

Presse and IR Release

## **The autonomous factory: Schaeffler wins German Innovation Award for its industrial metaverse**

HERZOGENAURACH, 2026-04-17.

- Schaeffler wins prestigious German Innovation Award for the implementation of its own Industrial Metaverse at Schaeffler plants
- The Industrial Metaverse combines real-world production with digital simulation, ensuring even more efficient manufacturing processes
- Accolade underscores Schaeffler's high level of innovation in autonomous and AI-assisted manufacturing

Motion Technology Company, Schaeffler, has received the prestigious German Innovation Award in the 'Large Companies' category for its Industrial Metaverse. The digital ecosystem bridges the gap between the physical shop floor and the virtual environment. Thanks to the seamless integration of AI-supported simulation models and software solutions, Schaeffler is creating a highly efficient, data-driven production environment. This technological foundation is laying the groundwork for the large-scale use of autonomous production resources, such as humanoid robots. In doing so, Schaeffler is accelerating its transition to a digital and autonomous production environment. The German Innovation Award is presented annually by the business news magazine *WirtschaftsWoche*, in collaboration with Accenture, the BMW Foundation, and O2 Telefónica, under the patronage of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy. It celebrates companies whose innovative solutions make a significant contribution to strengthening the global competitiveness of Germany and Europe.

Klaus Rosenfeld, CEO of Schaeffler AG, says: "We are very pleased to have received the German Innovation Award in the 'Large Companies' category. With the Industrial Metaverse, we are not only creating a digital twin of our plants but also a learning ecosystem in manufacturing that will help secure our long-term competitiveness. By using AI in industrial applications and deploying humanoid robots in manufacturing, we are laying the foundation for the factory of the future."

### **Industrial Metaverse: From simulation to production applications**

The Schaeffler Industrial Metaverse combines a realistic, three-dimensional digital map of the production environment with a life-like simulation of physical processes. In addition, it integrates the control software for autonomous systems such as automated guided vehicles (AGVs), humanoids, and programmable logic

controllers. With the help of physical AI, sensor signals are evaluated, correlations and patterns are identified, and targeted actions are determined. While robots are practicing their motion sequences in the virtual environment, assembly processes are already being optimized for maximum efficiency prior to their use in the real world. This enables, for the first time, the automation of processes previously regarded as too complex or uneconomical. Schaeffler's Industrial Metaverse is already being used at ten locations. By 2030, Schaeffler plans to expand it to 50 percent of its plants worldwide.

Dr. Jochen Schröder, COO of Schaeffler AG, says: "For us, the Industrial Metaverse is far more than just a means to optimize processes. It is the key enabler for the scaling up of humanoid robots, as cyber-physical systems can already be trained by physical AI in the virtual space quickly and efficiently. By using the Industrial Metaverse, we are paving the way for flexible, high-level automation and greater efficiency in our worldwide volume production."

*Forward-looking statements and projections*

*Certain statements in this press release are forward-looking statements. By their nature, forward-looking statements involve a number of risks, uncertainties, and assumptions that could cause actual results or events to differ materially from those expressed or implied by the forward-looking statements. These risks, uncertainties, and assumptions could adversely affect the outcome and financial consequences of the plans and events described herein. No one undertakes any obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statement, whether as a result of new information, future events, or otherwise. You should not place any undue reliance on forward-looking statements, which speak only as of the date of this press release. Statements contained in this press release regarding past trends or events should not be taken as a representation that such trends or events will continue in the future. The cautionary statements set out above should be considered in connection with any subsequent written or oral forward-looking statements that Schaeffler, or persons acting on its behalf, may issue.*

\*\*\*

Schaeffler Group – We pioneer motion: The Schaeffler Group has been driving forward groundbreaking inventions and developments in the field of motion technology for 80 years. With innovative technologies, products, and services for electric mobility, CO<sub>2</sub>-efficient drives, chassis solutions and renewable energies, the company is a reliable partner for making motion more efficient, intelligent, and sustainable – over the entire life cycle. Schaeffler describes its comprehensive range of products and services by means of eight product families: From bearing solutions and all types of linear guidance systems through to repair and monitoring services. Schaeffler is with around 110,000 employees and more than 250 locations in 55 countries, one of the world's largest family-owned companies and one of Germany's most innovative companies.

Klaus Rosenfeld (third from right) accepts the German Innovation Award in the 'Large Companies' category together with the Schaeffler project team. (Picture: argum)

[Download](#)

Schaeffler's industrial metaverse combines real production with virtual simulation for more efficient and autonomous manufacturing processes. (Picture: Schaeffler)

[Download](#)

CONTACT:

**Dr. Axel Lüdeke**

Head of Group Communications & Public Affairs Schaeffler Group

Tel.: +49 9132 82-8901

E-Mail: [axel.luedeke@schaeffler.com](mailto:axel.luedeke@schaeffler.com)

**Daniel Pokorny**

Head of Communications Technology, Operations & Digitalization

Tel.: +49 9132 82-88708

E-Mail: [daniel.pokorny@schaeffler.com](mailto:daniel.pokorny@schaeffler.com)

**Heiko Eber**

Head of Investor Relations

Tel.: +49 9132 82-88125

E-Mail: [heiko.eber@schaeffler.com](mailto:heiko.eber@schaeffler.com)