

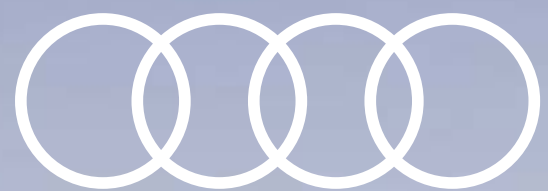
GERMANY

LOOKING TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE GERMAN AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY



+ EXPERIENCE A SHOWCASE OF THE COUNTRY'S
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THE AGE OF AUTOMOTIVE TRANSFORMATION IN THE GERMAN CAR INDUSTRY

● Sustainability and a move away from traditional internal combustion engines are rapidly changing the motoring landscape

By PETER FEELY
Senior Editor

In July, the European Union proposed a ban on the sale of new petrol and diesel vehicles by the start of 2035. The European Commission also proposed a 55 per cent reduction in CO2 emissions by 2030.

The European Environment Agency announced in June that in the past 12 months, one in nine cars sold in Europe was an electric or plug-in hybrid vehicle, resulting in a 12 per cent decrease in CO2 emissions from new cars compared with that for the previous 12 months.

This year, Klaus Zellmer, Volkswagen board member for sales, told *The Muenchner Merkur* newspaper that the carmaker intends to stop selling combustion engine cars on the continent by 2035. "In Europe, we will exit the business with internal combustion vehicles

between 2033 and 2035, in the United States and China somewhat later," he said.

The unquestionable momentum away from internal combustion vehicles is not just limited to the European Union. Dr Manfred Bräunl, Chief Executive Officer of Porsche Middle East and Africa, says that the pattern is also reflected in the Emirates. "The demand for our first battery-powered sports car has proven to be a full success not only on a global level but also here in the UAE," he says. "In the first six months of 2021, we have sold close to 300 Taycan models – a great result for our first electric product. Our accomplishment in such a competitive market underlines that our forward-thinking appeals to our customers."

Bräunl adds that Porsche has already committed to producing sustainable vehicles in the future but that predictions of the complete demise of the combustion engine may be premature. "With the introduction of our first fully electric sports car, the Taycan, and CO2-neutral production sites in Germany, Porsche has manifested its position as a sustainable manufacturer of luxury sports cars," he says.

"In addition, we are planning to make a significant contribution to our sustainable strategy by enhancing the classic combustion engine through eFuels. Pro-

duced with renewable energy, eFuels can reduce fossil CO2 emissions in combustion engines by up to 90 per cent. So, don't write off the combustion engine just yet."

Younger consumers

Syed Faiz Karim, General Manager of Abu Dhabi Motors, believes that younger BMW customers in the UAE are often more conscientious about the environmental and sustainability credentials. He also says they are more inclined to embrace the latest technology. "There seems to be a growing appetite for cleaner and greener mobility in our younger customers. This generations seem to be

● Most countries will have to invest significantly in charging infrastructure for electric vehicles



Pictures: Shutterstock

extremely accepting of new technology, and as a result, electrification will play a huge part in Abu Dhabi Motors' future. However, it is important to mention that the premium experience and impressive performance of a vehicle is still at the top of their list of expectations – something we will always prioritise regardless of the powertrain they opt for."

He is already seeing a shift in consumers towards alternatives to traditional combustion engines. "Over the past few years, there has been a noticeable increase in purchase intent for plug-in hybrids and electric vehicles, motivated by government incentives and consciousness about sustainability."

Transitioning to all electric

Carsten Bender, Managing Director, Audi Middle East, says that the brand has set a time frame for its transition to electric vehicles. "Production for our last new combustion engine model will begin in 2025. Its roll-out to international markets will extend into 2026. All other Audi models that will be launched on the global market, starting in 2026, will be all-electric. We aim to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 at the latest."

Bender believes that Audi's decisive approach to launching electric vehicles is already achieving results, although he says that combustion engines currently remain an important part of the brand.



Manfred Bräunl
Porsche Middle East and Africa



Syed Faiz Karim
Abu Dhabi Motors



Carsten Bender
Audi Middle East



Mohammad Ghazi Al Momani
Emirates Motor Company

"Our extremely successful Audi e-tron models recorded year-on-year growth of 79.5 per cent last year, with 47,324 units delivered to customers. This definitely is a sign of the road we are on, but of course traditional combustion engines are still a big part of our business today."

Mohammad Ghazi Al Momani, General Manager at Emirates Motor Company (EMC), says that Mercedes has also set a deadline for the electrification of its vehicles. "Mercedes EQ, home to the EQS and EQA, is pioneering the progressive luxury concept that will soon define the market and cater to the increased demand for electric vehicles in the region," he says.

"Recent announcements of the EQE and EQG, expected to debut in the UAE in the next two years, will drive the evolution of EVs in the region. EV versions of these models will enhance their appeal to a new generation of customers and help fuel Mercedes' ambitions to be electric-only by 2030."

Momani also adds that EMC is adapting its sales approach to accommodate increasingly digitally savvy consumers. "We are renovating our main showroom in Abu Dhabi, creating a digital-first environment to redefine their in-store experience. We also have plans to expand across Abu Dhabi to be closer to our key clients, existing and future customers."

Maintaining brand heritage

Bender believes that despite the seismic changes within the industry, Audi remains committed to its brand image by sitting at the forefront of innovation and performance. "The biggest and most recent accomplishment of Audi, the e-tron GT, is a firm demonstration of our approach," he says.

"This car is not only electric, but it is also the most powerful production engine ever built by Audi. With this car, we are saying you don't have to compromise on performance, luxury or design when you make the switch to an electric vehicle."

Momani is similarly optimistic about Mercedes' ability to transition to electric vehicles, without compromising its brand. "Mercedes-Benz's mission for the coming years is to provide exceptional automobiles that define the luxury market, which will be made even more exciting by the arrival of EV models of the Maybach and G-Class in the near future."

In the case of Porsche, Bräunl feels strongly that maintaining the iconic brand's sporting identity is the key to continued success. "We continuously strive for innovations while utilising the knowledge we have gained from building benchmark sports cars for over 70 years to make every Porsche drive and feel like a true Porsche." ■

Looking towards the future on the Day of German Unity

● **Peter Fischer,**
German Ambassador
to the UAE, encourages
tourists and residents to
visit Campus Germany
at Expo 2020 Dubai

What are you most looking forward to achieving through EXPO 2020 and what should visitors look forward to in particular?

We truly believe in the great theme of Connecting Minds, Creating the Future. The time is now. Expo2020 will send a strong signal that we must join hands and work together in solidarity to preserve this one beautiful planet that we share. That is really what should be achieved. Expo is not about showing off or selling something. We want an experience of learning and pleasure that supports a global sense of community, responsibility and purpose. When visiting Campus Germany, the German National Pavilion, please bring your kids and some tissues. Look forward to having fun and at the end crying a little bit for joy and emotion. You are also invited to Baden-Wuerttemberg House to learn more about the beauty and innovation of Germany's regions.

How would you describe bilateral ties between Germany and the UAE and what areas are you looking to strengthen?

Our ties are great. We consult closely on foreign policy, we have vibrant economic ties and our cultural links are productive. We have big potential to deepen them, as we move forward together. International challenges are growing and we need to join hands to meet them. On business, in the future, we should develop products and services for the sustainable, knowledge based economy together: renewable CO2-free energies, smart factories, new frontiers in health care, aerospace to mention just some. We could also do a lot more in culture. There is an appetite to connect our people, especially amongst the youth. Let's get them to



● Peter Fischer,
German
Ambassador to
the UAE



“
Expo2020
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solidarity

collaborate on training and education as well as tolerance and global harmony.

How do you think Germans can use their expertise in areas such as engineering to help the UAE achieve its ambitious goals?

Made in Germany is recognised universally as a mark of excellence. As we connect our economies even more closely we have the opportunity of matching Make it in the Emirates with Made in Germany. There is a great complimentary relationship between the UAE's strategy for The Next 50 and what German companies have to offer. We just concluded a bilateral German-Emirati Taskforce on the 4th Industrial Revolution in which over 100 companies from both countries participated. They

identified 64 projects that can bring investment and innovation. We're talking here about really new things that will move us into the sustainable knowledge-driven economy together.

