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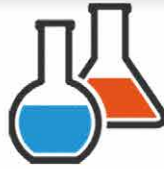
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Mr. Maximilian Butek

GCC | South & Southwest
Executive Director
Delegation of German Industry & Commerce Guangzhou
Delegate and Chief Representative

Dear Readers,

We are living in an ever-changing world. COVID-19 hit the world in an unexpected way, and its continuous impact is threatening to cripple businesses of all sizes. But on a positive note, it has also facilitated their change – under the crisis, many enterprises' human resources management is undoubtedly pushed to create new structures.

Before the pandemic, could you believe that HR departments would conduct recruitment solely through the Internet? Have you ever imagined that the entire company could work effectively from home? Or that your work performance will be easily evaluated without your physical presence in the office? As the core of the company, HR departments need to adapt to the continually changing environment and unpredictable external challenges faster and better than any other department.

Thanks to the technology revolution in fields such as big data and artificial intelligence, HR is becoming increasingly digitalized, diversified, and globalized. During these days, we can see a significant increase in enterprises applying digital and intelligent methods in human resource management. For example, the smart scheduling system, used by labor-intensive enterprises to optimize employee management, improve employment efficiency, reduce costs, and increase productivity. Tools that facilitate interviewing remotely, online meetings, and training are receiving considerable attention from enterprises. With the support of AI, 5G, and other advanced technologies, these tools become easy to obtain and utilize, which further improves the efficiency of human resources management.

Looking into the future, the rapid development of technology would most likely retire many jobs, especially in labor-intensive industries. However, at the same time, many new positions will be introduced. To adapt to the changing needs of corporates, companies should equip themselves with a competitive HR department, honing existing employees' skills to occupy multiple positions across different departments, and hand-picking new employees.

In today's day and age, HR departments are entrusted with tasks far more complex than routine administration – they need to immerse themselves with the strategy and external challenges of the organization as a whole. It is time to think outside the box and learn from the crisis. The transformation of HR is imperative, human resources managers. Are you ready?

Yours Sincerely,

Maximilian Butek

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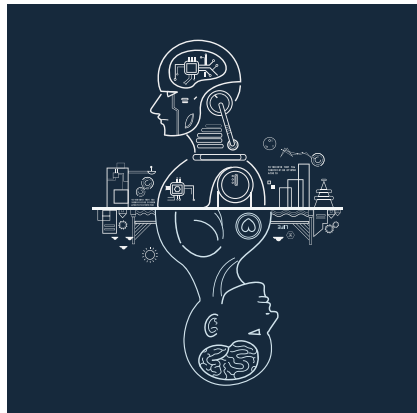
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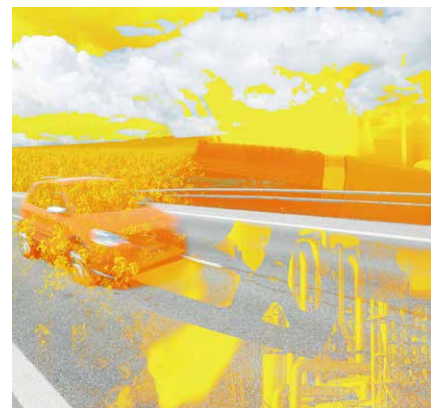
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Is COVID-19 Changing Our Views on Talent Management?



Dr. Natalie Koeppe
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Talent Management, an integral part of HR in organizations for decades, is experiencing a change in current times of crisis. While talent attraction, development, and retention has been defining the talent management agenda of organizations in the past, the focus started to shift toward how talent management can support a business facing an increasingly VUCA environment. VUCA began to trend across the business landscape during the 21st century, mapping the talent management of organizations against the degree of readiness to cope with volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. Under the influence of COVID-19, the talent management focus swiftly shifted to support business recovery and the continuity of management tasks. This shift has the potential to change the term talent and the way organizations practice talent management for years to come.

Talent Management Prior to the Crisis

Talent management has been around for decades. Concepts range from key positions, talent pipelines, and pools, to keywords like high performance and high potential management. However, the approaches have one common purpose: matching a key position, with the right person having the right skills, in a timely manner. Talents in this context are commonly understood as individuals showing a high growth potential, as well as high performance, in their current role. Both are often linked to a unique or rare set of skills and abilities that are hard to find on the external market. While talent itself is being assessed through performance and potential analysis, critical issues arise from the link of talent to key positions, leading to so-called "key talents" or "critical talents." These employees are known to be contributing directly, significantly, and positively to the company's value, while influencing the company's strategic future.

Some organizations are taking a holistic approach to talent management, focusing on the entire talent life cycle, including talent attraction, recruitment, development, and retention while others concentrate their efforts on key areas, such as nurturing a strong succession bench for critical positions. Naturally, when looking at a single-digit number of critical roles and only a small, elite group of high performers in the organization, the

approach to talent management becomes rather exclusive, supporting dedicated investments into the strategic organizational human resources – the talents.

Could the crisis change this classic understanding of talent management for good?

Impact of Crisis on Talent Management

By the end of April, when this article was written, the (first) curve of infection was flattening worldwide, and countries were extensively starting to estimate the pandemic's development and its impact on business for the near and distant future. The first few months of 2020 saw an impact on talent and talent management across organizations, particularly in the following areas:

Talent hiring: while many companies are holding on to old processes, structures, and habits, leading companies are using this time to architect the 'new normal.' Research on companies pulling through during recessions suggests that the key for a stronger post-crisis position is a strategic and selective focus on investments. While many companies are installing strict cost control mechanisms, scaling back on recruitment and driving downsizing, those organizations that balance their "hire and fire" approach are performing significantly better than their competition. A study of Boston Consulting Group suggests that in previous cases of crisis, a highly selective hiring approach of key talents was one of the most effective crisis measures reported by more than 3000 executives from 30 European countries across multiple industries (BCG, 2009, 'Creating People Advantage in Times of Crisis'). This was confirmed by another study by the Harvard Business Review, showing that companies balancing cost control and investments in a progressive manner, improving operational efficiency and boldly investing into new business opportunities, have a higher likelihood to come out as post-crisis winners (HBR, 2010, 'Roaring Out of Recession').

How could companies proceed with strategically-selective hiring?

- **Focus on external key talents:** Analyze which key talents on the market you have been looking at in the past, but have not been able to attract. It is possible that those talents, that have not been interested in joining an organization before, will now be open to consider a position, as their personal or professional circumstances might have changed.
- **Target key sectors and industries:** Particularly in times of crisis, companies should focus their sourcing and hiring efforts on scouting top talents in key functions, predominantly in hard-hit industries (such as aviation, the hospitality sector, or the start-up scene).
- **Hire for soft skills and potential:** While the concept of hiring based on potential (to perform in future roles) rather than past performance has been known for years, it seems that the crisis has emphasized the need for it even more. Candidates with a 'growth mindset,' that have the ability to adapt effec-

tively to changing circumstances and apply soft skills like change management, collaboration, communication, influencing techniques, and inspirational leadership – now move to the top of the selection criteria. Investigative, behavior-based questions such as "Could you tell me how you managed your team through a transition?" could support the selection process.

Critical Roles and succession: In times of crisis, it is crucial to review the key players and reassess their skills and potential in the face of the business's revised requirements. The past weeks have given organizations an opportunity to get an alternative view on leaders, observe their performance in crisis, and raise the question: "Do we have the right successors in place for our critical roles?"

In the past, critical roles were typically defined based on a set of diverse 'risk criteria,' including, but not limited to, the degree of impact on the business (e.g., operationally, financially, functionally, etc.), degree of external availability of talent in the market, or the uniqueness of skills, competencies, and knowledge. Recently, the new criterion of 'crisis risk' has entered the criticality discussion of succession and talent pipelines. With COVID-19, the risk lies in the event of sudden unavailability of incumbents of critical roles. The 'risk factor' for senior leadership roles and other key positions is not new, and most companies have mitigation protocols in place. The new aspect, however, is the pandemic's effect on multiple key positions simultaneously. For such cases, it is crucial to reassess the succession bench strength and ensure the talent pipeline continuity, by defining multiple (instead of one) steps for candidates with instant availability. Alternatively, organizations could also split a critical role and divide responsibilities among several step-in successors. This would support business continuity, while maintaining proper control during unprecedented times.

Additionally, globally mobile successors might require a reassessment. The impact of the crisis might be threefold: First, from a regional, macro-economic perspective, as borders remain closed and countries do not offer clear communication of timelines on travel restrictions, "next in line" successors might be immobile and need to be reconsidered. Secondly, once countries open their borders, the aspect of work permits and possible delays in their processing might add another layer of complexity for international succession pools. Finally, talents themselves might have changed their minds in terms of mobility, as they might be reluctant to relocate to certain countries or regions. This might particularly extend to countries that have been severely hit by the virus and are only slowly recovering.

Development and retention of key talents: Once organizations have reassessed their succession pool, development and retention of key talents move to the foreground. What can organizations do in times of crisis to develop and retain their talents?

- **Implement targeted development plans:** As the requirements for skills and knowledge change in the face of future business outlook, closing the skill gap becomes a top priority. Targeted talent development plans could not only include temporary,

cross-functional resource re-allocation, but also stretch assignments, which often arise from crises.

- **Transition to virtual learning & development:** During COVID-19, the learning and development aspects of organizations are increasingly shifting to the digital sphere (partially due to cost control and mobility restrictions). Particularly in China, where classroom training is the preferred learning option, many companies find themselves unprepared to switch gears and drive development through virtual offerings. While driving the transition to virtual learning, organizations might need to take a step back and focus on the 'digital readiness' first. Not only does this include providing access to the required hardware, software, and tools, but also upskilling and navigating the virtual/digital learning landscape, while pursuing self-paced, self-disciplined and self-guided learning according to individual needs. Organizations could provide introductory training to digital learning, as well as establish regular digital learning activities. While the need for virtual or remote learning opportunities is obvious, the need for a virtual talent development program might be a new challenge.
- **Invest in top talents:** This might sound controversial – given the fact that in times of crisis cost control is predominant. However, investment in talent retention is essential in a VUCA environment. Keep in mind that losing your talent is more costly than retaining. Once organizations start to recover from the crisis, recruitment costs are expected to mount. Thus, reviewing your talent retention practices now and setting up a proper retention plan is key in times of uncertainty, when the competition targets your high performers to support their business recovery. Adding to the monetary aspects of talent retention, companies, now more than ever, need to invest in the health and well-being of talent and their families. It might be the right time to review the annual leave policy, implement guidelines for working from home, start offering annual health check-ups to all employees, or invest in health insurance for your staff.

Hit by the pandemic, organizations will need to rethink how talent management will look like in the future, asking themselves how to identify and develop their high potentials (sometimes remotely), drive strong leadership across teams physically and virtually, and how to react to the potential case of losing a high proportion of their talent base at once. These issues will drive the talent agenda for years to come. Furthermore, talent will become more mobile, expanding beyond the scope of regional borders – particularly beyond functional borders and job grades. Ad-hoc short-term assignments and pooling of skills will become the new operating model. At the same time, the digital mindset and the advancement of technology will support even faster resource re-allocations through remote working opportunities.

While strategic investments in external talent are smart, it is important to take a closer look at your internal key talents now. Reviewing talents' availability, capacity, and capability is necessary for understanding the organizational talent gap and ensuring a strong succession bench to master extraordinary cir-

cumstances. And while organizations are progressively cutting costs to stay operational, it's also the right time for companies to reexamine their talent retention plans, as losing top talents now will cost organizations more in rehiring, when the cost of recruitment spikes post-crisis. Companies now have the chance to learn from the crisis, strengthen their organizational 'immune system,' and show resilience.

Dr. Natalie Koeppe is a versatile HR professional with a Ph.D. degree in International Management complemented by a Lean Six Sigma Black Belt. She holds a guest professorship at two European universities and is a regular speaker at academic and business conferences. She has been working in China since 2012 and last year joined adidas to drive the talent agenda across APAC.



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Digital Workplace, Data Analytics, and Science: Human-Centric HR for Company Transformation



Rosanna Terminio
Managing Partner at Asecorp China
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Chatbots are already replacing human interaction in recruitment processes: Thanks to big data analytics, they can access the candidate's data through the cloud and analyze his or her transactional and communication history quickly. This allows chatbots to create an enhanced experience for the user. The introduction of Robotic Process Automation (RPA) into HR processes increases workflow optimization, reducing repetitive admin tasks and cuts recruiting time. Still, excluding specific cases, the HR profession has not evolved following the trends, but rather maintained its mainly administrative and supportive functions.

At present, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced an accelerated implementation of digital solutions, which is not a proper digital transition nor a structured digital workplace. However, it has made evident that, if HR wants to remain current in times of increasing automation, it needs to evolve, shifting to a digitalized workforce and a strategic mindset. In complex and unpredictable times – that are becoming the new normal – companies need to count on employees as a source of competitive advantage. The transformation toward a more technology-enabled environment cannot be postponed any further.

A More Tech-Savvy HR

Recruitment processes are already impacted by the extensive use of social media and other web platforms and software applications, making recruitment even more challenging. This not only requires recruiters to use multiple channels to identify the best talents, but also to remain up-to-date with the latest digital trends depending on the different candidates' profiles and age groups, exactly like marketers.

This requires HR professionals to enhance their digital literacy and

promote digital innovation through the company. For example, the growing literature on blockchain applications, that could have a bigger impact on labor intensity and slow processes in each aspect of HR-related activities, like recruitment, professional growth, career advice, remunerations, and related reductions of costs.

Artificial Intelligence, in general, could also reduce recruitment bias and grant a more diverse and inclusive workforce, helping to match the right candidates to the right positions. That is why employers are increasing their use of online-based assessment tools that include tasks simulation, gamification, or cognitive technology. By reducing the risks of outdated information or missing regulations, technology can also speed up compliance check-ups.

Today, technology provides support that can free HR professionals from tasks with no added value, allowing them to focus on strategic work such as evaluating the impact of AI, robotics, and digital solutions on the organization, procedures, and work structure. For example, remote teams and flexible work will increasingly become the new normal, requiring companies to manage a fluid workplace. RPA and data analytics tools can help to improve efficiency and analyze employees' performance while working remotely. As the past few months demonstrated, Virtual Reality and Augmented reality can support remote teams with assistance and training.

Neuroscience and Human Behaviour

One of the hardest tasks for HR departments is change management. Dealing with people and keeping them engaged, motivated, and aligned with the company's goals and values require an in-depth understanding of the human psyche. Science-based knowledge could also be a useful tool when persuading leaders that need evidence-based decision making.

Neuroscience and behavioral science applied to human resources management can help design better strategies, at both the team and the individual levels. Under pressure, conflicts may arise. Interesting patterns in our brains generate different thought processes. Understanding how human dynamics and minds work can help individuals improve their self-awareness and leadership skills, as well as develop interpersonal relations and overall communication inside the organization. Additionally, a diverse workforce implies cognitive diversity, that also has to be managed (ex. people with certain degrees of mental impairment).

Finally, to increase employees' well-being in the workplace, as well as their concentration, creativity, and consequently, their productivity, more and more workspace design take into account how light, temperature, and other variables might impact our brain through our senses. Science shows that we only get two good hours of work a day from our brains. Together with the employee, HR should make sure that these two hours are the most productive ones.

HR will need to assess each individual's attributes, who he or she should partner with to reach their full potential, and who the company should invest in for the future. A self-aware HR manager will also be cautious about acting based on his own bias when recruiting, designing programs, and developing other internal communication processes. A seasoned manager will know how to push employees out of their professional comfort zone, foster growth, and promote continuous learning.

A Strategic Approach

In my opinion, the future of HR should be called 'People & Tech Management.' With the help of digital tools and data analysis – together with scientific information on human behavior and the brain – the practice of HR will play a major role in the reengineering of the organization.

Yet this is not enough. The uncertainty of the new business environment demands HR to assume a more strategic role, connecting with all the different parts of the organization. HR should be able to make the system more adaptable and flexible, anticipate the organization's future needs by looking inside and outside the company, and help shape the company's vision.

HR departments will also need to prepare the future workforce, making it more agile and flexible and reinventing the structure to include full-time employees, part-time, freelancers, and bots. This will require HR to identify which skills are in demand for the new organizational structure. In the market's current volatile environment, HR should be able, together with C-suit level executives, to create some jobs and tasks from scratch, or fuse tasks from different positions. Therefore, training for HR departments should include data analysis tools and foster skills necessary for strategic thinking for all levels of the organization.

Employee Experience: Human-Centric HR Functions

The race for talent will make the employee experience a relevant strategic aspect for companies of every size, influencing the company's image and brand. The message communicated should be consistent through all channels and business functions, in both the physical and the digital spheres. In the end, employees are our first brand ambassadors, attracting new talents and clients.

Data and AI could support the design of a customized employee experience through a tailor-made intranet space or a structured digital workplace. This can improve decision making for hiring, engagement, retention, and personalized career planning. If you want to attract the best talent, you must first define what they can get in return, even if you are a known brand.

