



inside

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GENEVA
INTERNATIONAL
MOTOR
SHOW
7-17 MARCH 2019



T-Roc R¹



The new Passat¹



The ID. Buggy

Volkswagen at the Geneva Motor Show

Eight of the Volkswagen Group's brands are presenting their innovations at the Geneva Motor Show on March 7-17. At the Volkswagen brand's stand, which is around the same size as half a soccer pitch, the highlights include the Passat facelift, the T-Roc R, and the ID. Buggy concept car. A project team of 20 people worked on the exhibition for the brand.

The Swiss trade fair is one of the world's oldest and most prestigious motor shows, and has a global importance. This year, the organizers expect more than 600,000 visitors and around 150 world and European premieres.

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Kaluga Is Still Most Efficient

Russian site wins Production's plant competition for the second time running

The Russian plant Kaluga has won Production's global efficiency competition "Transformer of the Year 2018." The location repeated last year's success by achieving maximum ratings in five out of seven key performance indicators. Second and third places were taken by the plants in Palmela (Portugal) and Bratislava (Slovakia). The awards ceremony was held as part of the Production round table in Wolfsburg. The winning team from Kaluga attended via a live feed. "To have won the title of 'Transformer of the Year' for the second

time running is a fantastic achievement for our plant and for the whole Kaluga team. This title is also proof of the outstanding performance of this team," says Plant Manager Stefan Depka.

The competition not only establishes which plant works most efficiently, it also shows just as strikingly where the teams buckle down for their location. There is no prize money for the winners – it's about something much bigger: pride. Incidentally, the competition has a new name this year: race4TRANSFORMATION.



Winners: The team at the Kaluga plant wins the competition for the second time.

Up for grabs:
50 x 2 tickets for the international match in Wolfsburg



Enter now!

inside is giving away 50 x 2 tickets for the international soccer match between Germany and Serbia in the Volkswagen Arena. → [PAGE 15](#)

Volkswagen and Microsoft Driving the Collaboration Forward

Automotive Cloud extended to China and the US



With the ID. Vizzion²: CEO Herbert Diess (left) and Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella during a visit to the Volkswagen Digital Lab in Berlin.

The development of the Volkswagen Automotive Cloud continues, declared CEO Herbert Diess and Microsoft boss Satya Nadella during a joint visit to the Volkswagen Digital Lab in Berlin.

The Volkswagen Automotive Cloud, a kind of enormous storage device, is being expanded gradually, and will, in addition to Europe, soon be available in China and the US – the key markets for the fully electric and fully networked ID. model family of the future.

Volkswagen and Microsoft are also working on the first flagship projects for networked vehicle services. For example, swift progress is being made with the set-up of Volkswagen's development center in Seattle, which began in December.

"Our strategic partnership with Microsoft is a key building block in developing Volkswagen to become a software-driven mobility provider," said Diess. "With the Volkswagen Automotive Cloud we are working on a globally harmonized solution for our customers. Our ability to scale up gives us an enormous competitive advantage in this area."

Within the Group, the Volkswagen brand is leading the development of the Automotive Cloud, working in collaboration with partners.

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Herbert Diess: What We Can Learn from China

Interview with Volkswagen CEO and Director of Chinese Operations about the need for new collaborations and why the Group and the brands must open to Chinese executives.

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New Fire Station Opened

Gunnar Kilian and Bernd Osterloh inaugurate the new building in the Wolfsburg plant.

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Software Boss: Strategy Stands

Christian Senger became Board Member for Digital Car & Services in March. He reveals in an interview what makes the new department so unusual. → [PAGE 5](#)

T-Cross: Getting Off to a Great Start



In interview with *inside*, Series Director Andreas Krüger discusses the successful start of production at four locations. → [PAGE 19](#)

¹ Concept car.

² Near-production-ready concept car.

New standard workstation: Volkswagen AG, IT City Wolfsburg.

"Telephone booth": new individual workstation at Porsche AG, Zuffenhausen.

New workspace: project room at Audi AG, Ingolstadt.



...AND THE CELL STRUCTURE IS BROKEN UP: A VOLKSWAGEN OFFICE WING AFTER THE RENOVATION



Office Workstations of the Future

New handbook with room modules for different requirements

What do the office workstations of the future look like at Volkswagen? 40 experts from nine Group brands and companies worked on this question. They recorded their results in a strategy book, which shows how rooms can be designed and realized, and how they should provide inspiration and orientation.

Leading the project are Ann-Kathrin Dohme and Thomas Rühl from the HR Strategy & Innovation division. Dohme: "We've established five principles that are reflected in a catalog of fourteen room modules: Offices should adapt to people's activities and needs, and promote teamwork at eye level."

Rühl: "The office wing of the future offers more than just the standard workstations: for example, it also offers quiet individual work-

places such as the think tank, project workspaces, or modules for informal

exchange. The aim is to create an attractive, creative environment."



The heart of the almost 100-page handbook is a guide to analyzing the forms of work in a team. The book, which is available exclusively in digital form with plenty of pictures and graphics, helps to find and combine the appropriate room modules. It also shows how small steps can improve the working environment. Dohme: "Our handbook, 'New Workplaces', is intended for everyone in the company who's interested - from managers to office planners."

Chief Human Resources Office Gunnar Kilian: "Volkswagen is in a phase of upheaval. This can be seen

very clearly, for example, in our new IT labs, where agile processes are frequently used. Naturally, this has an influence on the design of office workplaces. If we provide orientation for the workspaces of the future at Volkswagen with the handbook, then we have achieved an important goal!"



Digital Handbook

The "New Workplaces" handbook is available exclusively in digital form. Those interested can find the document available to download as a PDF from Group Connect here: <https://soco.volkswagen.com/sbc/docs/DOC-61487>

Heading the "New Workplaces" project: Thomas Rühl (left) and Ann-Kathrin Dohme.

New Group Software to Strengthen Teamwork

Office 365 is gradually being deployed - more storage space for employees

The conversion to Office 365 software will begin in the next few weeks. It's meant to make working in a team easier. **inside** answers the most important questions:

What is Office 365?

Many Volkswagen employees know the Office software by Microsoft through programs like Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and Outlook. The new Office 365 is a Cloud-based evolution, containing a total of more than 40 applications and services. "It's meant to make office work in the Volkswagen Group more flexible," says Mario Müller, Head of IT Integration & Services.

Who will be affected by the changeover?

Office 365 will be introduced Group-wide. The first step starts with Volkswagen, Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles, and Audi. The aim is to gradually convert all employees in the

indirect workplace (office workspaces) by the end of the year. IT will migrate a total of 423,000 mailboxes. "The individual departments will be contacted again and informed by us six weeks in advance," says project leader Martina Sandfuchs.

What are the advantages to employees?

First, the email inboxes will be changed. This alone should make itself felt for employees. "In the future, their storage space for emails and attachments will multiply from two gigabytes to 100 gigabytes," says Sandfuchs. In principle, Office 365 is intended to promote collaborative work: "The way we communicate and interact online will be made easier," says Müller. In the future, employees will be able to better share information with colleagues and work on documents at the same time. In addition, mobile work should become easier, especially access to email

attachments and documents from the smartphone. Müller: "The introduction of Office 365 is a strategic decision by the Group management. Employees should view Volkswagen as an even more of an attractive employer."

What about the Cloud?

One important aspect of Office 365 is the use of the Cloud. "Each employee will receive a personal Cloud storage space of one terabyte. In the future, they will be able to store their documents, presentations, and images there," says Sandfuchs. According to IT, this is done in strict compliance with all data protection and data security regulations. In the future, documents will be stored in Microsoft's European data centers. "They meet the highest international security standards," says Sandfuchs. "This procedure is safer than storing data on the hard drives of individual PCs."



Working on the Office 365 introduction in Wolfsburg: Project Manager Martina Sandfuchs, Florian Bergsma, Martin Mensing, and Carsten Finck (from left to right).

"Storage space for emails will multiply from two gigabytes to 100 gigabytes." **Martina Sandfuchs**

Change Must Succeed

inside interview with Thomas Meiers, Head of the Central Coordination Monitor

The mentorship of Larry D. Thompson and his US team at Volkswagen has been scheduled to last three years. The first half is over, but there's still plenty of work to do. The monitor made further recommendations in his second report from February 8. The implementation deadline is in 120 days. *inside* spoke with Thomas Meiers (48), who heads the Central Coordination Monitor. In this role, he is responsible for working at the interface between the Monitor team and the company.

What makes Volkswagen's monitoring tasks so complex?

Larry D. Thompson has a double mandate – as monitor and auditor. For our team and the specialist departments involved in the Group, this means: two work plans, two approaches to the procedure and two reporting lines. Not only individual specialist departments are affected, but also many aspects throughout the Group – with numerous brands, regions, and subsidiaries. Third: the sheer complexity of the Volkswagen Group challenges us every day.

How does it show in everyday life that Volkswagen gives top priority to monitoring?

The Executive Board have made this a matter for the top-level management. At numerous meetings and written examinations, they have dealt intensively with this issue and significantly strengthened the Group's Integrity and Legal department in terms of personnel. Additional compliance experts were hired in the relevant specialist areas. This enabled us, for example, to further develop the existing whistleblower system more quickly. In addition, the Executive Board has adopted the Group-wide "Together4Integrity" program as the umbrella for all measures relating to integrity, compliance, and cultural change. Like the Group strategy, Together4Integrity is geared to the year 2025, not just to the end of our monitoring. Of course, everyone is aware of how much depends on us succeeding in effecting change. The objectives are defined and the



Keeping the threads together: Thomas Meiers is responsible for working at the interface between the Monitor team and the company.

"The Monitor's recommendations will help us make Volkswagen an even better, more ethical company."

packages of measures put together. Everyone is working hard to make the necessary changes. But with a hulk like the Volkswagen Group, this isn't going to happen overnight.

The monitoring is scheduled until June 2020. What is Volkswagen like today, and what is the timetable until 2020? In the last few months, we have reached some important milestones,

collected a lot of material and organized discussions for the monitor. At the end of March 2018, the Independent Compliance Monitor issued its initial review report, and the Group had to implement its recommendations in just 150 days. The recommendations from the second report, the first follow-up report from February 8, must be implemented within a period of only 120 days.

These reports are confidential and will not be published. At the same time, Thompson's team produced a second report in August 2018, which evaluates us in terms of compliance and the environment. This can also be viewed online via a link on the corporate website. And we're preparing for the second auditor report of the Independent Compliance Auditor, which will be published in August 2019.

There is still much to do and much to achieve. But above all, we see monitoring as an opportunity, and will draw the right conclusions for the future viability of the Group. We are convinced that the Monitor's recommendations will help us make Volkswagen an even better, more ethical company.

Integrity: 74 Workshops, 1,000 Participants

Until April: discussions among employees from the direct workplace in Wolfsburg about integrity

Even if courage can't be measured, 74 integrity workshops with around 1,000 participants have so far provided a good impetus for change. This was also demonstrated by the fact that two dozen of the participants took the opportunity to visit the workshop to become integrity ambassadors: They want to actively support and help shape cultural change in their areas.

Team spokespeople from Production and Components, but also foremen, production section managers, and employee representatives: They all used their time in the Integrity Workshop to learn more about integrity in everyday professional life. In which seemingly banal situations is it important to act courageously and sincerely? What good ideas have employees used to bring about changes that promote cultural change?

These and other questions have been and will continue to be extensively discussed in the event series for the direct workplace until April. Wolfsburg plant manager Stefan Loth also attended an Integrity Workshop. He says: "The Integrity Workshop is a good tool for exchanging ideas. The subject of integrity is very important to me personally – also with a view to the future of our plant."

The aim of the workshop, to be more courageous, is to help address the things that go wrong and thus provide the impetus for change. The many good discussions are a strong signal that Volkswagen's employees are mastering this task together. "It has become clear that honest and decent behavior is a matter of course for participants in the Integrity Workshop," emphasizes Factory Manager Beate Eilermann. "Integrity is already firmly anchored in the team today."



Discussions: plenty of opportunity at the Integrity Workshops.

Open dialog in a large roundtable: integrity is firmly anchored in the team.



Names & News



Jörg Müller (56), previously the Head of Production and Logistics in the Volkswagen Group China in Beijing, took over the management of the Osnabrück site on March 1. He followed Ulrich Riestenpatt gt. Richter as Management Spokesperson and Managing Director of Technology, who has headed Volkswagen Osnabrück GmbH since 2016 and will be available to Volkswagen AG in an advisory capacity until the end of the year. Jörg Müller holds a degree in electrical engineering and has worked for the Group for 29 years. From 2002, his responsible functions included plant management in Braunschweig, from 2005 onwards, Operations Director at Volkswagen do Brasil, from 2007 onwards, Group Representative, and then Head of Volkswagen in India, before moving to the Volkswagen Group China in 2013. His last position there was Vice President of Production and Logistics.



Andrea Morgan-Schönwetter (43) has been head of the newly created Recruiting and HR Marketing department in Wolfsburg since the beginning of the year. Prior to this, she worked for Deutsche Telekom for 18 years in various positions in personnel marketing and recruiting. The graduate in business administration already set up a central recruiting center at Deutsche Telekom. Morgan-Schönwetter is responsible for the Group and brand, and reports directly to Chief Human Resources Officer Gunnar Kilian. In a pilot project, she will initially push the recruitment of software developers and IT experts.



The new user interface.

i.Serve Ordering Portal is Now my.Serve

The Group-wide and internationally used order portal i.Serve has a new, modern user interface with many new functionalities. Also new: since late-February, it has been renamed my.Serve.

The redesign was carried out after a lot of feedback from users and with the help of new modern technologies. Among other things, ordering processes and approvals are now even more efficient and clearly arranged.

my.Serve is accessible:

- from the Intranet at <https://iserve.vw.vwg/myserve>
- online at <https://iserve.volkswagen.de/myserve>
- by entering the abbreviation "myServe" in your web browser
- entering the abbreviation "iServe," has redirected users automatically to my.Serve since February 28
- if a link to i.Serve has been saved as a Favorite, it should be converted to the new URL for my.Serve

Fakultät 73 Has Been Launched



Qualification program for 100 future IT specialists – Successful participants to get a permanent contract

2018 Was a Successful Year for the Group

The Volkswagen Group had a successful 2018. Sales increased by €6.3 billion to €235.8 billion, while operating profit before special items was €17.1 (17.0) billion, on a par with the previous year. At 7.3 percent (7.4 percent), the operating return on sales before special items was at the upper end of the target range. Operating profit amounted to €13.9 (13.8) billion and, as in the previous year, was negatively impacted by special items of €3.2 (3.2) billion relating to the diesel crisis. Net liquidity in the Automotive division remained solid at €19.4 (22.4) billion. The sustained positive development of operating profits was driven by a slight increase in the number of vehicles delivered – up 0.9 percent to 10.8 million vehicles worldwide. A new record for us.

Group CEO Herbert Diess: “We did well in 2018, especially against the backdrop of the WLTP changeover, which led to considerable distortions in our sales development. The headwind in certain important markets will probably be even tougher in 2019. Our e-offensive will take off with new models. Overall, however, considerable effort will be necessary to achieve our ambitious goals in the new financial year.”

You can find further information at inside.volkswagen.com

It's starting! After a year of planning, 'Fakultät 73' has been officially opened. Ralph Linde (Head of the Volkswagen Group Academy), the Chairman of the GBR Education Committee Gerardo Scarpino, and Ralf Brunken (CIO of Skoda and future Head of the AutoUni) were



Ralph Linde,
Head of the
Volkswagen Group
Academy

among the keynote speakers at the AutoUni.

In the 'Fakultät 73' qualification program, Volkswagen has established its own training center for IT and software development on the AutoUni campus.

Volkswagen is actively tackling the shortage of IT specialists and giving people the opportunity to complete a two-year qualification as a software developer in the automotive industry.

Ralph Linde: “For the first year of many, we have selected the 100 best applicants from 1500. With its innovative qualification approach, Fakultät 73 is a win-win situation for everyone: The participants build on their qualifications and have a secure job

in one of Volkswagen's future areas. Volkswagen gains highly trained and urgently needed IT specialists.”

Works Council Coordinator Gerardo Scarpino: “The Fakultät 73 training follows on from successful internal qualification programs for colleagues in IT initiated by the Works Council. It is a sensible supplement to vocational training, dual degrees, and traditional further education. The program is aimed primarily at trainees and employees of Volkswagen AG, but also at external candidates. The participants we have in the first year make me confident that we will soon be getting excellent recruits for our IT department.”

“Working on Fakultät 73 is a lot of fun for the whole team because we are making a very concrete and

sustainable contribution to the ongoing digitalization of Volkswagen,” says Project Manager Gregor Bräunlein, who is looking forward to exciting times ahead.