What message do you have for German expatriates in the UAE ahead of your reunification anniversary?

Warm greetings to all the Germans in the UAE and all best wishes on the Day of German Unity. We just had our federal elections and the result shows that we live in a stable democracy and prosperous country that meets its responsibility at home and in the world. Our Emirati friends can count on us as friends and partners. I thank all of you for the contribution you make to German-Emirati friendship.



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Building bridges between Emirati and German companies

● **Oliver Oehms**, CEO of the German Emirati Joint Council for Industry & Commerce (AHK), highlights the strong economic ties between the two countries

What are the key responsibilities and duties of the German Emirati Joint Council for Industry & Commerce (AHK)?

AHK is an official bilateral business organisation that builds bridges between Emirati and German companies. We currently represent close to 500 corporate members as a private, not-for-profit organisation. Being equipped with a mandate from the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, we work in close cooperation with the German diplomatic missions here in the UAE. We not only nurture and support the local Emirati-German business community but we also advise newcomers on the respective markets how and where to start. In this regard we cooperate closely with a multitude of local stakeholders, for instance free zones but also Dubai FDI orADIO. Good friends and partners!

How would you describe Germany's relationship with the UAE in the context of industry and commerce and what are the key sectors of mutual interest?

The engagement of German Industry and German entrepreneurs here in the UAE dates back to its early days, and it is all-embracing. German firms supported the physical development of the young country in the seventies, and now we witness start-ups and young founders exploring the fantastic platform the UAE has been able to create in the last 50 years.

Now, the UAE is home to a significant ecosystem of German firms, ranging across all sectors, industries as well as services. I like to refer to the German tax accountant, the German-owned car workshop and the German physiotherapist, which all call the UAE home. There are many medium-sized to large German industrial champions that serve a large



● Oliver Oehms, CEO of the German Emirati Joint Council for Industry & Commerce (AHK)



We currently represent close to 500 corporate members

and growing region from the UAE, with significant and extremely talented international teams.

How has the UAE leaderships' support for cultivating ties helped German industry in the country develop in the recent past?

Our outreach from the UAE leadership has been just marvelous recently. We see a great deal of openness within the Government, not least triggered by the successful visit of H.H. Crown Prince Mohamed bin Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan to Berlin in mid-2019. As AHK, we enjoy the patronage of H.E. Ahmed Al-Sayegh, Minister of State, who has been an important caretaker of bilateral business relations, complementing the engagement of our bilateral Board of Directors, under the leadership of our longstanding President, Honorable Saeed Al-Faheem.

How would you describe German cooperation with the UAE during the pandemic and how has that helped both countries to continue to achieve success?

For our member companies it has been extremely important that the UAE did its utmost to return to normal business conventions as soon as it was deemed possi-

ble. By doing so, the UAE set a worldwide example of excellent public management. Also, looking into the large community of German business representatives and their families, opening up schools and nurseries was a strong sign that made us feel safe, always welcome and at home. Hardly anyone left the UAE in a difficult 2020, and this tells a lot.

What should we look forward to with AHK's and Germany's participation in EXPO 2020 Dubai?

First of all, Germany is the only country featuring two pavilions at EXPO 2020, as next to the breathtaking federal pavilion Campus Germany, the state of Baden-Wuerttemberg will have its own house. And even more – SAP and Siemens are premier partners of EXPO and hence will operate their own platforms at the Expo site.

Many public and private organisations and institutions are preparing for visits during the next six months. In many, if not all, AHK is involved as the official partner of the two German pavilions. This means a lot of work for us, but having seen the two German flagship buildings emerge and grow, we are getting very excited. I can promise that Germany will not disappoint anyone!"

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PORSCHE

National pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai opens

● Campus Germany will host guests from around the globe over the next six months

GN FOCUS REPORT

The German Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai opened to visitors on Friday October 1 with a small ceremony to mark the launch of Campus Germany. The Expo was postponed by a year because of the Covid-19 pandemic but now Germany is all set to showcase its sustainability-related ideas and innovations over the next six months. The German presence will also include plenty of events featuring German culture and tradition on the Pavilion's culture stage. The project is being organised by Koelnmesse on behalf of Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy.

After several years of preparations, Friday saw the big day arrive with the official opening of the German Pavilion at Expo 2020 in Dubai. The opening ceremony was attended by Albert Hoffmann from Germany's Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy, along with the Commissioner General of the German Pavilion, Dietmar Schmitz, the German Ambassador to the UAE, Peter Fischer, and the President and CEO of Koelnmesse, Gerald Böse.

"Campus Germany is testimony to Germany's multitude of creative minds that can implement flagship projects like this and respond flexibly to unforeseen challenges. We compare exceedingly well to other countries. I'm convinced the German Pavilion will be a resounding success and will receive lots of positive feedback during the Expo", said Dietmar Schmitz.

Denis Steker, Senior Vice President International at Koelnmesse and responsible for the Expo project, was happy about the positive signal being sent by the opening of the Expo. "For quite a while", he said, "the Covid-19 pandemic made exhibitions and events almost impossible but now we can breathe a sigh of relief. The Expo is ringing in a new phase – one that will give us back some normality."

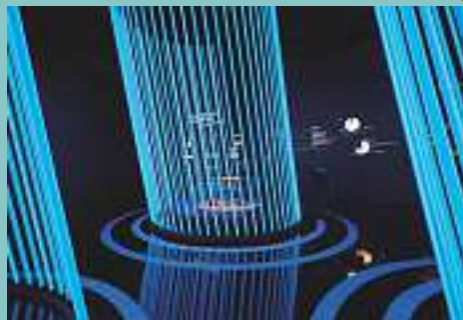
Following a ribbon-cutting ceremony in the Pavilion, the first visitors flooded in to start their journey through the Campus Germany curriculum. Once they've enrolled, guests can enjoy a pre-



ABOUT EXPO 2020 DUBAI AND THE GERMAN PAVILION

Expo 2020 Dubai will take place until March 31, 2022, under the theme Connecting Minds, Creating the Future. More than 190 countries will be participating in what is the first Expo to be held in the Arabic-speaking region. The organisers are expecting over 70 per cent of the visitors to come from overseas.

Koelnmesse GmbH will be organising and running the German Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai on behalf of the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy. The German Pavilion Expo 2020 Dubai Consortium, comprising facts and fiction GmbH (Cologne) and NUSSLI Adunic AG (Hüttwilen, Switzerland), is in charge of the concept design, planning and realisation. facts and fiction is responsible for content, exhibition and media design, and the pavilion is being built by NUSSLI Adunic. The architecture and spatial design come from LAVA – Laboratory for Visionary Architecture (Berlin). The cultural programme, known as Culture Lab, is being put together by Frankfurt-based agency VOSS+FISCHER, working in a consortium with culture and media manager Mike P. Heisel.



For more information, www.expo2020germany.de/en/

show, before moving on to three labs entitled Energy, Future City and Biodiversity. Then there's an exhilarating grand finale in the Graduation Hall to mark the end of their tour. Afterwards, visitors can refuel with some typical German food in the Pavilion's restaurant and enjoy the diverse programme of cultural events in the Culture Lab in the atrium or the outdoor area.

Sebastian Rosito, Deputy Commissioner General of the German Pavilion and Pavilion Director, is proud of what his team has achieved so far and can't wait to see what the next few months bring. "After almost four years of preparation, today we can finally welcome visitors from across the globe to Campus Germany," he said. "We're overwhelmed by guests' reactions and looking forward to showing the public sustainability innovations made in Germany." ■



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● Bayern Munich's goalkeeper Manuel Neuer and Borussia Dortmund's Erling Haaland and Jude Bellingham

TAYYABA ANWAR,
Special to GN Focus

“There was no organisation, and for a leading football nation it was sad to see,” said Rinus Michels, UEFA technical delegate, following Germany’s limp 3-0 capitulation at the hands of Portugal in Rotterdam at Euro 2000.

It was a shocking display from the European champions, but from the embers emerged a system that would take *Die Nationalmannschaft* back to the top of global football.