A digital workplace will create integrated solutions that personalize the virtual support each employee can receive in terms of information, opportunities, and career development inside the company. Many organizations have adopted cloud-based learning management systems that use artificial intelligence to make personalized courses or certification recommendations that can be integrated into one unique platform. To make it work, HR must participate in its development.

Employee data analytics, paired with proper privacy laws, can become a sort of Internet of People (IOP), collecting data from every point of contact with the organization or its environment and suggesting improvements in process and procedures. This has the potential to increase productivity and efficiency and make the employees' working time more satisfactory. People analytics can also help HR better understand employee engagement, development, and performance, and how to support the employees in reaching their goals and designing a tailor-made career path.

HR will combine personalized support through the digital workplace with physical mentoring and coaching, identifying the right solutions for each individual, and empowering leaders to act as mentors and coaches.

In conclusion, we can expect a future shift to smaller HR departments, due to the increasing integration of automated technologies. HR will become more strategy-focused, and its professionals will need to equip themselves with a new range of skills, including people analytics, digital HR, strategic workforce planning, behavioral science, and stakeholder management.

The future of HR professionals will include impacting the organization, both qualitatively and quantitatively. To do this, HR must be able to identify each individual's traits and skills, combining them with the best technology to augment machine performance with a unique set of human abilities, creating a competitive advantage for the company. This will create new roles and jobs within the HR profession, such as people analytics professionals, human-robot trainer, employee experience designer, and so on.

Is your HR department ready for the future?

Rosanna Terminio is a consultant, contributor and lecturer specializing in innovation and strategy for the organization, as well as human resources strategist. After a few years of working in Spain, she moved to China in 2008 as a General Manager for AsecorpChina, of which she became co-owner in 2011. In 2012 they developed AsecorpChina/ZhongDao, a division dedicated to organizations and human resources strategy for the Chinese market. Ms. Terminio can be reached by email at rterminio@asecorpchina.com.cn

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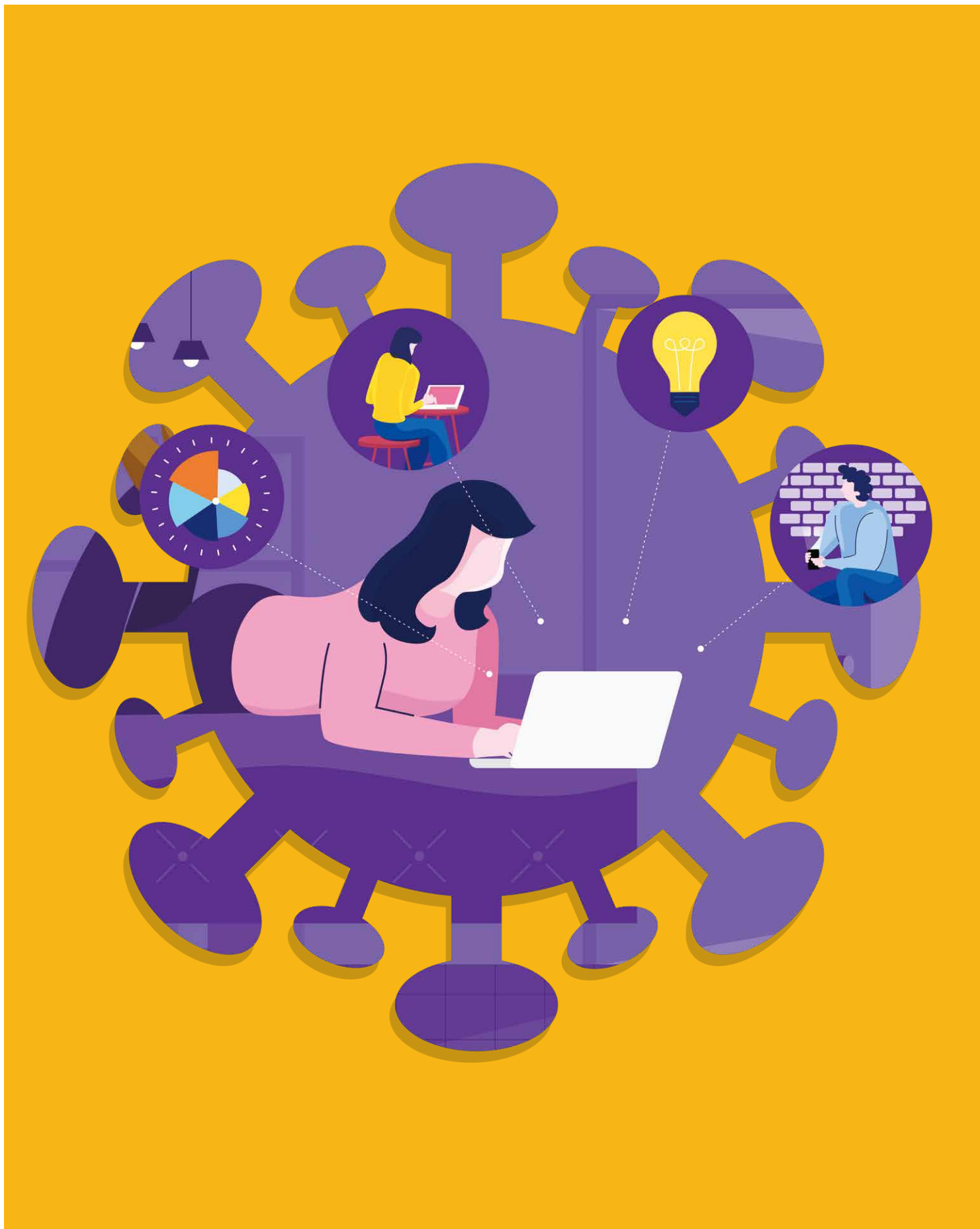
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Key Lessons from COVID-19:

Responding Strategies to HR Management in Organizations



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As a black swan event of every new decade, COVID-19 took us by surprise with its scale and quick spread. It affected every aspect of our lives – business, industry, manufacturing, trade, supply chain, traveling, entertainment, and social life, to name a few. It made a bold statement when it crossed China borders to all other major economies worldwide. Without distinguishing between nationalities and countries, social status and levels of economic development, personal and national wealth, it caused us all to experience pain, solitude, and fear all the same. Only a few months earlier we looked differently into 2020 – full of hope and optimistic expectations for a good start of a new decade, excited by what innovation and new technology would bring. Little did we know that 2020 will be a wake-up call for large and small organizations to redefine their core mission, reposition human capital as their most valuable asset, redesign business strategies with priority and rigorously re-examine existing management systems and organizational infrastructures. Ultimately, COVID-19 taught us priceless lessons and became the impetus for major human, economic, technological and business transformation.

Lessons Learned

COVID-19 taught us valuable lessons – many organizations and their existing management systems are simply not suited to deal with a crisis of this magnitude. In the past few years, we have been hearing of the benefits of technological advancements, and the importance of organizations to transform into an agile ecosystem, integrating technology, people and processes to compete in today's VUCA environment. COVID-19 led many companies to the realization that they are far from realizing this new ideal of work. Sadly, facilitating remote work and mobilizing workforce in response to the outbreak was an unplanned scenario for many organizations. Challenges arose

from how to quickly set up communication channels to facilitate home office, as well as to maintain the employees' morale and remain efficient. The outbreak also put privacy and data security to the test: maintaining the usual data protection protocols in this new setting proved to be challenging. It became evident that widely utilized performance management tools and systems are mainly based on employees' physical presence.

Organizations that have been able to manage the COVID-19 crisis effectively have five things in common: an elevated sense of urgency; rapid communication on goals and priorities, both internally and externally; a high financial sensitivity; an almost instant mobilization capacity; and an efficient decision-making process. These stem from strong leadership, running a simple yet effective performance management system.

Future Strategies

Leadership guru John Maxwell describes in his book, *Sometimes You Win, Sometimes You Learn*, the kind of mindset we need to be able to deal with difficulties, failures and challenges, combining a healthy dose of optimism with robust planning for the future. How can we use the time to prepare for the post-outbreak period? What should we leave behind, and how should we strategize for a better future?

First of all, we need practical agility – the ability to think, comprehend, and move swiftly through an accelerated decision-making process and rapid mobilization of resources. Improving the company's cultural intelligence is crucial in overcoming the "HQ pride" and aligning the headquarters' pulse with its China subsidiaries to the same level of flexibility and rapid adaptation to constant changes.

Secondly, we need to develop a resilience mindset – the ability to recover quickly from difficulties and adversity and develop practical resilience strategies for the business. For some, this could be a diversified market supply – not only to customers from different industries, but also for markets of different geographical locations. For others, this could mean diversifying the supply chain of key components by adopting alternatives, especially when these components are meant for the assembling of end products in the China market.

Finally, we should embrace innovation. The management consultant Peter Drucker said that innovation is a “change that creates a new dimension of performance.” This ultimately translates to strategic change in business models and people management, integrating digitization and digitalization, and accelerates new ideas and innovation strategies to priority level in execution.

Let's review some targeted strategies organizations should consider for the future:

Place people at the heart of innovation and technological advancements. Far too often, companies focus on the technology itself, neglecting to see the significance of people and people management in the process. Technology works best when employees leverage it to improve their performance output and to exchange a higher portion of their operational time with creativity time instead. Technological advancements and innovation are only meaningful when they bring added value to people's jobs, lives, and overall well-being of society.

Organization and mobilization of work need to be diversified, flexible, and, when feasible –non-dependent on physical presence. This includes all knowledge-based jobs, R&D, and other work, which typically does not require special lab equipment or manufacturing environment. COVID-19 taught us that the focus should be on accountability rather than availability – when accountability is not reliant on physical availability.

Digitization and digitalization of operations, communication, and document inventory to the highest level is no longer a futuristic, good-to-have concept. In fact, it has become a foundational requirement for companies to be able to navigate work in a globalized – virtually and physically – interconnected world.

Workforce upskilling is becoming the most sought-after strategy for companies. Investing in people development and integrating technological advancement create a versatile workforce, able to adapt to a data-driven business world. The main purpose of people upskilling is to enhance the collaboration of people and robots working together toward common business goals where people remain the core drivers of organizational performance. Unfortunately, in the past years we have witnessed major efforts being directed mainly toward technological product development, while people upskilling lagged behind.

Setting up simple, agile and highly effective performance management systems and pairing them with virtual learning has become essential to boost motivation and productivity in a virtual environment.

Author David Graeber claims that we have developed far too many pointless jobs that make people unhappy and unmoti-

vated. Today, many positions could be transferred to a data management software, freeing employees to pursue more creative job prospects. We already witness many traditional job functions being completely redesigned in scope and purpose to better meet the actual business needs.

The Long-Term Impact on HR

In the aftermath of COVID-19, the role and purpose of HR, as we know it, will forever change. Simply put, the effort will shift toward talent and organizational development to meet the overall business strategy, while focusing on its people. In the past 15 years, multinational companies have embraced the term ‘HR business partner’ developed by Dave Ulrich and Wayne Brockbank. This upgraded the HR function from mere policy and admin work to a strategy-building department, in support of line leaders and business decision makers. So far, however, the role was rarely adopted by small or mid-size industrial enterprises. Enabled by technology, China-based enterprises are becoming more advanced in people management. Thus, it is most likely that forward-oriented manufacturers will leapfrog from the well-known HR admin function straight to People and Organizational Strategy Officers (POSO), who use visualized data analytics, employ state-of-the-art people behavior and talent analytics, and develop organizational psychology approaches to engage the workforce. Such HR talent will then be well-positioned to sit at the business table and advise on people strategy across all functions and levels in the organization. POSO will have to deploy the latest performance management technology and business tools, promoting flat hierarchy and accountability over availability; integrate virtual communication tools into daily routines; and introduce cutting-edge technology in workforce mobilization. Therefore, POSO should possess a variety of skills, such as data analytics, digital communication, fintech, organizational and human psychology skills, and neuroscience behavior expertise, as well as coaching and mentorship skills.

New Approaches

COVID-19 proved to be a catalyst for innovations touching on various business areas:

Reshaping of existing business models. In the past, we have witnessed a move from product-oriented business models to services. Most recently, we saw the power of knowledge and information-based management industry as a result of the outbreak. Most businesses realized that they no longer need to carry industrial hardware assets that are not utilized to maximum capacity and are becoming a liability. They would now prefer to outsource to vendors and focus on using the end services instead.

Digitalization of B2B sales and marketing activities is no longer a good-to-have concept, but rather a necessary strategy to keep sales organizations afloat. COVID-19 prevented many businesses from their usual visits to B2B customers to present their products and provide technical and aftersales support. Such restrictions had a huge impact on companies' revenues. Many organizations have been working hard during this period to develop digital, virtual product catalogs to attend to their customers' needs and improve B2B customer journey – something rarely heard of in the past. Many technological tools that allow a comprehensive virtual experience, such as webcams, have found a wider range of remote technical support applications.

Learning & development is no longer constrained to a class-room setting, but is rapidly shifting online to digital learning platforms and virtual team sharing as a new form of blended learning. It will allow companies to implement mass training and people upskilling in a short period of time and maintain an agile workforce that can quickly learn new skills.

Remote workforce mobilization tools are on the rise, with tools such as Alibaba's DingTalk app that enable thousands of employees to remain connected and informed in real time.

Virtual conference formats, where conference attendance becomes easily accessible and agile, are also gaining momentum. These features allow attendees to get the latest industry updates from an office desk or home office. Sooner or later, there will be a digital tool that frees people from the need to physically meet in order to network.

Gig economy as the preferred employment strategy. With higher demand for highly customized goods and services, a single organization can no longer provide the wide range of talents needed to meet each and every one of their customer's needs. Therefore, companies will shift toward open talent models and outsource highly specialized knowledge and expertise to on-demand talents, who will join the in-house teams on a project basis. The new trend will bring diversity into projects, improve flexibility and autonomy, and increase engagement and motivation – highly valued job characteristics by the Generation Z workforce.

Last but not least, with the shift toward virtual interactions and online work, companies are making it a priority to review and update their existing virtual storage, cloud solutions, and intranet infrastructure to enable a massive number of employees to connect to company software tools and access resources needed from anywhere in the world.

In conclusion, while COVID-19 has delivered a blow to the world economy and disrupted the lives of many, it has taught us some valuable lessons – and hopefully made us better prepared for the post-outbreak realities of our world. Remaining optimistic and open-minded to the surge of new technologies, adequate workforce architecture, and business models is crucial for a successful economic reboot.

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Is the Flexible Workplace Here to Stay?



Philipp Baumann
Head of R&D at hivetime

In the past few months, there has been no shortage of discussions about the flexible workplace. Many organizations turned remote with little to no preparation, and now there appears to be a desire to make sense of the experience and share lessons learned. For some, this abrupt transition has short-circuited business continuity and led to a sharp decline in productivity. For others, it opened the workplace to a brand-new world.

Yet the flexible workplace is not a new concept – it has been around for decades, offering clear advantages to employers and their employees. Will COVID-19 cement the concept on a global scale, or will it turn out to be just a fad?

The Sluggishly Slow – and Later Sudden Rise – of the Flexible Workplace

In many ways, the flexible workplace remains controversial in China. Prior to COVID-19, the concept was slowly gaining traction (Regus 2017), and companies had already been toying with it as far back as the early 2000s. Yet merely five years ago, Chinese workers were still among the least likely to have flexible schedules (22%), trailing Japan (30%), the United States, and India (61% each). In contrast, 70%

of workers in Germany reported that they had some form of schedule flexibility (EY 2015).

As late as 2019, only 51% of companies in China had a flexible work policy, and it remains unclear what such policies entail (IWG 2019). The number of companies that make actual use of their policies is far lower. During this crisis, however, most organizations and employees that had the ability to switch to remote operations did so. For many, what was deemed impossible for years suddenly became the only option.

Are Flexible Workplaces Here to Stay?

The flexible workplace has the potential to be much more than a crisis-induced home office, which, in actuality, is not 'flexible' at all. Scholars define workplace flexibility as "the ability of workers to make choices influencing when, where, and for how long they engage in work-related tasks" (Hill et al. 2008). This concerns the employee's schedule (9–5 core hours vs. complete customization), location (in-office vs. working-from-home vs. working-from-anywhere), role (classical, strict job description vs. fluid role), and contract (part-time vs. full-time; contractual vs. permanent), which includes contractual



subtypes of freelancers, gig workers, and crowd workers. At its best, it allows employees and managers to create solutions that benefit both parties – taking into account individual circumstances.

From a strategic perspective, these options may lead to more complexity. However, they can also improve an organization's resilience when a shifting environment requires swift adaptation. At this stage, though, conversations with HR managers and decision makers from different industries show that many still view workplace flexibility as little more than an emergency solution. For it to become an integral part of the landscape, the flexible workplace must face organizations' ultimate test – that of bottom or top-line results. Do flexible workers deliver better results in terms of efficiency or creativity? And does it show in the numbers? Preliminary evidence does not paint a clear-cut picture.

