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## Site symposium in Wolfsburg: Focus on safeguarding the future of Vehicle Production and Components

- Increasing productivity through lean management
- Innovative lightweight materials for large-scale production
- Digital training with VR headsets

Wolfsburg, February 1, 2017 – The site symposium held today at Volkswagen's main plant in Wolfsburg focused on aligning the plant for the future. Brand and plant management were joined by the Works Council to review 2016 and discuss concrete projects for the future at the Wolfsburg site.



Site symposium at Volkswagen in Wolfsburg: Brand and plant management together with the Works Council on a tour of Components. Aligning the plant for the future was also the central theme for Vehicle Production.

Ingo Grönig (2<sup>nd</sup> right) from Golf Assembly explained the principle of closed-loop quality management to Stephan Wolf, Deputy Chairman of the General and Group Works Councils, Dr. Herbert Diess, Brand CEO, Dr. Karlheinz Blessing, Board member for Human Resources, and Dr. Stefan Loth, Plant Manager (from left).

Dr. Herbert Diess, CEO of the Volkswagen brand, said: "The Wolfsburg plant has developed an ambitious plan for the current year. We are on the right track with these ideas and solutions for increasing productivity at the site. The Wolfsburg team has come up with a convincing production system. Now we must move on to systematically implementing the agreed goals."

Bernd Osterloh, Chairman of the General and Group Works Councils, underscored: "These symposiums have a long tradition at Volkswagen. They are not so much a presentation of past achievements as a demonstration by the teams of projects and new developments to safeguard jobs for the long term. The 'Zukunftspakt' (pact for the future) is thus being brought to life in a very practical way. Today, our well-trained

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and motivated colleagues at the main plant gave an impressive demonstration of how they intend to respond to the special challenges facing Volkswagen."

Plant manager Dr. Stefan Loth emphasized: "To safeguard the future of our plant it is imperative that we systematically align the production system with lean management. That brings sustained productivity increases, ensures stable processes at the plant and makes our work organization future-proof." He added that the entire team was committed to mastering the challenges.

Examples of lean management in Vehicle Production presented at the symposium ranged from cost-effective solutions to create ergonomic working conditions throughout assembly to new developments such as Pick-by-Light shelving featuring flexible display and acknowledgement modules using wireless technology. Logistics is introducing digital training, using VR headsets to simulate real-life situations in a virtual environment. This makes it easier to understand complex content prior to process roll out and independent of manufacturing flow.

Components, which comprises the Plastics and Chassis units, gave an insight into optimized manufacturing methods and product innovations. Innovative lightweight plastics such as organic sheet compounds can be combined with injection molding technology to manufacture new hybrid assemblies, and are to be increasingly used in large-scale production to further reduce vehicle weight. Chassis components are being optimized for the new generation of electric vehicles: Components is, for example, generating growth opportunities in terms of extending the product portfolio of individual brands and attracting new customers to the Group by expanding the e-chassis module and systematically deploying the same-parts strategy. Both units presented product and process innovations aimed at increasing productivity, reducing material consumption and lowering costs – these innovations included optimizing tool costs and self-regulating processes to avoid manufacturing defects at higher machine temperatures.

Thomas Ulbrich, the Volkswagen brand board member for Production, commented: "For Vehicle Production, the 'Zukunftspakt' and the company's realignment were the main themes at this year's site symposium. Digitalization in production and the expansion of lean management are driving solutions for more efficient products and processes, enabling us to remain successful in competition. We need a committed team that continues to work on improvements in the key areas of the future in order to safeguard vehicle production at the site."



Board member for Components, Thomas Schmall, underscored: "For Components, too, the focus is clearly on implementing the 'Zukunftspakt' – with measures that strengthen our economic efficiency and our future capabilities. We demonstrated at the symposium that the Plastics and Chassis units in Wolfsburg are on the right track with good measures, for example with regard to cutting costs, outlay and variants, while maintaining the high quality standard. That is crucial for our customers. Innovation topics such as new materials also play a decisive role. There is a great deal of potential in that respect, for instance as regards reducing the weight of our parts."

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**About the Volkswagen brand: "We make the future real"**

The Volkswagen Passenger Cars brand is present in more than 150 markets throughout the world and produces vehicles at over 50 locations in 14 countries. In 2016, Volkswagen produced about 5.99 million vehicles including bestselling models such as the Golf, Tiguan, Jetta or Passat. Currently, 218,000 people work for Volkswagen across the globe. The brand also has 7,700 dealerships with 74,000 employees. Volkswagen is forging ahead consistently with the further development of automobile production. E-mobility, Smart mobility and the digital transformation of the brand are the key strategic topics for the future.

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