The message was clear: never again. Work was immediately started on developing a plan for the future. A new Talent Promotion Programme was started, with substantial investment backing a brand-new education initiative for both players and coaches. More importantly, the DFB also passed new legislation: Prior to being licensed to play in the Bundesliga, each of the 18 clubs were required to operate centrally regulated training academies.

Over the next decade and a half, this system would help produce some of the world-class talents that would conquer European and world football. There was Thomas Mueller, the 20-year-old top scorer at the 2010 World Cup; his Bayern Munich team-mate Manuel Neuer won UEFA Goalkeeper of the Year five times, including in 2013, when his club faced Borussia Dortmund in the Champions League final at Wembley - the first all-German meeting in the illustrious competition’s history. In 2014, Mario Goetze, a Dortmund academy product, scored the World Cup-winning goal to break Argentine hearts in extra time.

In 2021, Chelsea’s Kai Havertz, a Bayern Leverkusen youth product, scored the only goal of the game against Manchester City to win the Champions League.

The Bundesliga youth development machine has performed so well over the past 20 years that it is now attracting budding talents from a once unlikely source market: England. Prior to his big-money move to Manchester United this summer, Jadon Sancho, once of rivals City, landed in Dortmund to rise through the ranks at Borussia, where the exciting winger averaged a goal or assist every 90 minutes. Dortmund is also the home of Jude Bellingham, a Birmingham City academy product who followed in Sancho’s footsteps last year. At just 18 years of age, he was called up by Gareth Southgate to represent England at this year’s Euros.

“There are few other clubs in Europe that place as much emphasis on youth as BVB [Dortmund],” said Sancho of his former side.

Dortmund’s most eye-catching player of the moment is undoubtedly Erling Haaland. The 20-year-old Norwegian scored a remarkable 41 goals in 41 games across all competitions for his club side last season - including four against Hertha Berlin in a single game - to help the team secure Champions League football this year, with a brace in the DFB Cup to win the first major trophy of his career.

Bayern’s Jamal Musiala left Chelsea two years and is now, at 18, a starter at Germany’s most successful club side. This summer, he also became the youngest-ever player to represent Germany at a major international tournament. Emile Smith-Rowe, who scored a fine goal and set up another for Arsenal in the North London Derby last weekend, has credited his time



● Borussia Dortmund’s Westfalenstadion

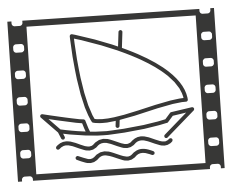


“Dortmund’s most eye-catching player of the moment is undoubtedly Erling Haaland

at Leipzig to his development. “I think it’s definitely a big step at such a young age, but I think that’s a great experience,” he told media at the time.

So what is it about Germany that has made it such an attractive destination for Europe’s finest young players? One important factor is investment: 1.5 billion Euros has been pumped into youth development at Bundesliga clubs. “Each season, an average of 5,588 young talents - distributed across all age groups - are trained in the academies,” says the DFB website. “Every year, around 70 players make it into a professional squad of a Bundesliga or Bundesliga 2 club.”

From a historic footballing perspective, Germany have always been an efficient, rather than genuinely thrilling, side - difficult to break down, and highly organised. With substantial investment in youth development and a league that gives high-potential talent an excellent footballing education, it would take a brave punter to bet against a new-look *Die Nationalmannschaft* side. ■



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LOVE, LABOUR, LEISURE

The Goethe-Institut's online exhibition Love Labour Leisure explores the cultural life of migrant workers in the UAE.

"There exists this city built by laborers who disappear after their respective buildings are made. Once the last brick is laid . . . the laborers . . . begin to fade, before disappearing completely. Some believe the men become ghosts, haunting the façades they helped build." This is how Deepak Unnikrishnan describes in his novel Temporary People the existence of migrant workers in the Gulf region. The artists who contributed to Love Labour Leisure delve into the cultural life of migrant communities in the UAE. Through the lenses of art, performance and music, alternate ways of looking and mapping are presented from wide-ranging aerial views to forensic, facial close-ups.

Artists: Amira Tajdin, Vikram Divecha, Eisa Jocson, aba Qizilbash, Riyas Komus, Augustine Paredes, Anahita Razmi, Mohamed Somji and a line-up of DJs and performers from Berlin.

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Dancers from Kerala by Mohamed Somji

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A post-Covid adventure to

Baden Baden & the Black Forest

A combination of open roads, forest rambles and public bathing – what better way to banish the memories of lockdowns and social confinement than spas and nature?

KEITH J FERNANDEZ,
Special to GN Focus

● Right: Baden
Baden, 170km
south of
Frankfurt

In the end, the dithering was a colossal waste of time. At the end of a walk through the forest, we're both wearing large grins. Buoyed by a deep sense of tranquility, we're energised but calm, relaxed but alert and clear-headed – all at once. I've never been much of a one for meditation, but the Black Forest is a full-on sensory immersion. The autumn palette has relaxed my screen-weary eyes, the birdsong scrubbed away every last TikTok. The cold, crisp air seems to have deep-cleaned my insides, and washing away the weariness that has dogged me for the past year and clearing out every last cobwebby wisp of chronic stress cleared out.

This being Germany, there's an untranslatable word for it: *waldeinsamkeit*. As a portmanteau of *wald* (forest) and *einsamkeit* (loneliness or solitude) the term is often used in a deeper sense, to refer to a connection with nature, a feeling of being one with the universe. Similar to the Japanese concept of *shin-*

rin-yoku, or forest bathing, *waldeinsamkeit* is a spiritual experience all on its own.

The naturalist E O Wilson described phenomenon in the Eighties as biophilia, or a hardwired instinct to affiliate with other forms of life. Germans have recognised this urge since Roman times. The historian Publius Cornelius Tacitus wrote of how much the ancient Teutons loved woodlands as far back as AD98, describing horse-eaters, tribespeople in boar heads, and unicorns. Woods – and the Black Forest specifically – show up again and again in fairy tales and romantic literature: in the Grimm Brothers' stories of *Little Red Riding Hood*, and *Hansel and Gretel*, or in Ludwig Tieck's *Der Blonde Eckbert* (Fair-Haired Eckbert), where the term *waldeinsamkeit* was first used.

Post-Covid travel

As travel opens up and we begin to get the measure of a new normal, nature and wellness holidays have been trending worldwide. Germany, where terrestrial protected areas comprise 37 per cent of

It's possible to sight deer and badgers while mountain biking through the Black Forest National Park

the country, was the most-visited country in Europe over the pandemic. As vaccine roll-outs took effect and the most intrepid began to venture out, the country recorded six per cent more overnight visitor arrivals in July (48.2 million visitors) as compared to July 2020 (43.6 million). Arrivals do not yet compare to July 2019 but it be some time before tourists get the message that Germany is open to private travellers again and fully vaccinated travellers have been welcome since June – although the vaccine must be approved by the Paul Ehrlich Institut.

We certainly remained unsure about quarantine, tests and accommodation protocol during a trip to Germany. To go or not to go remained the question for several weeks – but the dithering proved pointless. For now, post-coronavirus travel is quite like life in the UAE. Hotels and restaurants will ask to see your vaccine certificate. Although masks aren't required outdoors or when seated at a restaurant, everyone needs to wear one when walking around anywhere indoors. We're all used to the constant un-



of in Baden Baden, about 170km south of Frankfurt (less than two hours on the legendary autobahn, retracted roof optional). Our filters? Independent, self-catering, parking, a terrace with a view of the mountains – and contactless check-in and check-out. I took my work along, so the entire experience was just like #WFH, except for the bathing.

Besides the opportunity for *waldeinsamkeit*, this UNESCO World heritage town *kurorte's* (health resort) reputation rests on the 12 curative hot springs that have attracted wellness seekers and the well-heeled since Roman emperor Caracalla reputedly first visited in the third century. The Caracalla Terme doubles as a sort of upscale waterpark. There's a rocky grotto, a steam room, and indoor and outdoor pools heated to up to 38°C. The latter are pretty special in the winter, when the fog rises through the thermal waters.

