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PRESS RELEASE

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ŠKODA AUTO DigiLab and Champion Motors establish Joint Venture in Israel

- › ŠKODA AUTO DigiLab and Champion Motors meet in Prague to sign documents establishing a joint venture in Tel Aviv
- › The joint venture in Tel Aviv gives ŠKODA AUTO DigiLab the best possible access to talent and new technologies from the IT industry
- › Joint venture partner Champion Motors has excellent connections on Israel's start-up scene
- › Venture aimed at collaborating with high-tech start-ups and universities
- › Start-up hotspot Israel is one of the regions with the most high-tech start-ups in the world

Prague, 15 December 2017 – ŠKODA AUTO DigiLab and Israeli ŠKODA importer Champion Motors establish a joint venture in Tel Aviv, which will commence operations in January 2018. ŠKODA CEO Bernhard Maier, Champion Motors CEO Dan Orenstein, and Erez Vigodman and Dr. Ing. Yoram Turbowicz, Board Members of the Israeli joint venture partner, signed the documents for the foundation of the joint venture yesterday at the Rudolfinum in Prague's Old Town.

ŠKODA AUTO DigiLab will soon be represented in Tel Aviv thanks to the new joint venture. The city is considered one of the most dynamic IT start-up locations in the world. Two full-time local employees will be assigned the task of making connections with the main Israeli start-ups and concluding partnership agreements.

"Israel is a high profile source of digital innovation. Being present there and gaining direct access to innovative projects, high-tech start-ups and IT talent is very important to ŠKODA," emphasizes ŠKODA AUTO CEO Bernhard Maier. "We firmly believe that we can use the local creative ecosystem and digital development expertise optimally for us. ŠKODA is currently focusing on areas including cyber security and big data."

"We are proud to strengthen our collaboration with ŠKODA AUTO and take it to the next level with the establishment of a Joint Venture in Israel," said Professor Itzhak Swary, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Champion Motors. "I am sure that our joint venture and the active presence of ŠKODA AUTO in the Israeli ecosystem will open new business opportunities for all sides – the Czech car manufacturer, Champion Motors and the local industry."

The aim of the partnership is to open continual exchanges with regional players on the IT scene as well as companies and universities. The focus is on collaborating with start-ups at a certain level of maturity. This will involve identifying innovative projects early on, and developing them into interesting business models for ŠKODA.

ŠKODA AUTO DigiLab is working on this closely with Champion Motors. The importer of ŠKODA vehicles and models from other Group brands, which has been operating successfully for many years, has expertise and experience in promoting emerging high-tech in partnership alongside its parent company, the Allied Group. Champion Motors and the Allied Group have excellent





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connections on the IT start-up scene as well as with local venture capital funds. The company itself has been investing in innovative start-ups for several years; these are now to be networked with ŠKODA AUTO DigiLab.

Holdings of the Allied Group are aimed at, for example, developers of digital security solutions and optical sensor technologies. Among other things, the Israeli importer and the traditional Czech brand are planning a joint innovation platform that promotes start-ups in the automotive and smart mobility sectors. The project receives support from the Israeli-Czech Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

Israel is currently home to more than 6,000 start-ups, around 300 R&D facilities of multinational organisations and hundreds of high-tech companies. The booming high-tech industry is supported by an investment-friendly financial sector as well as dedicated incubators and accelerators.

The automotive sector is a key driver and user of this dynamic development. More than 500 start-ups and research groups in Israel are currently involved in automotive projects – six times more than in 2013.

ŠKODA models first appeared in Israel in the early 1990s and are now frequently seen on Israeli roads. Between January and November 2017, ŠKODA AUTO delivered more than 23,000 vehicles in Israel.

As part of its Strategy 2025, ŠKODA has defined digitization and the creation of digital mobility services as the cornerstones of future corporate development. ŠKODA AUTO DigiLab in Prague plays a key role here, which, among other things, aims to strengthen the innovative power and digital development expertise of the Czech carmaker. ŠKODA AUTO DigiLab aligns the entire company with the possibilities and requirements of digitization. Established as a responsive IT start-up, this ideas workshop explores and develops new business models, solutions and products. One of ŠKODA AUTO DigiLab's core tasks is to collaborate with external innovators.

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Media images:



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ŠKODA CEO Bernhard Maier (on the right), Champion Motors representative Erez Vigodman signed the documents for the foundation of the joint venture on the 14 December 2017 at the Rudolfinum in Prague's Old Town.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO



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ŠKODA AUTO DigiLab and the Israeli ŠKODA importer Champion Motors have established a joint venture in Tel Aviv, which will commence operations in January 2018. ŠKODA CEO Bernhard Maier (second from the right), Jarmila Plachá, head of ŠKODA AUTO DigiLab, Champion Motors CEO Dan Orenstein (on the left), and Erez Vigodman (in the middle) and Dr. Ing. Yoram Turbowicz (second from the left), Board Members of the Israeli joint venture partner, signed the contracts for the foundation of the joint venture on the 14 December 2017 at the Rudolfinum in Prague's Old Town.

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Source: ŠKODA AUTO

ŠKODA AUTO

- › is one of the longest-established vehicle manufacturers in the world. The company was founded in 1895 – during the pioneering days of the automobile. Today, the company's headquarters remain in Mladá Boleslav.
- › currently offers the following models in the range: CITIGO, FABIA, RAPID, OCTAVIA, KAROQ, KODIAQ and SUPERB.
- › in 2016 delivered more than 1 million vehicles to customers worldwide.
- › has belonged to Volkswagen Group since 1991. The Volkswagen Group is one of the most successful vehicle manufacturers in the world. ŠKODA, in association with the Group, independently manufactures and develops vehicles, as well as components, engines and gear transmissions.
- › operates at three locations in the Czech Republic, produces in China, Russia, Slovakia, Algeria and India mainly through Group partnerships, as well as in Ukraine and Kazakhstan through local partners.
- › employs over 30,000 people globally and is active in more than 100 markets.