There are Upsides...

In 2010, Ctrip decided to run a 9-month working-from-home experiment with call center employees. Homeworkers achieved a 13% performance increase, measured as more minutes per shift and more calls per minute, while simultaneously being more satisfied and less likely to leave the company. Similarly, a 2019 Harvard study analyzed the flexible work structure at the US Patent and Trademark Office. Employees with flexible location arrangements were 4.4% more productive than those following a work-from-home policy that allows schedule flexibility but requires living near the office.

A growing body of research points in this direction: employees achieve better results when they control their schedules and location. Being able to choose the physical and psychological conditions most suitable for task completion is not just a perk. Steering away from in-office distractions, engaging in creativity-enhancing diversions, and

working according to one's biorhythm instead of factory-like shifts, tend to be a real performance booster.

A number of employees in China have reported experiencing such benefits, along with less stress and improved work-life balance. Among the reasons were the cut in commute, lower costs of living, and strengthening relationships with family and friends (e.g., BBC 2020; McKinsey 2020; TIME 2020). Gallup (2017; 2020) confirmed returns on engagement for organizations in terms of financial, customer, retention, safety, quality, shrinkage, and absenteeism metrics. Apart from engagement-related aspects, organizations willing to embrace the opportunity are likely to benefit from a stronger employer brand, lower attrition rates, and reduced office costs.

Maybe most importantly, organizations that have flexible workplaces are more crisis-resistant, and can seamlessly transition between different states of operations.

... and There are Downsides...

In recent months, companies and employees have raised the alarm on the 'less than ideal' aspects of flexible work. Across China, employees have encountered – and complained about – what Regus (2017) had previously called the 'horrible home office': an ill-equipped space full of domestic distractions, where focusing on work is a Sisyphean task. Feelings of isolation, relationship decay, and loss of direction and purpose occurred when people lost the option to have physical interactions with their colleagues. Workers have had fewer chances to bond with their teams, which may impact the work culture. When only part of the staff works remotely, some flexible workers describe being less visible than their in-office colleagues. These points are supported by pre-COVID-19 data: 10% of flexible US workers said they had "suffered a negative consequence as a result of having a

flexible work schedule," which included being assigned less interesting projects, being denied a promotion or raise, and even losing their job (EY 2015). The downsides of flexible work do not end with home distractions – they can impact entire careers.

Videoconferences, combined with various digital tools, have been lauded as a cure-all solution. Although technology now allows real-time teamwork to an extent we could only dream of before, it is still insufficient for many companies. A growing number of employees in China have raised concerns about having gone from a '996' to a '007' work schedule, where they were encouraged to stay in touch with their teams almost 24/7. Prolonged video-calls are taking a toll on employees' energy levels, and tools like Zoom raise issues of data security in the modern age of flexible work.

The Pitfalls of the Flexible Workplace

With preliminary results still mixed, the flexible workplace is not an easy sell. There appear to be four concepts that reinforce each other, and whose presence may turn flexible work into nothing more than a management fad.

1. Business-as-usual under the guise of business continuity

Many organizations were overwhelmed by the sudden need to operate remotely without the necessary infrastructure and playbook in place. Turning this crisis into an opportunity requires strategic thinking, but these days the default preference appears to be business-as-usual and reactive opportunism under the guise of business continuity. Will organizations learn, or will they revert to the status quo?

2. The lure of traditionalist mindsets

While progressive managers have embraced this learning opportunity and are considering the potential of working flexibly, traditionally minded managers have been quick to dismiss it, lamenting the lack of visibility and control. Despite the buzz, in-office still has more fans among decision makers than the flexible workplace. Are managers ready to give up their familiar approaches, or will they succumb to the lure of traditionalist mindsets?

3. An ambivalent workforce

The Chinese workforce is by no means unanimous in terms of its flexibility preferences. Some have loved working remotely, while others loved to hate it. As economic uncertainty looms large, more and more employees may opt for safety and time-tested in-office work over a novel approach. Furthermore, low performers and tasks that absolutely cannot be completed under a flexible format cast serious doubt on whether the flexible workplace is meant for everyone. For traditionalist leaders and organizations, these aspects may serve as opportune cases in point to confirm the doubts they already harbored. Good old in-office may just feel safer.

4. A fairytale narrative

The last – and possibly most consequential – is the 'fairytale narrative'. Scholars such as Dan Ariely and Nobel Laureate Robert J. Shiller have made the case that the stories we tell have a significant impact on our decision making. Lately, what feels like a social media marketing campaign is shaping the flexible workplace narrative. Once too many authors overpromise on the flexible workplace, and it then underdelivers on the rocky road to implementation, the bitter aftertaste of disappointment will linger on.

Is Flexible Work a Fad – or the Future?

Most organizations and employees have spent the last few months in crisis mode. The conclusions we draw after this period are, at the very least, to be taken with a grain of salt, because many of the actions taken had little to do with serious, coordinated planning. Though the flexible workplace bears significant potential for organizational improvement beyond being "just" a shock absorber, it also comes with downsides if not managed well. How could organizations in China avoid these pitfalls?

The first step is to clarify and align the strategic imperative for installing a flexible workplace. It makes a big difference whether your primary motivation is to improve productivity, strengthen your employer brand, increase employee retention, or strengthen your organizational adaptability.

Winning over management of all levels is crucial for this process. You will need an airtight business case that includes risk management. It is up to all managers to step on the brakes and compel their organizations to learn from this crisis, rather than return prematurely to business-as-usual via renewed, visionless performance pressure.

Management may be the foremost stakeholder group, yet installing a cross-functional team and including relevant major stakeholders from across the organization, will ensure that all voices are heard. Solid decision-making processes require a diversity of perspectives. Even though it may at times be tedious, having a designated employee play the 'devil's advocate' allows for critical points to surface, facilitating concept modification before going live.

Next, HR's timely involvement is essential. A strong HR team is key for putting workforce concerns on the table and solving them. Different workforce aspects, ranging from legal to talent management, need to be addressed and worked out early on. This includes upgrading and refocusing performance management away from 'presenteeism' and toward goals, outcomes, and progress. A competent HR organization will also proactively deal with ambivalence among the workforce in terms of flexible workplace fears, needs, and expectations, playing a fundamental role in building a culture that views flexibility as an opportunity worth experimenting with.

Finally, an approach that often brings forth good results is that of the experiment. The goal of every organization should be to find a suitable, tailor-made solution. Setbacks should be viewed as moments of truth for adapting and changing direction. Starting with a few key hypotheses and a limited number of employees (selected consciously based on merit, necessity or task type, vs. random selection) limits the negative impact and increases the likelihood of success. And this will ultimately influence whether the flexible workplace is here to stay or not.

As hivetime's Head of R&D, **Philipp Baumann** and his team are responsible for conceptualizing strategy- and culture-building programs and leadership development initiatives. These programs help management teams co-create value and build the long-term resilience of their organizations. Philipp is the go-to person for all topics related to research and concept development, as well as anything related to hivetime's services specifically and creativity in general.



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AI for Diversity: Can AI Save Us From Our Own Bias?



Robin Young
Founder and Chairman of Seedlink Technologies

Human Resources is generally a slow adopter of technology. In this field, the reliance on human judgment and knowledge is critical. However, human judgment can be limiting: hiring managers typically select people who resemble themselves, rather than candidates most qualified for the job. Affinity bias – a known cognitive bias where people gravitate toward those similar to them in background and appearance – has been a known source of discrimination in recruitment processes. While our attraction to people similar to ourselves is innate, it could prove catastrophic for the workplace, reinforcing a phenomenon called ‘groupthink.’ Groupthink occurs when an organization with low diversity makes irrational decisions due to the need for conformity or social unity. Some notable examples of groupthink include Swiss Air, where groupthink contributed to the company’s financial downfall; and the Bay of Pigs invasion, where homogenous decision making led to devastating results.

The importance of diversity in the workplace is growing, and now we are witnessing the seeds of change worldwide. However, that varies significantly based on country and field. In the US and Europe, for example, work performance is largely decoupled from education history and grade point average. In China, we see a bias toward top universities, with many companies only recruiting from the top 25 schools or competing organizations. This is partially due to China’s huge population: the growth of Chinese college graduates has skyrocketed over the last 20 years, from just over one million in 1990 to over 8.3 million in 2019. Dealing with such large numbers makes traditional approaches obsolete.

According to Hunter & Schmidt (1998), traditional interviews seldom predict job success – and the correlation between résumé screening and job success nears zero. According to the Harvard Business Review, 40%–60% of new executive hires fail within 18 months. This high failure rate does not seem to spring companies into action: only a third of multi-national companies even measure whether their hiring practices lead to well-matched employees.

The Age of Intelligence

Structured interviews – where all candidates are asked the same questions in the same order – tend to outperform unstructured (traditional) interviews by almost three times. IQ tests also have predictive validity nearly equal to structured interviews, though some overlapping factors may apply. Simply put, most companies would be better off hiring based on intelligence tests rather than interview results. While controversial, the data supports this statement.

While we are still at an early phase of the intelligence age, it promises to revolutionize our way of living and working even more than computers and smartphones. Though it’s unclear how long this transformation will take, evidence suggests that change will come faster than we realize. Machines will eventually be able to do the jobs that most people do today. Beyond manual labor and repetitive tasks, the age of intelligence means that machines are getting smarter and will start to encroach on knowledge work.

To elucidate this concept, look at the use of AI in healthcare. Machines can already interpret CT scans and identify possible tumors at a rate rivaling top radiologists. Initially, this led to some predicting the end of radiology. But as science progresses, we learn that the human-machine combination has higher predictive accuracy than either alone. Furthermore, in many aspects of modern occupations, machines simply fall short. Consider work requiring human interaction: doctors spend long hours consulting with other doctors and patients, for example. Healthcare professionals’ ability to determine an issue and solution is heavily dependent on human contact. In an ideal world, the intelligence age will allow doctors to spend more time working with patients rather than focusing on data entry, which is currently the case in many industrialized countries.

AI in HR: Leveling the Playing Field?

Unlike radiology and healthcare, the benefits of AI in HR are hard to measure. This can be attributed to our criteria: the human estimate of success is inconsistent and difficult to quantify. While cancer scans can be clearly defined, employee performance reviews are subjective.

Practices such as games, résumé screening AI, and video interview AI are still more artificial than intelligent. Currently, gamified assessments are not based on AI, but instead offer a new way of assessing traits that vocational psychologists know are correlated to job success. For résumé screening and Video AI, progress remains slow. Conversational AI, otherwise known as chatbots, is showing improvements, but having a real and pleasant conversation with a bot is still out of reach.

Some of these measures are alleged to be discriminatory. Hirevue, the leading video AI supplier, came under scrutiny after claims of discrimination surfaced in the United States. In 2019, the Electronic Privacy Information Center filed a formal complaint with the Federal Trade Commission against the company, alleging biased and unprovable results. With low trust in AI and its ability to level the playing field, the University of Maryland Business School recently told its students: "Robots compare you against existing success stories; they do not look for out-of-the-box candidates."

Yet evidence shows that AI is improving recruitment. According to a 2019 McKinsey survey, 63% of respondents reported an increase in revenue after implementing AI solutions. Seedlink's case studies reveal that AI can screen for more productive employees when measured by revenue output. While there are clearly challenges with this method – as revenue does not account for important traits such as integrity – it is a good place to start. Another tool is monitoring company morale: COVID-19 and remote work have proven that understanding and maintaining employee morale is vital to productivity. Using Seedlink's Morale Monitor, companies can track morale and take action using real-time data.

The fundamental issue in Human Resources and management is defining success. Ultimately, AI is only as good as the data it seeks to model. For AI providers and companies using these tools, obtaining reliable data is critical.

How Do We Prepare for Tomorrow?

Invest in Measurement and Data

If your organization is not measuring the performance of its recruitment function – that is where you should start. You cannot improve or track anything without first understanding the baseline. Indicators to track include costs of hiring, the performance of new hires, and what channels produce top candidates. Tata, for example, tracks its graduate hires by college, performance, tenure, and salary. L'Oréal tracks its gender bias (or lack thereof) in addition to standard performance metrics. Leading companies consider their measuring system to be competitive advantage, and many are outperforming their competition.

Review Hiring Practices

According to Glassdoor, companies are now spending nearly double the amount of time on interviews compared to 2009 – pro-

longing the recruiting process without improving hiring results. One of the main reasons is that most managers do not prepare for interviews, and instead interview in an ad hoc manner, increasing the chances of affinity bias and missing out on competent professionals.

Structured interviews, on the other hand, are run with very specific criteria that are agreed upon before interviewing begins. The process focuses on the needs of the company rather than the candidates' background, scoring them solely based on their answers and selecting the candidate with the highest score. Even though this quantitative method outperforms the traditional approach, it is still rarely applied, mostly because it requires deep organizational discipline and a commitment to measuring results.

Test Candidates Using Traditional and Novel Approaches

The methods to determine which candidates will be successful date back to the 1930s. Personnel and industrial occupational psychologists have methods that can predict a candidate's success rate. This data should be the starting point from which traditional, human interaction should be combined with modern practices. As technology progresses, companies should experiment with different tools and methods, trusting machines to execute where they are proven. Investing in AI tools and the right data can help deliver an efficient and effective outcome.

As the business environment continues to evolve rapidly, businesses need to rely on – and experiment with – data analytical approaches. Automation of processes is inevitable, even in HR. Employing newer approaches such as AI assessments, that are able to identify candidates with long-term potential and combining them with traditional methods such as structured interviews and aptitude tests improve results. Avoiding human bias and groupthink while embracing diversity is crucial for creating a high-performing, sustainable organization. As with many roles, the future manager needs to have a good grip on technology, data science, and occupational psychology. Getting familiar with AI must start today.

Robin Young is an entrepreneur and investor. He is the Founder and Chairman of Seedlink Technologies, a company focused on People Science. Seedlink supports companies in over 30 countries with hiring, management, and performance processes. For more on Seedlink and its industry-leading platform, visit seedlinktech.com and at Seedlink on LinkedIn. To try out the morale monitor, go to moralemonitor.seedlinktech.com.



Industry Report:

China's Financial Sector and the Next Stage of Reform



Leilei Wang
Fintech Consultant at Kapronasia



Overview of China's Financial Sector Today

Growth in China's financial sector has slowed since 2013, although the performance in 2019 was better than in 2018. The commercial bank average profit growth rate increased to 9.3% but could not compare to the double-digit growth of the 2000s. The insurance original premium increased by 12% from US\$574 billion in 2018 to US\$650 billion in 2019. By the end of 2019, assets under management (AUM) reached US\$7.8 trillion, higher than 2018, but still a decline from US\$8.0 trillion in 2017.

At present, the financial sector faces many uncertainties amid a tough global economic environment. Though China's economy has initially stabilized after years of development, it still faces downward pressure not only from reduced domestic demand, but also from the slowdown of the global economy. The banking industry aims to remain generally stable and to continue risk compensation capability.

A Brief History of China's Post-1978 Financial Reform

Although the Chinese government promised that it would fully open the domestic banking market to foreign capital within five years of joining the WTO in 2001, limitations still exist. China's financial reform can be divided into three periods:

1979~1993: 'Starting from scratch' – China gradually developed its financial sector. It set up four special economic zones that attracted many investors, as well as allowed foreign institutions to open businesses. Financial institutions mainly focused on the export and import industry, providing foreign exchange services.

1994~2001: Steady growth – In 1994, Beijing promulgated more policies to lift restrictions. These policies encouraged greater participation by foreign financial institutions in the Chinese financial sector. By the end of 2001, there were 177 foreign-funded, bank-operating institutions, an increase of 100 compared with the end of 1993.

During this period, China's insurance industry also attracted foreign capital. However, China's securities industry had yet to develop at this point.

2001~2018: Gradually opening to the world – In 2001, China joined the WTO, promising to fully open its financial sector by the end of 2006. However, many delays have occurred. Foreign participation in China's financial sector remains limited today. As of the end of 2018, foreign banks' total assets only accounted for a total of 1.69% of China's total banking assets. Foreign insurance companies' total premium income market shares were just 5.58%.

Further Financial Reform Measures from 2019

In 2019, China took steps to further open its financial sector to foreign investment. The Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC), under the State Council (China's Cabinet), announced 11 measures in July 2019 to be effective no later than 1 April 2020.

Overall, the measures relax restrictions on many aspects of foreign firms' access to China's financial sector, notably on the proportion of foreign ownership of companies in the insurance, securities, fund management, and futures segments. The measures also scrap

the requirement that an insurance company in the PRC must have a 30-year operating track record and a representative office in the country for a minimum of two years. Furthermore, China will lift the foreign ownership ratio restriction of 45% and allow foreign-owned service providers to enter the securities, fund management, and futures financial industry segments.

Secondly, the measures accept and approve license applications of foreign-funded institutions, including in the fund custody, credit rating, financial asset management, insurance, and securities investment consulting segments.