The first year group of 100 par-



Gerardo Scarpino,
Works Council
Coordinator



Gregor Bräunlein,
Project Manager

ticipants has now started the training. “I'm looking forward to learning as much as possible and to applying it in practice,” says Marcel Dos Anjos. Bräunlein: “When selecting candidates, it was not important to us what formal qualifications someone had

or what kind of work they were currently doing. We were interested in the potential and motivation they could bring to software development.”

That is why the starter group is such a varied bunch: There are participants with and without professional qualifications, and they range in age from 19 to 43.



Starting at AutoUni:
100 participants are gaining
a qualification as IT specialists at
Fakultät 73.



What is Fakultät 73?

- There were 1500 applicants, half internal and half external.
- 91 men and 9 women obtained a place
- The average age is 29 – the youngest participant is 19, the oldest 42.
- 72 colleagues were selected internally and 28 externally.
- The qualification takes 2 years to complete
- Successful participants are offered permanent contracts.

New Head of Software: The First Interview

In office since March: Board Member Christian Senger (44) has big plans for the new Digital Car & Services division

Christian Senger (44), the first Member of the Management Board responsible for software in the history of the Volkswagen brand, took up his new role at the beginning of this month. [inside](#) caught up with him for an interview.

Why does Volkswagen need a board member for software? Or, to put it another way, why are hardware and software separate?

The digital complexity of our vehicles is increasing year on year. Our vehicles are turning into “tablets on wheels.” This means that, in future, we will be introducing more and more digital functions and services in our vehicles. For example, we will need up to a billion lines of code for fully autonomous cars. By way of comparison, today’s Golf has 50 to 100 million lines of code.

At present, the development of software and services in the company is very much distributed across all brands and a large number of stakeholders. This results in hardly any synergies. The rapidly growing volume and complexity of software requires group-wide software solutions and intelligent mobility concepts in order to be effective and future-proof. By bundling them into one software supply chain, we improve the overall digital experience for our customers and users. It is already clear that the new cross-brand Digital Car & Services division is the only one of its kind in the automotive industry. The combined forces of Audi, Porsche, and Volkswagen make us an attractive choice for experts and talents in digitalization and software.

What are you doing in your first 100 days?

My team and I are working flat-out to develop and implement the necessary structures and working models for the new department. However, we are not building the new organization from scratch, because there are already a large number of well-functioning units in the company. In the first 100 days, the main task is to stabilize the functionality of currently critical projects and to avoid jeopardizing this functionality by the reorganization. At the same



New Board Member for Software since the beginning of March: Christian Senger.



Christian Senger (44)

has been the Member of the Volkswagen Management Board with responsibility for the Digital Car & Services Division since the beginning of March. The mechanical engineer started his career in 1997 at BMW in Munich. He held various managerial positions there, including Head of Energy Management and Head of BMW i Product Concepts. In 2012, he moved to Continental in Regensburg, where he was Head of Automotive Systems & Technology. When he moved to Volkswagen in 2016, Senger became Head of the e-Mobility series. He established this area and made a key contribution to advancing the brand’s electric vehicle offensive.



Herbert Diess on the new software division

“The amount of software in cars is increasing rapidly, and represents an ever-larger share of the total value added, and is thus a significant factor in the performance and characteristics of our vehicles. That is why, at Volkswagen, we intend to fundamentally strengthen software development. Christian Senger will press ahead vigorously with this in his new position.”

time, we are working on establishing a new joint software organization under which we will bundle our vehicle-related software activities. Necessary measures in inventory organization must be designed in such a way that current production launches are not jeopardized. This requires a high level of discipline and willingness to change from all participants. This will be a great challenge, but I am sure that we will overcome it as a team and put our company in a strong position with the new department.

It is your job to shape the group’s software activities. How will the brands collaborate in the future?

We are setting up a joint software organization, particularly from within the main brands Audi, Porsche, and Volkswagen. There, we will create a common software platform for all brands, which will be used in a binding manner. This organization will be at several locations, making it possible for colleagues to work at their home locations for this common software stack.

Will all software be created in the Software division in the future?

The goal is to increasingly separate hardware and Software from each other. In the future, the Software division will be primarily responsible for producing the software that is used for digital products in our vehicles and mobility services. This also includes the software for vehicle-to-vehicle communication, backend, and cloud solutions, for example. Hardware-related software will continue to be developed in Technical Development.

In what way is Volkswagen engaged in competition with Apple and Google?

Google and Apple are of course the big players in the digital business. At the moment, however, neither one is an expert in our field, namely building outstanding vehicles. Our goal is to keep the vehicle and mobility operating system in Volkswagen’s hands. This is the only way we can remain a valuable partner for individual mobility in and around the vehicle for our customers and users.

By which results would you like to be judged?

Our aims are clear:

- to set up a new cross-brand and cross-regional software organization,
- to significantly increase in-house competence and performance,
- to respond more flexibly to vehicle requirements,
- to deliver and regularly roll out attractive software solutions,
- to get projects off the ground in a timely manner,
- to increase the value of the company.

These are important measured variables. But the satisfaction of my employees is also a key indicator. With our new department, we have a great opportunity to focus not only on the customer and the user, but also on our employees. We want to give them a high degree of personal responsibility. They should be able to make important decisions, and to identify with their products and their work. Quite simply, my employees should enjoy creating something extraordinary and look forward to coming to work. What we are planning is decisive for our future. Let’s take on the challenge together! I’m looking forward to it.

Volkswagen Brand: New Management Structure

Brandstätter assumes responsibility for series, while Sommer leads procurement for the Group and brand

The Volkswagen brand is aligning its management structure with future topics. As part of the new distribution of responsibilities within the brand’s management board, the Digital Car & Services division was formed on March 1 (see article above). The brand is thus increasing its impact and the speed of implementation in the rapidly advancing digitalization and networking of the car.

Under the brand’s new management structure, responsibility for series and for quality assurance lies with the Chief Operating Officer. Volkswagen is thus pooling responsibility for its products and strengthening the management of its operating business. At the same time, Technical Development is given more scope for conceptual develop-

ment work and corporate tasks. In another change, responsibility for the Group and Brand Procurement division will be merged.

The changes in detail:



Ralf Brandstätter

Ralf Brandstätter, who as Chief Operating Officer (COO) manages the brand’s operational business, will be responsible for the brand’s value engineering and quality assurance. However, the

Product Safety Committee remains the responsibility of Herbert Diess. The change gives the CEO greater freedom for strategic tasks within the Group.

In addition, COO Ralf Brandstätter takes over the Small, Compact and Mid/Full series, which previously reported to Frank Welsch. As Head of Technical Development, Welsch is more intensively



Frank Welsch

involved in his parallel function as Head of Corporate Research and Development, and is promoting the development of alternative drive concepts, pioneering assistance systems, and sustainable mobility within the brand. The E-Mobility series will remain assigned to the E-Mobility Management Board division.

The newly created Digital Car & Services division, which Christian Senger is establishing and managing, bundles the brand’s software activities. At the same time, Senger, as Head of Digital Car & Services for the Group, is responsible for Group-wide cooperation on software concepts and intelligent mobility concepts.

Stefan Sommer, Member of the Group Executive Board, is responsible for procurement for both the Group and the brand. Putting responsibility for Volkswagen brand procurement in the hands of the Head of Group Division helps to streamline internal processes and create synergies.



Stefan Sommer



"We Need to Get the Young Chinese Middle Class Excited"

In this interview: CEO Herbert Diess on the importance of the Chinese market for the Group

Mr. Diess, you have been in charge of the Group Executive Board Division China since mid-January. What do you see as the greatest challenges?

There is no other market in the world where the technological transformation towards electrification, digitalization, networking, and automated driving is progressing as rapidly as in China. In addition, the Chinese government has a clear development plan that extends to 2025 – and that includes the automotive industry. This

is being rigorously implemented, which means Volkswagen has to change at the right speed too. We are the market leader. We must remain at the forefront of development. That's what our Chinese customers expect of us.

How is Volkswagen currently positioned in China? What do we have to do and what are the next steps?

Our Chinese joint venture companies are leaders within the Volkswagen Group in terms of productivity, quality – particularly product starts – efficiency, and profitability. That's

the benchmark. Our partners, such as the FAW Group and SAIC, are now on a par with us. If we don't want to miss the boat, we must work closely with our long-standing partners. New collaborations are just as important, because in China – as in the US – there are internet giants that set standards. Likewise, the emerging start-ups within the digital sector and the many mobility service providers are extremely agile and innovative. This potential must also be exploited for developments that are useful not only for the Chinese market, but worldwide.



Herbert Diess, Group CEO, Volkswagen AG.

VOLKSWAGEN GROUP CHINA



New Brand Is Called JETTA

Volkswagen now offers models specially aimed at a young target group in China

JETTA will be Volkswagen's new brand in China. It is aimed particularly at young customers. "With JETTA, we are closing the gap in China between the established lead brand Volkswagen in the upper volume segment and entry-level mobility, which accounts for around one third of the Chinese market and is primarily served by local brands. That will allow us to increase our market coverage significantly," says



Jürgen Stackmann, Sales Director.

Jürgen Stackmann, Sales Director of the Volkswagen brand.

The number of vehicles is still very low in numerous megacities outside metropolitan regions such as Beijing and Shanghai,



Harald Müller, JETTA Brand CEO.



Starting signal: Qin Huanming, Vice President of the China FAW Group and Herbert Diess at the presentation of the new brand in Wolfsburg.

with fewer than 100 cars per 1000 inhabitants in many places. At the same time, a steadily growing middle class is striving for individual mobility by owning a car of their own for the first time. With the new JETTA brand, Volkswagen intends to address these customers in particular. JETTA's model

range, produced by FAW-Volkswagen in Chengdu, includes a sedan and two SUVs. The sales launch is planned for the third quarter of this year.

"In China, the Jetta plays an extremely valuable role for us as a Volkswagen model. It has brought mobility to the masses, as the Beetle

Young excited"



What can we learn from China? How must we adapt our strategy?

It's the speed and efficiency with which Chinese companies implement technological innovations – that's what we can learn from them. China has now become an important automotive powerhouse. That is where we need to aim our strategy. That is why I have personally assumed responsibility for China on the Group Executive Board. Stephan Wöllenstein, with his wealth of experience of China, manages the operative business. We can no longer produce and sell cars in China that were designed in Europe

for Europe. We must develop and produce in China, for China.

With the new JETTA brand, Volkswagen is now systematically pursuing this path. How did the idea for the new brand come about?

In China, Jetta is a symbol for attainable, individual mobility. This is the model with which we put China on four wheels in the 1990s. With more than 300,000 vehicles sold per year, it is one of our successful models in the world's largest market. And this market is developing rapidly, especially in

the numerous megacities beyond the metropolitan regions such as Shanghai or Beijing, where vehicle density is very low. In these areas, it is primarily young customers and the large number of first-time buyers who have a significant need for mobility. We are answering that need without having to reposition the Volkswagen brand. With the launch of the JETTA brand, whose model portfolio includes a sedan and two SUVs, we are combining tradition and quality with attractive design and modern technology. JETTA

therefore has the potential to grow from a successful model into a successful brand, especially among the young Chinese middle class: We need to get them excited about Volkswagen. By establishing the new brand, we have taken an important step in this direction. My thanks go to the entire JETTA team who have successfully realized this project, putting in a lot of energy and commitment. That was a very impressive achievement, congratulations.

What other strategic steps present themselves?

It is my goal to intensify the existing collaborations. We have a lot to offer – and together we can be the strongest alliance in the industry. This is a great opportunity for us and we need to take advantage of it. At the same time, however, we also have to open up as a group and in the brands to more Chinese executives. We can benefit from their expertise, diligence, and entrepreneurial spirit. Professional and intercultural exchange is of great value to all of us and to our business. We must be open to this if we want to enjoy continued success in China in the future.

Top 10 Volkswagen Group models in China



In addition to two SUV models (top), the new brand also offers a sedan. This is intended to appeal in particular to young first-time buyers in China.



Concentrated interest: International business journalists at the presentation of the new JETTA brand in Wolfsburg.

once did in Europe. To this day, the Jetta remains one of the most popular Volkswagen models in China – a true icon. That is why, for the first time in Volkswagen's history, we are turning a model into a brand with the Jetta, and are developing a model and brand family for it," says

Stackmann. New approaches are also being pursued in sales. JETTA is setting up its own dealer network and is approaching its customers directly with innovative sales formats: with digitalized showrooms, with mobile sales trucks, and in shopping malls. By the end of the year, around 200

dealers are expected to offer the new brand.

In China, the Volkswagen brand delivered 3.11 million vehicles to customers last year (-2.1 percent year-on-year). With a share of almost 50 percent of worldwide deliveries, China is Volkswagen's largest single market.



Experts from Production in Wolfsburg

They came to Wolfsburg from 16 Volkswagen brand locations: 120 experts from Production got together in Wolfsburg. For two days, they brainstormed ideas for measurable and sustainable productivity gains. In the center of it all: Head of Production Andreas Tostmann.

The event was organized to mark the World Building Plan. The new plan is pursuing a goal of rolling out technology and processes to Volkswagen production that are available immediately and are easy to copy.

With just under 100 "source measures" from various divisions and locations, six teams got right to work: specialists from the Press Shop, Body Shop,

Paint Shop, Assembly, and Logistics presented measures with a lot of potential while at the same time acting on innovative solutions from other plants.

Attendees spent the second day of the event reporting on just how economical it could be to implement the suggested measures at particular production plants. From plant manager to Head of Finance to Head of Industrial engineering, every single decision maker had a seat at the table. By the end of the event, an agreement was in place for each location, which was confirmed by the executive board and plant managers.

"The methodology used here helps to quickly share good ideas across different locations worldwide," said Uwe Schwartz (Head of Brand Planning), who organized the event. Co-organizer Martin Goede (Head of Technology Planning and Development) added, "This intensive kind of discussion allows teams to share their skills and expertise with each other more quickly and consistently."



Full speed ahead for the environment: Employees from Volkswagen Navarra and students.

Students Plant Trees and Shrubs

Volkswagen Navarra worked with students to plant 50 trees and shrubs on the plant grounds in Pamplona in northern Spain. They were planted to replace green spaces that were removed to build a new employee parking lot. The children also participated in road safety training.

Social responsibility and environmental protection have a long history at Volkswagen Navarra: 45 percent of the premises are green spaces. More than 700 plant species, mostly native to the area, provide a perfect habitat for birds and insects. The road safety training project for children has been running since 1999.

Company Pension Scheme: It All Started 70 Years Ago

Anniversary celebration: Department looks back – and is calling on employees to take control of their retirement plans

It has been part of Volkswagen for 70 years, and is more pertinent than ever today: the company pension scheme. It was Managing Director Heinrich Nordhoff who launched the scheme in 1949. In a letter written at the time, he stated that the aim of the scheme was to pay "employees with benefits towards their statutory retirement pensions." In addition, he arranged for employees who passed away to receive 4,000 Deutschmarks.

84,000 retired employees currently receive a Volkswagen pension

Nowadays, the company pension is the most important social benefit offered at Volkswagen AG, and the consistency and stability of the pension scheme makes it one of the company's and the works council's biggest success stories. "Some 84,000 retired employees currently receive a company pension," says Tania Michaelis, who works in the Pension and Time Asset Bond department in Wolfsburg. Volkswagen AG currently provides an employer-financed company pension scheme for more than 118,000 active employees. "That's more than 200,000 people who rely on us for all things retirement pension. The only way this works is with a committed, expert team and well-rehearsed processes," says Michaelis.

But to celebrate 70 years of the company pension scheme, the department, headed by Johannes Teslau, wants to do more than just look back over the past seven decades. It wants to shine a spotlight on the topic of retirement pensions. "Each and every employee should take control of their retirement planning,"



It all started in 1949: Heinrich Nordhoff launched the pension scheme.



There to answer all your questions: some of the members of the Pension Management team, photographed on Südstrasse at the Wolfsburg plant. Left: Beetle production 70 years ago. That was when employees received the first retirement benefits.



Volkswagen Aktiengesellschaft



Tania Michaelis, employee working as part of the pension team.



Johannes Teslau, Head of Pensions and Time Asset Bonds.



Sandra Bruder, Works Council Representative and Chair of the Social Committee.

says Teslau. After all, statutory pensions are no longer enough to maintain the standard of living in retirement that people achieve during their working lives. That's why the Volkswagen AG company pension scheme offers an additional component: its Contributory Pension Scheme II, launched by the works council in 1998. Employees can use the scheme to supplement their company pensions by diverting a portion of their salary.