Or try the naturist Friedrichsbad (Mark Twain once bathed here!). It puts you through a 17-step classical circuit that involves dry air bathing, soaking, steaming and scrubbing. Villa Stéphanie at Brenner's Park hotel ups the ante with everything from facials and physiotherapy to digital detox and dietary consultations. The Heliopark Bad Hotel Zum Hirsch lets you book a private mineral bath at a more approachable price.

You'll take your chances with city sights: some are temporarily shut, others like the Festspielhaus classical the-

atre and the Fabergé Museum are open. But nature experiences abound: outside the city, climb up to Battert Rock for a panoramic view over the Black Forest and the Rhine plain, and stop for a photo of the ruins of Hohenbaden Castle. It's possible to sight deer and badgers while mountain biking through the Black Forest National Park, 35km away. Channel your inner Angel from *X-Men* to paraglide over the region from the Merkur mountain (22km away and up a funicular), or take a more sedate hot-air balloon from the city to the Vosges Mountains. There are vineyards and waterfalls, lakes and cuckoo clock museums. Or extend your stay at one of Black Forest's 60 *luftkurorte* or air spas, where the climate and ambient air is maintained at optimum levels to promote healing – perfect for asthmatics, the allergy hit and anyone who's had to wear a face mask for extended periods of time.

With so much to do, I'm a kid in nature's candy store. In the end, we go with the flow. A series of rambles through this craggy city brings us into a gaggle of enthusiastic schoolchildren bursting out of school, racing against the clock to grab a sandwich while filling each other in on the morning's earth-shattering events. We shiver under the glare of Otto van Bismarck, towering 13 metres high over the city's market square and then grab a lounge by the city fountain for a bit of autumnal sunbathing. Couples connect on garden benches, and office dwellers rush past us, holding aloft slices of carbby pizza on cardboard trays as they walk back to their cubicles. Shoppers – and there are plenty – mask up and down as dash in and out of the many emporia on the cadge for new-season designer clobber, or stop to stock up on antioxidants at the Lindt boutique.

We move a step, to huddle by the fire on a restaurant terrace, for the *kässpätzle*, a cheese-covered pasta, a gigantic meat platter and slices of indulgent *schwarzwälder kirschtorte*, (black forest gateau), to marvel at how stylish the average Badener is, chic but shorn of the bling so common to Dubai mall-walkers. For a moment, the coronavirus is a distant memory. ■

certainty around health advisories, but tourists need to remain vigilant about changes. Airlines, of course, have specific rules. Not all travel suppliers offer full refunds on cancellations.

Baden Baden

We picked a B&B on the northwest edge of the Black Forest, in the spa town

● Above: Battert
Rock in the Black
Forest; Below:
Baden Baden;
Below right: The
Caracalla Terme





Shaping the future of mobility

Innovative IT solutions for public transport

Designing the future of mobility is no easy task. In order to reduce car traffic, public transport must become even more attractive, punctual and efficient while reducing the carbon footprint of the fleet and integrating new mobility players. To master these challenges, we provide cutting-edge IT solutions for:

- ▀ Open mobility platforms
- ▀ ID-based ticketing
- ▀ Real-time passenger information
- ▀ Electromobility
- ▀ Operations control

Embracing a sustainable future

● Porsche is planning to invest €15 billion on transformation in the next five years

How is a sports car manufacturer such as Porsche embracing a sustainable future?

Over the next five years, Porsche will invest €15 billion (Dh64.6 billion) in electric mobility, sustainable production and digital transformation so that 80 per cent of Porsches will be either electric or hybrid by 2030 when we also plan to be carbon neutral in products and operations.

As the next step in Porsche's electromobility journey, we will launch an all-electric version of our best-selling Macan SUV in 2023.

It's important to remember that a Porsche will always be a Porsche in how it stirs emotions, the way it looks, feels and drives. Our fully electric Taycan has not only a low-level driving position similar to the 911, it's a Porsche through and through.

On a regional level, what has your organisation done so far?

We embrace sustainability and are pushing ahead in several directions. We successfully launched our first ever fully electric model, the Taycan, last year and welcomed the Taycan Cross Turismo in spectacular



● Dr Manfred Bräunl, Chief Executive Officer at Porsche Middle East & Africa FZE

lar fashion to enhance the awareness of our electric offering.

EXPO 2020 is offering us a window into a sustainable future. What are your plans for the next few years?

Firstly, the UAE Government is doing an amazing job by making the future of mobility a pillar of EXPO 2020 and investing in a public charging infrastructure for electric vehicles as part of its sustainability and carbon reduction strategies.

So far, we have 312 Porsche chargers on the grid across the region with more than 240 to follow till end of next year. Moreover, we are strategically investing in high-power charging networks with the first project entering its final phase – a significant milestone for electrification in the UAE and beyond.

You seem to have a solid business plan for the future. How has Porsche performed in sales so far this year?

The first half of 2021 has been

very encouraging with demand spread across the range and resulted in our best performance since 2016, including the best result for the 911 since 2017. This shows that despite the popularity of our four-door models, two-door sportscars still enjoy great momentum with one in five Porsches sold being a two-door.

The Macan had its best half-year performance since it was launched in 2014, while the Taycan recorded almost 300 deliveries, an extremely positive performance for our first all-electric sports car. ■



A diverse programme of cultural events at Expo 2020 Dubai

● From performances from bands to exhibitions, the next six months will be rich in culture

GN FOCUS REPORT

At the opening press conference for the German Pavilion at the end of last month, Dietmar Schmitz, Commissioner General of the German Pavilion, presented Germany's diverse programme of cultural events, explaining, "We intend to present Germany not only through its innovations and ideas, but also through its culture, customs and hospitality. In addition to the permanent exhibition and the spectacular shows, the German Pavilion will therefore host numerous cultural events."

The cultural programme will include a range of up-and-coming bands from Germany, giving them a platform to promote themselves and their music to a wider audience. There will also be regular themed events, such as gaming days or



© German Pavilion Expo 2020 Dubai / Bjoern Lauen

karaoke nights. In the science sessions, visitors of all ages will get a hands-on look at the world of science. There will be plenty of physical activities too, with dance and sports offering intercultural experiences and a chance for everyone to join in the action.

Gerald Böse, President and CEO

of Koelnmesse, was particularly positive about how his team would perform, explaining, "Koelnmesse is now ready to run the pavilion and offer our guests a fantastic exhibition experience. This is only possible with a large team of motivated and highly skilled staff who will guide visitors on their journey

through Campus Germany. After countless hours of interviews, the Koelnmesse team recruited and trained new staff members so that they are fully prepared to respond to any question or request our visitors may have."

Speaking as the official spokesman for the German Pavilion Expo 2020 Dubai Consortium, Andreas Horbelt said, "Our aim with the German Pavilion at Expo 2020 Dubai is to create a place that not only showcases sustainable innovations made in Germany but also gives visitors the feeling of being part of a community. The idea behind our German Pavilion concept is to make people aware of how urgently joint action is needed in the fight against climate change. And we've set out to do that using an approach that's fun and provides lots of ways to engage interactively with this complex topic." ■

Striving for success and happiness through education

● The Principals of the German International School Abu Dhabi and the German International School Dubai share insights into their schools' unique approach to learning



● Left: German International School Dubai (DISD); Above: German International School Abu Dhabi (GISAD)

What are the key strengths that make German International Schools unique?

Andreas Rothfritz, GISAD: German International Schools are part of a system of only 141 schools certified through the German federal government. This grants students who attend German International Schools access to certified diplomas, which are seamlessly recognised in case of a family transition back to Germany, Austria, or Switzerland. The German Schools in the UAE are even certified as "Excellent German Schools Abroad." Most teachers are recruited directly from Germany, enabling a teaching standard that reflects Germany's curriculum. This teaching standard highlights the excellent performance of our students. An above average number of our students complete their Abitur (German high school diploma, eligible for university entry-level) and study in Germany, Austria, Switzerland, or worldwide in various fields such as medicine, engineering, computer sciences and education. German curriculum graduates have obtained a broad and strong basis of knowledge covering all STEM subjects, social, and arts subjects, build up a high level of intercultural competence and tolerance, have a high level of foreign language competence (English, French, and Arabic), can act independently, develop creative ideas, and think critically, and thus possess outstanding study skills.