Payments

Amid this new stage of financial reform, Beijing is also issuing more payment licenses to foreign firms. For instance, PayPal completed the acquisition of GoPay in September 2019, becoming the first foreign online payment platform in the China market with the online and mobile payment licenses owned by GoPay. In November 2018, American Express set up a joint venture with Chinese payment company Lianlian Pay to apply for a clearing license, which was approved by the PBOC. In January 2020, MasterCard's 51% holding subsidiary submitted a clearing business application, which was accepted by the PBOC and is currently in process.

Insurance

In total, China had 57 joint-venture or wholly foreign-funded life insurance companies by the end of October 2019. Those companies' premiums reached RMB4.3 trillion (US\$644 billion) in 2019. The total premium increased by 12% compared with 2018. However, it only accounts for 5.89% of the total 2019 insurance premium.

China is opening its doors to foreign insurers. As previously mentioned, foreign insurers with less than 30 years of operational experience will be allowed to enter the market, specializing in their vertical industries or the overall insurance industry. Additionally, foreign-invested insurance companies can be wholly owned by the parent companies. China's consumers, meanwhile, will benefit from more diverse insurance products and better services.

Securities

Before China joined the WTO, foreign securities companies primarily operated in the country through representative offices. After 2001, foreign firms invested more in domestic securities houses or established joint ventures. However, foreign firms were still constrained by the ownership restriction of 49% on joint ventures and the difficulty of acquiring licenses. Thus, foreign brokers have had limited success in the China market so far.

The new measure removes the 49% ownership upper limit, allowing institutions to set up a fully foreign-owned broker in China.

Wealth Management

In the pilot stage of the new policy proposed by the China Banking Regulatory Commission, priority will be given to internationally renowned foreign financial institutions. These institutions can raise funds in RMB or, in part, with long-term foreign capital.

The policy facilitates the introduction of industry-leading investment ideas, management strategies, incentive mecha-

nisms, and compliance risk control frameworks from developed markets, which will further enrich the supply of financial products, whether used for insurance asset management or pension management.

Credit Rating

Foreign companies are now allowed to conduct credit rating business in China of all types of bonds in the interbank and the exchange bond market. China's bond market is the second-largest market in the world, with overall market size of US\$6.8 trillion in 2019. Before the relaxation of restrictions, only 11 companies were permitted to conduct the credit rating business in China. Previously, S&P China Ratings was the only qualified foreign rating institution allowed to operate in China.

Underwriting Licenses

There are currently 143 underwriting licenses in the Chinese market, only six of which are held by foreign players. Half of them hold Class B and the other half hold basic underwriting licenses. None of them have Class A lead licenses.

The new measure allows foreign-funded institutions to apply for Class A lead underwriting licenses for the inter-bank bond market.

The Impact of the Pandemic on China's Financial Sector

The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has hit China's economy, and the global economy, hard. China's GDP contracted by 6.8% in the first quarter compared to a year earlier. As a result of the pandemic's crippling effect on economic activity, China's 2020 GDP forecast has been revised down to 2.6% from the original 6.1%, according to CICC. The loss is equivalent to RMB3.5 trillion (US\$494 billion).

For the financial sector, the biggest challenge brought by the pandemic is declining liquidity. For the financial industry, especially the banking industry, profits mainly come from deposit and loan spreads. The pandemic's repression of consumption has caused liquidity to decline, affecting consumer and investor confidence and leading to a reduction in the effectiveness of loans. Banks are facing great pressure, and the impact has also spread to the entire financial market.

China has implemented policies to ease this market pressure. The Politburo meeting of the CPC Central Committee on 3 March plans to increase the fiscal deficit rate and issue special treasuries. The Ministry of Finance encourages financial institutions to issue new loans to SMEs. The CBRC has adjusted personal mortgage repayment arrangements such as housing mortgages and credit cards, and will extend the repayment period according to specific situations. Provincial governments in many places also issued billions of "consumer coupons" to encourage consumption. Multiple financial institutions cooperated with technology giants to issue instant online loans with lower or zero interest. We can expect additional measures by local governments to stimulate demand that has been suppressed.

Vanguard expects that China's economy will show positive growth by the end of the year, but developed markets will need

another 3 to 4 quarters to stabilize, which means we might not see positive growth until the end of 2021.

Opportunities and Challenges for Foreign Companies

Swiss Re's 2019 Sigma report predicts that China will be the world's largest insurance market by 2030. The report made that prediction before the latest financial reform measures were announced.

The demanding wealth market is looking for reputable service providers. It is estimated that financial assets owned by individuals will exceed US\$30.2 trillion in 2021. On the other side, at present, cash and savings account for more than half of China's household finances, according to a speech by Cao Yu, Vice Chairman of China Banking Regulatory Commission, in 2019 China Fortune Forum. The average retention of current in-service fund managers is 3.1 years in China. Compared with overseas, the average retention of fund managers in American fund management companies such as BlackRock, Fidelity, and Pioneer Fund is more than six years, as claimed by chyx.com. This could be an advantage when foreign players come in.

However, while China is opening up the majority of financial sectors to foreign institutions, the banking industry remains somewhat closed off. The policies around opening up have been fully liberalized, but invisible barriers at the executive level have led to a shrinkage of foreign investment market share – for example, the long and opaque application process and relationship maintenance during operation. This may continue to cause uncertainty for foreign capital to set up business in China.

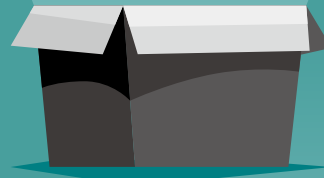
Foreign enterprises will face competition from not only domestic financial institutions, but also China's home-grown tech companies such as Alibaba and Tencent as their appetites heighten, which have large pools of capital and innovative business models. The companies have been widely praised for their efficacy in supporting China's fight against the coronavirus. Understanding the market and people here is especially necessary to keep competitive in the changeable market.

Leilei Wang graduated from the University of Southampton with a master's degree in accounting and finance. She is a Fintech consultant at Kapronasia, focusing on banking, payment, and blockchain research. Leilei was also the Shanghai ambassador of Blockchain Ladies Asia.

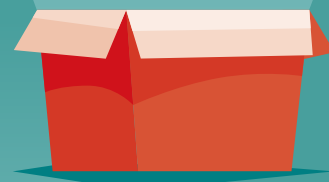
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Managing Your Labor Costs

By Dr. Ulrike Glueck and Jeanette Yu

The outbreak of COVID-19 has a significant impact on the world economy. Companies are encountering economic pressure and looking for possibilities to control and reduce labor costs. During COVID-19, the Chinese government issued several policies to help companies overcome their difficulties. These policies are expected to be applicable until the impact of COVID-19 has been eliminated. According to PRC labor law and currently applicable labor policies, the following measures can be taken into consideration for managing labor costs:

1. Reduction of Salary and Benefits

When encountering economic difficulties, reducing the remuneration of employees is one of the most efficient ways of cutting down labor costs. Unfortunately, reduction of the remuneration of an employee in China is not that easy because, under PRC labor law, the consent of the employee is always needed except if certain statutory reasons exist, such as the employee's work position is adjusted if he or she is proved to be incompetent to work or due to his or her health situation, and according to the company's remuneration system the employee shall receive a lower salary and/or less benefits according to his or her new work position. These two situations usually do not apply to many employees.

According to the Opinions on Better Supporting the Stabilization of Employment Relationships and Resumption of Operation and Production of Enterprises during the Period of Prevention and Control of Coronavirus issued by the PRC Ministry of Human Resources and Social Security and other government authorities on 7 February 2020 during the COVID-19 outbreak, the Chinese government allows companies suffering operational difficulties to reduce the salaries of the employees by consulting with them as a collective. This means companies do not need to get the consent from each individual employee about the salary reduction as normally required by statutory law, but can do so upon discussing with the employees' representatives' congress or all staff, asking for their proposals and consulting with the trade union or the employees' representatives. This policy also applies to the reduction of benefits provided in the individual employment contracts, the Employee Handbook, or company policies.

As to other benefits which are not provided in the individual employment contracts, the Employee Handbook or company policies, or

which, according to the Employee Handbook or company policies, can be changed or cancelled by companies at their discretion, companies can change or cancel them without getting consent from the individual employees or making collective consultation with the employees, but companies must notify the employees.

2. Avoiding Overtime Payments by Arranging Leave or Adjusting the Working Time System

Under PRC labor law, employees are entitled to 5 to 15 days of statutory annual leave or additional annual leave as provided in the individual employment contracts, the Employee Handbook, or company policies. Employees who are subject to a standard working time system normally work five days and rest two days per week. A company is obliged to pay compensation to the employees, if they fail to take annual leave due to reasons attributable to the company, or to pay overtime payments to the employees who are subject to a standard working time system and did overtime work beyond the normal working hours.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, under PRC labor law, a company can arrange the employees to take annual leave when the company does not have sufficient workload due to the impact of the outbreak. As a result, the company can save labor costs since the company does not need to pay compensation for untaken annual leave or overtime payments if the company needs the employees to work more after the epidemic period ends and operations recover.

According to Shanghai's local policy, a company can even comprehensively arrange the rest days of the entire year for the employees upon consultation with them. I.e., the company arranges the employees to take more rest days during the outbreak, for example, three days per week, and then take fewer rest days after that period, when business fully resumes. That way, the company can save labor costs by arranging the employees to work more without paying overtime payments. Although other locations did not announce similar policies, however, legally speaking, companies located in places other than Shanghai can also adopt this measure upon consultation with their employees.

Further, in some places such as Beijing and Suzhou, companies being affected by the COVID-19 pandemic are allowed to adopt the comprehensively calculated working time system for employees during

the outbreak. Such a special working time system in the past was only applicable to some particular industries requiring employees to work constantly or being impacted by seasons. By adopting this unique working time system, a company may arrange the employees to take rest for a certain period of time when the company does not have sufficient workload due to the impact of COVID-19. Once the period has passed, companies can arrange the employees to work consecutively for a certain period of time. As long as the employees' average working hours during a period such as one quarter or one year do not surpass eight hours per day, companies do not need to pay overtime payments. But according to the law, the adoption of such a working time system is subject to the approval of the competent labor administration authority.

Once the outbreak fades away, companies may still save overtime payments by properly arranging employees to take leave or adopting a proper working time system to the employees.

3. Arrangement for Halting Production

If a company's production is not sustainable, a company may consider stopping its production for a while and ceasing employees' work. In such a case, according to PRC labor law, the company must pay full salaries to its employees in the first salary payment cycle, normally one month. Starting from the second salary payment cycle, the company may pay the employees who do not work only the living allowance, ranging from 70% to 100% of the statutory minimum wage, which is subject to the regulations of the local governments.

Such policies are applicable not only during, but also after the outbreak period. As to halting production, a company can make its decision according to its Articles of Association at its discretion.

4. Control of Headcount

A company is entitled to decide its headcount at its discretion. To control labor costs, the company may consider limiting any new increase in its headcount. This can be achieved either by keeping a lid on new recruitments or by not renewing fixed-term employment contracts that are going to expire.

However, during the outbreak period, except for the circumstances stipulated under Article 42 of the PRC Labor Contract Law such as an employee suffers from illness and is during the statutory medical treatment period or a female employee is pregnant or during the maternity leave or nursing period, if the fixed-term contracts of employees who are coronavirus patients, suspected patients, close contacts, or employees on lockdown expire during the quarantine or lockdown period, the company shall also not terminate the employment contracts of such employees due to expiration until the end of such period.

Further, in all locations other than Shanghai, under PRC labor law, except if any statutory termination reason is fulfilled, a company must conclude an indefinite term employment contract with the employee whose contract expires as required, if he or she has continuously worked for the company for a period of 10 years, or he or she has consecutively concluded a fixed-term contract with the enterprise twice after 1 January 2008. In such a case, the contract can only be terminated if the employee agrees.

5. Reduction of Workforce

The reduction of the workforce is the most direct way of cutting down

redundant employees and reducing labor costs. If a company cuts down 20 employees or 10% of its employees or more due to economic difficulties or change of business, this shall be deemed as mass layoff and can only be done by following the statutory procedures. The procedures include explaining the mass layoff plan to the trade union or all staff, consulting with the trade union or the employees, filing the mass layoff plan at the competent labor authority and notifying the employees 30 days in advance, as well as paying the employees statutory severance payments. The wording of the law states "filing." However, in practice, if the competent authority does not agree with the mass layoff, it will not accept the filing of the plan. Thus, in practice, the filing amounts to an approval process. During the period of the outbreak, as required by the government, a company will get approval from the government on mass layoff only, if the company proves that the mass layoff is truly unavoidable after the company has taken various other measures such as shortening the working hours or reducing the salaries of the employees.

Another statutory termination reason which may become relevant due to the pandemic is the termination of an employment contract due to the change of objective circumstances. I.e., if there is an objective reason causing the original employment contract unable to be continuously performed, and no agreement is reached on the amendment of the contract following negotiations with the employee, the company can unilaterally terminate the employment contract with the employee. In this case, the company should give the employee a 30 days' prior notice or a one month salary in lieu and pay statutory severance payments. Under PRC law, such facts as the relocation of the company or business restructuring, etc. qualify as an objective reason. During the outbreak, the objective reason should not be a general one (such as the outbreak itself), but must be a specific one (for example: a particular project the employee works for has been cancelled due to the pandemic).

The employment contracts of patients, suspected patients, close contacts, and employees on lockdown shall not be terminated due to the reasons of illness, incompetence, change of objective circumstances, or mass layoff during the quarantined or lockdown periods. Such special protection also applies to employees fulfilling the circumstances under Article 42 of the PRC Labor Contract Law, i.e., employees who are sick or pregnant, etc.

Of course, a company can always terminate the employment contract with employees for other statutory termination reasons, such as termination by agreement or termination due to the employee's serious breach of company rules.

In summary, both during the COVID-19 outbreak and afterward, companies can adopt several measures in their daily work to control and reduce their labor costs. As to which detailed actions to take, companies will need to check their specific situations.

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How COVID-19 Changed Chinese Consumer Values

By Christian Stipp

Times of crisis often put our core values to the test, uniting us under basic, universal practices such as the search for a family's embrace, healthy living, and personal safety. China is no different, and the months of the pandemic have pivoted consumer needs and behavior. As the country slowly adjusts to a new 'normal,' its recovering economy can shed some light on consumer behavior post-crisis. Foreign companies would be well advised to look at China's recent developments and adjust their local strategies, or rather reflect on current practices and advance sustainable solutions in their respective markets.

The Chinese Consumer Value Index

A two-month period of quarantine and strict regulations in early 2020 have taken their toll on the Chinese economy. Limited consumer mobility paralyzed the majority of industries in China, at a time when the consumer economy should have boomed during the Chinese New Year season. As a result, new trends and innovative business practices have emerged as successful paradigms – providing potential models for other countries to adapt.

In order to dive into these shifts of behavior and new approaches, Avantgarde, together with Trendbüro and trend researcher Maggie Li, conducted a comprehensive value analysis, resulting in an 18-page report titled "Coronavirus Update 2020."

The report follows the same approach as the Chinese Consumer Value Index (CCVI), published in 2019. The team collected, analyzed, and evaluated large-scale data from popular Chinese social media platforms Sina Weibo and WeChat, categorizing 640,719 posts over a period of 37 days (9 January – 14 February 2020). Finally, they compiled a list of the ten most important values for Chinese consumers during that time.

The COVID-19 report, when compared with the first CCVI, showcases the pandemic's effects on individuals' set of values in China. Furthermore, it offers first-hand observations and study cases for the benefit of international companies, Chinese enterprises, and decisionmakers looking to position themselves successfully in the Chinese market. This publication can help brands tap into the new values of Chinese consumers, fostering meaningful relationships with their customers post-COVID-19 by putting relevant values at the focal point of their brand, communication and experience strategy.

From Optimism to Fear

Financially, 2019 ended on a positive note for many businesses in China – and the findings reflect an overall optimism among consumers. To better understand the impact of the COVID-19 on consumer values, it is important to first review the top three values for Chinese consumers in 2019.

In 2019, 'Success' topped the ranking as the main value presented in Chinese social media, followed by 'Security' and 'Health.'

Top Value: 'Success.' Success is a value measured through improved quality of life. Chinese consumers enjoy being able to provide themselves and their families with a better quality of life. They treat themselves through material products, travel, and unique experiences, and they enjoy working toward that goal.

Second Value: 'Security.' The term has various meanings for Chinese consumers, ranging from physical safety (road traffic topped the list of issues discussed) to trust in products and brands. Chinese consumers have an evident desire for quality products, and trust and safety play a vital role in this.

Third Value: 'Health.' A commonly used term under this category is "Big Health" – referring mostly to the digitalization of the health

industry in general, e.g. setting appointments with doctors, ordering prescriptions, or digital health care products (e.g. tracking tools). This category also covers fitness and a healthy lifestyle. This is not primarily about reactive healthcare, but rather about preventing illness and ensuring a high quality of life.