For example, an employee who diverts 100 euros a month from their gross salary starting at age 20 will receive a gross monthly retirement pension totaling 485 euros from Contributory Pension Scheme II if they retire at age 65. According to Teslau, this makes for quite an attractive model, but one that not enough employees are taking advantage of. Just 13 percent of employees covered by collective agreements subscribed to the scheme in 2018.

"The company pension scheme at Volkswagen is better than the

Here's how the company pension scheme at Volkswagen AG works

The company pension scheme is comprised of three components:

- Volkswagen AG finances a basic pension provision. Among other things, the amount is based on an employee's gross pensionable earnings and job tenure.
- Contributory Pension Scheme I was launched through a collective agreement in 1996. It is also financed by the employer. A new feature will be added in July 2019: The most recent pay negotiations resulted in an increase in the amount contributed per month for each full-time employee from 27 euros to 90 euros. Starting January 2020, future dynamic wage developments will bring this up to 98 euros.

- In addition, Contributory Pension Scheme II was added in 1998, which allows employees to divert a portion of their salary to the company pension scheme under deferred compensation.

These components all come together to form the company pension generally paid to retired employees with a retirement pension or pension for reduced earning capacity provided based on statutory pension insurance. If an employee passes away, surviving beneficiaries (spouses/registered civil partners, children up to 18 years old generally) are entitled to a pension.

General information about the company pension scheme is available on the Personnel Portal. For specific questions, employees can contact the pension management team: bav@volkswagen.de

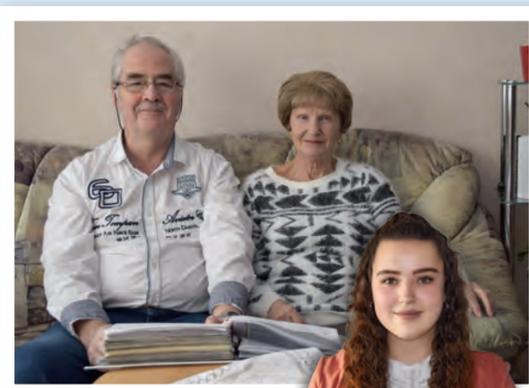
schemes available at many other companies. Among other things, this is evident from the increase in the employer contribution rate for Contributory Pension Scheme I negotiated during a pay dispute; the rate will increase to 90 euros per month starting this summer. The works

council, workforce, and labor union will continue to press ahead with the issue. After all, we want retirees to be financially secure after spending their working lives at Volkswagen," says Sandra Bruder, Works Council Representative and Chair of the Social Committee.

How Employees View the Company Pension Scheme: A Retiree and a Current Employee Report on Their Experiences

Klaus Konstroffer, 70

"I worked for Volkswagen in Wolfsburg for 38 years, most of that time in production in Hall 80. Our job was to get vehicles ready for press events. It was a great time in my life. To be honest, I didn't spend much time thinking about retirement in those days. And why should I? I had a good job. Thankfully, when Contributory Pension Scheme II was launched in 1998, my colleagues and I signed up right away. I finally retired in 2008, but shortly before that I was seriously concerned about how much I would end up getting. I now have 30 percent more money in addition to my state pension. It definitely helps now that rent and food prices are increasing."



Spent 38 years at Volkswagen: Klaus Konstroffer (pictured here with his wife, Felicitas).

Cina Blecker, 22

"I've been working for the company since September 2015, and completed training to become an office manager in Office Management. I now work as a team assistant in Monitorship in Wolfsburg. Nowadays, it's impossible to be sure just how much of a pension you'll ultimately end up receiving. That's why I started paying 35 euros a month through Contributory Pension Scheme II back when I was a trainee. It made very little difference to my pay in the end. I tend to think that I'll need it more later than I do now. In general, I think that young people nowadays are better informed than they were 30 or 40 years ago. You hear so much about it in the media. The good thing about Contributory Pension Scheme II is that I can be flexible. I can stop paying in for a year or change the amount I pay in. And I know what I'll be getting at a minimum."

At the company since 2015: Cina Blecker works in Monitorship.

Partnership with Microsoft

Herbert Diess and Satya Nadella met at the Volkswagen Digital Lab in Berlin – Automotive Cloud for Europe, China, and the US

CEO Herbert Diess and Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella announced in Berlin that the Volkswagen Automotive Cloud would gradually be expanded. Beyond Europe, the “data cloud” will eventually be available in China and the US – the key markets for the fully electric and fully networked ID. family. The first ID. model will initially be sold in Europe and China starting next year, and in the US starting in 2022. For a bit of background, Volkswagen

is building its own cloud-based platform with help from well-known US software group Microsoft, which will simply act as a huge digital storage space. This lays the groundwork for Volkswagen to always be “online” in future, ultimately becoming rolling smartphones.

“Our strategic partnership with Microsoft is a key building block in developing Volkswagen to become a software-driven mobility provider,” said Group CEO Herbert Diess during

the visit to the Volkswagen Digital Lab. Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella stressed, “Our partnership will see Volkswagen develop new mobility services that advance Volkswagen’s transformation into a software-driven mobility provider, shaping the future of mobility for people the world over.”

Volkswagen aims to expand the Automotive Cloud, currently developed for Europe, to China and the US. There, too, the Microsoft Azure cloud platform will form the basis



Starting next year: the first ID. model will initially be sold in Europe and China and in the US starting in 2022.



Discussion in Berlin: Volkswagen CEO Herbert Diess (right) and Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella.

for the growing digital ecosystem – the totality of all the digital services available in vehicles. The Volkswagen brand is in charge of development for the Group.

Christian Senger, Brand Manager for Digital Car & Services and Head of Digital Car & Services within the Group, is in charge of the Volkswagen Automotive Cloud. He says, “It will serve as the global technological centerpiece of our digital ecosystem. At the same time, we are introducing powerful new software architecture in our vehicles. This will allow us to lay the groundwork to fully network our fleet of vehicles and develop services for our customers that add value. Our aim is to ensure the best possible customer experience in and beyond their own vehicle.”

And if that were not enough, Volkswagen and Microsoft are also working on the first key projects for networked vehicle services. Two examples of this include developing an intelligent car that is always connected to the internet with a navigation system that automatically determines the destination based on the driver’s calendar entries. Drivers will also be able to automatically dial in to conference calls.

Progress is also being made in setting up a Volkswagen development center in Seattle in the northwest of the US, where Microsoft is headquartered. Volkswagen began setting up this location late last year to work on developing the Automotive Cloud. The two companies announced their strategic partnership back in September 2018.

Quality Assurance: New Strategy

More than 300 employees worked to develop the strategy with the management team headed by Andreas Klar

New strategies don’t sell themselves – especially when they are developed at the top levels of management alone. To get Quality Assurance employees on board with the division’s new strategy from the start, they needed to take an active role in shaping it. To accomplish this, 300 employees from different levels attended a two-day strategy conference in Wolfsburg.

Everyone else was able to follow the conference through a live blog on Group Connect.

For Andreas Klar, Head of Quality Assurance for the Volkswagen brand, and his management

team, the process and methodology of the conference was unusual. He said, “We hammered out the vision,

mission, and strategic goals in workshops and were excited to see how our first draft would be received by the employees.” Attendees from all departments in central Quality Assurance and the Emden and Wolfsburg plants came together to work, spread out across 20 tables. They engaged in discussion, asked questions and suggested their own ideas. That evening,

Klar and his management team spent time going through the hundreds and hundreds of comments the employees provided to see how they could fit with the original draft strategy. The final version of the strategy was created that night so it could be presented to the employees on the morning of the second day of the conference. By a show of hands, the vast majority

indicated their approval and then got to work on how to implement the strategy in practice.

It’s now just a matter of getting those who weren’t in attendance on board. Klar said, “We’ve scaled the mountain. Now we just have to wait for the windmills to appear. Let’s keep at it and work together to shape the future of quality assurance!”



Andreas Klar, Head of Quality Assurance for the Volkswagen brand



Lea Marschall (26), Series Quality Assurance



Helmut Averbeck (52), Emden Quality Assurance



Carlos Eduardo Dominguez (38), Overall Vehicle Quality Assurance

“The fact that we, as employees, are allowed to help shape quality assurance strategy demonstrates openness and transparency. I hope to continue to be involved.”

“I went to the strategy conference with mixed feelings. It quickly became clear that there was no reason for that. The atmosphere was constructive and open-minded.”

“The strategy conference was a huge – and important – first step. I really liked how the openness and clarity shown by our management team.”

Modular E-Toolkit To Be Made Available to Third-Party Providers

The Volkswagen Group will be making its modular electrification toolkit (MEB) available to other manufacturers. Ensuring the broadest possible distribution of the MEB and the associated economies of scale will greatly reduce the costs of e-mobility. This will make individual mobility affordable and usable for many people in the future.

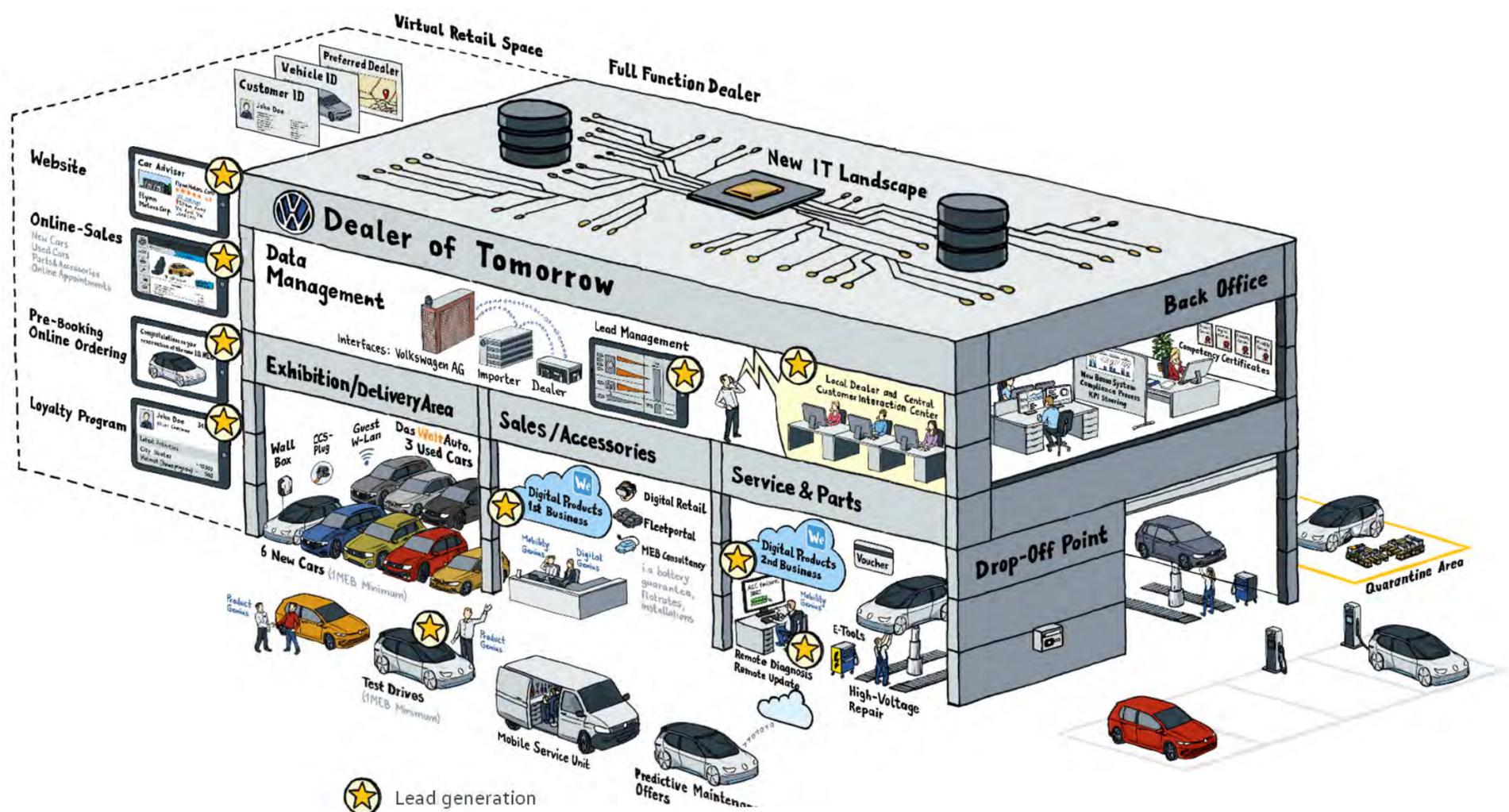
Volkswagen has projected that some 15 million purely electric vehicles will be produced using the MEB in the first phase. The world’s first partner company outside the Group to use the modular electrification toolkit will be Aachen-based company e.GO Mobile AG, which will use the MEB to bring electric cars beyond the models offered by Volkswagen to the market.

Group CEO Herbert Diess says, “We’ve proven with our modular transverse toolkit that we are platform experts. More than 100 million of our vehicles are based on this platform. With the MEB platform, we will be rocketing this successful concept into the electric age and working with third-party providers. The aim is to establish the MEB as the gold standard for e-mobility. We want to use it to lay the foundations for CO2-neutral, safe, and comfortable individual mobility available to as many people as possible.” Even emotionally-charged limited series vehicles like the ID. Buggy can be easily and cost-effectively produced using the MEB. Diess says, “I’m pleased that e.GO will be the first partner to use our modular electrification toolkit as the basis for a vehicle project we will work on together.”



Dealer of Tomorrow: A Perfect Mix of the Analog and Digital Worlds

Part of the latest sales strategy: customers will soon be able to order their car online



Customers will soon be able to skip the dealership and order their cars straight from the website. This is all part of Volkswagen's new sales strategy.

And that's not all. Each customer will receive an individual ID linked to their car and their preferred dealership. A one-time registration process ("single sign-on") will enable vehicle owners to use all of Volkswagen's "We" services and manage their personal details and vehicle information.

Volkswagen will use the ID to provide individualized customer service - with the customer's consent, of course. Benefits include the company being able to bring cars to the workshop before a minor technical issue results in a breakdown. In the future, Volkswagen will use its vehicles' mobile internet to provide its customers with software updates as needed. Customers will also be able to purchase online services or book a car-sharing vehicle using their ID.



Christoph Hartung

All of this will require a completely innovative data management system, and Volkswagen will need to engage much more intensively with its dealers. "Our absolute top priority is data security. No one will be forced to give us access to their data. Only people who want to opt in will be involved," says Christoph Hartung, Head of Digital and New Business Sales.

Regardless of whether cars are ordered online or purchased offline, dealerships will retain their important role in future. "Some customers will want to have a look at the car they are considering at the nearby dealership and then order it online later that night as they relax on the sofa," says Ulf Eberhardt, Head of Sales and System Strategy, summing up what a combined analog/digital purchase experience might look like. In addition to traditional dealerships, smaller showrooms or pop-up stores will be set up in downtown areas. These will be short-term "stores" that might



Ulf Eberhardt

be set up only for the duration of a specific event being held somewhere. The workshops housed at dealerships will also be undergoing changes: they will start concentrating on "high-voltage repair" for electric cars. Another innovation is the "Digital Genius." It can advise customers on any questions they have about online services, products, and general questions regarding digitalization. Apps and online services will also play a greater role in after-sales. For example, service employees will be activate specific digital functions in a vehicle on request. Each dealership will also offer its customers charging stations and free Wi-Fi. Peter Maiwald, Head of After Sales and Retail, says, "This new sales strategy represents evolution, not revolution. We are combining the advantages brought by the digital age with the trusted service our dealers provide all over the world."



Peter Maiwald

Sales, service and administration will take on entirely new roles and responsibilities at the dealer of tomorrow. In addition to dealerships, digital interfaces will soon be available to customers as well (left side of the image).



The future is real: the Volkswagen ID. will be the Group's first electric car to be carbon neutral throughout its entire service life, if customers choose green energy sources to charge their vehicles.

Clean Mobility

The Volkswagen ID. will mark the Group's first mass produced car manufactured in a way that is ultimately carbon neutral

Volkswagen has committed itself to the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement, setting the course for sustainable mobility with its electric offensive. The new ID., for which production is set to start late this year in Zwickau, has taken on a pioneering role: it will be the Group's first electric car to be carbon neutral throughout its entire service life if customers choose green energy sources to charge their vehicles. In the manufacturing phase alone, the ID.'s¹ CO₂ balance will be improved by well over one million metric tons of CO₂ a year. This is roughly equivalent to the climate impact made by a coal-fired power plant that provides electricity to 300,000 homes. Volkswagen is also working on an extensive decarbonization program, including measures for other models. By 2025, the brand aims to launch

more than 20 purely electric models on the market.

