recently passed.

Our first domestic sale was to a local Jeep® dealer for 400 rear seats and 200 carpet kits for their new 1994 Wranglers. In our minds we had finally done it. We had reached the Big Leagues.



1997. Real Estate lesson in life; read your leases carefully.

Buoyed by our success, I decided to open FORTEC®'s first retail space by renting a small storefront to sell Jeep® accessories. The business actually did pretty well, and we managed to sell a bunch of Jeep® accessories and perform a few custom installations in the parking lot.

To continue building off our success, I decided to expand once again. However, selling



1993: My dear father was the first employee at FORTEC®, Inc. USA

He agreed to move to Atlanta and help get FORTEC® up and running in the U.S. During those first few years, we only bought Jeep parts

and accessories for export to Germany, which was great for Jeep® lovers in Europe and for the economy in the U.S. After several years of expertly running our U.S. office, my father decided the time had come for him to step aside so I could run the company by myself.



1994. Loading Jeep® parts for export to Germany.



1996 Andreas with business partner and cousin Matt

I made a few mistakes over the next couple of years, like committing to a long lease for a building that was too big and not practical for us. One thing I got right though was agreeing to let my cousin Matt intern at the shop for a summer. What started off as a few months of free labor transformed into a budding partnership that lasts to this day.

Matt has become a managing partner at FORTEC® and today takes care of our Florida business and is in charge of all purchasing.

After running FORTEC® for four years in Hamburg, I was ready and eager for the opportunity to move to the U.S. and continue what my father had started.

At the end of 2006 the industry and Jeep enthusiasts were anxious to see the new platform, the 2007 Wrangler JK. While the last TJs disappeared from the dealership lots, we knew that we were going to go through a hard time the 2008 recession.



## FORTEC® expands into Florida



FORTEC® Florida location in 2001

Before FORTEC® became the thriving business it is today, our company nearly collapsed in 2000. Poor investment choices had left us on the brink and we were desperate. We began restoring old CJs, sold used parts, repurposed old parts left over from customizations, built custom Jeeps;

we tried everything we could think of to keep FORTEC® solvent. After a few harrowing months, FORTEC® finally started turning a profit again. They say that necessity is the mother of all inventions, and from our need to expand the scope of the business, we discovered the

incredible demand people had for customized Jeeps. Building custom Jeeps turned out to be hugely successful, and quickly became one of our focal points for FORTEC® going forward. Back in the black and focused on building custom Jeeps,

in addition to selling parts and accessories, we decided to expand FORTEC® into the Miami market. Led by cousin Matt, the Miami office quickly established partnerships with local dealerships to sell Jeeps customized by FORTEC®.



## The Jeep® Wrangler TJ

We were working with numerous Jeep® dealerships but also retail customers, in Georgia and Florida.

Thousands of Jeep Wrangler TJs were customized by us and the platform is still a favorite today. More than 80% of our work went directly to Jeep® dealerships. Our precise work and ingenuity were quickly and

widely recognized. Those next years were lucrative for the Jeep dealerships as they benefited from quick sales and nice commissions from FORTEC® Custom Jeeps they sold from their lot.



GRIZZLY EDITION



THE PATRIOT EDITION



THE MAD MAX EDITION

At the end of 2006 the industry and Jeep enthusiasts were anxious to see the new platform, the 2007 Wrangler JK. While the last TJs disappeared from the dealership lots, we knew that we were going to go through a hard time the 2008 recession.

that had done business with us for years, filed for bankruptcy while having FORTEC® Jeeps in inventory. We weren't granted access to the Jeeps to at least salvage some parts. Not ever getting paid seemed a bitter possibility. However, we did eventually get paid after some time.

Also happening at this time was the expiration of the lease on our Marietta, GA building, so we had to move. Just at the right time a 75 year old lady in Roswell, GA happened to need to sell her family's warehouse. We immediately jumped on it, luckily got financed at the beginning of the recession, and moved in.

This was our first big shop, and didn't rent it – we owned it. The old steel building in Roswell is in a great location but was in pretty bad shape. At the beginning we had to sublease part of it to afford the building. Some customers will still remember our bail bond company neighbor.