COVID-19's Impact on Consumers

Media outlets are constantly addressing the negative impacts of COVID-19 on society and the economy. However, little research was done to address the implications of the pandemic on the consumers' mentality. Do new restrictions and negative media reporting actually affect the feelings of Chinese users and the values they hold near to their hearts? The "Coronavirus Update 2020" illustrates the significant shifts in values most important to social media users before and after the outbreak of COVID-19.

Please see the below figure.

CCVI 2019

1. Success
2. Security
3. Health
4. Simplicity
5. Freedom
6. Nature
7. Family
8. Community
9. Recognition
10. Transparency

CORONA UPDATE 2020

- ↑ 1. Security
- ↑ 2. Health
- ↑ 3. Family
- ↑ 4. Freedom
- ↓ 5. Success
- ↓ 6. Simplicity
- ↑ 7. Recognition
- ↓ 8. Community
- ↑ 9. Transparency*
- ↓ 10. Nature*

*excluded due to insufficient data

Security, Health, and Family Overtake Pursuit of Success

According to the CCVI 2019, 'Success' was the top value for Chinese consumers; however, the new findings show that it has lost significance during the crisis, falling four places in the 2020's value ranking. It gave way to the desire for 'Security' (no. 1) and 'Health' (no. 2), with the value of 'Family' rising four places (no. 3).

The value of 'Freedom' has also taken on a new meaning. While the term was previously associated primarily with family and marital pressure, it now awakens more of a "you only live once" sentiment. The demand for simple living and processes (no. 4), both in work and in consumers' personal lives, was driven further partially due to the increasing introduction of flexible working models.

The visible decline of the value 'Success' should be taken with a grain of salt – Chinese consumers show a growing desire for new projects and products again, hinting that 'Success' has great chances in making a comeback soon.

Learnings

Compared to other nations, China does not focus primarily on the negative side-effects of digitalization. Chinese consumers

see the positive impacts that digital networking, transparency and surveillance have brought about, especially in the fight against the pandemic. In contrast to the current western discourse of "technology-induced insecurity" brought about by a growing dependence on mobile phones, Chinese consumers believe the contribution of technology in preventing the transmission of COVID-19 compensates for any negative effects of tech. For example, by introducing China's Smartphone "Health Code" System or WeChat and Alipay, many believe the outbreak was now under control. Therefore, Investments in this area hold great potential for companies: technologies provide security and create added value. The pandemic proved the dominance of tech in our modern lives.

During the crisis, the market for digital fitness has proven to have a constantly-growing pool of customers, that could provide a basis for new, comprehensive health packages. Health-related businesses could potentially capitalize on this movement by either working with existing online fitness companies or by launching independent initiatives based on previously-proven models. The possibilities are more diverse than ever, and the current visibility of health-related issues may set the trend for other industries.

Living closely together with family members during quarantine has led many consumers to a new understanding of family and cohesion. Although regional news reported an increase in domestic violence and divorce, the family unit remained the main topic in recent months. For many users, investing in their family is more important than ever before. This trend, in turn, affects consumer behavior: shopping with and for each other is becoming increasingly important. Products that support an individual lifestyle can also contribute to, and benefit from, family success.

During the crisis, many individuals and communities in China have shown national solidarity through their consumption patterns and social media presence. Local or regional products are gaining massive popularity, and the "buy made in China" mentality is experiencing a renaissance. Therefore, companies should embed local traditions and customs in their designs, taking into account patriotic sentiments in their marketing campaigns.

Finally, there is a growing movement toward simplicity and simplified procedures, that can help increase the sustainability of temporary business models. People are increasingly looking for products and services that fulfill their desire for freedom, both virtually and physically. Since the primary desire to realize physical freedom is largely restricted due to the pandemic, freedom through digital experiences and the integration of elements of simplicity and flexibility hold great potential.

The Future of Business in China

There are feelings of confidence and optimism in China that the local economy will rebound in the next few months, and that China will be able to recover faster than any other country from the economic effects of COVID-19. Chinese consumers believe that household spending and incomes will increase in the coming weeks. This applies in particular to "personal" and "health" categories (McKinsey Study 2020).

When reviewing the results of both reports, one might wonder: will values change once the pandemic becomes part of our daily lives? Certain values might become staples among Chinese consumers, while others will lose their momentum. We can already predict that the value of 'Success' will rise back to its previous position, making it essential to launch new projects. The value of 'Nature' will most likely regain its importance and will be further integrated with other practices. Another value that is expected to increase in priority is 'Simplicity.' Companies will be smart to capitalize on this value, developing innovative solutions and simple user experiences or adopting minimalist designs.

Christian Stipp is an international brand expert with vast experience in brand strategy, brand development, and product management. In recent years, he is creating and executing brand experiences for multinational premium and luxury brands. Christian started his career in the sporting goods industry, and in 2004 he opened Avantgarde's first office in China with the goal to support multinational brands creating fans through memorable brand experiences in this dynamic market. With the publication of the first Chinese Consumer Value Index in 2019, Avantgarde extended its core business of "brand experiences" in new formats by consulting clients on customer-centric brand, communication, and experience strategy.

China's First Civil Code – Impact on Commercial Contracts

By Simona Buss

Introduction

On 28 May 2020, China's parliament, the National People's Congress, adopted the People's Republic of China's ("PRC") long-awaited and first-ever Civil Code, consisting of seven books and 1260 Articles. So far, the Civil Code is the only law in the PRC carrying the name "code," and as such, is the most wide-ranging piece of legislation since the founding of the PRC in 1949. The Civil Code will enter into force on 1 January 2021 and will abolish the preceding civil laws.

In general, a Civil Code codifies private law and as such, involves the relationship between individuals, basically covering all aspects of a civil society, including laws on personal and property rights, marriage, inheritance, torts, and contracts. The significance of the PRC Civil Code has been reflected in the intense engagement of the society during its legislation process, as the published drafts of the PRC Civil Code have received approximately 900,000 comments from the public.

The PRC Civil Code merges the existing separate civil laws such as the Property Law, Contracts Law, etc., which have been structured and compiled into one unified legal document. Thus, the main impact of the PRC Civil Code lies in building a complete and logical system of civil laws, leading to a reduction of inconsistencies between these laws that have been issued separately between 1986 and 2009.

The Civil Code: A Brief History

After the founding of the PRC, the Communist Party confessed to the establishment of a legal system under the Rule of Law. Due to the pressing need for civil laws while building a market-oriented economy, the development of a civil code was regarded as unrealistic in the short term. The Communist Party instead followed a step-by-step legislation approach and enacted standalone civil laws that were heavily influenced by the German Civil Code. This process began with the Marriage Law (1980) and was followed by the Inheritance Law (1985), General Principles of Civil Law (1986), Adoption Law (1991), Guaranty Law (1995), Contracts Law (1999), Property Law (2007) and Tort Law (2009).

Finally, in 2014 the Central Committee of the Communist Party announced their intention to enact a Civil Code. The corresponding drafts were completed during 2017 and 2018, when seven separate parts of the Civil Code were submitted to the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress, whereas the National People's Congress in its annual session in May 2020 – at last – passed the present Civil Code.

Implementing Regulations

As the existing separate civil laws are abolished by the Civil Code as of 1 January 2021, their numerous implementing regulations which provided for a substantial amount of specification will be abolished as well. The Civil Code, which for a significant part is teeming with vague wording, would, therefore, lack specification without such implementing regulations. Consequently, the Supreme Court of the PRC has already announced its intention to develop judicial interpretations, which shall further clarify outstanding questions by the end of 2020.

Further transitional provisions regulating whether the Civil Code is applicable to contracts that have been concluded before 1 January 2021 need to be included in such judicial interpretations.

Overview of the Civil Code

The Civil Code consists of seven books: (I) General Provisions, (II) Rights in Rem, (III) Contracts, (IV) Personality Rights, (V) Marriage and Family, (VI) Inheritance, and (VII) Tort. This article will focus on the books on General Provisions, Rights in Rem, Contracts, and Tort, and will be confined to highlighting the most significant innovations with respect to commercial contracts that have also been heavily discussed amongst commentators of the draft Civil Code.

Impact on Commercial Contracts

General Provisions (Book I)

The General Provisions of the Civil Code basically mirrors the existing civil laws, i.e., the General Provisions of the Civil Law from 2017, and contains no noteworthy amendments.

Rights in Rem (Book II)

The book on Rights in Rem is mainly based on the Property Law from 2007 and addresses absolute rights of persons over things, i.e., movables or immovables. Examples for such rights in rem are ownership, usufruct, and security interests (e.g., mortgage, liens, etc.).

The most substantial change brought by the book on Rights in Rem touches on usufruct:

- **Usufruct:** Paragraph 367 of the Civil Code introduces a right of habitation, which – in comparison to the contractual rights of a lessee based on a rental contract – is of absolute nature, strengthening their protection from the owner of the respective apartment/house and third parties.

Contracts (Book III)

The Book on Contracts is mainly based on the Contract Law from 1999 and, with its 526 articles, is the most comprehensive book of the Civil Code.

Changes brought by the Book of Contracts worth mentioning are as follows:

- **Termination right of continuing obligations:** Regarding open-term contracts with the recurring obligation of one party, for example rental contracts or credit contracts, paragraph 563 provides for a termination right of both parties upon a reasonable notice period; however, the extent to which the parties may agree on such termination right in advance in the underlying contract needs to be specified by future judicial interpretations.
- **Types of Contracts:** The PRC Contract Law regulated 15 different contract types, such as sales contracts, gift contracts, rental contracts, technology contracts, etc. The Civil Code adds four more contract types: the factoring contract, partnership contract, guarantee contract, and the property management contract. The Civil Code consolidates these contract types as they have yet neither been explicitly addressed by civil laws nor have they been regulated by separate special laws. Among the different contract types, the following changes are of substantial nature:

– **Guarantee Contract:** The Civil Code balances the interests of the parties of a guarantee contract in a better way. Under a guarantee contract, a person promises to pay a debt of a third person, i.e. the principal debtor, who is primarily liable for such debt. Under current civil laws, when the parties did not clearly stipulate the type of such guarantee, the creditor could choose whether to claim payment from the main debtor or directly from the guarantor. In contrast, paragraph 686 of the Civil Code sets forth that, where the parties do not stipulate the type of guarantee, the creditor may only claim fulfilment from the guarantor if the principal debtor fails to perform his debt, providing for a better protection of the guarantor.

– **Rental Contract:** For limited-term rental contracts, the Civil Code significantly strengthens the position of the lessee. Paragraph 734 sets forth that after the expiration of the contract term of a rental contract, the lessee has the right to claim continuance of the lease contract under the same conditions as offered by the landlord to prospective lessees. Whether or not the parties to a rental contract may exclude such right of the lessee in the rental contract may be clarified in future judicial interpretations, as otherwise, the landlord would hardly be able to rid himself of a lessee.

- **Retention of Title:** The parties of a sales contract may stipulate that even after the delivery of the goods, the ownership of the goods shall remain with the seller until the buyer fulfills certain requirements. In the past, if the buyer transferred such goods to a third party, this third party would normally acquire ownership of the goods in good faith. Now, paragraph 641 of the Civil Code sets forth that in case such retention of title is registered, third parties may not acquire in good faith, therefore indicating stronger protection for the seller in the future. However, the Civil Code is silent regarding the details of such registration, which may be regulated in future judicial interpretations or implementing regulations.

Tort Law (Book VII)

The Book on Tort Law is mainly based on the existing PRC Tort Law from 2009, which regulates violations of civil rights ("tort"), which lead to civil liability.

One noteworthy innovation in this last book of the Civil Code is the following paragraph regarding environmental damages:

- **Tort liability for environmental pollution:** Within special fields as product liability or intellectual property infringements, existing tort laws already introduced so-called "punitive" damages for civil rights violations into the PRC tort law. As normally the primary function of tort law is to compensate the harmed party, punitive damages, which are payable on top of such "compensatory damage" are considered an exception. In addition to the existing punitive damages, paragraph 1232 of the Civil Code regulates punitive damages in the case of intentional environmental damage resulting in serious consequences to the environment.

Conclusion

The PRC Civil Code is a milestone of the PRC legal reforms. It covers most of the dimensions of civil society, regulating property rights, contracts, personal rights, family, marriage inheritance, and tort. Apart from its significance as an extensive and unified codification, however, the Civil Codes – for the most part – is a conflation of existing separate civil laws.

Due to the arcane wording of the paragraphs of the Civil Code, the Supreme Court of the PRC has already announced its intention to develop and enact judicial interpretations by the end of 2020. Therefore, the practical impact of the PRC Civil Code heavily depends on such judicial interpretations and future implementing regulations.

Ms. Simona Buss is a Foreign Legal Consultant at Burkardt & Partner Rechtsanwälte, focusing on company structure solutions, labor law, international trade, and foreign direct investment.

Burkardt & Partner is a China licensed law firm advising medium-sized enterprises as well as business groups and international industrial companies from Germany, Switzerland, and Austria on their investments in the People's Republic of China.

Conquer the World With TikTok

How an amateur video app surpassed Facebook and Instagram, and what it means to your business

By Fabian Ouwehand

What once started as an app that allows teens to upload amateur videos of themselves dancing and share it with the world, TikTok has now become a world sensation – and a serious marketing tool. Yet while companies continue to boost their Facebook, Instagram, or WeChat presence, many choose to ignore the successful platform.

What is TikTok?

Contrary to its somewhat 'messy' reputation, TikTok is quite simple to understand: It is a platform combining music streaming with social networking. Users can record short videos (15-60 seconds) using pre-selected music available on TikTok's library. The users can then edit the videos and add special effects within the app, or as the TikTok mantra goes – "The more creative, the better." Users can follow specific trends – called hashtag challenges – as well as other popular videos. Unlike algorithms employed by other social media platforms, TikTok's strategy lets users with few fans reach millions of views with a single video – even if they have single-digit followers. This approach allows users to become a world sensation overnight – and can prove valuable for companies taking their first steps in the app.

Exponential Growth

TikTok has gone through several life cycles. In 2016, the Chinese AI company ByteDance, founded by Zhang Yiming, launched a short video app called 'Aweme', eventually renamed 'Douyin.' After the app hit 100 million users in China within a year, an international variant was developed and launched in mid-2017, named 'TikTok.' In December that year, the company bought Musical.ly, a Chinese company popular for its lip sync videos, mainly active in the United States. In July 2018, there were already 500 million users worldwide, and by August 2018 Musical.ly was integrated into TikTok. Today, the app is available in 150 countries and 75 languages.

TikTok saw exponential growth across Asia and the Western world, exceeding two billion downloads worldwide and over 850 million active users by mid-2020. For several consecutive months, TikTok topped the charts as the most downloaded app in the world, outperforming Facebook (587 million) and Instagram (376 million). COVID-19 brought a surge in popularity for the video platform:

The app saw 315 million downloads in 2020's Q1 alone – the highest figure ever achieved by an app in a single quarter. During the pandemic, more and more videos of police officers and doctors surfaced, using creative ways to relieve the pressure caused by the outbreak. Users of all ages took to the app to share their hobbies during the lockdown. The World Health Organization (WHO) even launched a campaign on TikTok, providing trustworthy information regarding COVID-19.

Celebrating Humanity

The app's sudden rise has attracted influencers and KOLs – both in China and abroad. In 2018, the majority of the app's top 20 influencers came from the US, having 25 to 42 million followers each. In 2019, seven of the app's biggest influencers came from India. The app has transitioned from a local craze to a worldwide phenomenon – in merely a few years.

TikTok has an entirely different presentation style than Facebook or Instagram: It celebrates humanity, in all its flaws and imperfections. Users are not looking for the perfect picture, but rather ask to be entertained by someone in their natural settings. This puts advertisers at certain risk: TikTok users are looking for authentic, 'home-made' content – and have zero tolerance to slick corporate ads.

TikTok: A Novel Marketing Opportunity

TikTok is no longer a "silly" entertainment app catering to the world's youth: its monumental success has caught corporates' attention, and the amateur entertainment app is now increasingly used for information (e.g., COVID-19 WHO campaign) and commercial purposes. A company wishing to expand its brand visibility using TikTok should carefully craft its marketing strategy: No more bombastic visuals of the product or tacky slogans – in TikTok, it's all about the creator. Viewers follow the influencer, awaiting his new creation. Popular creators can upload short, amateur videos with minimum investment, reaching millions of people (and, therefore, potential buyers) and trumping a million-dollars' worth campaign. Companies choosing to stick with traditional campaigns will find it hard to compete with TikTok KOLs.

In the past couple of years, TikTok has been rolling out new features for companies, providing novel marketing opportunities. Aside from creating original content and working with influencers, companies can create or sponsor a challenge, for example, inviting users to engage with their brand by sharing original content. Giants such as Google, Guess and Colgate have generated successful challenges, resulting in millions of videos and views. TikTok recently added the 'Hashtag challenge plus' feature, allowing users to purchase products that appear on branded hashtags. These features, along with marketing opportunities such as brand takeover and traditional ad placement, increase brand awareness and drive sales.