"Climate change is the biggest challenge of our time," said Thomas Ulbrich, Head of E-Mobility for the Volkswagen brand. "As the world's largest automotive manufacturer, Volkswagen is stepping up to the plate and taking responsibility. The new ID. will mark the Group's first mass produced car manufactured in a way that is ultimately carbon neutral. To ensure it continues on this zero-emissions path throughout its service life, we are working to provide a range of different options to charge vehicles using electricity from green energy sources. Truly sustainable mobility is possible if everyone wants it and we all work together."

Georg Kell, Founding Director of the UN Global Compact and Spokesperson for the Volkswagen Sustain-



Thomas Ulbrich, Head of E-Mobility for the Volkswagen brand

ability Advisory Board, says, "CO₂ emissions caused by humans need to be reduced as quickly as possible. Since its founding, the Volkswagen Sustainability Advisory Board has fought for the company to include climate protection as a strategic priority. Volkswagen has set the right course with its electric offensive and the ID. Now we need to stay the course."

With the ID., Volkswagen is focusing the entire value creation chain on avoiding and reducing CO₂ emissions. The battery cells are being produced in Europe and the energy needed to manufacture them is provided using green energy sources. Further potential savings in the delivery chain, including the production of raw materials, are currently being looking into in cooperation with direct and indirect suppliers. The Zwickau plant is already working with outside electricity providers that use renewable energy sources. Unavoidable emissions throughout the entire manufacturing process will ultimately be compensated for with investments in certified climate protection projects, to ensure the ID.'s market launch is backed by carbon-neutral production.

In terms of actually running ID. vehicles, Volkswagen recommends customers use energy from renewable sources such as wind or hydropow-

er. Newly established Volkswagen subsidiary Elli has recently begun offering customers in Germany regeneratively produced Volkswagen Naturstrom® electricity. The IONITY rapid charging network, which Volkswagen co-founded with multiple vehicle manufacturers will offer renewably-sourced electricity – wherever possible – to some 400 charging stations along European highways.

Because an electric car is only as clean as the electricity used to produce and charge it, Volkswagen has fully embraced the next step toward a sustainable energy supply planned for Germany in particular. Even as we move on from the energy revolution, electromobility will only take hold with support from policymakers. From the laws governing home ownership to expanding public charging infrastructure, the hurdles electric cars currently face will quickly need to be removed.

Volkswagen wants to make electric cars attractive and affordable for as many people as possible. The compact ID. will start rolling off the production line in Zwickau at the end of 2019. The ID. CROZZ¹ SUV, the ID. BUZZ¹, and the ID. VIZZION¹ sedan will follow shortly after. By 2023, the Volkswagen brand alone will be investing around nine billion euros in e-mobility.



Georg Kell, Founding Director of the UN Global Compact and Spokesperson for the Volkswagen Sustainability Advisory Board.



Thanks to Volkswagen: Sabrina Fiorini and Pablo Di Si, Head of the South America region.

After an Accident, A Woman Extends Her Thanks to Volkswagen

A grateful customer: A few weeks ago, Sabrina Fiorini of Argentina got into an accident in her Golf near the city of Balcarce in Buenos Aires Province. She survived the crash without a scratch. Shortly afterwards, Pablo Roman Di Si, Head of Volkswagen South America (SAM), received a moving letter through LinkedIn expressing her thanks:

"I am overjoyed to be able to write to you today. I'm writing you because I would like to thank Volkswagen for the Golf TSI DSG 1.4 Turbo. I have been loyal to the brand since buying my first Volkswagen in 2006, and I bought this car just last year. I'd never had an accident before, but that fateful day ultimately came on January 27, 2019. I was really lucky. I am convinced that the Golf and its high safety standards saved my life when I fell asleep while driving near the city of Balcarce.

I was in a serious accident; I drove into a truck

The truck driver I hit said that I was weaving along at around 130 kilometers per hour (80 miles per hour). The right front end of my car hit the left side of his truck, bursting his tire. My car spun around twice and I hit another truck with the left side of my vehicle. This second impact broke my windshield, leaving my car completely totaled on the side of the road. I opened my eyes and thanked God – and Volkswagen for making such safe cars. I'm alive! Aside from the impact from the airbag and my seatbelt, I emerged from the crash without a scratch. I would like to congratulate the Volkswagen brand and thank you for all your work. Volkswagen thinks about more than just comfort and modern design – it also keeps focus on the safety of its drivers and passengers at all times.

That decision saved my life

I know that I would not be here today to tell this story if I had been in a different car. The truck driver thought the same thing and he has seen more than one accident in his time. I am hoping that this message reaches the top levels of management at Volkswagen. God alone is not to thank for my survival; the decision to choose this brand saved my life, too. I was able to climb out of the vehicle on my own through the window. Thank you, Volkswagen! There are no words. I am incredibly thankful to have survived without any injuries."



In São Paulo: Members of the board of the Volkswagen brand and the South America region with a team from the Caraigá Volkswagen dealership after presenting the Digital Dealer Experience.

Brand Management in South America

Meetings to discuss the Volkswagen brand's performance and expectations

The Volkswagen Executive Board on a visit to Brazil: Ralf Brandstätter, Chief Operating Officer, Arno Antlitz (Finance), Jürgen Stackmann (Sales), Andreas Tostmann (Production), and Frank Welsch (Development) spoke with Pablo Di Si,

Head of the South America region, and his management team about Volkswagen's performance and expectations in South America. They also met with employees and journalists. The board members also paid a visit to a dealership in São Paulo

that is implementing the innovative Digital Dealer concept in Brazil. It will be launched in other countries in the South America region starting in March. What's it all about? The Digital Dealer Experience allows customers to use touchscreen TVs to

view Volkswagen do Brasil's entire product portfolio. This means that digitalization is making it possible for even the smallest dealerships with small vehicle inventories to present Volkswagen's entire range of products to their customers.

¹ Near-production-ready concept car.



Wolter and Müller: Rising Star Gets Tips from Champions League Winner

inside interview before the Wolfsburg women's soccer quarter final against Lyon, France's top team

Champions League winner meets VfL Wolfsburg rising star still hoping to reach the top of the soccer world: Former finisher Martina Müller (38) and young midfielder Pia-Sophie Wolter (21) met ahead of the quarter final firecracker between VfL Wolfsburg and Olympique Lyon to discuss how it feels to be at the top of the game in Europe.

Ms. Müller, what do you have to say about May 23, 2013?

2013 was a triple win year. It's the day we became either the German champions, German soccer league champions, or Champions League champions.

It was the day you won the Champions League in London – which you had no small part in.

That's right, my penalty shot gave us a 1:0 win over Olympique Lyon – and I wasn't even supposed to take the shot. Nadine Kessler, who was our penalty taker at the time, told me during our warm-up that her foot hurt. She said, "If there's a penalty shot, you have to take it." So I thought, "Okay, don't worry. We won't have to take any penalty shots anyway." No chance! I was so incredibly nervous when I lined up to take my shot. Hero or zero – in that moment, it's anyone's guess. Luckily it turned out hero.

2013 was the first year the VfL women's team earned a title – and then they went on to do it three times in the same year. Was the Champions League title the most significant win?

I consider the German championship and our success in the Champions League to be on a par. And, of course, it's nice to have done so well in European competition. But a German championship is just as hard won. It represents stability throughout an entire season.

Ms. Wolter, your eyes seemed to light up when Martina Müller was talking about that triple win.

Oh yeah. That's something I hope to achieve as well. I want to be able to talk about championship wins one day. It's something I dream about, and our entire team is working hard toward that goal. That's another reason why I transferred to Wolfsburg. Don't forget, I come from the humble beginnings – at least in women's soccer – of Werder Bremen. Until this past summer, I was still playing home games in front of just 150 spectators and fighting to hold off relegation. But everything in Wolfsburg is just a few digits bigger. It's great!



Pia-Sophie Wolter (21) used to play for the German U-19 and U-20 national team. Last summer, the midfielder transferred from Bremen to VfL Wolfsburg, and has played in eight Bundesliga games so far. Wolter finished high school and went on to study business administration with a focus on sports business at the VfL Campus.

Was it difficult to get used to life at the VfL?

Not at all! I received such a warm welcome from the team. I feel completely at home in Wolfsburg, even though this is the first time I've ever lived alone. But that's going well, too. I have not regretted my transfer for a

single second, especially since I've already been put on the field a lot more than I'd hoped as such a young player.

Ms. Müller, how did things go when you first arrived in Wolfsburg?

Great. Don't forget, that's one of the team's stated goals. New players always have an easy time transitioning to the VfL. I don't think anything about that has changed between then and now. That may be one of the secrets of the team's success.

Who's the favorite in the upcoming duel between these two iconic teams?

Wolter: There isn't one. For us, it's all about making sure we start out well in France with a first-leg victory before returning home and trying to make it into the semi-final in this unique kind of floodlight atmosphere. I saw that all the tickets had been sold back in mid-February – that's crazy! We're all so happy about that. Müller: The most anticipated game for me is when VfL play Olympique. Unfortunately, what are probably the two best teams in Europe are squaring off early in the tournament. Lyon have upgraded their staff, but have the disadvantage of only really being challenged two or three times a season in the French league. The result is that the decisive details can sometimes be lacking in a big game. I've got my fingers crossed for VfL. It's my team. They'll always have my heart. And I know that they're going to make it to the semi-final, especially because they have a score to settle after losing in the final in 2018.

Ms. Wolter, your father, Thomas, played for Werder Bremen

in around 300 Bundesliga games. Is it a blessing or a curse to have such a prominent player as a father?

A blessing! My father never let his career as a pro soccer player in the Bundesliga define him, and he let me do my own thing. He and my mother haven't made it to a game here in Wolfsburg yet, but I've reserved tickets for them for the Lyon game.

Will you be there in the stadium, Ms. Müller?

No. I've only been there twice since retiring from soccer because I have so little time. In addition to working at Volkswagen as a specialist for the



Martina Müller (38)

has appeared in 101 games for the national team and celebrated two world championship wins with them, plus two European championship titles and an Olympic bronze medal. The forward has been with VfL Wolfsburg for two Champions League wins, a German championship win and a German soccer league cup victory. She retired from soccer in 2015 and has since returned to working full time for Volkswagen in Wolfsburg.

Service Factory Mobility and Environmental Service, I've been continuing my education to earn my certificate in business studies. I also play for Holzland in the state league. It doesn't leave a lot of time for making it to the stadium. But I watch VfL play on television as often as I can – and I'll definitely be watching the second leg when they play against Lyon in late March.

VfL Wolfsburg – Olympique Lyon

The first leg of the Champions League women's soccer quarter final will be held on Wednesday, March 20 in France. Kickoff is at 8:45 pm. The second leg will be played a week later at AOK Stadium in Wolfsburg. Kickoff is at 6:15 pm. Sport1 will be airing the games live.



One-on-one: Captains Josuha Guilavogui (right, VfL Wolfsburg) and Max Kruse (Werder Bremen).

VfL Wolfsburg Best Northern Club in the Bundesliga

Ten game days before the end of the season, VfL Wolfsburg is the top northern club in the German Bundesliga. After their 1:1 (0:0) game against Werder Bremen, they ranked seventh on the league table, giving them the best chance in two years to qualify for a spot in international competition. But what comes next will be exceptionally difficult: On Sunday, March 9, VfL will play at reinvigorated, record-holding champion Bayern Munich at 3:30 pm.

Defender John Anthony Brooks headed up VfL against Bremen, drawing level with former Wolfsburg player Max Kruse. Despite the tied score, Coach Bruno Labbadia seemed happy to the 28,200 or so spectators who came to watch the game at Volkswagen Arena. His only point of criticism? "After a well-deserved lead, we failed to make it 2:0. That's quite annoying, because we would have wanted a three turn."

VfL home games

		Sat., March 16, 3:30 pm
		Sun., April 6, 3:30 pm
		Fri., April 20 to Mon., April 22
		Fri., May 3 to Mon., May 6
		Sat., May 18, 3:30 pm

Tickets available at www.vfl-wolfsburg.de



EHC Wolfsburg Ends the Season Ranked 12th in the League Table

Even winning five of the last six games was not enough to save the day: German ice hockey team Grizzlies Wolfsburg failed to make the playoffs for the first time in 11 years. The team led by coach Hans Kossmann defeated the Iserlohn Roosters by 5:4 in overtime in the season finale in early March. Goals were scored by Kris Facault (2), Spencer Machacek, Daniel Sparre, and Gerrit Fauser, with nearly 3,700 spectators cheering them on. With that, coach Hans Kossmann's team ended up finishing the season ranking 12th on the league table.

Manager Charly Fliegau is now looking forward in hopes of putting together a strong team for next season, which starts on September 13. Online season ticket sales open on May 6.



Gimme five! Martina Müller (right) wishes Pia-Sophie Wolter good luck in the upcoming Champions League games against Lyon.



3 Questions for...



Soccer fan: Jochen Sengpiehl (50) has served as Head of Marketing for the Volkswagen brand since September 2017.

Sengpiehl: "We Want to Convey Our Values"

1 Mr. Sengpiehl, Volkswagen is currently running its first advertising campaign with the national team. Except for the T-Roc, which is shown briefly on several occasions, our models don't appear in the TV spot. Why not?

For one thing, the purpose of the campaign is to express our fundamental understanding of soccer. We want to convey the values we share with soccer that are particularly important to us: responsibility, team spirit, equality, and trust – values that play a major role both in soccer and at Volkswagen. There are a lot of overlaps there. We want to use this initial campaign to bring home to fans that Volkswagen is the German Football Association's new partner, which means it is also a partner to all of soccer in Germany.

2 The campaign's motto is "Soccer is for all of us." What is this meant to portray?

From the start, we've stressed again and again the fact that it's not just the national team that we want to support. Although the national team players do serve as the figureheads of German soccer, they ultimately only represent the tip of the iceberg. We want to support soccer at every level: men and women, professionals and amateurs, kids and adults. Not to mention the thousands of volunteers who work so hard for our teams, and without whom none of this would be possible. From youth soccer coaches, to groundskeepers, to parents who organize the carpool schedule. If they weren't there working so hard to lay the foundations, there's no chance our national team would be what it is today.

3 In addition to the German Football Association, Volkswagen also sponsors a lot of other national teams worldwide. It's also partnered with the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA). Why is soccer so important to Volkswagen?

Soccer remains the world's biggest platform for communication. 280 million people watched the last European Cup final on television in 2016 alone. We want to take advantage of this platform to present ourselves as a modern, innovative company – and to show the world our latest models, from the Golf 8 to the ID. When soccer fans think about mobility, we want them to automatically think of us.



Closing shot: Fans, youth players, and volunteers surround the national team.

Behind the Scenes of the New TV Spot

On camera: *inside* goes backstage with German national soccer team players

Soccer is for all of us" – this is the motto followed by the first advertising campaign now being launched by Volkswagen as the German Football Association's new partner. The centerpiece of the campaign is a 45-second TV spot that will air on multiple German television channels over the next few weeks.

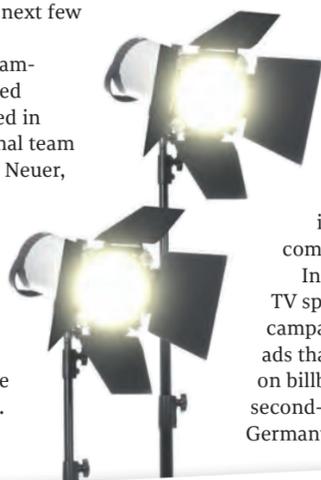
At the heart of the campaign, which was created by DBB, an agency based in Berlin, are seven national team players. Goalie Manuel Neuer, midfielder Leroy Sané, and the rest of the group take the field at Olympiastadion in Berlin alongside numerous fans, young players and volunteers. There, the pose for a large group photo.

The TV spot was filmed over three days

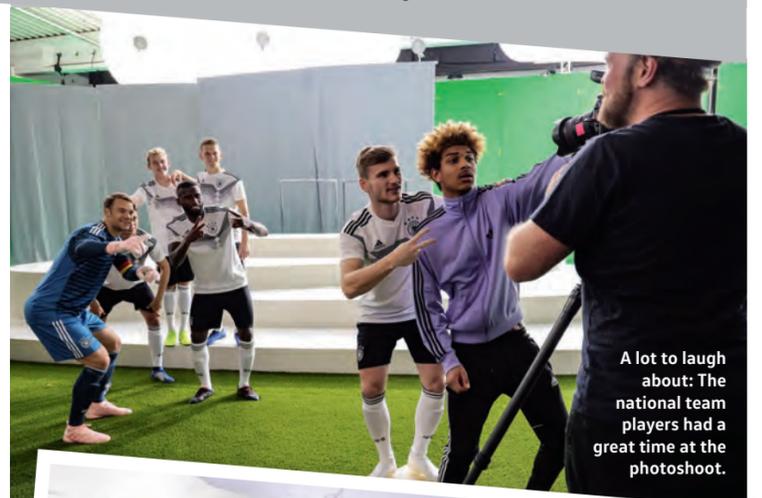
late last year. In the end, director Markus Walter and his crew had a terabyte (or 1,000 gigabytes) of film material to sort through.