How have German International Schools worked to ensure the well-being of students and staff following the stress and upheaval of the pandemic?

Michael Lummel, DISD: Well-being is key at the German International School Dubai (DISD). "Our goal is to strive successfully for happiness." This central goal from our mission statement has never been more important than today. What have we done to improve this pursuit for happiness



Andreas Rothfritz,
Principal, German International
School Abu Dhabi



Michael Lummel,
Principal, German International
School Dubai

at DISD? We have employed an additional school psychologist. We have intensified our German language learning support with two additional teachers. We are introducing an innovative app to measure and boost emotional well-being. We are planning school trips and excursions, for example to Expo, for all classes. Afternoon activities and school teams have kicked off again. Our teacher training days include yoga, meditation, relaxation, music and sports activities next to academic slots. No wonder that the German International Schools of Dubai and Abu Dhabi ranked excellent in inspections during the pandemic. All in all, we want both, students and colleagues alike, to interact, collaborate, relax, laugh and focus together. As I said before, well-being is key at the German International School Dubai.

What is German International Schools' legacy in the UAE and how has it developed over the country's 50 year history?

Andreas Rothfritz, GISAD: The German International School Abu Dhabi's (GISAD) legacy is reflected in its long history in the UAE, having been founded in 1976. This year, GISAD celebrates its 45th anniversary. This history allows insight into

that strong foundation of support between our institution and the UAE. H.H. Shaikh Mohammed bin Zayed generously donated land for the school to flourish and expand. In 2005, with the help of local German companies and especially a donation from the royal family, a modern sports hall was built on-site in Abu Dhabi. In 2007, through a Memorandum of Understanding, the first Emirati children were admitted to the kindergarten under the scholarship programme of H.H. Shaikh Mohammed bin Zayed, and GISAD moved to a generously new building. The German International School in Dubai (DISD) was founded in 2008, and its rapid growth to a big school reflects its high status amongst the top-ranking international schools in Dubai.

What steps do German International Schools take to prepare their pupils to be as competitive and successful as possible?

Michael Lummel, DISD: The German International School Dubai (DISD) is an innovative, competitive and learning school. We continuously strive for excellence in all categories. We foster the unique German engineering spirit. Just take our presence at the Expo: have you ever witnessed students performing a science slam? DISD students will compete against each other and against students from all over Germany in presenting complex scientific topics at the Expo.

Do you want to experience a fusion of German fairy tales and a chemistry show? This fusion will be performed by our multilingual DISD students at the German Pavilion on December 6 at the Expo. Other examples of our adaption to a rapidly developing world are digitalisation, augmented reality (AR) and coding. All DISD students are equipped with standardised iPads. Merge Cubes AR makes digital 3-D objects tangible and learning more effective at the German school. We are also an Areeka partner school for augmented reality. Robo Mice, Shero Bolts and Lego Mindstorm introduce the world of robotics and coding from primary school onwards. Our DISD students thrive as true global citizens that set sail into the future. ■

To learn more about the German International School Dubai, visit germanschool.ae or www.gisad.ae to discover more about the German International School Abu Dhabi

Germany's new parliament is more diverse than ever before

● The recent election has made the country's lower house increasingly inclusive and has the potential to change German politics

GN Focus Report

Hakan Demir smiled broadly as he stood in front of Germany's majestic parliament building on his first official day of work on Tuesday September 28 as a national lawmaker.

"My grandfather would have been mighty proud of me, and my parents are proud as well," Demir, 36, said, taking a moment to remember his family's roots in Turkey, from where his grandfather came in the early 1970s as an untrained "guest worker" to help build roads and houses in Germany.

Demir, a member of the center-left Social Democratic Party, is one of hundreds of people who ran for Germany's 735-seat lower house of parliament with backgrounds as immigrants or parents or grandparents who immigrated to the country. The number who won has made the Bundestag more diverse and inclusive than ever before.

The chamber now includes at least three people of African descent - up from one in the previous parliament. After years of stagnation, the number of female lawmakers also has gone up again. Among the newly elected immigrants is Awet Tesfaiyesus, 47, the first Black woman to serve in parliament. Tesfaiyesus, who fled from Eritrea with her family as a four year old, is a member of the Greens who was elected to represent the Werra-Meißner constituency in central Germany.

Other new Social Democratic lawmakers are Armand Zorn, 33, who was born in Cameroon and came to Germany at age 12, and Reem Alabali-Radovan, 31, the daughter of Iraqi migrants.

New parliament member Serap Güler, 41, of outgoing Chancellor Angela Merkel's center-right Christian Democratic Union, is the German-born daughter of Turkish immigrants. She has served in recent years as deputy minister for integration in North Rhine-Westphalia state.

West Germany started recruiting "guest workers" from Turkey, Italy, Greece and later Morocco more than 60 years ago, to help the country advance economically. The workers were employed in construction, coal mining,



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“
More
than 500
candidates
with
immigrant
roots ran for
parliament
this year

steel production and the auto industry. Many who initially came as temporary workers decided to stay and bring their families, giving Berlin and other cities in western and southwestern Germany large immigrant communities.

"My grandfather came to Germany because his family was simply so poor. He always told me how as a child he couldn't even afford to buy shoes," said Demir, who 50 years later was elected to represent Berlin's Neukölln district, one of the country's most diverse immigrant neighborhoods.

Nowadays, there are about 21.3 million people with immigrant backgrounds in Germany, or about 26 per cent of the population of 83 million.

More than 500 candidates with immigrant roots ran for parliament this year. While it is not yet clear how many were elected, the number is expected to be higher than in all previous parliaments.

The outgoing parliament had 8.2 per cent, or 58 of 709 lawmakers with immigrant roots, while the 2013-17 parliament had only 5.9 per cent, or 37 out of

631 lawmakers, according to Mediendienst Integration, an organisation tracking migrant issues in Germany. Election rules mean that the number of lawmakers serving in Bundestag can change" the new one has 735 seats.

The growing diversity in German politics reflects demands from society for a more accurate representation of everyone, University of Trier political scientist Uwe Jun said.

"There is more openness now, and the idea that diverse groups should be found in politics and be directly represented," Jun told *The Associated Press*. "This will change politics."

While the election gave the Bundestag more female lawmakers, women are still a long way from reaching parity in the national legislature. More than a third, or 34.7 per cent, of the new lawmakers are women compared to 31.4 per cent in the outgoing parliament, according to German news agency dpa. In the 2013-17 parliament, 37.3 per cent of lawmakers were women. ■ AP

hypermotion

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GERMAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOLS

Education “made in Germany” in the UAE



From kindergarten to the graduate level, the German International Schools of the United Arab Emirates, situated respectively in Abu Dhabi, Dubai, and Sharjah, offer education “made in Germany.” They are part of a network of currently 141 German Schools Abroad in 72 countries all certified through the German Conference of Ministers of Education (KMK). They adhere to a worldwide quality standard and are recognised for this with the seal of approval “Excellent German School Abroad” signed by the German Federal President. All schools in the network are governed by the Federal Republic of Germany, which sponsors qualified teachers from Germany and financially support the schools.

German Schools Abroad do not only impart academic and language skills, but shape their students to become global citizens. In the UAE they are at the core of intercultural exchange and place a high emphasis on maintaining German and Arabic cultural assets in a strong school community. They follow a German curriculum, which is specifically supplemented and expanded by Arabic and social studies from the local curriculum.

They offer the German International Abitur (DIA); this diploma offers the highly qualified students the chance to not only study in Germany but also worldwide. The German International School in Abu Dhabi (GISAD) is a German-owned school that has a history in the UAE, having been founded in 1976. Since then, GISAD has established itself as a renowned international school that is regularly awarded “very good” from ADEK (Abu Dhabi Department of Education and Knowledge).

The student body is comprised of 400 students and benefits from a quality teaching staff in a multicultural environment, based on the Thuringian Education Plan. Their cultural awareness is strong and is extremely emphasised by the multilingualism of the teachers, the other students and the bilingual curriculum.