Consequently, companies looking to use TikTok for marketing must find suitable influencers to act as brand ambassadors, giving them creative freedom to use the product in ways they deem fit. After all, on TikTok, it is the influencer who is selling the product – not the brand.

Social Commerce

Where Instagram and Snapchat have slowly evolved in enabling companies and influencers to sell their products on their platform, social commerce is already very common in China. Most major platforms like Douyin, WeChat, and 'Little Red Book' enable users to make in-app purchases effortlessly. TikTok could be the one to cement this concept in the West.

Since early 2018, Douyin has been offering social commerce in-app. Chinese users with a minimum of ten videos are allowed to perform in-app sales, linking products from China's most popular e-commerce websites – such as Taobao (local Aliexpress), JD.com, and Tmall – to their Douyin store. It would not be a surprise to see

something similar such as an Amazon x TikTok collaboration, where brands and users can sell Amazon products in their videos and on their profiles.

TikTok vs. Douyin: Foreseeing the Future?

ByteDance often debuts new features on Douyin, before rolling them out to the rest of the world. By examining the Chinese predecessor, we can foresee some of TikTok's features that are yet to come.

When examining the app's features, China's Douyin still overshadows its Western counterpart: Among the app's many unique characteristics are social commerce, stores, advanced live streaming, and advanced video editing (with the additional app Jianying). Users watching the videos can immediately access the displayed products, linked to the company's website and ready to order. It won't be long before this possibility is introduced to TikTok. Companies will be well-advised to familiarize themselves with the app as soon as possible, and prepare for new features that will take TikTok marketing to the next level.

Fabian Ouwehand is the founder of UPLAB and co-founder of @manycreators, companies that strive to ensure that creators, artists, and brands maximize their creative, marketing, commercial, and/or growth potential on TikTok and Douyin. He has been consulting on the platforms since 2016.

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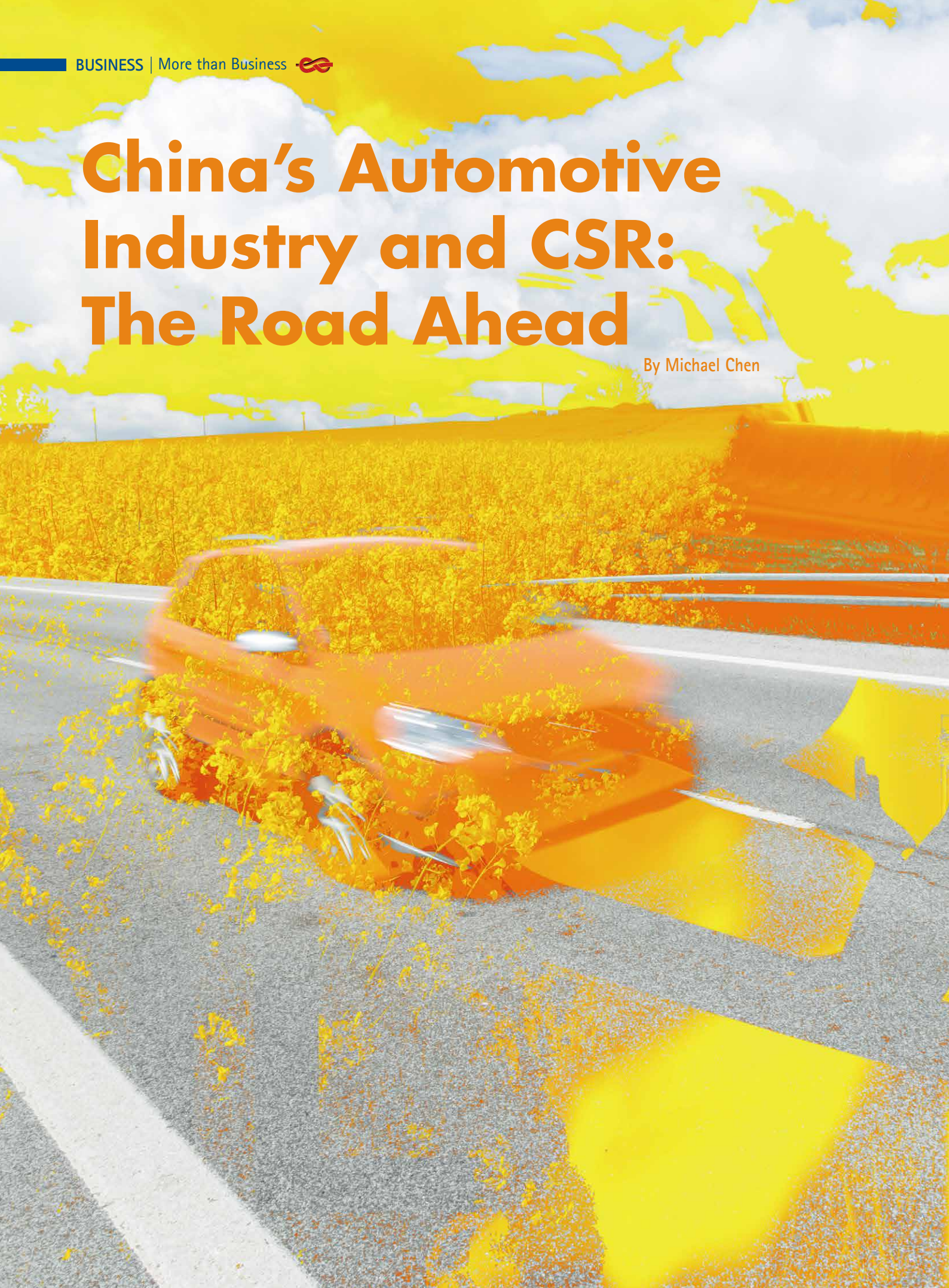
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China's Automotive Industry and CSR: The Road Ahead

By Michael Chen



Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is a concept used to describe the relationship between corporate growth and social development. Enterprises are responsible for – and obliged to – promote social welfare in the pursuit of maximum economic benefits, including their responsibilities to employees, customers, partners, shareholders, governments, communities, and the environment. A growing number of Chinese enterprises have already incorporated CSR into their development strategies and corporate governance.

In recent years, driven by factors such as regulation and the capital market, businesses have begun to draw up and issue CSR reports. Some stock exchanges have also increased mandatory environmental, social and governance (ESG) disclosure requirements for listed companies. ESG performance, as an important indicator of the performance of listed companies in fulfilling CSR and sustainable development goals, is increasingly being integrated into listed company research and decision frameworks by investors and asset managers.

The automotive sector is characterized by numerous production processes and a complex, diverse supply chain system. OEMs are at the core of the industry chain across production and demand, so bear more complex and arduous CSR. In addition to these sector characteristics, industrial policy is now promoting the evolution of the auto industry in a strategic direction focused on improving quality, valuing technology, and stimulating innovation. All these factors will propel automotive enterprises to make positive adjustments in fulfilling CSR or ESG requirements, and the COVID-19 outbreak will accelerate this transformation.

Automotive Businesses CSR Evolve Due to COVID-19

During the pandemic, automotive companies and many other businesses have made substantial donations to relief efforts. According to incomplete statistics, from 23 January 2020, more than 120 OEMs, parts suppliers, dealers, charging enterprises, logistics companies, and mobility companies in the auto industry contributed a combined RMB1.2 billion to fight the pandemic in less than two weeks. Automotive businesses have taken CSR actions in addition to donations during the outbreak:

Shifting from "capital contribution" to "technology output" and "capability output." During the outbreak, China has faced a shortage of medical supplies, and production capacity has been restricted. Many passenger vehicle enterprises quickly organized personnel, and purchased raw materials and production equipment, to produce masks and other emergency supplies through self-built production lines or outsourcing, delivering these to areas hit by the pandemic. OEMs quickly and rapidly transferred a series of production materials to produce medical supplies – showing the comprehensive advantages of automotive enterprises in raw material procurement, storage and transportation, workshop management (masks need to be produced in dustless workshops), automated production, quality control, and several other respects.

Ensuring efficient resource scheduling and integration. As the outbreak expanded, businesses were called on to solve problems that arose. Automotive companies gave full play to their internal and cross-industrial strengths, cooperating with professional organizations and institutions on joint innovations through the reasonable division of work. For example, one major Chinese automaker worked with scientific research institutions and air filter enterprises to develop an intelligent air purification system to

prevent bacteria and viruses from entering vehicles, rapidly achieving mass production. In addition, many global automotive enterprises used their networks to purchase medical supplies needed urgently to combat the outbreak. Automotive businesses' huge channel advantages meant they could solve the problem of frontline supply shortages.

Safeguarding the interests of stakeholders during a unique period. During the height of the outbreak, automotive enterprises made use of automation, big data, cloud computing, shared service centers and other technological means to ensure their employees could work remotely, guaranteeing their safety while providing essential services for customers. At the same time, automotive companies paid more attention to the health of employees across the value chain, proposing measures to relieve cash flow pressure on downstream enterprises, including by extending interest-free periods and removing quarterly assessment targets.

COVID-19 Prompts OEMs to Change Their CSR Thinking

During the pandemic, as traditional relief channels like donations proved less efficient in delivery and could not accurately meet demand, automotive businesses took the initiative to adjust and rethink their positioning and capability advantages.

We believe COVID-19 will accelerate the transformation of automotive company CSR strategies and practices to "Phase 2.0." In this phase, the fulfillment of CSR will become a way for enterprises to contribute to society, laying the foundations for sustainable brand development and repaying society as effective organizers of social resources. The pandemic will prompt enterprises to emerge from their original strategic frameworks and innovate approaches to fulfilling CSR:

As social governance decentralizes, enterprises emerge as efficient organizers of social resources. In the face of a public health emergency, enterprises have exerted their intrinsic advantages in organizing, scheduling, and coordinating resources to provide higher social utility in combating the outbreak. For example, some OEMs transformed lines to produce masks or provided vehicles to transport medical care personnel, showing their strong supply chains and production recovery capabilities.

Enterprises in the same industry chain share weal and woe. Many parts enterprises and 4S stores have not been able to continue normal operations due to the pandemic, and working with upstream and downstream stakeholders has highlighted OEMs' operating advantages. OEMs took the initiative to check how upstream suppliers were affected, and helped them resume work to reduce performance difficulties. They also reduced pressure on downstream dealers by adjusting assessment targets, granting subsidies, interest payment discounts, and reductions. During a time of crisis, Automotive businesses fulfilled their CSR to enterprises in the same industry chain.

The wide spread of COVID-19 deepened concerns among vehicle owners about in-vehicle air quality, and stimulated new demand for healthy, intelligent in-vehicle environments. Automotive companies will be prompted by the pandemic to emphasize safety and health in future product development, including by launching in-vehicle air purification and sterilization functions, using interior materials with stronger antibacterial capability, and installing sensors that

can monitor body temperature and other physical signs of occupants in real time. Such health-related sub-functions are expected to stimulate new demand and become a point of growth for automotive businesses post-pandemic.

Awareness of automotive brands has surged. Domestic-funded automotive companies have seen a surge in brand awareness due to the outbreak. One domestic-funded automotive enterprise with outstanding performance during this period experienced two significant improvements in the Baidu Index of search queries in February, surpassing some foreign-funded brands. It used its supply chain advantages to produce masks and won high praise from across society. However, most foreign-funded automotive enterprises were unable to take such quick, practical actions due to a lack of decision-making rights and other factors. In CSR Phase 2.0, domestic-funded automotive enterprises need to consolidate this brand awareness, while foreign-funded enterprises need to optimize their domestic influence through more local CSR and brand activities.

Automotive Companies Will Make Substantial Adjustments to CSR Strategies

Following COVID-19, auto businesses will be left with little choice but to restructure existing CSR programs.

First of all, companies will carry out CSR planning based on corporate strategies. Businesses often consider CSR as a "cost item" or a "forced action" to cope with public opinion and government relations. Moreover, CSR budget, strategy and execution planning is conducted by their marketing or brand departments, yet implementation is often entrusted to public relations companies.

In CSR Phase 2.0, automotive companies will adjust their CSR activities to align these with their corporate values and strategic objectives, by:

- Developing top-level CSR strategy and design based on long-term, sustainable development goals.
- Integrating CSR into raw material procurement, production and manufacturing, logistics and transportation, assembly, marketing and other operations.
- Sharing global supply chain issues with supply chain enterprises and proposing countermeasures against potential CSR risks.
- Establishing CSR activity performance systems and measurement standards, and evaluating and quantifying CSR's economic and social value.
- Incorporating CSR into organizational culture and business conduct.

Businesses should consider social issues closely related to their main business and with strong appeal to stakeholders. Automotive businesses in China have mainly focused their CSR efforts on two categories: First, charitable activities in the course of business, such as disaster relief donations, funding for disadvantaged schools, and projects for left-behind children, without pursuing direct or indirect economic returns. Second, taking responsibility for sustainable production and operations, as well as environmental protection, by lowering energy consumption and emissions levels, reducing their impact on and protecting the environment, recycling resources, and using clean energy.

Automotive companies can formulate CSR strategies and select CSR

projects based on the following principles:

- Extending and expanding core business based on strategic needs;
- Screening for social issues of common concern among stakeholders;
- Prioritizing issues from multiple perspectives such as the impact of stakeholders on current business operations as well as the urgency and universality of demands, maintaining the interests of stakeholders while fulfilling CSR obligations.

The pandemic also raises a new consideration in CSR project selection: Businesses need to incorporate contingency plans and risk resistance measures for public safety incidents (including natural disasters, infectious diseases and accidents) into the scope of CSR, thereby guaranteeing the sustainability of their business plans.

Companies should expand their influence and build ecosystem partnerships around CSR. CSR should make use of platform effects to mobilize resources from customers, suppliers, communities and other areas, use the strengths of various stakeholders, and solve problems in an integrated, innovative way. A domestic-funded automotive enterprise was able to rapidly supply self-produced masks to the frontlines largely because it gave full play to the advantages of its suppliers. With active and close cooperation between multiple parties, it took less than a week to launch mask production lines. Such a collaboration enhanced its reputation and created social value for parts factories and the OEM itself.

Companies will further integrate CSR into sustainable development strategies. Sustainable management planning allows enterprises to evaluate their long-term development strategies. Amid a global trend toward fulfilling CSR, OEMs must also formulate localized, sustainable development strategies for the Chinese market. For example, to address global warming and demand for new energy vehicles and mobile car-hailing, automotive companies need to consider how to integrate environmental and urban sustainability, reposition dealers and other external partners, create new value for users, and provide new thinking for employees as internal partners. This will enable them to formulate sustainable development strategies and reflect their concerns.

Finally, businesses should pay attention to CSR disclosures. Automotive businesses can prepare CSR reports according to the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) sustainability standards, CASS-CSR, or other guidelines. The issuance of CSR reports not only shows society a company's practices and achievements in CSR, but also enhances transparency to ease stakeholder concerns and win trust, promotes corporate values, establishes a responsible brand image, and improves corporate reputation.

Michael Chen serves as Partner at Deloitte Consulting based in Beijing. Mr. Chen has served clients in the automotive OEMs, financial services, FMCG, telecom operators, and media groups in China. He has rich experience in market entry, growth strategy, branding, CRM, channel management, and customer service. Prior to his consulting career, Mr. Chen has served in several luxury brand auto OEMs, responsible for marketing and strategy functions. He has also worked in the Chinese central government, where he was responsible for China's trade relationship with Southeast Asian nations.



MORE THAN A MARKET

Since 2015, the More than a Market initiative provides a platform for sharing and developing best practices of social engagement by German companies in China. **There are plenty of opportunities to showcase your company's engagement in society.**

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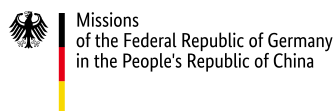


For more information, please contact:

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morethanamarket@sh.china.ahk.de

www.morethanamarket.cn



The German Chamber's Reaction to COVID-19

China-Wide Activities

COVID-19 Chamber Updates



Between 21 January and 17 April 2020, the German Chamber published 15 updates, touching on issues such as new financial regulations, travel restrictions, legal updates, and COVID-19's impact on German companies worldwide. Policy topics included:

- Recent COVID-19 Policies and Notices
- Supporting Measures and Policies for Foreign Companies
- Questions & Answers on Force Majeure, Contract and Employment Law

Flash Surveys

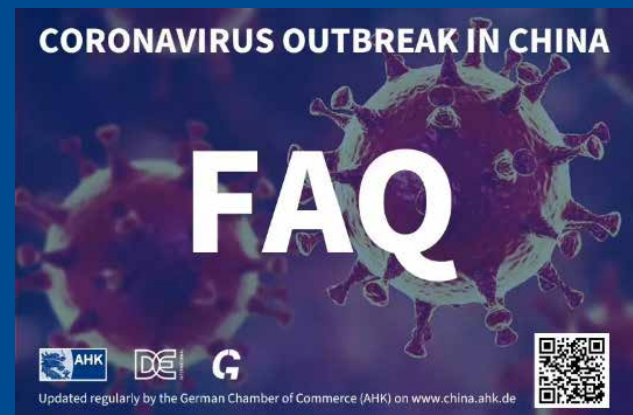
In February, the German Chamber has sent out a flash survey to

its members, examining the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on European companies in China. The survey was conducted by the German Chamber of Commerce in China in cooperation with the EUCCC. 577 participated in the survey, among them 188 German Chamber Shanghai members. Based on the survey's results, the German Chamber and the EUCCC issued a comprehensive report and a press release to present the findings.