More than 250 performers and extras were involved, filming in eleven different locations. The scenes in which the national team players appear were filmed in a hall on the Porsche premises in Leipzig. Experts added the Berlin Olympiastadion backdrop in afterwards using computer technology.

In addition to the TV spot, the 360-degree campaign will feature ads that will be displayed on billboards in first- and second-league cities in Germany. The campaign will also run online, in particular on soccer websites and Volkswagen's own media channels.



Shooting the commercial: Even national team coach Joachim Löw (right) was there.



A lot to laugh about: The national team players had a great time at the photoshoot.



Filming on set in a hall at Porsche in Leipzig: The Berlin Olympiastadion backdrop was added in afterwards on the computer.



Team jackets with the Volkswagen logo: Players on the national team wore them for the first time when shooting in Leipzig.

An Exclusive Look at the New Spot

The TV spot will begin airing on Friday, March 8, on German TV. Starting on February 6, Volkswagen employees will have the opportunity to have an exclusive look before the ad airs through the Volkswagen Portal.



Soccer is for all of us: that is the campaign slogan featuring on billboards across Germany.

Win Tickets to the International Game at the Volkswagen Arena with **inside**

We're giving away 50 pairs of tickets to the international friendly between Germany and Serbia

Just two weeks to go until the Volkswagen Arena in Wolfsburg hosts its second international soccer match. The German national eleven will be taking on Serbia on Wednesday, March 20 at 8:45 pm. Head Coach Joachim Löw is counting on the support of the Wolfsburg public for the team's first international match of the year.

"I promise that we will be doing everything in our power to put on a good show for the spectators," notes the 59-year-old. For his team, the match in Wolfsburg is an all-important warm up ahead of the clash against the Netherlands in Amsterdam just four days later. This match is all about clocking up points to qualify for the World Cup. Germany's qual-

ifying group also includes Belarus, Estonia, and Northern Ireland.

"For us, this year is also about getting a team together for Euro 2020," explains Löw, who will also be taking advantage of the trip to Wolfsburg to enjoy a tour of the Volkswagen plant with his players.

GIVEAWAY

inside is giving Volkswagen employees the chance to win one of 50 pairs of tickets for the Germany vs Serbia game. If you would like to take part, email your name, team number, and telephone number to fussball@volkswagen.de. The competition closes at 12 noon on Monday, March 18. Terms and conditions can be found on the Volkswagen Portal.

For those who don't fancy their chances in the giveaway, tickets will also be available on pre-sale - including in the online shop for the German Football Association at www.dfb.de/tickets



A peek inside the exhibition: Volkswagen playfully showcases its soccer connections.

At the Plants: Soccer-Themed Exhibition

What do the German national soccer team, VfL Wolfsburg, and Kickers Emden have in common? All three are sponsored by Volkswagen. A traveling exhibition designed by the Volkswagen Sports Communications team allows employees to experience the full extent of our soccer sponsorship. The exhibition will be opening on March 11 in the BT10 foyer at the Wolfsburg plant. After making pit-stops in the company restaurant "Oase" (March 18-22) and in Hall 90b of the Technical Development department (March 25-29), it will then make its way on a tour of all German Volkswagen plants.

In addition to a variety of interesting facts, the exhibition will offer a whole host of fun activities, including a pretend penalty shoot-out where employees can put their best foot forward, and a quiz to test their football knowledge. There will even be a screen showing the new ad that Volkswagen filmed with the German national team.

GENEVA

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Geneva International Motor Show 2019

Volkswagen showcases product innovations

The 89th International Motor Show will be taking place in Geneva from March 7-17. Brands such as Volkswagen, Audi, SEAT, SKODA,

Bentley, Bugatti, Lamborghini, and Porsche will be in attendance to showcase their latest products. A project team of 20 people worked on the exhibition

for the Volkswagen Passenger Cars brand for over a year, with many other specialists also getting involved. The highlights of the stand, which spans over

3,000 square meters, include the Passat facelift, the T-Roc R, the Touareg V8 TDI, and the ID. Buggy concept. *inside* gives us a closer look at these vehicles.

What's New About the Passat¹?

Zero emissions in the city along with more infotainment and assistance systems

The latest Passat facelift is one of the many showcases appearing at the Geneva International Motor Show. The update to the mid-range model from Volkswagen

features a number of on-board innovations. These include the new infotainment system, which ensures the vehicle is always online as required. The additional assistance systems

promise even greater safety, while the plug-in hybrid Passat GTE² can rely on its electric operation to stay on the road even longer going forward.



Capacitive steering wheel:

It responds to the touch of the driver and checks their fitness to drive. In the event of an emergency, assistance systems like "Emergency Assist" will take over and bring the vehicle safely to a stop.



Permanently connected with the third generation of the Modular Infotainment Toolkit (MIB3):

As well as enhanced navigation services with real-time information, this enables brand new technologies and services, such as music streaming capabilities, internet radio, natural (online-based) voice control, and the seamless integration of the "Volkswagen We" online services.



"Travel Assist":

The IQ.DRIVE system combines all of the assistance systems: the traffic jam assistant including roadworks assistant, the predictive distance-regulating assistant ACC, and the lane assistant. This allows the Passat to reach speeds of up to 210 km/h almost entirely automatically.



"IQ.LIGHT – LED matrix headlights":

The innovative light technology offers better vision and therefore added safety. It was previously only available for the current Touareg model.



Larger battery in plug-in hybrid Passat GTE:

Its energy capacity has increased by more than 30 percent. The fully electric range has also increased accordingly to 55 kilometers in the new WLTP cycle. This corresponds to around 70 kilometers according to the NEDC.

GENEVA

T-Roc R¹: A True Sports Car

Sporty SUV celebrates its premiere: Performance for road and racetrack

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7-17 MARCH 2019

Volkswagen presents a true sports car at the Geneva International Motor Show: Boasting 221 kW / 300 bhp, the T-Roc R concept is almost ready for production and is the most powerful derivative of the crossover series launched in 2017. It accelerates from a standstill to 100 km/h in just 4.9 seconds. The R model also stands out visually. The newly designed grille features the obligatory "R" motif. Chrome-effect mirror caps, black grained and slightly flared wheel arches, and the black brake calipers, emphasize the car's sporty ambitions from the get go.

According to Nicolas Förster

(product spokesperson for the T-Roc R): "The new T-Roc R was developed and tested by Volkswagen R. Volkswagen plant driver Benjamin Leuchter supported us with his racing driver expertise with the result being a vehicle that boasts real performance." The four-cylinder TSI engine with a cubic capacity of 2.0 liters provides 221 kW and a torque of 400 Nm.

It also features sports suspension to ensure optimum grip on the road. The standard progressive steering provides a decisive contribution to the vehicle's agile handling. The available driving profiles also include a special Race mode to facilitate an exceptionally sporty driving experi-

ence. The Launch Control guarantees traction-optimized acceleration for maximum performance on the road.

The Volkswagen T-Roc R's exterior serves to emphasize its sporty characteristics. According to Förster, "we have specially designed an R-specific front bumper for the SUV in the same color as the vehicle. Large air intakes allow the engine to really breathe." The rear also features bumpers in the same color as the car itself, including aesthetic air outlets and a contrasting diffuser. The left and right double-flow exhaust systems are reserved for the R model. The vehicle is fitted with 18-inch alloy wheels as standard. Customers can also request body



Sporty design: Bumper and double-flow exhaust system.



Product spokesperson Nicolas Förster: "Our vehicle boasts real performance."



Offering the necessary support: Sports seats with R logo.

paint in Lapiz Blue Metallic, which is exclusive to R models. There is even the option to combine a contrasting black roof with all available color variants.

According to Förster, "the sporty design also continues inside. The stainless-steel sills bear the R logo and the motif can also be found embroidered on the backrest of the sports seats. These seats feature a semi-integrated headrest, which

combines with the backrest to form a continuous surface. In combination with the side walls on display, the seats give the driver the support they need to pull off sporty maneuvers in the T-Roc R."

Additional individuality is provided by optional extras such as leather upholstery, the exclusive R interior paint finish, and 19-inch light-alloy wheels with 235/40 R19 tires.

World Premiere: New Touareg V8 TDI²

The most powerful diesel SUV made by a German manufacturer.

The new flagship of the Volkswagen brand celebrates its world premiere in Geneva in the form of the Touareg V8 TDI. With a capacity of 310 kW/421 bhp, this is the most powerful diesel SUV made by a German manufacturer. The maximum torque reaches the level of sports cars: 900 newton meters. The SUV reaches a top speed of 250 km/h and accelerates from 0 to 100 km/h in 4.9 seconds. Like all Touareg models, the V8 version complies with the Euro 6d-TEMP emissions standard. The Touareg V8 TDI will be launched at the end of May.

In addition to sportiness and dynamics, the V8 TDI also offers premium aesthetics. Buyers can choose between the standard design packages of "Elegance" and "Atmosphere." "Elegance" features a technical interior dominated by metal finishes and cool colors. "Atmosphere" offers a warm interior characterized by wood features and natural tones. The seats and door panels in both versions are finished in leather as standard.

The interior of the Touareg V8 TDI is characterized by screens with digital display and control elements, tanned leather, as well as aluminum and chrome details. Most notable of all is the use of wood. Taking the "Atmosphere" design package as an example, the entire width of the dashboard is spanned by a narrow curved beam of wood – a single piece of ash that follows the shape of the dashboard.

Unlike the models with V6 engines, the Touareg V8 TDI also comes with air suspension, an electrically opening and closing trunk lid, comfortable seating, an anti-theft warning system, stainless-steel pedals, and the "Light & Visibility" package as standard. In addition, the V8 will be released with 19-inch "Tirano"

alloy wheels instead of 18-inch wheels.

The product range also includes state-of-the-art assistance and chassis systems. Additional security is afforded by the night vision support, which uses

a thermal imaging camera to detect people and animals in the dark. There is even a "traffic jam and roadworks

assistant" that enables semi-automated steering and lane-keeping, accelerating, and braking up to 60 km/h.



¹ Concept car.

² Near-production-ready concept car.

GENEVA

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7-17 MARCH 2019

110 Years of Bugatti

Anniversary vehicle presented in Geneva



Sandblasted and hand polished: The fuel cap of the Chiron Sport "110 Ans Bugatti."



Tricolore: Bugatti emphasizes its French origin.

This year sees Bugatti celebrate the 110th anniversary of the Volkswagen Group's sports car brand by releasing a special model. The Geneva International Motor Show is where the Alsaticans will be presenting the Chiron Sport¹ "110 Ans Bugatti," which is limited to a run of just 20 vehicles. The vehicle underlines the French origin of the luxury brand. The Chiron Sport boasts 1,500

bhp and is capable of top speeds of 420 km/h. The anniversary vehicle features two colors: "Steel Blue" matt to the rear of the vehicle and "Steel Blue Carbon" to the front. The sandblasted and hand-polished aluminum fuel filler cap is adorned with the "110 Ans Bugatti" logo engraved into the bodywork. Another visual highlight is the French national flag, which features at several points on the body

and in the interior.

Since 1909, Bugatti has developed into one of the most fascinating names in automotive history. The Bugatti legend was brought to life by the company's founder Ettore Bugatti and his son Jean, whose designs and constructions sought the perfect synthesis of art and technology. The brand has been part of the Volkswagen Group since 1998.



110 years of Bugatti: Chiron Sport "110 Ans Bugatti" anniversary vehicle.

Fully Electric: The ID. Buggy

Concept based on the modular electric drive toolkit



Klaus Bischoff,
Head Designer for the
Volkswagen brand.



Fully electric and based on the MEB:
The ID. Buggy concept.

A real crowd pleaser: Volkswagen presents the electric ID. Buggy at the International Motor Show in Geneva. The concept is inspired by the popular US beach buggies and based on the Beetle chassis. The new edition is based on the modular electric drive toolkit (MEB).

"A buggy is more than just a car. It's an automotive lifestyle. And this is reflected in the new ID. Buggy, which embodies a modern, non-retro interpretation of a classic. But above all, it shows the emotional side of electromobility," says Klaus Bischoff, Head Designer for the Volkswagen brand.

Like its predecessors that were popular until the 1980s, the electric buggy does without a fixed roof and conventional doors. In addition, the free-standing wheels with off-road tires and open side skirts are also reminiscent of the classic design.

The new MEB-based concept shows that the all-electric platform isn't just for mass production models. Customized small series are also possible.



"One of Us": Benjamin Leuchter Enters World Touring Car Championship

German racing driver in the Volkswagen Golf GTI TCR¹

In 2019, Volkswagen and Sébastien Loeb Racing will enter the FIA World Touring Car Cup (WTCR) with four drivers. The only German in the Golf GTI TCR will be Benjamin Leuchter. The 31-year-old had his first contact with Volkswagen when he was still a child. Since 2009, he has also been closely connected to the Group in his professional life.

Benjamin Leuchter has "gasoline in his veins." Cars, and especially the Volkswagen brand, have been a part of his life from a young age. Leuchter: "I remember that my mother drove a Golf II GTI. Her brother was at the first ever GTI meeting in Wörthersee. It was actually impossible to avoid Volkswagen. So it's no wonder that my first car ended up being a Golf VI GTI."

The Duisburger celebrated his first motorsport successes in karting as a teenager. Subsequently he started driving formula racecars and various long-distance championships. In 2009, "Benny" Leuchter first crossed paths with Volkswagen in a professional capacity. Since then, he has been working as an instructor at Driving Experience. Leuchter: "We host driving training sessions, driving events, and passenger rides in racecars. I also provide product training to sales reps." His experiences with the various vehicles have often influenced the development of passenger cars by the Volkswagen brand. In future, he will also be involved in development at Volkswagen R GmbH. "Benny" can also frequently be found at driving events for Bentley, Bugatti,



On the road together in the World Touring Car Championships: Benjamin Leuchter with his Golf GTI TCR.

Lamborghini, and Škoda.

Leuchter: "I identified with

Volkswagen from day one. When I was able to drive a GTI in motor-racing for the first time in 2016, everything just fit together." In his first year at TCR Germany, he immediately took fifth place, making him the best Volkswagen pilot. In the same year, Benjamin Leuchter also set

the lap record for front-wheel-drive, series-production vehicles on the Nürburgring-Nordschleife in a Golf GTI Clubsport S.

2019 may well be the highpoint of the racing driver's career, who has held the title of Volkswagen brand ambassador and motorsports representative since last year. Leuchter: "Sticking with Volkswagen despite receiving other offers has paid off. Now my dream is coming true: I'm going to compete in a world championship in the highest class of touring car racing."

He knows his vehicle, the Golf GTI TCR, inside out. He was involved in the development program as early as 2015, and since then, has been part

Facts and Figures Benjamin Leuchter

Date of birth	11/22/1987
Place of birth	Duisburg (D)
Height/Weight	165 cm/60 kg (5 ft. 5 in./132 lb.)
Motorsport	Since 2001
Hobbies	Karting, poker, CrossFit

of the winter testing during further development, as well as numerous races. The aim for Leuchter's first season in the WTCR: "I've only driven two of the tracks in the racing schedule only once and I'm a newcomer to this series, but I will do everything I can to succeed, and I think I can pull a few highlights out of my sleeve." Laughing, he adds: "So far I've been the best Volkswagen pilot in every season – so it would be a shame to break the tradition."



Test Program for ID. R is Successfully Launched

On the Circuito de Almería in Andalusia, the preparatory stage for the world record attempt on the Nürburgring-Nordschleife in the fully electric ID. R has begun. Driver Romain Dumas completed the first test drives in Spain. In the summer, he wants to beat the current best time for electric vehicles (6:45.900 minutes) on the 20.832-kilometer racetrack in the Eifel.

"After the functional tests in Oschersleben, the first test drives in Spain also went to plan," says Volkswagen Motorsport Director Sven Smeets. "It is very exciting to experience the ID. R on a real racetrack after its record-breaking performance at Pikes Peak. Optimizing an electric sports car for the Nürburgring is a great new challenge for our entire team. We are all looking forward to testing the power of electromobility on the legendary Nordschleife." The ID. R is the sporty forerunner of the new ID. product family, with which Volkswagen will offer a wide range of fully electric vehicles from 2020 onwards.

