New Solution Center in Portugal Boosts Expertise in Digital Business Models and Tire Solutions

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Continental opens new Solution Center in Lousado, Portugal

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Hanover, April 24, 2023. Tire manufacturer Continental has opened its new Solution Center in Lousado, Portugal on 20 April, 2023. In the presence of the employees, Christian Kötz, head of the Tires group sector and member of the Executive Board of Continental AG, formally inaugurated the recently completed building. At the Solution Center, which is located in the immediate vicinity of the tire plant, cross-functional teams drive forward targeted digitalization topics. The company has enlisted specialists from the fields of IT, artificial intelligence and applied analytics, e-commerce and industrial engineering. They have been tasked with providing global support for the digitalization of tire solutions, production processes and business workflows at the Continental Tires group sector. The new recruits bring further expertise to the global team of IT specialists and staff in related roles. With the approximately 80 employees, the tire manufacturer is strengthening its global team of various IT specialists and related functions. That number is to be doubled by 2026.

“We are working systematically on digital tire solutions, e-commerce and Industry 4.0 applications. At the Lousado site, highly skilled employees are supporting our global Tires team: with new digital business models and our ecosystem of digital solutions for our premium tires,” said Kötz at the opening ceremony. Pedro Carreira, Head of the Continental tire plant in Lousado and one of the board

members of the Solution Center, added: “Continental once more expands operations at its Lousado site. Our new Solution Center is right next to our state-of-the-art tire plant. Both will be working in close collaboration. And the nearby universities of Porto and Braga are ideal for the recruitment of highly skilled new employees.”

The added value offered by the Solution Center is already plain to see. Take a recent tire quality control project, for example. Staff from Lousado and the Applied Analytics & AI team at the Tires global research and development hub in Hanover worked together on this project, investigating ways of using artificial intelligence in final inspections of tires. This will allow artificial intelligence to detect small deviations that are usually extremely difficult to see with the human eye. The data gathered also gives the experts valuably references for continouslyoptimizing tire production processes. This new type of AI-assisted tire quality control is now also set to be used at other tire factories operated by the manufacturer.

Another team from Lousado is supporting the development of new digital fleet solutions and refining existing ones. One example is the ContiConnect tire management system. This offers digitally assisted tire monitoring, allowing for simpler, more efficient and more sustainable tire management. Tire pressure, temperature and service life are monitored, enabling specific recommended actions to be identified. The system achieves this by linking the tires to sensor systems, telemetry data, algorithms and the cloud, enabling tire-related breakdowns and failures to be averted and making it easier to plan maintenance and servicing schedules. This not only ensures much enhanced safety and productivity, but also helps to cut costs as a result of factors such as better fuel economy. Continental developed parts of the IT infrastructure and the associated apps and web-based user interfaces at the new Solution Center.

Lousado: a site with a long history looking ahead to the future

Continental is one of the biggest employers in the region and Portugal’s fourth largest exporter. At the site in Lousado tires for passenger cars, agricultural machinery and off-road vehicles are produced. With a history in Portugal dating back more than 30 years, Continental is a dependable partner that values its history but is also committed to innovation in both tire manufacturing and automotive technology.

Head of External Communications

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