The focus on a multilingual education begins at the kindergarten level and offers language instruction in German and English. Furthermore, the school offers language integration classes for students with no prior knowledge in German but seeking a late entry into the German education system. www.gisad.ae



DISD, the German International School in Dubai, was founded in 2004, owned by the Consulate General in Dubai. Around 800 students from more than 30 nations study here in a respectful and open-minded atmosphere. DISD is located in Dubai Academic City and can be counted among the most modern German schools abroad. DISD fosters the unique German engineering spirit and aspires STEM excellence (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) from kindergarten to the abitur. The school offers an outstanding and inspiring learning environment with modern science labs, two libraries and state-of-the-

art sport facilities to cater to the students' needs in every category.

All primary and secondary school classes work with iPads, implemented with an innovative evidence-based approach. DISD students thrive in a multilingual environment and develop into true global citizens with the German language as a core competence. Many of the students reach a native speaker level in several languages, next to German, as well in English and Arabic. The city Dubai, region and the world serve as classrooms in stimulating national and international excursions and exchange programmes. www.germanschool.ae

intersec

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Dubai

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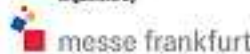
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MESSE FRANKFURT MIDDLE EAST

Intersec event to return to Dubai in 2022

Intersec – the world-leading emergency services, security and safety event – will return for its 23rd edition with a ground-breaking, elevated new programme uniting global and regional leaders as they explore solutions for the rapidly evolving challenges facing the industry. With advances in technology and changes to the way we live and work disrupting the industry beyond expectations, Intersec will convene thousands of industry specialists in for its most strategically comprehensive event yet. Cybersecurity and advanced technology will be in the spotlight as part of the most compelling and wide-ranging conference framework developed for the industry that will be headlined by eminent international speakers never seen before in the region.

The flagship event, under the patronage of His Highness Shaikh Mansoor Bin Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, will feature strategic government-to-govern-



ment, government-to-business and business-to-business discussions with deep dive sessions into key sector verticals all under the theme of 'Uniting the world's leading industry specialists for the safety and security of future generations.'

A nexus for the industry, Intersec

is the only event in the region that brings together the entire ecosystem of emergency services, security and safety together at one time.

Organiser, Messe Frankfurt Middle East, has worked closely with key stakeholders to develop a programme that will provide unlimit-

ed value for the entire supply chain, from government entities to businesses, including global corporations and – for the first time – enterprising start-ups.

The first industry gathering of 2022 will be an opportunity for many of its brightest minds to step back from the frontline challenges presented by recent global events and share insights on their experiences, as well as exchange knowledge and practical learnings. They will be joined by leading regional and international brands exhibiting the most innovative systems and solutions in a dynamic environment that will enable face-to-face and virtual exchange through interactive roundtables, workshops and closed-door confidential conversations. Demonstrating Intersec's strategic importance to the UAE, long-standing official supporters include Dubai Police, Dubai Civil Defense, Security Industry Regulatory Agency (SIRA) and Dubai Municipality.

MENA LEGAL

5 minutes with Dr Alexander Brexendorff, founder of Mena Legal

Over the two decades, Dr Alexander Brexendorff, has become an important figure in the Middle East legal and business landscape. Opening several offices and engaging with a diverse range of clients including government ministries and large international corporations. Despite a rigorous schedule, he took five minutes to share his thoughts on life in the UAE.

Why did you study for a law PhD?

The way laws guide society and instruct us in fair principles, is something I have always recognised as important. Plus, I had remarkable tutors in Germany and the UK who inspired my interest further.

What encouraged you to choose the UAE as your home in 2005?

I have been consulting international corporations on Middle East-



ern legal aspects since the 1990s from Europe, but eventually realised that one needs to be close to the action for being able to advise cli-

ents in the best possible way. I have always been particularly curious about emerging markets because of the unpredictable challenges

that make them interesting. Living here you meet people from around the world, who are like-minded and I would like my children growing up with the same international experience and mindset.

What make a business successful in the UAE?

Next to a good idea, it is essential to be part of a trusted and loyal team. Equally important is to make sure the basics, such as practical realities and legal compliance, are in place and managed by experts. This way the business can focus on what they know best.

What are you most passionate about?

My primary joy is of course my role as a father to three busy daughters and their younger brother. There's incredible happiness in seeing your kids grow. But helping others in growing their business here in the Middle East I consider as my mission.

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The Schüco Group develops and sells system solutions for windows, doors and façades, worldwide. With the completion of our NEW Showroom at Dubai Airport Free Zone (DAFZA) we have established a place where you can get in touch with Schüco. Find out more about our products and special constructions and start planning your projects with us. – Visit us at Schüco Middle East Windows & Façade Systems LLC, Dubai Airport Free Zone (DAFZA), Building 9W, 4th floor, Block A, office 401.

SCHÜCO

MESSE FRANKFURT MIDDLE EAST

Hypermotion exhibition heads to Dubai in November 2021

Hypermotion Dubai, the German-originated exhibition addressing the transformation and future of the transport, logistics and mobility sectors through disruption, decarbonisation and digitalisation, is heading to Dubai as a key event within the Expo 2020 grounds.

Held under the patronage of Shaikh Ahmad Bin Saeed Al Maktoum, President, Dubai Civil Aviation, Chairman and CEO, Emirates Group, and Chairman, Dubai Airports, the event will host more than 100 brands at Dubai Exhibition Centre (DEC) from November 2-4, 2021.

Organised by Messe Frankfurt Middle East (MFME), Hypermotion Dubai will take place with global supply chain and logistics solutions provider DP World as Global Partner, and Abu Dhabi Ports as Strategic Partner.

Tapping into the world's lead-



ing data scientists, experts will also be invited to the Global Logistics Hackathon in partnership with Asyad – Oman's global integrated logistics solutions group.

Asyad, with the collaboration

of MFME, has also organised and developed an extensive logistics start-up programme to help promote and facilitate burgeoning new companies, entrepreneurs and ideas.

Hypermotion Dubai will at-

tract high-level C-suite participation from international, regional and local government entities and private organisations across the logistics, mobility, infrastructure and transport ecosystems.

Through the event's three content streams – Hypermotion Labs, Smart Mobility Conference and Scalex, disruptive thinkers from around the world will gather to share pioneering ideas and concepts set to shape the future of mobility and transport.

Headline speakers confirmed to take the Hypermotion Dubai stage include Sultan Bin Sulayem, Chairman & CEO of DP World, Abdullah Al Shamsi, Senior Director of Future of Things, Dubai Aviation Engineering Projects; and Josh Giegel, CEO and Co-Founder, Virgin Hyperloop.

— More information is available on Hypermotiondubai.com

GOETHE-INSTITUT GULF REGION

Welcoming you back to visit the Gulf German Film Festival

Thanks to the UAE's exemplary response the pandemic is now loosening its grip on our lives. For almost two years our students have been learning German online, and cultural events have come to you online. One takeaway from the last two years is that a lot can be done online and our students and teachers did an awesome job coping with the pandemic. However, there are limits. At some point you want to apply what you learned in real human interaction. This is why learners of German are now gradually returning to our classrooms in Abu Dhabi and Dubai.

Streamed movies, concerts and online exhibitions brought us through the pandemic, but aren't we all longing for the magic of the silver screen in our favorite movie theatre, a theatre or dance performance, or a concert? Even the guy rustling with his popcorn in the seat next to ours seems to be only a minor nuisance now. Get ready for our real life events this fall. In late November and early December it's curtains up for the second edition of



As soon as the temperatures cool down in the fall we will show biweekly movies on our rooftop in Abu Dhabi.

Fareed Majari,

Director of the Goethe-Institut Gulf Region

the Gulf German Film Festival. As soon as the temperatures cool down in the fall we will show biweekly movies on our rooftop in Abu Dhabi. In December *Love Labour Leisure* – an exhibition combined with talks and performances – will explore the cultural practices of migrant workers. And if you are interested in dance and movement sign up for one of our workshops. We look forward to welcoming you back.