2007 FORTEC® moves into the 830 Ellis Street Location

2019 FORTEC® Jeep at 830 Ellis Street Location

The market recovered pretty quickly, dealerships changed hands, and the Jeep® market boomed again. Wrangler JKs started selling like hot cakes. Jeep® clearly showed the automotive world that a Jeep® platform can be more than an off-road vehicle that can drive on the road to an all-in-one solution. The Jeep® JK presented itself as the features and benefits of a mini van, a convertible, a 4x4 Jeep®, and driving comfort of an every-day-driver. There has never been a Jeep® in history that sold as well as the 07-18 Wrangler JK models. As slow as the JK started, it then took off like a rocket.



Our 2009 FORTEC® Catalog



By 2010, JKs became so popular that our business was booming. We could barely handle it. We knew it was time to set ourselves up for further growth.

For the first time we first spoke about franchising. We thought our 30 years of expertise must have value to shops that are interested in entering into the Jeep® market with a strong partner.



A little later, as more JK's were hitting the market we were realizing that competition had moved in. The amount of Jeeps created demand that our shop could not handle. Soon we found ourselves surrounded by new off road and Jeep® shops. We almost welcomed competition. It keeps one on our toes. We also realized that we needed to invest further into our business if we wanted to survive in the long run. Having competition for the first time made us realize that the old battleship

FORTEC® needed some updating. From the up and downs from 1991 to the 2008 recessions, we have been through a lot. Now it was time to grow our business, set ourselves apart from new Jeep® shops and get a real structure. Luckily my brother who is a talented business man, sketched out a strategy on a napkin while we were enjoying a bottle of wine.

The first decision for me was to decide if we even wanted to grow the business further or stay at the size we are. The 2008 recession has taught me that you have to be able to change and grow or you could get run over.

## FORTEC® FINETUNES ITS OPERATIONS

We evaluated our own company on every level, improved plenty of processes and finally developed a licensing program for future FORTEC® partners. 30 years of business expertise shared with established shop owners that want to enter the Jeep market sounded like an intriguing proposal. In all these years FORTEC® has created a large network of suppliers and resources. Why not help other shops to participate in the Jeep® market? We started our leap for growth by looking for a business

consultant. We needed to evaluate FORTEC® in all aspects. We wanted to see what needs improvement and what doesn't. A suiting gentleman came to mind, an old friend I met in 7th grade. His name is Axel Rost and I knew that he did these sorts of things for a living. In 2015 he started to fine-tune our operation and went through every nut and bolt. Before he even got to the accounting part of FORTEC®, he had fallen in love with our company. In 2016 he became an investor and has been working for us since.



Axel joined our team and and of course bough a Jeep



2021 POS Material for Retail Stores and Dealerships



My son Alex

By 2018, our company was internally clean as a whistle. Procedures, a swift ordering- and a sophisticated quality control system were implemented.

To be able to allocate enough time in order to cultivate existing business partners and find new licensing partners, Matt and I had to step back from everyday business in our shops. We therefore sold our retail business in Pompano Beach, FL to "Brandon's Jeep & Trucks". Brandon is a talented and award winning customizer that's been in business as long as we have.

Here in Roswell we handed a lot of responsibilities over to my son Alexander. He has been involved in our business since he was a child. Alex literally grew up in our shop and knows Jeeps inside out.

Now that I have told you our story, I hope I also inspired you. You may not want to start your own Jeep® custom shop, but at least you now know who you are doing business with. I am immensely grateful for what the Jeep® brand has allowed me to do. We are looking forward to the next few years, hopefully further prospering and finding a few more business partners in this rewarding market.

Thank you for reading my story!

Andreas Ulber President & CEO

REQUEST "PARTNER INFO"

## FORTEC® PARTNERS UP

FORTEC® has partnerships with Expert Mechanic and Custom Shops. We trustfully refer to these shops because they have the same approach towards Quality and Customer Satisfaction, providing Jeep owners professionalism and expertise.



Brandon's Jeep and Truck has been working with us for more than 10 years. After long considerations Brandon decided to buy our FORTEC® Pompano Beach retail business. Brandon is an award winning fabricator and we were happy to have found the right partnership in Florida. FORTEC® at Brandon's Jeeps & Trucks is located at 530 S Dixie HWY W, Pompano Beach, FL 33060 and they can be reached at (954) 785-3131.



