

News

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Volkswagen Group expands its competence in artificial intelligence

• Prof. Patrick van der Smagt to strengthen Data Lab team in Munich
The Volkswagen Group continues to drive the digital transformation forward and is expanding its competence with regard to artificial intelligence (AI), not only with a view to using this key technology in the field of autonomous driving and in production, but also to speed up corporate processes. To that end, Prof. Patrick van der Smagt will be joining the team of AI experts and data scientists at the Volkswagen Group's Data Lab in Munich from October, and will lead the AI team. Van der Smagt is Associate Professor at Technische Universität München and one of Europe's leading experts in deep learning and robotics.

Dr. Martin Hofmann, Chief Information Officer at the Volkswagen Group, commented: "We are delighted that Professor van der Smagt will be joining the Data Lab. This shows how attractive the Volkswagen Group's IT labs are for distinguished scientists and experts in artificial intelligence. Top specialists from Volkswagen, industry partners and the academic world as well as startups jointly develop and test forward-looking ideas in our labs – working in an environment similar to Silicon Valley."

Johann Jungwirth, Chief Digital Officer at the Volkswagen Group, said: "First-class competence in the field of AI is an essential prerequisite for safeguarding the future. Artificial intelligence and machine learning are emerging as key technologies in the automotive industry. Volkswagen plays a pivotal role in driving these topics forward."

So far, artificial intelligence has mainly been applied in autonomous driving and robotics. This includes among other things pattern recognition based on image and sensor data, intelligent decision-making based on AI algorithms, and processing very diverse data types. A new field of AI is "robotic enterprise" – the use of auto-adaptive algorithms in corporate functions and processes such as those found in development, production, sales, finance, and quality assurance. Working with a team of scientists and AI experts, Prof. Patrick van der Smagt will be focusing in particular on this area.

The Data Lab set up in Munich in 2014 specializes in artificial intelligence, automotive data science and machine learning and has become the largest team of experts for AI and data science in the Volkswagen Group and the automotive industry. It is where IT solutions for big data and the internet of things are developed in close collaboration with universities and technology partners and made available to all brands in the Volkswagen Group. The Data Lab was set up with financial support from the Volkswagen Innovation Fund, a joint initiative of the company and the Works Council. The fund supports projects going beyond Volkswagen's previous core business.