Road Safety as a success story

34% less Road Fatalities in the UAE

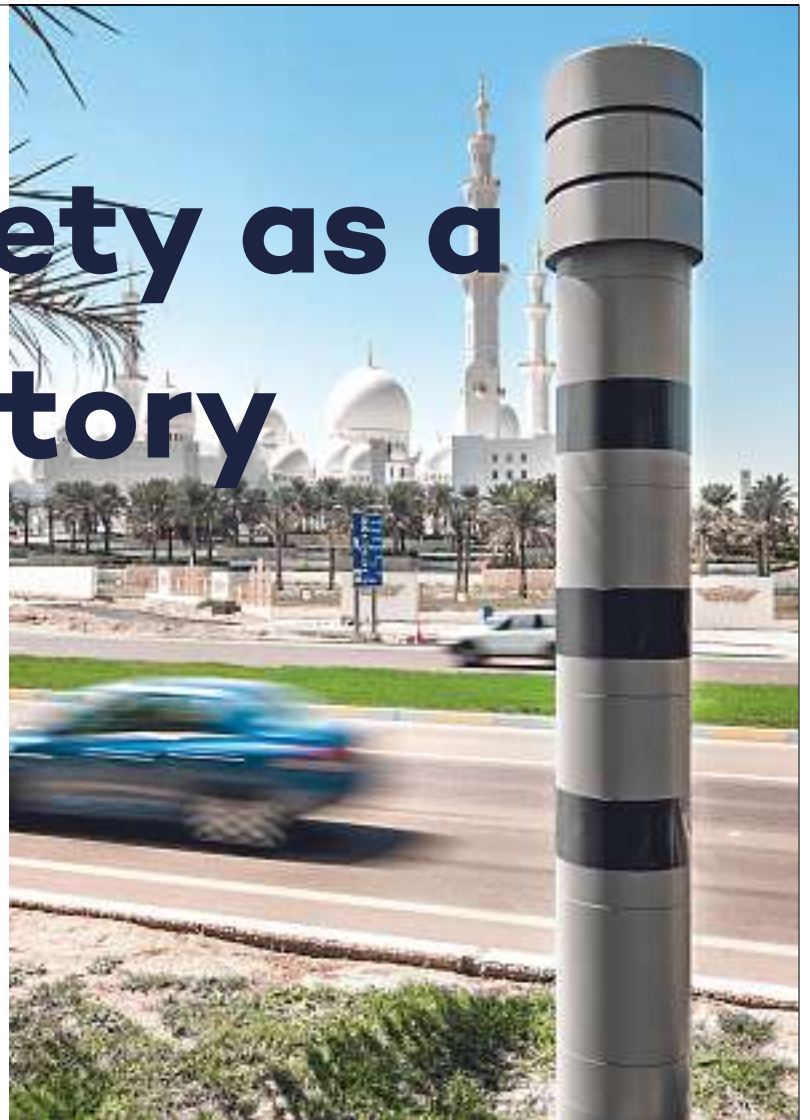
Driving the streets in the UAE you instantly recognize the amount of systems installed to ensure road safety and traffic supervision. This has a good reason.

In the past, the UAE and the Middle East in general have been facing significant road safety issues. There are several reasons behind this phenomenon in the region: harsh desert climates, frequent sand and dust storms that limit visibility are only some of the many factors that influence road safety. Therefore, the UAE faced a high number of serious road accidents in the past.

Not ignoring the fact that many actions have been taken, traffic enforcement has been one of the major factors in implementing a safer environment for road users.

With the installation of traffic enforcement systems starting in 2009, the number of road fatalities in the UAE has fallen significantly, despite the fact that economic growth in the Middle East over the past decade has led to a sharp increase in car ownership and a rapidly expanding road network.

With over 1.300 systems installed across the UAE, VITRONIC has had a major impact on this development as well.



Traffic Enforcement systems by VITRONIC have made a significant impact on reducing road fatalities in the UAE and have contributed to reducing the accident costs for the country: According to The Global Burden of Diseases, Injuries, and Risk Factors Study, road injuries were the 1st cause of deaths in UAE in 2009, while in 2019 became the second.

The number of road traffic deaths in the UAE has fallen by 34.2 percent in five years, down from 712 in 2014 to 468 in 2018, according to statistics released by the Ministry of Interior.

VITRONIC Machine Vision Middle East has been a significant part of implementing systems for more safety in the streets of the UAE. Since 2009 we are the reliable partner for speed- and red-light-enforcement, traffic supervision and tolling solutions in the whole region.



Forerunners of far-reaching automotive technology

● Syed Faiz Karim, General Manager, Abu Dhabi Motors LLC, offers insights into BMW Group's ambitious plans

How would you describe BMW Group's philosophy in 2021?

The BMW Group entered 2021 with determined targets for growth and will be putting the forerunners of its far-reaching technology offensive on the roads soon.

The company is expanding its competitive advantage in the current, far-reaching transformation of the entire automotive industry: it is uncompromisingly focusing on e-mobility, digitalisation, and the circular economy in its 'New Class.' We have set the course for a comprehensive realignment. From the middle of the decade, a new generation of models will take premium mobility to a new level from a technological perspective.

BMW Group have a clear roadmap for making the transformation of our industry a real competitive advantage for BMW in the coming years: uncompromisingly electric, digital, and circular.

What are BMW Group's key achievements in the previous 18 months?

Abu Dhabi Motors has had a fantastic 18 months and we are proud of all we have achieved. We have launched several incredible

new initiatives and introduced brand-new products to the market, which have all been received well by our loyal customers.

In April 2021, we showcased the all-new BMW M3 Competition Sedan and BMW M4 Competition Coupé models in all their glory at Yas Marina Circuit.

Thirty-five years after the launch of the very first M - the legendary E30 M3 - the sixth generation of M3 and second-generation M4 deliver uncompromising street and track capabilities for which the model line has become well-known.

With Covid-19 restrictions easing, we had the opportunity to host such an event, and we were delighted to showcase the formidable power of these vehicles, on and off the racetrack.

In addition, we launched the all-new BMW 1 Series, the MINI Paddy Hopkirk, BMW X2 M Mesh Edition and BMW X3 and BMW X4 - to name just a few.

“Ultimately our goal is to be the number one choice for consumers across the region

What new products are you excited about introducing into the market?

Ultimately our goal is to be the number one choice for consumers across the region who are looking to acquire an all-electric vehicle, therefore we are incredibly excited for the arrival of the BMW iX. This innovative new model showcases how we are taking a big step in the field of automated driving.

The BMW iX is the first BMW Group vehicle to offer automated driving and parking functions from a new technology kit. It offers enormous potential for systematic further development of automated driving functions over the years thanks to its computing power, powerful sensors, continuous enhancement through data-driven development, and its options for integrating AI into the processing of complex tasks.

How does BMW Group adapt its brands such as Rolls Royce to appeal to the Middle Eastern market?

As you know Rolls-Royce Motor Cars is a global centre of lux-

ury manufacturing excellence, all Rolls-Royce motor cars are hand built in Goodwood, UK, in the highest standards of quality specifically to fit in each region, whether it's a super-cold country like Russia for example or super-hot countries like the UAE and the GCC in general.

Our models: Phantom, Ghost, Cullinan, Wraith and Dawn, in addition to Black Badge models, are all in high demand - typically for Abu Dhabi customers, the bespoke commissions are of unique interest and highly sought-after. Here I would like to stress on an important point which is the grey market - unfortunately some clients tend to invest in the wrong place by heading to traders instead of the authorised Rolls-Royce Motor Cars dealerships, so they end up owning a non-GCC specifications car which has not been stringently tested and adapted to our climatic-conditions. This also negatively impacts from an ownership perspective as these cars do not enjoy a warranty nor service contract, and no access to Whispers, a by invitation only app for Rolls-Royce clients. Ultimately they get a car that was not built for our market and they lose the opportunity of experiencing the true Rolls-Royce experience with us.