The focus of the four-day test drives in Spain was the adaptation of the software that controls the balance between the mechanical brake and recuperation on-board the ID. R. "On a secure racetrack like the Nürburgring-Nordschleife, you can get much closer to the limit than during the hill climb at Pikes Peak," says Romain Dumas, describing the differences. "I can brake harder and accelerate more aggressively. Adapting the software will fine-tune the performance of the electric motors for our new record attempt."



T-Cross Production Launch Worldwide: Four Plants, One Model

Series Director Andreas Krüger on the new SUV, teamwork, and positive responses

The Volkswagen brand's SUV family gets another new addition – the T-Cross. The new model, based on the Polo, combines the benefits of modular strategy and series organization, and will go on sale in Germany and Europe in April. **inside** spoke to the director of the G1 series, Andreas Krüger.

In your opinion, what's special about the new T-Cross?

One of the best features of this ve-

hicle is its functionality. The variety of assistance systems is unique in its vehicle class. Here, we're taking full advantage of the Modular Transverse Toolkit (MQB). For example, it features a surroundings monitoring system, lane assistant, and lane changing assistant as standard – and all that at a very reasonable price-performance ratio. We placed a lot of importance on the flexibility of the interior during development. To give just one example: The rear

seat can be moved by five and a half inches. This lets customers increase either the space for passengers in the rear seat or luggage space. As a result, the T-Cross has the biggest trunk in its class.

Why is the T-Cross being produced in four different locations worldwide?

There are two reasons for that: Firstly, demand was high from the very start. That's why we're planning to produce the T-Cross in large numbers. In order to serve all our customers in good time, we need the capacity of four plants. Secondly, this decentralized production is the result of our series structure, in which we are handing more responsibility to the regional divisions. Our local specialists know best what customers in different markets want. For example, in China and South America, the T-Cross is three and a half inches longer than in Europe.

In three of four locations where the T-Cross will be produced, production was started almost simultaneously. How did you achieve such a challenging task?

This, too, is thanks to our series

organization. Our recipe for success is teamwork. The headquarters in Wolfsburg, the sites in Spain and Brazil, and the two Chinese plants, Anting, and Changchun have worked together extremely effectively. For that I would like to say a big "well done and thank you" to our teams worldwide.

The T-Cross has been available for pre-order since December. How has the new SUV been received by customers so far?

The number of pre-orders has exceeded expectations. Many customers have ordered the T-Cross without even having seen it. This demonstrates enormous trust in our brands and products. We are expressing our thanks with a "First Edition." Customers who have pre-ordered will receive their vehicles before the official market launch.

When will the T-Cross be available in dealerships and what's on the schedule before then?

As for the start of production, we are on track for a coordinated market launch in all the regions. The official launch is at the end of March. In

Germany and Europe, the T-Cross should be available in dealerships from late-April. Beforehand, journalists and bloggers from around the world will have the chance to put the new model to the test in Mallorca this March. We can't wait to see how the media will react. Test drives of the camouflaged T-Cross by journalists have already elicited a very positive response.



Andreas Krüger (51)

has worked for Volkswagen since 1991. After completing his studies in electronics and industrial engineering, he started out as an assembly planner in the Wolfsburg production facility. He was subsequently stationed at plants in Germany and abroad. Krüger switched from Production to Development as Head of Prototyping. He's been in charge of the Small series since September 2017. Krüger is married and has two children. In his free time, he goes jogging and watches VfL Wolfsburg soccer games.



Series Director Andreas Krüger praises the functionality and flexibility of the T-Cross.

¹ Golf GTI TCR racing version.



Volunteering for Aids-Hilfe: Volkswagen apprentice Selda Eraslan (right) with Angela Biese.

“Think Social”: Apprentices Volunteer for Charity

Eleven business apprentices at the Wolfsburg site have supported charities once a week. As part of the “Think Social” project, they gained experience in facilities for children or the elderly, as well as animal and environmental charities.

“Voluntary work is very important to personal development. We hope that it will inspire these young people to continue to get involved and engage in volunteering activities,” says Ralf Thomas, Head of Volkswagen Pro Ehrenamt. The apprentices agree too. Their unanimous opinion, after receiving certificates in recognition of their efforts: They would do it again.

“My first choice was to volunteer for Aids-Hilfe. I learned a lot in my time there and even started my own prevention project. I will definitely continue to volunteer and stay in touch with the team there,” says Selda Eraslan (22).

If you have any questions about Think Social, please write to **VWAG R: WOB, Think Social**.

Employee with a Sense for Compressed Air

How the “Sonaphone” helps find undiscovered leaks in the Wolfsburg press shop



Leaks in compressed air lines are a problem. Maintenance worker Olaf Thor is a tinkerer, and loves solving problems. Now, as a team member of the Press Shop’s technology center in Wolfsburg, he has ensured that leaks can be detected using a digital ultrasound device.

The problem

Compressed air is an expensive resource and plays an important role in the plant: A large drop in pressure is not only wasteful, but can even put the production process at risk. All the more annoying if a significant portion escapes unnoticed via hairline cracks in weld seams, valves, or pipes connections.

These weak points usually can’t be spotted with the naked eye. Sometimes they can be felt or heard, provided that the environment isn’t too noisy to hear the hiss of escaping air. But that is almost never the case in the press shop. The result: A loss that amounted to around 1,200 liters of compressed air per minute in the second half of 2018 alone. And that’s just in one part of the Wolfsburg press shop, Press Shop 1.

The solution

The team at the technology center did some real detective work, before hitting upon a digital ultrasound device. The team quickly realized: This could be used to detect leaking air. “The Sonaphone can also be used



Tinkerer: Olaf Thor at his workstation in the Press Shop technology center.



Measurement: Leaking air can be detected with a digital ultrasound device.



Heike Ripke, Head of Maintenance



Andreas Hoppenbrink, Works Councilor

to measure noise from a flowing current,” explains Olaf Thor. “Just like escaping air, these sounds are hardly perceptible to the human ear.” This is because the escaping air makes a sound that is in the ultrasonic range. However, the Sonaphone is able to detect these sound waves.

The device, which resembles a large smartphone, is connected via cable to a sound sensor, hardly bigger than an ordinary ballpen. A probe

then localizes the source of the noise and measures the amount of leaking air in seconds.

The device then generates a report. An integrated camera makes it possible to clearly label the leak – a great help to the repair team responsible for repairing the damage.

Heike Ripke, Head of Maintenance, Mechanics and Hydraulics in the Press Shop, says: “The Sonaphone detects even the smallest leaks,

where human hearing wouldn’t stand a chance. This is how innovative technologies help set up our press shop for the long-term future.” Works Councilor Andreas Hoppenbrink says: “This great idea is another fantastic example of how the employees themselves are the best experts. There is so much knowledge and creativity in the workforce of the press shop and other departments that we can achieve a lot more improvements.”



Symbolic key handover: This natural gas bus from Scania will transport guests from the Autostadt to guided tours of the plant.

Natural Gas Bus Transports Visitors to Plant

Autostadt starts operating bus from Scania

A gas-powered bus from the brand Scania now offers an additional transport option at the Autostadt: The bus will transport guests to the starting point for the guided tours of Wolfsburg, and make service trips for the Autostadt and for Volkswagen. After presenting the first Scania Interlink bus in Germany with a Euro 6 natural gas engine, Roland Clement, CEO of the Autostadt, said: “Our goal with the brand’s first CNG bus was to make a statement for modern, sustainable mobility in the Autostadt. We purposefully selected the strong branding for the bus so that the new Scania CNG would make a striking

impact on the road, and to draw attention to its innovative technology and reduced CO₂ emissions.” Luc Moulin, Director of Bus Sales at Scania in Germany and Austria, remarked: “Scania buses stand for environmentally friendly passenger transport. This includes drive solutions like natural gas and biogas.” Compared to a similar bus with a diesel engine or a fossil natural gas engine, the new bus delivers CO₂ savings of up to 15 percent, explains Moulin. The bus, powered by a natural gas engine, has been specially produced with 14,30 meters (469 feet) in length and 65 seats. It has a range of approx. 400 kilometers.

Focus on Healthy Eating

Chief Human Resources Officer Kilian learns about the selection at the salad bar and deli counter

The currywurst is one of the most popular dishes in Volkswagen cafeterias. But demand is growing for salads, fruits, juices, and freshly prepared wraps. During a visit to the cafeteria in the brand tower of the Wolfsburg plant, Chief Human Resources Officer Gunnar Kilian shifted the focus onto the available selection of healthy meals. Wolfgang Pick and Karsten

Bogun, both managing directors of the Service Factory; Martin Cordes, Head of Gastronomy, Hotels, and Catering; and Ralf Kroschel, Head of Corporate Catering at Wolfsburg, explain the options at the salad bar and deli counter, which serves small meals to-go.

“The employees who work in our cafeteria do a great job. They put together a very diverse menu,”

says Kilian. “It’s great that they’re expanding it, because demand for fresh food, fruit, and salad is growing.”

Ralf Kroschel says: “Many of our restaurant visitors don’t know that we offer so many fresh products. Classics like currywurst and meatloaf are as popular as ever. But almost a third of employees are now choosing vegetarian dishes.”



In the cafeteria of the brand tower: Chief Human Resources Officer Gunnar Kilian (fifth from left) and Ralf Kroschel, Head of Corporate Catering at Wolfsburg, with the Service Factory team.

NEW SERIES

DO I KNOW YOU?

We bump into each other in the parking lot, on the way to the plant in Wolfsburg, or in the cafeteria, but we often don't know very much about each other. But that's all set to change, as inside will now be introducing Wolfsburg employees in this new feature.



Carola Simic (55) from Köthen, at Volkswagen for 22 years.



MY PREVIOUS JOBS

I studied hotel management in Köthen in the 1980s. Then I went to work at the "Hühner-Rudi" snack bar that used to exist in Wolfsburg. My path to Volkswagen started at the Blaue Saal ("Blue Room"). That's where the casino is now. After that, I starting working at the Panorama cafeteria. My dream came true when I finally got a job at "Bella Vista."



MY CURRENT JOB

I work the checkout at the Bella Vista cafeteria at the office block by the park (BT10) and help prepare the breakfast buffet. My motto is: "The customer is king."



MY CAR

I drive a silver Polo. It may be 15 years old already, but I feel right at home in it. My "little one" loves our annual tour through the Spreewald. It almost knows the way off by heart.



MY HOBBIES

In my free time, I volunteer at the Wolfsburg Hospice. I am currently doing a one-year course to become a palliative care assistant. I want to accompany people on their final journey and relieve their fears about death. My faith gives me the strength to do it.



MY DREAM

When I retire, I would like to start a multigenerational houseshare. It will be a house where young people and old people live together. I'm already looking forward to this project.



Gunnar Kilian (fourth from left) and Bernd Osterloh (fifth from left): The Chief Human Resources Officer and Works Council Chairman opened the new fire station.

Fire Station Is Officially Opened

Gunnar Kilian and Bernd Osterloh inaugurated the new home of the plant fire department

The new plant fire department in Wolfsburg on Strasse 37 has been officially opened. Chief Human Resources Officer Gunnar Kilian and Works Council Chairman Bernd Osterloh, who arrived at the event in the "Volkswagen Move by Service Factory Shuttle," inaugurated the new station. The move from the old fire station near the East Gate took place shortly before Christmas.

Kilian: "I'm impressed by the new fire station. The short construction time and the moderate cost development were in part made possible by the close cooperation between the planners and the future users of the building. Our colleagues developed the specifications themselves, in order to incorporate their individuals needs and work requirements in the design."

Osterloh took the opportunity to praise the fire department for its work: "A site with 70,000 employees is full of hazards and risks. That's why it's reassuring to know that there's a troupe of well-qualified and equipped



The plant fire department helped design the new fire station: (back row from left) Markus Isensee, Jens Lankau, (front row from left) Viktor Sibilski, Werner Weiss, Jan Ahrens.

fire fighters and paramedics at our service in an emergency. Because of you, everyone at the site is kept safe, and feels safe. We would like to thank you for that today."

Niko Meinke-Marquardt (Head of the Plant Fire Department at Wolfsburg): "Our new location in the middle of the plant provides ideal conditions. Within five minutes, we

can be anywhere in the plant in the event of an emergency. This meets the legal requirements and ensures everyone's safety."

In addition to space for vehicles and materials, the fire station has five workshops, 25 break rooms, kitchens, and a sports hall, as well as training and office rooms. The workplace has also been made more ergonomic by

including employees in the design process. For example, ceiling cranes and extensive automations in the respiratory protection workshop will facilitate lifting of heavy objects.



Plant Fire Department in Numbers

Fire department employees	100
Vehicles	30
Fire station area	7,500 m²
Energy saved by new building	80%
Dispatches per day	15
Fire extinguishers in the plant	16,000
Response time from alarm	45-60 sec.



After signing the contract (from left): Tim Schumacher (VfL Wolfsburg), Julius von Ingelheim (Regional Strategy and Site Development Manager at Volkswagen), Hans-Dieter Brand (Neuland), Dennis Weilmann (Wolfsburg City).



Conversion project: Behind the historically listed facade, there will be modern studios, labs, and offices.



The Market Hall

The market hall building was opened in 1960 as part of the Hertie department store. The extension served as the food department. After Hertie closed in 2003, the department store was demolished, while the striking extension was left intact and converted into a market hall. However, it was unsuccessful. Today, the facade is historically listed, except for the north side.

From Market Hall to Digital Hub

Wolfsburg: Some Volkswagen employees will also move into the building in the city center

It has long been the subject of discussion. Now it's been decided: The market hall in the Wolfsburg city center will be converted into a digital hub. After receiving the green light from the city council, the rental agreement has been signed. The cooperative partners are Volkswagen, the City of Wolfsburg, and the VfL Wolfsburg soccer club. The new building will be opened at the end of this year. Volkswagen employees will be among those moving into the building.

The plans for the building near the Wolfsburg central railway station sound ambitious. "The market hall

will become the living room for digitalization in Wolfsburg," says Volkswagen Project Manager Thomas Abrell. In 2016, the city announced that it had plans to become a model digital city. Together with Volkswagen, it started the #WolfsburgDigital initiative. "The market hall will not only be a visible symbol in the city center," says Abrell.

After opening, there will be a space for events. There will also be studios for the production of films and augmented reality. The VfL Wolfsburg wants to build a digital soccer field on an adjacent green space, with features such as sensors

that measure shooting force. There are also plans to build a public workshop called Maker Space, where the public will be able to test 3D printers and practice robotics.

"Digitalization is an important future topic for Volkswagen," says Julius von Ingelheim, Regional Strategy and Site Development Manager. "It's not only about creating digital infrastructure or new forms of mobility. The market hall will be a centrally located meeting point for everyone interested in digital innovation. It will make an important contribution to our status as a smart city."



Autostadt: 40 Million Visitors since opening

40 million visitors since opening in 2000 – Autostadt in Wolfsburg reached this impressive milestone in mid-February. “Autostadt is unique and it clearly captures people’s imagination. Visitors from the area, many of them Volkswagen employees, love it, as do guests from across Germany and from countries around the world,” says Gunnar Kilian, Chairman of the Autostadt Supervisory Board and Volkswagen Board Member for Human Resources.



Gunnar Kilian, Chairman of the Supervisory Board at Autostadt

Looking back: Autostadt has far surpassed its original aim of attracting one million visitors a year. After welcoming a million visitors from June to December in its opening

year (2000), more than 2 million guests have visited the attraction each year on average since. “We make it possible for our visitors to experience the history, the present, and the future of mobility. Visitors can also discover first-hand the topics that are significant to the Volkswagen Group and its brands – and can do so in an inspiring yet relaxing venue,” explains Roland Clement, CEO of Autostadt.

The core business of Autostadt is vehicle handovers: Around 150,000 customers collected their new cars from the customer center last year.



Roland Clement, Autostadt CEO

However, Autostadt has also become one of Germany’s most popular travel destinations even for guests who are not taking a new car home with them. Visitors treasure the theme and experience park as a cultural venue and an accredited non-formal place of learning.

The seasonal productions in summer and winter are particularly popular with visitors. 455,000 visitors attended “Traumhafte Winterwelt” recently.

Free Wi-Fi at Braunschweig Airport

“Airport Free Wi-Fi” is now one of the Wi-Fi connections displayed on the list at Braunschweig-Wolfsburg Airport. The free service is available to all passengers in the entire departures area, with no time limit.

For passengers, that means hassle-free surfing before take-off. “Free Wi-Fi access is, by now, standard in passenger airports. So by doing this, we are satisfying a wish that was particularly important to our business travelers,” says the airport’s Managing Director Michael Schwarz.