An updated version of the survey was released in April, addressing recent developments of the pandemic. Almost 300 respondents participated in the second installment, providing valuable insight into COVID-19's future and strategic impact on German business in China.

AHK FAQ Page

china.ahk.de/coronavirus-updates



In order to address the growing number of inquiries due to the outbreak, AHK published a special FAQ page on the AHK website. The page updates regularly, providing current information on policy updates, support measures, travel restrictions, and more. Topics include:

- Preferential Tax Policies for Businesses Affected by the Outbreak
- Policy Updates (central, provincial, local)
- Operations, Production & Supply Chain (eg Force Majeure, work resumption, logistics services, etc.)
- HR and Social Security

Donation of Medical Supplies to Germany



The German Chamber published a call for the donation of medical supplies to Germany. The Chamber provided a detailed account of the process and key contact information for companies interested in making a donation.

WeChat Presence

At the height of the outbreak, the German Chamber of Commerce in China published over 130 WeChat posts containing regulation updates, travel information, call for donation, and more. The posts reached 70,000 views, demonstrating the local community's need for reliable, updated information during these times.

China-Wide Webinars



Experience Sharing on Coronavirus Outbreak Management in German Companies

7 February 2020

Production, Supply Chain, Logistics – Experience Sharing on Coronavirus Outbreak Management in German Companies

17 February 2020

Survey on the Impact of the COVID-19 Outbreak on European Companies in China

27 February 2020

Supply Chain and Logistics: Best Practices amid Coronavirus Outbreak

6 March 2020

Results COVID-19 Flash Survey 2.0: Shifting Challenges – Future Impact on German Business

2 April 2020

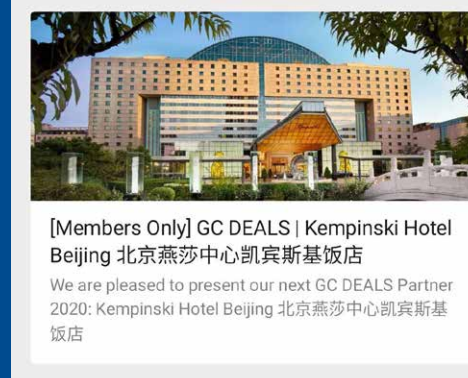
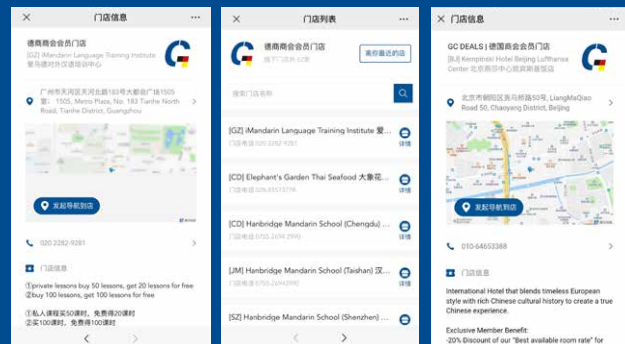
How to Limit the Impact of COVID-19 on your Company's Business: Government Support Policies for Foreign-Funded Enterprises During the Outbreak of COVID-19

27 April 2020

Relaunch of GC Deals

Companies in the hospitality, retail, and F&B industries are facing huge challenges due to COVID-19, such as restrictive regulations and fewer customers.

Our benefits program, GC Deals, offers exclusive discounts to Chamber members in Mainland China. To support our members and GC Deals partners during this crisis, the German Chamber of Commerce in China has revamped its GC Deals program, increasing our partners' visibility and providing easier access to the platform through WeChat. In the German Chamber | North China and the German Chamber | South & South West, the GC Deals program was integrated into the official WeChat accounts, allowing members to quickly obtain partners' information and find deals based on their geolocation.





Mission Accomplished - Welcome back to China!

AHK Greater China, together with the German Diplomatic Missions and Lufthansa, are organizing charter flights to help German companies in China to return urgently required personnel and project specialists as well as their families back to China.

In order to meet the high demand and support the Sino-German business community in the best possible way, three more possible charter flights from Frankfurt to Qingdao are planned in July. If you have any questions regarding these charter flights, please visit our FAQ website: <https://china.ahk.de/charterflight>

The first two charter flights have been successfully completed on 29 May from Frankfurt to Tianjin and 3 June from Frankfurt to Shanghai. Around 400 managers, employees, and their families were on board. In close cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Chinese local authorities, a comprehensive triple security procedure has been implemented (one COVID-19 test before departure, two tests after arrival) and all passengers have to undergo a 14-day quarantine in a designated hotel, according to the COVID-19 safety regulations. To facilitate the return to China and ease the time in quarantine, the German Chamber provided welcome-back goodie bags as well as an online entertainment program for the passengers during the quarantine. The German Chamber would like to sincerely thank its members for supporting this important process.



Regional Activities

North China

1. Liaison with Government Authorities



To ensure that real-time updates and verified information reach our member community in North China, we act as a liaison between the German Business Community and government authorities, organizing webinars with local authorities in North China.

Weekly Policy and Travel Updates

On the latest official notices and supporting policies announced by the Chinese government in Beijing, Tianjin, Jilin, Liaoning and Hebei on COVID-19.

2. German Chamber Community: Sharing Best Practices

WeChat Series – "How We Do"



Knowledge sharing is one of the best ways for our members to benefit from our great Sino-German Community. In our china-wide digital series "How We Do," members share their best practices on how to tackle challenges during the current COVID-19 crisis.



Mr. Sam Li,
Global Senior Vice President and Managing Director
of SAP China, shared the challenges SAP is currently facing and introduced IT solutions for their customers.
1800 Views



Mr. Jens Li,
Director of Arnold Fasteners Shenyang, shared his views on how to overcome challenges regarding work safety, operations, and work resumption.
300 Views



Mr. Hongtao Qu,
Managing Director of a.hartrodt Tianjin Logistics Co., Ltd., explained how to deal with global supply chain disruptions, travel restrictions, and decreasing transport capacities using flexible logistics solutions and close communication.
400 Views

SME Roundtable North China: How We Are All Doing | COVID-19 Impact on our Businesses and New Opportunities



The SME Roundtable is usually held in various locations in North China. The series aims to help the German Chamber learn how to provide added value to its members, as well as promote the exchange of best practices among our member companies.

The first roundtables of that kind took place on 29 April in Tianjin and on 22 May in Beijing. Check our website and WeChat account regularly for information regarding upcoming roundtables!

#KeepFighting – Motto of the Wirtschaftsjunioren Beijing



Ventum China became stronger than ever when it comes to reliability, trust towards each other and personal development of the team. We are ready for whatever comes next and we all understand that only these kind of challenging times create extraordinary chances.

The Ventum Management Team really is proud to make this journey with such amazing employees, partners and customers.

Verena Weindler, Executive Manager
© Ventum Consulting China

Wirtschaftsjunioren Beijing

The world is upside down but we keep on fighting



The Wirtschaftsjunioren Beijing launched a social media campaign inviting members to share what motivates them to go on, how to use the crisis for innovative and creative solutions, and how to become stronger as a team. Most importantly, members were asked to share their tips for staying positive and using creativity to make the best of the situation.

Regional Activities

Shanghai

1. Government Meetings and Advocacy Work

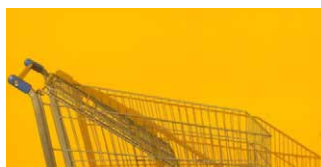


How is Shanghai going to further stimulate Demand? This was the question raised by Delegate and Chief Representative of the Delegation of German Industry & Commerce in Shanghai, Simone Pohl, at a high-level briefing with Vice Mayor XU Kunlin, hosted by the Shanghai Municipal Commission of Commerce (SCOFCON) on 9 April 2020.



On 12 May, Chairwoman of the Board, Bettina Schön presented the German Chamber's proposals to CPPCC, explaining how the 14th Five-Year-Plan can nourish the innovative power of both foreign and Chinese companies in Shanghai and the region.

2. Policy Snapshot Series



Responding to businesses' concerns over the ongoing crisis, the German Chamber of Commerce in China | Shanghai developed a series of WeChat posts that provide valuable policy updates in east China. So far, we published a series of support measures aimed to boost consumption and encourage tourism in Shanghai, Jiangsu, and Wuhan.

3. Virtual Roundtables

Since the outbreak of the pandemic, the German Chamber of Commerce in China | Shanghai organized a series of virtual roundtables, focusing on the current business situation, sharing of experiences and best practices and the latest policy support measures in the Yangtse River Delta:

- Shanghai Jiading district: Information and Experience Exchange During Coronavirus Outbreak
12 February 2020
- Jiading Conference Call with Companies
13 March 2020
- Company Roundtable with SCOFCON
18 March 2020
- Virtual Company Roundtable
19 March 2020
- InterChamber Leaders Conference Call
24 March 2020
- Virtual Company Roundtable
26 March 2020
- Wuhan German Companies Conference Call
27 March 2020
- Virtual Company Roundtable
9 April 2020
- Virtual Company Roundtable
16 April 2020
- Virtual Company Roundtable
23 April 2020

4. Mapping of Best Practices Among Companies in East China

During the first months of the outbreak, the German Chamber held very close contact with companies on their ongoing challenges related to COVID-19. The gained insights on topics such as staff shortage and challenges to restart business, supply chain disruptions and inbound travel restrictions were used subsequently for sharing best sharing and advocacy work.

5. Real-Time Regional Updates on Travel Restrictions and School Opening in East China via WeChat



6. COVID-19 Focus Topic in Our Webinars

We offered a broad range of over 15 webinars on COVID-19-related topics such as legal updates, country snapshots, industry insights, and CSR.



New Regional WeChat Groups

To provide immediate support and bring the community together, the German Chamber of Commerce in China | Shanghai also set up several local WeChat groups where more than 900 members connect and exchange.

- AHK Wuhan
- AHK Qingdao
- AHK Jiading
- Taicang Policies for MNC
- AHK Jiading
- AHK Minhang



South & Southwest China

1. WeChat Series – “How We Do”



In difficult times, we must move closer and stay strong together. Knowledge sharing is one of the best ways to benefit from our great Sino-German Community. In our digital series “How We Do,” we interviewed leaders from various industries to talk about the Chinese market, the future of their industry, and their experiences operating during COVID-19.

2. GC Insight

走进德企 | 德国斯宝亚创



走进德企 | 德国舒纳沃恩漆



走进德企 | 德国口力糖果



走进德企 | 德国梅塞尔气体



走进德企 | 德国美诺Miele



走进德企 | 德国海瑞克

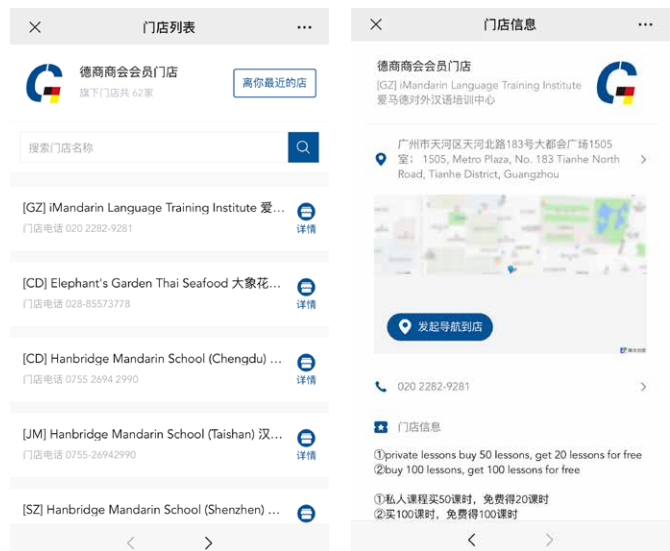


走进德企 | 蒂森克虏伯电梯



Our newly released “GC Insight” series dives into the stories behind outstanding German brands, by reviewing their history and milestones, introducing breakthrough innovation, and much more. It is a one-stop-shop for audiences to gain comprehensive knowledge of German brands. Furthermore, it enables Chinese audiences to get acquainted with German companies, finding business opportunities without being on-site.

3. AHK Sales Accelerator



While the COVID-19 outbreak is affecting life and businesses worldwide, the Chinese economy is slowly recovering. To benefit from this development, German companies need to be present in China – close to their customers and attentive to their needs. As AHK German Industry & Commerce Greater China, we understand the difficulties of entering the Chinese market. Therefore, we have introduced a new service: ‘Sales Accelerator.’ Through this service, we provide recruitment and employment of local staff in China through the German Industry & Commerce Greater China, allowing companies to access local Sales and distribution channels. This helps companies quickly develop their sales and growth in this dynamic region. No lengthy and costly company registration is necessary. Companies can concentrate on their core business – and we take care of their success in China.

For more information, please contact Ingo Xu, General Manager of GIC – Guangzhou.

GC Deals

North China

Beijing Marriott Hotel Northeast
北京海航大厦万豪酒店
26A Xiao Yun Road, Chaoyang District, Beijing
北京市朝阳区霄云路甲26号
Phone: 010-59278888
WeChat: 北京海航大厦万豪酒店
Email: mhers.bjsees.cm@marriotthotels.com
Web: www.marriott.com/bjsees
Benefits:



Beijing Scout Real Estate Co., Ltd
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Chaoyang District, Beijing
北京市朝阳区工人体育场北路4号81号楼1层(机电学院院内)
Phone: 010-8596 8872
WeChat: SCOUT-REAL ESTATE
Email: info@scout-realestate.com
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中国北京市大兴区经济技术开发区经海二路11号
Phone: 010-87929999
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Fu Tong Xi Da Jie, Wangjing, Chaoyang District,
100102nBeijing
北京市朝阳区望京阜通西大街
融科橄榄城商街13-16号, 邮编: 100102
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Phone: +86 10 6465 3388
WeChat: kempinski_beijing
Email: reservations.beijing@kempinski.com
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Email: marketing@bj.melchers.com.cn
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- 



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Middle Huaihai Road #1325, near Changshu Road, Real Tower (former name: Evergo Tower), B1-05, Xuhui District
Tel: 021-54652678, 021-54655766
Opening hours: 9:30 - 18:00, every day



DDS Dental Care Pudong Century Avenue Clinic

締浦口腔门诊部 上海市浦东新区浦电路438号双鸽大厦101-103室
Pudian Road #438, Double Dove Great Tower, Room 101-103, Pudong New District
Tel: 021-61049980
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Tel: 021-24284088, 021-24284089
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DDS Dental Care Hongqiao Clinic Mixe Mall

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Ms. Ginny Gu, Sales Manager
Phone: +86 512 5310 7777 * 8608
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上海市浦东新区源深路655号 (近张扬路)
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Email: info@linkparkour.com
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Tel: (021) 6474 5700

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台, 邮编200080

Tel: (021) 6523 5757
Office Phone: (021) 5466 5700
Email: paulaner@bln-restaurants.com
Official WeChat: baolaina1997
Website: www.bln-restaurants.com

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Shanghai 200233
上海市徐汇区田州路159号12单元1楼 邮编: 200233
Phone: 400 920 3910
Email: support@renaudair.cn
Website: www.renaudair.cn
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Siemens Supports China's Fight Against COVID-19

Siemens China, together with Siemens Healthineers China, donated RMB 15 million worth of Siemens Healthineers medical equipment to designated hospitals in Wuhan. Over 6,200 employees from about 50 entities of Siemens businesses across China jointly pledged an additional donation, totaling RMB 2.2 million. The accumulated donation will be used to purchase medical equipment, including computed tomography, mobile DR, ultrasound, and blood gas equipment.

Siemens continues to provide full support to China in the fight against the pandemic. Siemens Healthineers prioritized global



resources to guarantee the supply of medical equipment to China. Siemens provided 187 motors to support Huoshenshan Hospital's central air-conditioning system, and its advanced power distribution equipment continues to support the power supply of Leishenshan Hospital.

DEKRA Laboratory Tests Respiratory Masks

DEKRA is to bring additional protective masks to the German market to fight COVID-19. DEKRA Testing & Certification, with its special laboratory in Essen, is one of the two entities recognized in Germany as a notified body for respiratory masks (FFP masks). The Central Office of Federal States for Safety Technology (Zentralstelle der Länder für Sicherheitstechnik - ZLS) in Munich has now tasked DEKRA and IFA with establishing shortened testing principles.