● Abu Dhabi Motors' BMW showroom in the UAE capital

INIT

Shaping the future of transport with mobility platforms

Private transportation comes with a cost: traffic jams, gridlock in cities, pollutant emissions, and in turn, major contributions to the climate crisis. There is no doubt that we need to turn things around quickly. To encourage more people to avoid personal car use, regional mobility platforms are a promising option. This is already successfully demonstrated in the Karlsruhe region in southern Germany where INIT has helped bring the open mobility platform, regiomove, to life. As the world's leading provider of integrated planning, dispatching, telematics and ticketing solutions for buses and trains, INIT has been helping transport oper-

ators make public transport more efficient, faster, more convenient and more attractive for almost 40 years.

In Dubai and Abu Dhabi, INIT implemented a telematics system that improved punctuality and made passenger numbers increase significantly.

The goal of regiomove, the intermodal mobility platform of the Karlsruhe region was to connect as many mobility services as possible with each other by bundling various means of transport outside the urban area. While the project met this goal, it became a globally acclaimed success story and won several awards.

Passengers can use the uniquely



Picture: iStock, Courtney Hale

● To encourage more people to avoid personal car use, regional mobility platforms are a promising option

developed regiomove app to plan and book all mobility services in the region. In addition to public transport, this includes car and bike sharing services, with taxis, shuttles and e-scooters to be added in the future. Users only have to register once they download

the app and choose their payment media. They choose one of the suggested connections, which can include different means of transport. Then, all the necessary travel authorisations are booked directly from the app.

This is made possible by INIT's booking and payment background system, which is considered groundbreaking for other mobility platforms thanks to its sophisticated system design. INIT's global ticketing expertise has been incorporated into the project. An important factor for success was the ability of the INIT background system to include different companies, distribution channels and ticketing media. This allows for the integration of data from the various mobility service providers and therefore enables intermodal travel chains.

The app also displays road works and traffic jams and provides real-time information on the departure of the next train or bus. Users of car sharing services benefit from a display of available parking spaces. Therefore, regiomove also provides information about the number of parking spaces, fees and even opening hours of parking garages.

With projects like regiomove, INIT is shaping the future of mobility for transport companies and passengers around the world. More people can be motivated to rely on public transport and avoid using their own car, contributing to a greener and more sustainable future.



Picture: regiomove

● INIT has helped bring the open mobility platform, regiomove, to life. Passengers in the German region of Karlsruhe can book and pay several means of transport in one app

Supporting businesses with cross-border trade finance solutions

- **Peter Maerevoet**, Senior Executive Officer, Tradewind Middle East Limited and CEO Tradewind Asia, explains how the business offers sustainable, reliable and cost-effective access to credit

How would you describe Tradewind's business model?

Tradewind's primary focus is to support an array of market segments and industries to avail cross-border trade finance solutions. One of its major product offerings to suppliers, traders, and manufacturers includes export factoring solutions – a trade-credit insured, ring-fenced form of receivables financing which allows for companies to generate more sales by offering longer credit terms to buyers. It also provides supply-chain solutions to customers who qualify based on their jurisdictional requirements and balance sheet strength to extend days payables without negatively affecting their cash position, providing them with the cushion and liquidity needed to focus on other pressing commitments. Resultantly, both buyer and supplier achieve a win-win situation.

Our partnerships make a collective impact on how business is conducted globally – Tradewind maintains a keen focus on providing cost-effective and sustainable access to credit to customers in the emerging markets. Our trade finance experts possess the sectoral expertise needed to help align documentation and requirements to successfully obtain access to credit, and obtain additional access to credit without the need for tying up fixed assets towards collateralising the facility. Partnering with a trade finance (factoring) service provider like Tradewind, may ensure additional resilience against trade finance shortfalls.

Why is the UAE SME market so exciting for your business?

The UAE has one of the most liberal and resilient trade regimes in the Gulf. It attracts strong capital flows from across the region thanks to government incentives to investors and because of the country's ongoing commitment to technological and innovation ad-



● Peter Maerevoet, Senior Executive Officer, Tradewind Middle East Limited and CEO Tradewind Asia

vancements. Alternative funding options are gaining traction in the region due to an ongoing need to find solutions and ways out for clients who would otherwise find it difficult to secure additional credit, or any credit at all.

The acceleration in digital technologies has led to a reset in the velocity of business, and so, companies need to be plugged in and prepared for both potential disruptions as well and unplanned opportunities which would affect a company's cash and bank balance. As awareness of factoring increases over the next few years, we see immense size and scope for catering to the needs of existing and up-and-coming SMEs and their need for practical, sustain-

able liquidity solutions.

The UAE's recent groundbreaking decisions to open up markets to trade and abolishing strict lockdowns and travel restrictions, works in line with our strategy to support purpose-led growth to position everyone in the supply-chain space to navigate and predict high-risk scenarios which could cause further disruptions and liquidity issues.

How does your provision of export factoring solutions in the UAE differentiate from

your business' work in comparison to your operations in countries such as India and Bangladesh?

In India and Bangladesh, we provide supplier financing solutions to exporters selling to the UAE, EU, US, and other jurisdictions. Given our comfort and continued commitment to the region, Tradewind caters to both domestic and international financing needs in the UAE. We understand the complexities associated with a diverse spread of trading and manufacturing industries situated in the region, therefore, we arrange transactions to fulfill credit and payment objectives for both buyers and suppliers.

How do you reassure potential clients that your business is legitimate and appropriately regulated?

Tradewind GmbH, regulated by BAFIN, is a German-headquartered trade finance company with deep roots in the emerging markets. Tradewind Middle East Limited, its UAE affiliate, is regulated by the DFSA. Aligned to major trade corridors, it expanded its presence to more than 20 offices in 14 countries, affirming its commitment to providing responsible financing which helps companies accelerate their cash flows, improve collections, and reduce exposure to potential bad debts. While the group supports liquidity requirements along the supply-chain spectrum where traditional lenders would often shy away from, it understands and appreciates that credit intermediation increasingly takes place outside the banking sector.

“The UAE has one of the most liberal and resilient trade regimes in the Gulf”



AUDI MIDDLE EAST

Driving ahead through technology

- The slogan of the four rings has never been more true and the fully electric e-tron GT has arrived in the Middle East to prove it

Audi has long been known for its passion for detail, luxurious design, and incredible craftsmanship in all of its models. This time – their newest introduction is all that and more; it's fully electric. Audi has recently introduced to the world its newest and most anticipated, fully electric model yet, the e-tron GT. It is the most powerful production model Audi has ever launched. With its unique mix of sporty, luxurious, progressive, and sustainable, this car clearly represents Audi's vision towards the future of premium mobility. This is the perfect luxury model to give you the most seamless and dynamic driving experience.

Car specs for enthusiasts

First and foremost, power! This electric beauty, in its RS variant puts out an astounding 646 hp and is able to sprint from 0 to 100km/h time of 3.3 seconds from standstill. This is possible thanks to two powerful electric motors, one on the front axle, the other on the rear axle. In other words, the e-tron GT easily outperforms its more established siblings while still being the most sustainable.

When it comes to engine sounds, every car lover likes powerful roaring engines and this model speaks loudly, but elegantly. Audi has



composed a unique sound for the e-tron GT – one that is powerful, emanating from speakers integrated within the vehicle's architecture. Matrix LED headlights with Audi laser light come as standard in the RS version while a number of options are available, including up to 21-inch wheels and all-wheel steering.

This innovative supercar takes only 22.5 mins

to charge from 5 per cent to 80 per cent using any currently available high power charger (HPC). To put it simply, you can get over 100km of range with just five minutes of charging. Furthermore, the e-tron GT can accommodate all currently available charging infrastructure, with its battery design able to accept up to 270kW charging inputs, ready for the inevitable and ever-changing infrastructure developments within our cities. It truly is the car of the future, waiting for the future.

The Audi e-tron is the world's best-selling premium electric car

Throughout the years, the brand has adopted a forward-thinking and electric attitude, with more than 80 per cent of the models in Audi's range available with an electrified drive system including plug-in hybrid drives (PHEV) and mild hybrid systems (MHEV). That is why Audi was by far the largest manufacturer of electric vehicles among Germany's three premium brands in 2020. With the arrival of the e-tron GT, Audi is progressing further into becoming the lead provider of sustainable premium mobility. Planning even further ahead, the company intends to have more than 20 all-electric models and an expanded PHEV line-up on the road by 2025.



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