

Part 1 – The German Automotive Industry: Heading for Pole Position

Part 2 – Opportunities for Canadian Automotive R&D

Prof. Dr.-Ing. Bernd Wilhelm

VW Management Executive (retired 2012)

Faculty Engineering, Manufacturing Systems and Automation

Otto-von-Guericke-University of Magdeburg, Germany

Part 1: The current competition status of the German automotive industry from the perspective of a leading German OEM. 1 of every 7 employees in Germany is dependent on the automotive industry, an enormous strategic factor.

Dr. Wilhelm will detail the success factors for the German automotive industry:

1. Innovation
2. Quality Culture
3. Qualified Employees
4. Sustainable Business

Part 2: The Canadian automotive industry is ranked #8 worldwide, in a good position with strong suppliers. In terms of macro-economic financial soundness, Canada and Germany are the only automobile producing nations with a AAA rating. Canada's top strategic objective should be as a player in the premium league of automotive nations. Prerequisites are powerful R&D activities on a high level with strategic thrusts on; a) sustainability, b) systematic education strategies and, c) managers with a technical education base. Absolutely necessary is close R&D-cooperation between industry, universities and national institutions.



Dr. Wilhelm retired from Volkswagen in 2012 following a near 40-year career in production and logistics. From 2008-2010, he was CEO of Wolfsburg AG, a public-private partnership between Volkswagen and the City of Wolfsburg. Wolfsburg AG organizes the bi-annual IZB automotive suppliers fair, Europe's largest such event.

Dr. Wilhelm lectures on automotive production at the University of Magdeburg and was awarded an honorary professorship in 2004. He has published numerous papers and serves on several committees at universities in Hannover, Braunschweig and Clausthal as well as the German MTM organization.