Objective: A Paragon of Productivity

Site symposium in Wolfsburg: The plant aims to save around €186 million by 2020

A 25-per-cent boost to productivity by 2020: At the site symposium in Wolfsburg, plant management and employees presented comprehensive measures to the board and works council. These efficiency measures are part of the agreements under the Zukunftspakt (“Pact for the Future”), which aims to improve productivity by 25 per cent between 2016 and 2020. That will mean savings of €186 million for the Wolfsburg location, making the parent plant the most efficient site in the Volkswagen brand’s production network. These five measures will help to achieve that:

Transport robots

In body construction, driverless transport systems ensure faster provision of materials. The 23 fully automated transport robots boost productivity in body construction logistics by 7 per cent.

Automated screwing systems

A new robot station can autonomously screw up to 30 screws for engine mounts, shock absorbers, towing hitches, seatbelts and mass nuts in one work step. This improves quality and makes work easier for employees. These screws had previously been processed manually.

141 best practices

Measures such as the robot station are included in a group-wide catalog of methods that presents best practices. Tried-and-tested efficiency measures are thereby implemented across the global production network. In 2018, 141 best practice solutions from the Wolfsburg plant were included in the Volkswagen brand’s method catalogue.

Ergonomics and efficiency

Assembly seats, lifting aids, and special tools are making work in vehicle assembly more ergonomic. Employees have all the required tools and materials close at hand on a synchronously running cart. Experts call this concept the “surgeon-and-nurse principle.” It shortens walking movements by up to 30 steps.

Faster production

The start of Golf 8 production was also discussed at the symposium. Preparations are in full swing and are on schedule. Streamlined processes mean that production will take around 4 per cent less time than previously.



More efficiency at the Wolfsburg site: The group and brand boards and members of the group works council learned about innovative solutions such as the driverless transport system, which ensures faster material supply.



Plant Manager Stefan Loth

“Over the last few months we have analyzed around 700 work steps in more than 400 workshops in order to leverage the remaining efficiency reserves.”



Synchronously running cart: The necessary tools and materials are always within reach for employees.



Chairman of the Works Council Bernd Osterloh

“The workforce at the Volkswagen plant in Wolfsburg demonstrates great flexibility, always adjusting to the evolving challenges of production.”



Ergonomic seats: Making it easier for the employees assembling car interiors.



Journalists learning about measures for more efficient production on the assembly line: Plant Manager Stefan Loth (left) and Head of Production Andreas Tostmann (right).

Uganda: Employees Helping Children

With Glocal LifeLearn, Iain Fraser and Philipp Lesch are aiming to build an education center

Supporting children in Uganda – that is the aim of Iain Fraser (35) and Philipp Lesch (31). The employees at Volkswagen's Wolfsburg site engage in voluntary work with Glocal LifeLearn and have big plans. Their next project is to establish an educational center in one of the poorest regions of what is in any case a bitterly poor country.

Fraser, who works in Procurement as a PhD candidate on sustainability in supply relationships, and Product Manager Lesch got to know each other during a train journey from Berlin to Wolfsburg. The two commuters soon discovered that they shared a passion for development work, something they had both discovered in their student days. It wasn't long before the topic of Fraser's voluntary work with Glocal LifeLearn came up. Lesch's interest was piqued and he too became a member in 2017.

The charity promotes school education for children in Uganda. The project in the town of Bukedea in the east of the country was launched ten years ago with one sponsored child. Now, 60 boys and girls receive education in semi-private schools

Volkswagen employee Iain Fraser with schoolchildren: He visited aid projects in Uganda three years ago.



Seeing the impact for himself: Fraser (front center) and Glocal LifeLearn colleagues with the children in Uganda. Life in Uganda: The town of Bukedea.

supported by Glocal LifeLearn. "Voluntary work is so much fun when you see that it really achieves something," says Fraser.

He saw the impact it can make for himself three years ago. He emphasizes: "We have no administration expenses. The donations go straight to the children and young people." These children and young people have a strong will. "It's unbelievable how much energy they have. They are keen to change things and to contribute to a better life in their country. Some of them hope to do that by becoming teachers or nurses, for example."

That is where Glocal LifeLearn comes in. Lesch, Fraser, and the other members are aware that young Ugandans have very few opportunities to develop themselves and to learn a

trade close to home once they leave school. The solution: Glocal LifeLearn, in cooperation with a local partner, is building a training facility for nurses and midwives. "We're killing two birds with one stone. We're offering school leavers a chance to take professional training in their own region and, at the same time, we're doing something about the severe lack of medical infrastructure by boosting the health system," explains Lesch.

And how is all this financed? Partly through donations and partly through the support of Germany's Federal Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development. "We've already collected half the €65,000 we need," says Fraser. The New Zealander emphasizes: "I've seen a lot of poverty. But the situation in Uganda is really bad.

Due especially to high HIV mortality rates, the country is full of children without parents – and help is urgently needed."



Glocal LifeLearn

Glocal LifeLearn started in 2009 as an education sponsorship program and was recognized as a charitable organization in 2011. Its members support educational initiatives in Uganda, which is one of the world's poorest countries, with a population of 35 million. Further information at www.glocal-lifelifelearn.org. You can donate at betterplace.org/de/projects/67316



Commuters: Fraser (left) and Lesch got to know each other on the ICE train from Berlin to Wolfsburg.



Coming soon to your office: A mother with her child.

The Office for Parents and Children

Group Logistics has set up a parent-child office in its buildings in Wolfsburg Nordkopf. The aim is to improve the compatibility of family and work for its employees, which is also an objective of Volkswagen AG's Zukunfts-pakt (Pact for the Future).

It's a situation many parents will have experienced: Nursery staff are striking or the nanny is ill and it's almost impossible to find a suitable alternative for the child at short notice. Volkswagen employees now have a new option: Bring the child to the office with them. At Group Logistics there is now an office in which mothers and fathers can work and look after their children at the same time. The office is equipped with painting supplies, Lego blocks, a children's kitchen, and a car tower.

And there is a bed for that all-important nap time. "It quickly became clear that there was real demand for the parent-child office. I am proud of the projects that our staff have been able to implement after a hands-on campaign," says the Head of Group Logistics, Thomas Zernechel.

Last year, Group Logistics started a hands-on campaign on Group Connect. The aim was to make the work spaces and corridors more sustainable and pleasant. In five self-organized working groups, employees collected around 80 ideas and wishes, among them a parent-child office. Supported by Sabine Unger from Personnel Development and Dirk Wagner from the Works Council, Steffi Badur, Marc Pessel, Severine Bonitzke, Doreen Hamburger, and Silke Mann implemented the plan.



Thomas Zernechel, Head of Group Logistics.

The "Shopping Queen" from HR

Herdis Matthäus (34) also impressed presenter Guido Maria Kretschmer with her outfit



At her desk at Volkswagen: HR officer Herdis Matthäus.



Wolfsburg's shopping queens (from left): Mandy Aiuto, Monika Jürs, Gaby Sprenger, Maria Sciaraffia, and Herdis Matthäus.

Volkswagen employee Herdis Matthäus (34) is Wolfsburg's "Shopping Queen," after winning the popular Vox TV show, which was filmed in Wolfsburg for the second time. Two other Volkswagen employees came second and third: Mandy Aiuto (Process Management Pilot Hall) and Maria Sciaraffia (Logistics).

"Lots of people here at Volkswagen come up to me to ask about the show and to congratulate me," says the HR manager. And she is still smitten with the presenter: "Guido Maria Kretschmer is just as warm and likeable in the flesh as he is on screen."

As always on the show, each candidate had four hours and €500 to implement the motto in an original way, from shoes to hair style. "I suspect it must have been the red pants that really put me ahead," says Herdis Matthäus. And to go with those, she spent the money on a black turtle-neck, hair styling, nail polish, and accessories.

That really made a splash!

"I applied by email just for fun and never thought I'd hear back," remembers Herdis Matthäus. But a few months later she received an invite from the producers to appear on the program. And it really happened just as shown on TV: The candidates were picked up from their homes in a pink van and driven to Wolfsburg's stores to start shopping.

"Herdis was a deserving winner because she was single-minded but also warm and sincere," says her fiancé Andrea Russo, who also works at Volkswagen, in Interiors Procurement. Russo reveals the couple's secret: "Shopping is our mutual hobby." Well, he can now say he goes on sprees with a real shopping queen.



Full of praise: Andrea Russo

Components Presents Flexible Charging Station

Volkswagen Group Components looks forward to its first trade fair appearance in Geneva – series production starts in Hanover in 2020



Flexible charging station: The future product was on display in Dresden recently – and is making its first trade show appearance in Geneva (small photo).



First trade fair appearance for the new Group Components brand: The Components division is presenting its flexible fast-charging station, which is an in-house development, to an international audience at the Geneva International Motor Show on March 5–17. The charging station can also be seen before the trade show opens, at Volkswagen’s “Group Night” on the eve of the first press day. The Geneva event is one of the world’s biggest automobile trade shows, attracting around half a million visitors each year. Flexible charging stations also attracted attention at Volkswagen Passenger Cars’ Sustainability Workshop on 15 February in Dresden. Thomas Tiedje from Components Development briefed around 70 journalists on the charging station: “With the flexible

fast-charging station we are making a significant contribution to the topic of sustainability in e-mobility. On the one hand, we are making it possible to charge electric vehicles quickly and effectively. On the other hand, we are developing solutions for recycling, for the second life, of the batteries,” says Tiedje. Under the new battery strategy, Components is taking on overall responsibility for batteries. CEO of Components Thomas Schmall: “Components can, with its flexible charging station, make a major contribution to the development of charging infrastructure as a whole. Series production is starting in Hanover in 2020, and the pilot project will be launched in Wolfsburg this summer. The charging station is a good example of how we are shaping change in Components.” As part of a management info event and the first press briefing by Group Components in Salzgitter last month, Components also presented the flexible charging station to the public – and received an enthusiastic response.



The Kassel plant: Maik Dübener with a disk carrier at the new drying facility.

Online Grocery Service

Braunschweig: New collection point in the plant parking lot

A handy time saver: In cooperation with the “real” supermarket chain, the Braunschweig components plants now offers an online grocery service. Instead of battling through evening traffic and standing in line at the supermarket checkout, employees can order their shopping online and collect it from a pick-up point on the plant parking lot. The service was implemented by Service Factory Project Lead André Scheffel, and is part of the “Employee Service Points” listed in the Zukunftspakt. These are practical, employee-oriented services that are aimed

towards making Volkswagen a more attractive employer. Otto Joos, Head of the Chassis Business Area, Group Components: “I’m delighted that we are offering new services to our employees at various Group locations, making everyday life easier for everyone. The collection point is a great addition to the existing offering.”



Order online – collect right outside the workplace.



Official opening: The new collection point at the plant parking lot in Braunschweig.

Components Protecting the Climate: Cutting CO₂!

330,604 metric tons of CO₂; that is how much the components plants have saved through the Think Blue. Factory environmental program over the last nine years – around the same as all the households in Wolfsburg produce in five years. The components plants have also cut their consumption of water by 270,000 cubic meters and of solvents by 138 metric tons. These statistics cover all the components plants that belonged to Volkswagen Passenger Cars at the end of 2018 (apart from China).

One clever measure came from Kassel: In the past, disk carriers were passed through three conveyor ovens, using a great deal of energy, to dry them. Today, a facility designed in-house is used to carry out the drying process, cutting CO₂ emissions by more than 60 per cent and saving more than €43,000 each year.

Components is continuing with a strong focus on the thousands of measures from the Think Blue. Factory program. The ultimate aim is to cut water, waste, and energy consumption, and CO₂ and solvent emissions, by 45 per cent by 2025. This will also contribute to the group’s aim of delivering all cars CO₂-free by 2050.



An amazing team effort: 60 million engines have rolled off the line at the Salzgitter components plant since 1970.

Staggering! 60 Million Engines from Salzgitter

A short ceremony to mark the occasion: Employees, management, and works council celebrating together

A amazing milestone at the Salzgitter plant: The employees at the engine plant have manufactured 60 million units since 1970. The 60-millionth engine, a 1.5 TSI engine (EA211 evo), came off the production line in mid-February. The economical yet high-torque gasoline engine generation covers

a number of technical innovations, including the Miller combustion process and a turbocharger with variable turbine geometry. Employees at the Salzgitter plant currently produce 7,000 engines each day on 86 assembly lines.

Plant Manager Christian Bleiel acknowledged the enormous

achievement of the Salzgitter workforce in a short ceremony on one of the plant’s engine assembly lines: “The employees at our location have proven over five decades that they are masters of large quantities and high complexity.” Chairman of the Works Council Dirk Windmüller added: “60 million engines from Salzgitter

is a staggering achievement. The 60-millionth unit, an EA 211 Evo, which is the latest gasoline engine, demonstrates clearly that we at Salzgitter as a whole produce cutting-edge combustion technology, but we are also entering the electric mobility age with the rotor/stator and the pilot facility for battery cells.”



From Emden to Kassel: Maike Freese, Joachim Süssen, Tamara König, Sören Jakobs, and Christian Pause are five of 100 employees that have chosen to switch.

Work in Kassel for Colleagues from Emden

Praise for the amazing welcome support at the components plant: permanent contracts – change of personnel as an opportunity

Volkswagen is engaging seriously with future topics such as e-mobility, digitalization, and networked driving. As a result, Emden will become the second German location, after Zwickau, where Volkswagen will be building only electric vehicles. The necessary personnel change is no longer a future topic – it is already happening in practice. Around 100 colleagues from Emden took up their posts in the Kassel components plant in January. In the future, they will be deployed in gearbox manufacturing. After a week to think things over, these employees decided last autumn to take advantage of the new opportunity. The Kassel plant offers a workplace with future prospects and – as a new, added benefit – a permanent contract.

One of these trailblazers is 29-year-old Maike Freese. She switched from Passat production to the assembly of the DQ 381 gearbox, which is currently in high demand. Freese: “I miss my friends, of course. But we’re getting some amazing support to help us settle in here. The Kassel plant has started a campaign that offers mentoring and support with leisure activities. From badminton and bike tours to house hunting, colleagues are helping us to find our feet in these new surroundings.” Christian Pause (31) is another one who made the move. He says: “We have been given a warm welcome and are integrating well.”

In this transformation, Volkswagen is using the opportunities provided by a large network of locations and

brands for the benefit of its employees. Stefan Kreher (Head of HR at the Kassel plant) explains: “At Volkswagen we bear social sustainability in mind as we organize our transformation. As a result, excellent opportunities

present themselves to courageous employees who are open to change. Employees from Emden who were on fixed-term contracts can build up a good professional future in Kassel. Centered around a fixed, well-paid job

with Volkswagen.” Carsten Bätzold, Chairman of the Works Council in Kassel: “It is important to us that the personnel changes do not negatively impact those who are here already. We have enough work for everyone.”



The Emden colleagues discussing their switch to the Kassel components plant with Communications and HR staff.

Wolfsburg Chassis: Drive Shafts for all MEB Vehicles

First symposium of Volkswagen Group Components in Wolfsburg – Focus on innovative technologies and efficient collaboration

Drive shafts for all of Volkswagen’s new electric cars in Europe, innovative technologies in manufacturing, efficient collaboration within the new Group Components brand: At Volkswagen Group Components’ 1st Symposium, Wolfsburg Chassis presented numerous product and process innovations – thereby demonstrating a remarkable team achievement.

Providing drive for the ID. family and more: In future, every new electric car built in Europe on the MEB platform will be fitted with drive shafts made by Wolfsburg Chassis. During the symposium, Plant Manager Martin Schmuck and his team showed the Board members and Works Council representatives what Wolfsburg Chassis is doing to contribute to decarbonization. Improving existing drive shafts and developing various types of new ones is helping to significantly extend the range of electric vehicles.

Environmentally friendly and reduced-cost processes in manufacturing should also cut energy consumption and CO₂ emissions by 20 per cent.

The drive shaft is a key component. In 2018, Wolfsburg Chassis produced 9 million units; by 2022, that figure is expected to rise to 11.5 million.



Plant Manager Martin Schmuck (right): With a great team and a ground-breaking product strategy, Wolfsburg Chassis is well-positioned for the future.

At the same time, the 2,200 colleagues at Chassis are constantly improving their processes and making innovations. In future, 3D-printed inductors will be used to harden various components. As a result, it will be possible to use the utilized tools for twice as long in future. There were also positive financial effects in team organization in indirect production: Improved information flows and optimized processes led to a reduction of almost 40 per cent in the processing times for jobs. The cross-plant collaboration in the Chassis division and in the newly established Volkswagen

Chassis can be produced cheaper – this collaboration will be developed further in future.