Our first Georgia licensing partner is Dirty South 4x4 in Covington, GA. The owner Jamie is an industry professional with years in the business, having owned and operated Tire Stores and body shops. The folks at Dirty South4x4 love Jeeps and love to get them dirty. Dirty South 4x4 is located at 2600 Highway 212 Covington, GA 30016 and they can be reached at (470) 441-5888.



FORTEC® has worked with Hicks Automotive for about 10 years. Our go-to master mechanic Thad has helped is for many years with regular maintenance, suspension work and excellent accessory installations. HICKS is located at 305 Market Place, Roswell, GA 30075 and they can be reached at (770) 993-6755.



Baker Off-Road is the best local shop in the Milton area for Jeeps, trucks and SUV's. Besides being an excellent mechanic, Sean is also an outstanding fabricator. Baker Off-Road is located at 16480 Hopewell Road Milton, GA 30004 and operates by appointment only. He can be reached at (678) 429-7780.



Roswell Outback Automotive is Jeep® Specific. Jeff Demehl and his team are a knowledgeable resource, providing unsurpassed repair quality. They are located at 670 Houze Way, Suite D Roswell, GA 30076 and can be reached at (877) 829-0519.



FORTEC® closely works with Cartunes of Atlanta for the installation navigation systems, satellite radios, tinted windows and wraps. They are located at 8601 Roswell Rd Atlanta, GA 30350 and can be reached at (404) 256-5600.

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## FORTEC® TIME LINE



MAD MAX<sup>EDITION</sup>

1996 FORTEC® introduces the first line of complete Custom Jeeps

1991 FORTEC® Open for business



2005 FORTEC® becomes SEMA Member

2001 FORTEC® Open for business in Florida



2006 FORTEC® becomes a registered trademark



2007 FORTEC® starts producing 200+ page catalogs



2008 over 10,000 Jeeps customized



2009 FORTEC® opens new shop in Roswell



2012 Award Winning SEMA Build



2019 FORTEC® Pompano Beach moves into 6 bay location

2018 FORTEC® Covington



2020 FORTEC® joint ventures with Dakota Customs and builds the fastest JT in the South East

2021



2020 FORTEC® offers a licensing program to other shops.



# FORTEC® TIMES



1976-1986 CJ

## 30 YEARS OF EXPERTISE



### Gallery of Favorites



Built from a 1949 CJ-3A, our fabricator Jesse Spade stretched and chopped this platform. It's been to SEMA and a number of shows and won several awards.



This 1980 CJ is one of the few with a factory 304 V8, Automatic with select 4 Wheel Drive. The objective was to keep the Jeep® as original as possible.



This 85 CJ7 was brought to us in bad shape. Everything was weathered and old. We restored the Jeep® and turned it into an everyday driver.

Frame off restoration of a 1981 CJ7 Renegade. The original engine was also rebuilt. Later we added power steering and air condition to this beauty.

Our FORTEC® Tech Team Shirts are what we wear everyday. Comfortable and available in various sizes.

Application	Size	Part No.	Price
Black Tech-Shirt	S		<b>\$14.99</b>
Black Tech-Shirt	M		<b>\$14.99</b>
Black Tech-Shirt	L	FTC 5000-L	<b>\$14.99</b>
Black Tech-Shirt	XL	FTC 5000-XL	<b>\$14.99</b>
Black Tech-Shirt	2XL	FTC 5000-2XL	<b>\$14.99</b>
Black Tech-Shirt	3XL	FTC 5000-3XL	<b>\$14.99</b>
Black Tech-Shirt	4XL	FTC 50004XL	<b>\$14.99</b>

Stay warm and comfortable with the FORTEC® solid black sweatshirt which features a comfortable hoodie.

Application	Size	Part No.	Price
Black Sweat-Shirt	S	FTC 3000-S	<b>\$29.99</b>
Black Sweat-Shirt	M	FTC 3000-M	<b>\$29.99</b>
Black Sweat-Shirt	L	FTC 3000-L	<b>\$29.99</b>
Black Sweat-Shirt	XL	FTC 3000-XL	<b>\$29.99</b>
Black Sweat-Shirt	2XL	FTC 3000-2XL	<b>\$29.99</b>
Black Sweat-Shirt	3XL	FTC 3000-3XL	<b>\$29.99</b>
Black Sweat-Shirt	4XL	FTC 30004XL	<b>\$29.99</b>

Our FORTEC® T-Shirts are super comfortable and everyone in our shop likes to wear them. Combine cool style with Quality that shows your love to FORTEC®.

