



PRESSE-INFORMATION  
PRESS RELEASE

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## ZF chooses Microsoft and PwC Germany as their strategic partners to build ZF's Digital Manufacturing Platform

- **Three companies combine their strengths and experience with the aim of translating complex technical information into valuable business insights**
- **ZF location Diepholz in northern Germany as pilot plant**

**Friedrichshafen / Diepholz (Germany). ZF and PwC Germany work with Microsoft to transform processes at the ZF Diepholz plant in northern Germany and use the insights ZF wide. The project enables ZF to reduce conversion costs, improve inventory, performance and quality, and to make their workforce more efficient. ZF plans to work with Microsoft and PwC to contribute results to the Open Manufacturing Platform.**

Digital transformation is reinventing companies and their factories. In manufacturing, it requires the seamless integration of both information and operations technology. PwC Germany, part of one of the world's leading professional service firm networks, and ZF, as one of the world's leading technology companies, combine their strengths and experience to translate complex technical information into valuable business insights. The ZF Diepholz plant in northern Germany was selected for a pilot project where ZF, and PwC Germany will transform processes and workflows using Microsoft Azure to build the future Digital Manufacturing Platform (DMP) of ZF.

### **Digital solutions make manufacturing more flexible and more efficient**

"The world is changing, and so is manufacturing," says Gabriel González-Alonso, Head of ZF Corporate Production Management. "In these very turbulent times, it was especially important to us that we implement new digital solutions that enable our manufacturing to achieve higher flexibility and efficiency." This is nothing less than a



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paradigm shift for ZF. In the past, software was introduced into each plant one by one and installed on discrete servers. This has evolved into the creation of a platform in the cloud, connecting ZF's plants to said platform and rolling out the functionalities to the plant via Azure. This horizontal, cross-plant integration with easy scalability makes ZF independent of its local infrastructure.

"To further digitize the ZF Diepholz plant, we will implement a transformation program with several additional use cases, all of which will be integrated into an end-to-end Smart Factory Transformation for ZF," explains Michael Bruns, Partner Digital Operations at PwC Germany. Selected cases will aim at creating transparency of production performance from the plant as a whole all the way down to machine level. Others will focus on the traceability of production flows, analysis and prediction of production, and quality outcomes. A third set of used cases aims at enhancing maintenance operations through machine monitoring and fault prediction.

To master these tasks, ZF and PwC Germany will use Microsoft Azure AI services to improve planning efficiencies and effectiveness, improve maintenance, repair, and operations (MRO) inventory and present new insights to improve production performance. "With our approach, we will help ZF to reduce conversion costs, improve inventory, performance, and quality, and to make its workforce more efficient," outlines Reinhard Geissbauer, Global Head of Industry 4.0 and Digital Operations at PwC Germany.

"Our aim is to make this initiative not only a best practice for success at ZF, but also an industry-wide inspiration to other automotive companies endeavoring on their own digitalization projects. We see strong interest across the manufacturing sector globally to leverage digital technologies to drive quality as well as process optimization, and we're excited for this project to serve as a true benchmark." says Marianne Janik, Area Vice President, Microsoft Germany. By combining its business and process expertise, technology insights, and AI capabilities, the companies integrate all aspects of how to digitize a factory from a



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single source.” says Marianne Janik, Area Vice President, Microsoft Germany. By bringing together their business and process expertise, technology insights, and AI capabilities, ZF can leverage all aspects of how to digitize a factory from a single source.

**With Smart Manufacturing, Industry 4.0 becomes reality**

The partners will come together to bring fully-networked plants to the next level. Smart factories not only work quickly and reliably, but they also offer a high degree of adaptability for rapid design changes. This leads to more engaged employees, increased business velocity, and stronger growth margins.

Not only will other ZF plants benefit from the insights gained from digitizing the Diepholz plant and the capabilities of the DMP, but other organizations may benefit as well. Other organizations can thus get a proven solution which improves manufacturing reference models, effectively reduces maintenance costs, predicts failures and optimizes material availability – from planning through execution.

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**ZF Friedrichshafen AG**

ZF is a global technology company and supplies systems for passenger cars, commercial vehicles and industrial technology, enabling the next generation of mobility. ZF allows vehicles to see, think and act. In the four technology domains Vehicle Motion Control, Integrated Safety, Automated Driving, and Electric Mobility, ZF offers comprehensive solutions for established vehicle manufacturers and newly emerging



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transport and mobility service providers. ZF electrifies different kinds of vehicles. With its products, the company contributes to reducing emissions and protecting the climate.

ZF, which acquired WABCO Holdings Inc. on May 29, 2020, now has 160,000 employees worldwide with approximately 260 locations in 41 countries. In 2019, the two then-independent companies achieved sales of €36.5 billion (ZF) and \$3.4 billion (WABCO).

For further press information and photos please visit: [www.zf.com](http://www.zf.com)

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