Thomas Schmall (CEO of Volkswagen Group Components): “Last year, Wolfsburg Chassis realized savings of more than €9 million, further boosting our ability to compete. A consistent focus on scalable core products, innovative developments in products and processes, daily improvements on the shop floor: With this mix of measures, Wolfsburg Chassis is contributing to the transformation of the business area.” Otto Joos, Head of the Chassis Business Area, said: “In future, our task will be to make even more effective use of the global collaboration in Group Components and the Chassis business area.”

Chairman of the Group Works Council Bernd Osterloh added: “Wolfsburg Chassis has shown what this unit has carried out: Introducing future products for our roads, designing optimized



Maintenance Engineer Daniel Ludwig showing the advantages of good team organization, with discussions directly on the team boards.

processes together, and always striving to become more efficient. The collaboration between the works council, management, and employees, which was agreed on in the Zukunftspakt, is particularly successful in this regard.”



Successful product from Components: The kingpins are a key component in drive shafts.



Future site symposia

Braunschweig, March 14
Salzgitter, March 14
Kassel, June 6

Names & News

Sandra Müller-Lauhof, who was previously Head of Product and Project Management in Kassel, assumed her new role as Head of Site Optimization & Production System in Kassel on January 1. Through this role she also becomes a member of the plant management.

Poznań: Heat from the Foundry

Innovative and environmentally friendly: Thanks to a joint project by the Poznań Foundry and the Veolia company, around 2,000 homes in Poznań now get their heating through a waste heat recovery system. Veolia held a press conference on the subject in Paris, which was attended by around 50 international journalists. Plant Manager Thomas Kreuzinger-Janik, Veolia Director Dalida Gepfert, and the Project Lead from Foundry Planning Marcin Matuszak answered questions about the cooperation from Poznań via a live video feed.

Planning Managers Discuss Best Practices

Cross-brand exchange on best practice: Invited by Jörg Emmert (Head of Production Planning/Management Group Components), the heads of planning at Group Components, Volkswagen Passenger Cars, Audi, Porsche, Seat, and Škoda gathered for a meeting. They discussed current topics relating to all aspects of production planning, including the battery responsibility of Components, innovative training and qualifications concepts, and new machine suppliers from China and Japan.



Top handball players from MT Melsungen visit fans at the Kassel plant: For one hour they took over the roles of colleagues from various lines of work.

Job Swap with Handball Pros

Team spirit: Employees to make a backstage visit to MT Melsungen

Christian Bolle shows handball player Timm Schneider an idler gear on a DQ381 gearbox.



An exciting day for colleagues in Kassel: Six employees won a chance to swap jobs with the professional handball players of MT Melsungen in a competition in the site newspaper

“Pro Kassel.” February 13 was the big day: The six pro sportsmen visited the plant to try their hands at the jobs of our Kassel colleagues for an hour. The handball players asked numerous questions as the various work areas – such as production, foundry, and paint processing – were presented. “It was very interesting to get a look behind the scenes,” said Tobias Reichmann, handball player for the German national team. After an autograph session for all plant

employees, the group had lunch together before the job swap came to an end. In the second part of the exchange, the Volkswagen colleagues will get a look behind the scenes at MT Melsungen and an opportunity to visit the handball pros backstage. The objective of the job swap was to create synergies and analogies between industry and professional sport. Everyone agreed that a strong team spirit is a prerequisite for success in both fields.

Transform Minds: Inspiration for Strategy

Twelve employees from German and Polish components plants selected

Group Components is in the middle of a major process of transformation, one which components management is shaping with its “ONE MISSION 2025” strategy program. Group Components has initiated the “Transform Minds” program to ensure that the transformation is backed at all levels of the company and that the ideas of employees are fed into the change. Transform Minds – twelve employees from German and Polish components plants who, after applying successfully in summer 2018, will support the transformation of the divisions and plants, and provide ideas and inspiration for the twelve strategic action fields, which include “Digitalization,” “Product Portfolio,” and “Competency.” The project comprises four elements:

- Ideas and inspiration from the outside were presented at five stations of a “Learning Journey”
- Strategy ideas: Transform Minds



Launch with the Board: The project work started in the Volkswagen Arena.

- Participating in projects: Transform Minds have developed ideas that feed into the twelve action fields of the Components strategy.
- The multipliers of transformation:

Transform Minds report back on their experiences on Group Connect and function as contact persons for colleagues in the plants.

5 stations, 1,000 impressions, 1 goal: The Learning Journey of the Transform Minds

After the launch at the Group Components Conference in August, the Learning Journey of Transform Minds began. From September to February there were – in Linz, Berlin, Wiesbaden, Ingolstadt, and Essen – five exciting stations with working sessions and creative introductory speakers for the Transform Minds and their projects:

“Through Transform Minds, we can inject fresh, exciting ideas from the whole team, and from different teams, into our strategic development, and expand our experience horizon.”



Ludwig Fazel (Head of Strategy in the new Group Components brand) on the “Transform Minds” program.

Thinking and Acting More Flexibly



... David Kraushaar. He is a “Transform Mind” from Gear Manufacturing in Kassel and is involved with the “Communication” action field.

- 1 What have been the highlights on your learning journey?** The transformation process of Components is one of the biggest events I’ve ever experienced at Volkswagen. At our stop in Wiesbaden there was the “Change your perspective” space, which really got me thinking. We often talk at cross purposes because we have different points of view. Many processes would run much better if we all tried to understand each other.
- 2 How are you involved in the strategy?** In the “Communication” action area I would like to make a contribution to improving the flow of information between direct employees. I’m convinced that the transformation can be a success if we inform all employees about key topics clearly and in a targeted way, and involve them in that.
- 3 What conclusions have you drawn personally?** We must think and act more flexibly – and every individual can contribute to that.

1. Linz (September 2018): Visit to the Ars Electronica technology and future trade fair, and development of own thematic fields
 2. Berlin (October 2018): Visit to the SAP Data Kitchen on German Unification Day
 3. Wiesbaden (November 2018): Guided Tour of the “Erfahrungsfeld” (Experience Field) in Schloss Freudenberg
 4. Ingolstadt (December 2018): Visit to Audi colleagues
 5. Essen (January 2019): Discussion with E.ON on topics relating to transformation
- Incidentally, Transform Minds are presenting their project ideas to the Board and the Management Board of Group Components in March.

Reunion with First Volkswagen Speed-Trap Van

Former police officer Heinz Scholze returns to his workplace after 54 years



Two originals: Heinz Scholze (89) and the 66-year-old speed-trap van that the former police sergeant once used to catch speeders.

What a reunion! They're two originals who go way back and have stories to tell: Former police sergeant Heinz Scholze (89) and the first radar speed-trap van met again after 54 years at Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles Oldtimers in Hanover-Limmer.

Ex-policeman Scholze puts on the old blue police coat and sits down on a wooden chair in the back of the vintage van. The sprightly pensioner turns knobs on the built-in traffic radar machine "Telefunken VRG2," taps on switches, and jokes: "Give me 15 minutes and I'll be completely caught up! Then we can head out again."

It all started for him in August 1961, when he was part of the second radar training course in Lower Saxony. That meant Scholze was one of the first policemen to scan for speeders using the new VRG2 measuring system. He did so on the road, from a Volkswagen van.

And the vintage car experts of Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles recently brought just this vehicle out of its long sleep – a 1953-model Volkswagen speed-trap van that policemen used to train radar measurements. The blue van had stood

in garages and barns for roughly 54 years, covered in dust and largely unnoticed. Most recently, it was parked at the shop of a master mechanic in Hanover-Badenstedt.

Oil change and new battery – the van just keeps going and going ...

Tobias Twele, a project manager at Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles, discovered the van. And he still raves about it: "After 54 years of downtime, all we had to do was change the oil and spark plugs, and put in a new battery." They turned the key – and heard the typical deep bubbling sound of the 25-bhp flat four engine.

Twele adds: "The van hardly has any rust on the underbody and load-bearing parts. It's still in really good shape!" The vintage car experts want to leave it in its original condition. That also goes for the decades worth of dust on the roof and in the drip molding. "That definitely has to stay," Twele says. "It's all part of this van!"

But quality is one area where this T-series van isn't showing its age. And the police still appreciate that quality; in Hanover alone, there are currently over 159 Volkswagen vans in use. The oldest is a T4 built in 1998. So there's plenty of life in these vans yet!



Sales Director Heinz-Jürgen Löw (left) accepts the award.

Multivan in First Place 16th Time in a Row

The readers of the trade magazine "auto motor und sport" have decided that the Multivan is one of the "Best Cars of 2019." They voted it into the list of winners for the 16th time in a row. In all, there were 385 models competing in eleven categories. Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles' Multivan was again selected as the best of its class (Vans), having received 33.9 percent of the votes of international readers.

Volkswagen scored a total of four wins in the poll: In addition to the Multivan, the up!, Polo, and Golf also emerged as winners in their classes.

Poznań: New Logistics Building in Operation

Opening after eight months of construction – three-millionth vehicle produced

It took slightly less than eight months from the laying of the foundation stone to the opening. In Antoninek near Poznań (Poland), Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles has now started using part of the new logistics hall.

"With the new logistics hall, we can consolidate logistics areas that were previously located outside the plant, which allows us to reduce the commuting between Swarzędz and Antoninek," says Jörg Pott, Head of Logistics at the Poznań plant. Furthermore, he says, the direct connection to the production halls makes it possible to use innovative supply processes, such as auto-

nous transports between the halls. The previous external logistics center at Plant 4 in Swarzędz, approximately seven kilometers from the Poznań plant, recently completed the move to the new site.

Employees build three-millionth vehicle

Passing a major milestone, employees in Poznań have now built the three-millionth vehicle (since 1993). It was a Volkswagen Caddy Edition 35 station wagon (2.0 l, 110 kW). Vehicle number 3,000,000 remains part of the internal fleet of Volkswagen Poznań.



View of the new logistics hall: It is roughly the size of six and a half soccer fields.



Eye-catcher: The T2 made of toy bricks.

Van Made of 400,000 Lego Blocks

It's 4.5 meters long, 1.7 meters wide, and 1.9 meters high: Three Lego model-makers have built a full-scale T2 van using the popular building blocks. It took them around 600 hours. The vehicle consists of 400,000 Lego blocks and weighs 700 kilograms. By way of comparison, the original Volkswagen T2 van, which was built from 1967 to 1971, had a curb weight of 1,300 kilograms. The Lego van was presented at the travel and leisure trade show "f.re.e" in Munich.

Plus 14.4 Percent: Good Start

Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles has started the new year strongly: The brand delivered 39,500 vehicles to customers worldwide in January. That represents a year-on-year increase of 14.4 percent for the month. The key European markets of Germany, the UK, Spain, France, and Italy accounted for over two thirds of the total volume for the month with 26,700 vehicle deliveries (+24.9 percent).

The markets in eastern Europe also contributed substantially to the sales volume with a total of 3,850 vehicle deliveries (+40.6 percent).



Honor presented in Berlin: German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier (fourth from left) with Holocaust survivor Leon Schwarzbaum (second from right), Volkswagen apprentices and Christoph Heubner (left), and Ines Doberanzke (right) from the International Auschwitz Committee.



Evdokia Siori (19), logistics apprentice at Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles in Hanover, with trainer Lars-Timm Felker.

Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles Apprentices with German President Steinmeier

Evdokia Siori accompanied a survivor of the Holocaust to the Bellevue Palace in Berlin

Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles apprentice Evdokia Siori (19) and three other Volkswagen apprentices accompanied Leon Schwarzbaum, survivor of the Auschwitz extermination camp, to a reception with German

President Frank-Walter Steinmeier. The International Auschwitz Committee had invited the apprentices from Hanover, Braunschweig, and Wolfsburg. Last year, they helped to preserve the concentration camp memorial.

Of the visit to Schloss Bellevue, the official residence of the German president, Evdokia Siori says: "We had a very good, thorough discussion with the president. I feel as though our work at the memorial is appreciated. And I thank the IAC for inviting me to

participate." Leon Schwarzbaum (98) presented Steinmeier with the "B statue." Auschwitz survivors and the IAC use this statue to honor persons who stand up for democracy, human rights, and tolerance and keep the memory of Auschwitz alive.



Michael Paul's "Mr. G." (above) is a 1992 Polo G40.



"Emil Ypsilon": Ingo Drescher's (right) 1964 Beetle is now a full-fledged member of the family. His daughter Emma is also a big fan of the car.

Love at first sight: Lucia Hesse and "Herbie" met at a garage, and something clicked between them.



Christoph Köhler named his T3 bus "Shelli." He spent a year restoring it with his father and brother.

The Names Employees Give Their Cars

The *inside* editors asked employees what nicknames they've given their cars

Meet Emil Ypsilon. That's the name Ingo Drescher from the Battery Research unit in Wolfsburg gave his 1964 "Dickholm" Beetle. Drescher and many other coworkers give their cars nicknames – which they've now revealed to our editors.

"Emil Ypsilon was given his name by the previous owner from a nearby town based on the license plate, BS-EY," says Drescher. The previous owner, he explains, bought the Beetle

as a one-year-old used car from someone who worked at the plant. "She learned to drive with it. It was her first and only car." The Dreschers used Emil Ypsilon as a wedding car 19 years ago. "Naturally, we showed the previous owner the pictures of Emil as a wedding car. She was overjoyed." The Drescher children are all big Emil fans too.

Christoph Köhler from the California production plant brought his T3 out of a long period of dormancy. It used

to be a company car belonging to the oil company Shell, and he named it "Shelli." From May 2017 to June 2018, Köhler, his brother, and his father restored the bus right down to the smallest screw. "Only special cars have nicknames," says Köhler proudly. And the bright-yellow bus is certainly special.

Michael Paul has grown very fond of his Polo G40, a souped-up runabout from 1992. "I just call him Mr. G.," says Paul. "There are 136 healthy horses

under the hood, and when they're set free, they can sometimes do some amazing things," says the employee from the Kassel plant.

Love at first sight is probably the best way to describe the relationship between Lucia Hesse from Internal Re-Entry Management and her "Herbie," a Beetle convertible from 1979. During a garage visit, she discovered the Beetle in the showroom of the dealership in Wolfsburg – and immediately bought

it. "I decided right away the name had to be Herbie, in part because my late father's name was Herbert, and partly because I really like the Herbie movies." And does her Herbie have superpowers too? "I would say so, yes," Hesse replies. "He clearly has magic powers. He conjures up a spontaneous smile on many people's faces and makes strangers start up friendly conversations with me."

REARVIEW MIRROR – a look at the history books of the Volkswagen company

Former Federal Chancellor Helmut Schmidt (middle) with ex-Volkswagen CEO Toni Schmücker (right) at the company meeting.



43 Years Ago: Chancellor Schmidt at Company Meeting

He champions the automobile in front of 20,000 employees

There is a long tradition of hosting prominent visitors at Volkswagen company meetings. In March 1976, then German Chancellor Helmut Schmidt came to the plant in Wolfsburg. He had been invited by the Executive Board and the Works Council. Schmidt was impressed by the scale of the meeting. In front of 20,000 employees, he made a clear statement in favor of the automobile as a mode of transportation for large sections of the population. During the oil crisis of late 1973 and early 1974, he

noted, many people were inclined to believe that the commercial development of the automobile was over. Even back then, the German government rejected that point of view, Schmidt said. "I have no doubt that the automobile will most certainly have a bright future as our society develops further," said the SPD politician. The objective had to be for every employee to be able to afford a car, he added. "That's a characteristic feature of a modern course of development in society," Schmidt said.



40 Years Ago: First Golf Convertible Built

Mass production of the "strawberry basket" begins in Osnabrück

On February 14, 1979, the first Golf convertible rolls off the assembly line at Wilhelm Karmann GmbH in Osnabrück, and with it a new automotive era begins. With a fixed roll bar and the lined, waterproof top, the car sets standards in its class with regard to vehicle safety and comfort.

Roll bar improves safety

The first prototype for a convertible of the Golf I was created as early as December 1976. The windshield and the quarter windows of the sedan were kept, along with the lower part of the rear gate. It was because of the safety requirements at the time that the Golf convertible ultimately entered production with an integrated roll bar, giving it the "strawberry basket" look. Ernst Fiala, Director of Research and Development, considered the roll bar essential, particularly in view of the legal requirements in the United States.



Real eye-catcher: The first Golf convertible.

The technical data: The Golf convertible has a maximum speed of 150 km/h.

Volkswagen offers it as a two-door sedan only. Customers can choose from two engine variants: the 1.5-liter model with 51 kW/70 bhp and the 1.6-liter

model with 81 kW/110 bhp. The price: starting at 17,235 Deutschmarks. No wonder the open-air Golf is soon the best-selling convertible in Europe and even becomes a TV star: It's often seen in series such as "The Black Forest Clinic" and "Remington Steele." Six generations of the car were built, and the last Golf convertible was produced in 2016.