Application	Size	Part No.	Price
Black Short Sleeve T-Shirt	S	FTC 1000	<b>\$14.99</b>
Black Short Sleeve T-Shirt	M	FTC 1001	<b>\$14.99</b>
Black Short Sleeve T-Shirt	L	FTC 1002	<b>\$14.99</b>
Black Short Sleeve T-Shirt		FTC 1003	<b>\$14.99</b>
Black Short Sleeve T-Shirt	XXL	FTC 1004	

The FORTEC® White Long Sleeve Shirt is perfect for the colder seasons. Combine the white long sleeve shirt with the black shop or F3 Shirt for a stylish look.

Application	Size	Part No.	Price
White Long Sleeve T-Shirt	S	FTC 2000	<b>\$29.99</b>
White Long Sleeve T-Shirt	M	FTC 2001	<b>\$29.99</b>
White Long Sleeve T-Shirt	L	FTC 2002	<b>\$29.99</b>
White Long Sleeve T-Shirt	XL	FTC 2003	<b>\$29.99</b>
White Long Sleeve T-Shirt	XXL	FTC 2004	<b>\$29.99</b>

Cool and comfortable is what this FORTEC® Tank Top is all about. Next Level Ladies' French Terry Racerback Tank - Dark Grey.

Application	Size	Part No.	Price
Black Short Sleeve T-Shirt	XS	FTC 4000-XS-1	<b>\$14.99</b>
Black Short Sleeve T-Shirt	S	FTC 4000-XS-2	<b>\$14.99</b>
Black Short Sleeve T-Shirt	M	FTC 4000-XS-3	<b>\$14.99</b>
Black Short Sleeve T-Shirt	L	FTC 4000-XS-4	<b>\$14.99</b>

FORTEC® shops have been serving Jeep® enthusiasts for over 30 years. Reason enough to proudly display the logo on nice quality hats. Pick between the black with 3 color embroidered legendary skull logo or The grey hat with 3D FORTEC® Logo. Both hats are adjustable in size and very comfortable.

Application	Part No.	Price
<b>01</b>		<b>\$19.99</b>
<b>02</b> Full Fabric Grey Hat		<b>\$19.99</b>



# FORTEC® TIMES



30 YEARS OF EXPERTISE



2007-2018 JK

Gallery of Favorites



This FORTEC® Custom Jeep® attract plenty of attention, it also got hired for a nationwide TV commercial from Marathon® Oil. The commercial was filmed right here in Georgia and when you look really, really close, you can detect our proud little FORTEC® logo on the side of the Jeep®. We are thrilled that we made it into the movies.



The F3 OFF-ROAD xzcxzcxzc cxzc cxzc-cxzcxczxc cxz cxzcxzc cxzcxz xzcxzc xzcxzcxcz



The MILITARY xzcxzcxzc cxzc cxzcxzcxczxc cxz xzcxz cxzcxzc cxzcxz xzcxzc xzcxzcxcz



The F2 is the ideal Traveller and Expedition Vehicle. The 3.5" JKS® JSPEC Suspension is designed for long distance, comfort and anything the road and trail throws at you. The F2 has plenty of LED power for long distance lighting and the 9.5cti Warn winch will add safety and superior recovery options. Heat Reduction Hood and FOX® ATS Steering Stabilizer optimize drivability and performance. The F2 is a perfect All-rounder.



We call our 2008 Jeep® JK "F3" and it has some history. Purchased as a light blue JK with blown engine we did a complete rebuild, experienced one tragic roll over and did another complete rebuild.

# FORTEC® TIMES



30 YEARS OF EXPERTISE



2018-UP JL & JT

Gallery of Favorites



The FORTEC® F392 is powered by a 6.4L HEMI® V8 engine, offering 470 horsepower. The suspension has been upgraded to the MOPAR® 2.0" suspension kit and includes FOX® mono-tube shocks. We chose MOPAR® beadlock wheels with 37" BF Goodrich® KO2 All Terrain tires and topped it off with a WARN® 10,000 lbs winch.



2020 FORTEC® joint ventures with Dakota Customs and builds the fastest JT in the South East



2021 FORTEC® ANDREAS'S JT



2021 FORTEC® Scrambler