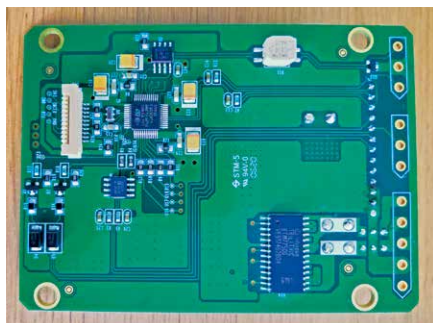
The objective is to make protective masks, that previously could not bear the required CE marking, available in the fight against



COVID-19 with targeted tests. The aim is to create a rapid process that allows for a technical statement on protection from coronaviruses and is accepted by the German market supervisory authority.

MOBA Dalian Develops First PCB of G176M

In March 2020, technicians from MOBA Limburg and Dalian developed the first printed circuit board (PCB) of the grade controller G176M, used for road engineering machinery. The PCB went into mass production on 10 April.



With this development, MOBA Dalian has taken a big step toward localization, getting closer to its aim of transforming from a sales-oriented company into a production-oriented company.

New S+E Industrial Park Opens in Liaoyang

On 12 December 2019, S+E China debuted the new generation S+E industrial park in Liaoyang, Liaoning province. The new generation possesses features such as complete 5G coverage and a circular economy (meaning zero waste and zero emissions), while integrating innovation in the fields of manufacturing, connectivity, technology, and living arrangements into the industrial park.

The opening ceremony was hosted by the Liaoyang Municipal Government and organized by S+E China. More than 100 representatives from global leading companies such as Siemens, Lear, Ariston and Covestro have attended the ceremony. A total of eight investment agreements and MOUs were signed in the presence of the Head of the Liaoyang City Government, the German Consul General Mr. Matthias Biermann, the Australian Consul Mr. Luke Coates, the Regional Manager in Liaoning and Jilin of the German Chamber of Commerce Mr. Jan Block, and S+E GM Mr. Adam Huang.



EPC Delivers Lecture at Clean Label Conference 2020

On 10 April, Chief Science Officer of EPC Natural Products Co., Ltd., Mel Jackson, Ph.D., gave a 'technical snapshot' speech about the innovative flavor SteviAroma™ at the Clean Label Conference 2020 in the US (done virtually). The keynote speech also



addressed the challenges of sugar reduction in terms of taste, and the selection of ingredients under the pressure of sugar tax.

The Clean Label Conference is a highly recognized association in the F&B industry. It provides insights and answers to the challenges of developing products with simple and consumer-friendly labels. Applied food science helps explain the use of emerging and multi-functional natural ingredient systems. Speakers deliver practical and technical advice as well as product trends and regulatory considerations.

EPC has been providing natural, functional solutions to industrial customers for over 20 years.

Local Government Official Visits Mubea China Shenyang Plant



In February 2020, Mubea China Shenyang plant, awarded as an "excellent foreign example enterprise" for work resumption, was visited by Mr. Chen Qiufa, Secretary of Liaoning provincial party committee, secretary of the standing committee of the provincial people's congress and chief commander of the provincial epidemic general headquarters. Liaoning's local TV reported the visit.

Mubea officially started resuming work on 10 February, and is fully operational.

Kaiser's Major Project in Tieling Nears Completion

Kaiser looks forward to the completion of an 80,000 m² construction project in Tiel-



ing, Liaoning province. Construction work began in 2019, and is expected to conclude in fall 2020. To meet the customers' needs and ensure structuring at the highest level, the project's entire formation was supported by Building Information Modeling (BIM). BIM is an intelligent, 3D model-based process that provides insights and tools for efficient planning, designing, construction, and management of buildings and infrastructure.

German Physician in Family Medicine at Beijing United Family Hospital



Dr. Katrin Molavi is a German physician practicing Family Medicine at Beijing United Family Hospital, focusing on internal diseases such as diagnosis of respiratory diseases, urinary

tract infections, abdominal and chest pain. As part of the annual health screenings, she conducts pap smears for women to screen for cervical cancer.

Dr. Molavi is passionate about developing health management options to prevent diseases. She works closely with her patients to find ways to improve their lives. She is originally from Düsseldorf, Germany, where she worked for several years before moving to Beijing two years ago. In August 2019, she started working at Beijing United Family Hospital. It was a big step for Dr. Molavi, but now she really loves her life and work in this incredible city - Beijing.

GG Shenyang plant Implements Health Measures

To enhance the prevention and containment of the novel coronavirus, and to further protect the safety and health of employees, GG Shenyang plant rolled out preventive health and security measures, successfully implementing them in the plant. Measures include daily disinfection, ventilation, staff temperature measurement, and wearing masks.



Following the COVID-19 outbreak, the GG Shenyang plant has already completed the ramp-up phase, with operations back on track.

Siemens Supports Digital Transformation of Chinese Enterprises with Alibaba



Siemens is communicating and cooperating with Chinese enterprises through its official, online flagship store, established on Alibaba's 1688.com. As the company's first official online direct-sale store for such products worldwide, it aims to become a leading online platform that supports the digital transformation of Chinese enterprises. The store contains end-to-end products and services covering the entire value chain, as well as convenient and efficient service experiences. Currently, 17,000 products, solutions, and services have been launched in the store, applicable to multiple industries including automobile, healthcare, power, metal, rail traffic, food and beverage, etc. Through the accelerated integration of online and offline channels and extensive industrial resources, Siemens is committed to jointly innovating new business models with partners such as Alibaba.

'Great Place to Work' Awards CPC

CPC was awarded the 'Great Place to Work' Consulting 2020 Award in Germany. This is



the 10th year in succession that the 'Great Place to Work' Institute grants CPC the award, which is an evaluation of the CPC corporate culture by its employees worldwide.

This year also marks the fifth anniversary of the inception of the CPC China legal entity. Although CPC has been active in China since 2004, the local subsidiary in China – CPC Consulting (Beijing) Co., Ltd. – was established in 2015. CPC's goal for the coming years is to expand its customer base in China and provide consulting services while leveraging the potential of organizations and transforming business models, processes and collaboration methods for our clients.

TAGAL Donates Medical Supplies to Germany

On 7 April, TAGAL donated 3,000 medical N95 masks to the German Federal Ministry of Health with the support of the German Chamber of Commerce in China. On 8 April,



TAGAL donated 10,000 surgical masks, 1,000 medical N95 masks, and 100 pieces of protective clothing to 23 children and doctors in the region of Bergisch Gladbach to fight the coronavirus outbreak.

As a subsidiary of ThyssenKrupp steel Europe, TAGAL pays great attention to the developments in Germany. The medical supplies for pandemic prevention demonstrate the importance TAGAL attaches to social responsibility and accountability.

Kempinski Hotel Beijing's Paulaner Bräuhaus Launches New Spring and Summer Menu

Paulaner Bräuhaus unveiled its newly revised menu with more than 40 new dishes in May 2020. The new menu includes vegetarian options, family-style platters, and modern twists on traditional German classics.

For over 27 years, Kempinski Hotel Beijing Lufthansa Center's Paulaner Bräuhaus has served Bavarian cuisine and freshly brewed Paulaner beer in Beijing. "This is the largest menu adjustment in the past five years at Paulaner Bräuhaus," said Brice Péan, Managing Director of the hotel. "We continually innovate the classics. I believe that, with the creative seasonings and our brand-new beer cocktail selection, Paulaner will bring a refreshing experience to all our guests."



New Members – North China

For full contact information and company profiles of our new and existing members, please visit www.german-company-directory.com

Private Member
Mr. Carsten Kausch

Private Member
Mr. Peter Schwarz

North China Past Events

New HR Challenges & Key Points of Employment Law in Times of Crisis
5 March 2020

新冠肺炎支持性税收政策解读 | Coronavirus Outbreak: Tax Incentive Policies
11 March 2020

Supporting Policies and Services for Companies in BDA During Coronavirus Outbreak
23 March 2020

Interpretation on Regulations for the New Annual Tax Reconciliation ("ATR" 年度汇算清缴) and the Impacts to Companies and Employees
26 March 2020

China Customs Update - Key Points for Customs Compliance in 2020 中国海关合规要点
1 April 2020

Compliance Management in China 中国合规管理在线课程
9 April 2020

Policy Briefing with Tianjin Municipal Government on COVID-19 | Updates on Support Measures 天津市政府关于COVID-19 | 更新的支持措施
10 April 2020

Total Productive Maintenance (TPM) - 全员生产力维护
10 April 2020

Single-Minute Exchange of Die (SMED) - 快速换模
17 April 2020

How to Limit the Impact of COVID-19 on your Companies Business: Government Support Policies for Foreign-Funded Enterprises During the Outbreak of COVID-19
27 April 2020

SME Roundtable Tianjin #1: How We Are All Doing | COVID-19 Impact on our Businesses and New Opportunities
29 April 2020

EV Road Trip | 3 Countries, 3 Cars, 3000 Miles
7 May 2020

Inventory Management - How to Save Costs and Maximize your Profit 库存管理
9 May 2020

Online Leadership Course: How to Redefine and Build a High-Performance Team After a Crisis
11 May to 2 June 2020

SME Roundtable Tianjin #2: How We Are All Doing | COVID-19 Impact on our Businesses and New Opportunities
14 May 2020

Understanding Key Challenges in HR Compliance: Payroll & Benefit 人力资源管理合规挑战
20 May 2020

Social Events in North China

Beijing:

The Wirtschaftsunioren | Young Business Leaders Beijing "Networking Tour" every second Friday of the month at 7 PM at varying locations (Please visit the event calendar on our website or subscribe to our newsletters and invitations).

Praktikantenstammtisch - every second Tuesday of the month at 7 PM at varying locations (Please visit the event calendar on our website or subscribe to our newsletters and invitations).

Shenyang:

Kammerstammtisch - every second Tuesday of the month at 7 PM in varying locations.

Note: You can find the latest event calendar on our website: <https://china.ahk.de/membership/north-china/>

New Regional Manager Tianjin



We are pleased to announce that Ms. Johanna Heinzmann will take over the role of Regional Manager in Tianjin, effective 1 April 2020.

Johanna has been with AHK North China since 2017, serving as a Senior Project Manager at our Beijing office. In her new position, she continues her work in our Beijing office, while regularly traveling to Tianjin, spending at least two days in our Tianjin office per week. Johanna holds a

master's degree in International Management Asia, with a focus on complexity and risk management in international companies. She has visited and stayed in China on numerous occasions since 2008.

As the Chamber's new regional manager, she is your first contact person for concerns and inquiries in Tianjin. Please feel free to contact her in German, Chinese or English at: heinzmann.johanna@bj.china.ahk.de, Tel: +86 (0)10- 6539 6664 or Mob: 13051966332.

We also would like to sincerely thank Ms. Zhang Xiaolei, who has led the Tianjin office since 2017, for her great work, commitment, and dedication over the past years! We wish her all the best in her future endeavors!

Beijing Training Calendar June - September 2020

4 June	PPT for Presenters (EN)
9-10 June	Living, Working and Leading in China (EN)
11-12 June	Production Management Skills for Front Line Supervisors (CN)
16 June	Excel Training Course: Improvement of Data Analysis Efficiency (CN)
17 June	PPT Training Course: Work Report Easy Making and Perfect Presentation (CN)
18-19 June	Convincing and Asserting Skills (CN/EN)
23 June	Deep Work: How to Become More Focused and Successful in a Distracted World (CN/EN)
3 July	Structured Thinking and Mind mapping (CN)
9-10 July	Standard Time Management According to REFA Methodology (EN)
15-16 July	Empowering your Support Staff (EN)
17 July	"Constructive Emotional Leadership" Workshop (EN)
23 July	Innovation Management (CN)
6-7 August	Communication, Influencing and Negotiation Skills (CN)
12-13 August	German Business Culture-Successful Cooperation with German Colleagues & Business Partners (EN)
20-21 August	Business Writing and Influencing (EN)
24-25 August	Management Transition & Managing Performance (CN&EN)
28-29 August	Intercultural Conflict Management - German and Chinese Perspectives (CN&GER)
4 September	Lean Management and Value Stream Design (EN)
10-11 September	Global Leadership and Talent Development (CN&EN)
14 September	Basics of Cultural Awareness (EN)
15 September	Basics of Leadership (EN)
16 September	From Employee to Manager (EN)
17 September	Intercultural Leadership (EN)
18 September	Excel Training Course: Enhancing Data Analysis Ability (CN)
21 September	PPT Trainings Course: Improvement of PPT Making Efficiency (CN)
24-25 Sept.	Creative Problem Solving and Decision Making (CN)

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**Training Highlights****Intercultural Conflict Management
- German and Chinese Perspectives****Date: 28-29 August 2020***Objectives and Content*

Conflicts are everywhere, and multinational enterprises are no exception. Conflicts in the workplace are diverse, some affecting the inter-personal relationships between colleagues, which in turn affect team cooperation, quality of work, and even employees' physical and mental health. Companies must, therefore, comprehend the reasons behind disputes in the workplace, why they escalate, and the psychological and behavioral effects they have on people. By improving the sensitivity to (cross-cultural) conflicts, we can avoid unnecessary behavior that might escalate into a major dispute.

During this course, we will examine cultural characteristics and other influencing factors to better analyze the underlying causes of cross-cultural conflict, its behavioral characteristics, and the resulting mindset.

Target Group

Managers working in multinational companies; participants interested in intercultural conflict management. Proficiency in Chinese/German needed.

Lean Management and Value Stream Design**Date: 4 September 2020***Objectives and Content*

In this workshop, participants will learn and practice the principles of lean management and lean manufacturing. During the first part of the course, basic concepts, tools, and terms such as Muda, Kanban, Gemba, and Heijunka will be explained and discussed. For the second half, the core tools of value stream mapping (of a current state) and value stream design (of a target state) will be tested, based on examples from two automotive suppliers.

Target Group

Industrial engineers; process planners; logistics planners; industrial supervisors and executives.

Beijing contact: Ms. Li Xingchen, Human Resources
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Election of the Board of Directors 2020 – 2022 and Online Conference



We are pleased to announce the following members will be serving as members of the Board of Directors for the term of office 2020 – 2022:

Dr. Stephan Wöllenstein, Chairperson, CEO, Volkswagen Group China
Mr. Jens Hildebrandt, Executive Director, German Chamber of Commerce in China – North China, Delegate & Chief Representative, Delegation of German Industry & Commerce Beijing

Ms. Yasmine Riechers, Vice Chairperson, Director Operations Greater China, Sennheiser Electronics (Beijing) Co. Ltd.

Mr. Andreas Feege, Treasurer, Partner, Head of German Practice for Northern China, KPMG

Dr. Matthias Göbel, Group Chief Representative, Deutsche Lufthansa AG

Mr. Yan Leng, Executive Vice President, Daimler Greater China Ltd.

Dr. Björn Lindemann, General Manager, Haver Technologies Tianjin

Ms. Susanne Rademacher, Partner, German Attorney-at-law, Chief Representative, BEITEN BURKHARDT Rechtsanwalts-gesellschaft mbH Beijing Representative Office

Mr. Yongxin Wu, Executive Vice President, Chief Government Affairs, Officer General Manager Regional Organization, Siemens Ltd. China

We are looking forward to a fruitful cooperation with the new Board of Directors in the next two years, and thank the previous Board of Directors for its engagement and great contribution to the Chamber's success!

Due to COVID-19, the decisions of this year's General Meeting were adopted by means of a Written Procedure by Online Vote, and on 27 May 2020, the German Chamber of Commerce in China – North China invited its members to an Online Conference to announce the voting results and present its work. After opening remarks by Dr. Stephan Wöllenstein, Chairperson of the German Chamber of Commerce – North China, Mr. Jens Hildebrandt, Executive Director of the German Chamber of Commerce – North China presented the Annual Report 2019, including the Chamber's activities, advocacy engagement and event highlights in the past year. He also gave insights into the Chamber's work in response to the COVID-19 outbreak. Treasurer Mr. Feng Xingliang then reviewed 2019 from a financial perspective. Guest speaker Mr. Mikko Huotari, Executive Director of Mercator Institute for China Studies (MERICS), joined the Online Conference by video from Berlin and gave the first assessment on the "Two Sessions."

Finally, the election committee – Dr. Falk Lichtenstein, CMS China, and Ms. Silke Neugebohrn, WZR Beijing – announced the Board of Directors for 2020 – 2022. The Board of Directors was elected online between April 30 and May 21, 2020, by the members of the German Chamber of Commerce – North China.



GERMAN CHAMBER
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中国德国商会 • 华北及东北地区

Board of Directors 2020 - 2022



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Shanghai Office



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TÜV SÜD Academy Greater China Appoints New Senior Manager



Ms. Ulrike Vogt was chosen to lead TÜV SÜD Academy Greater China team to further cultivate the local training market. Ms. Vogt has over 20 years of working experience in the fields of training and personnel

development in Germany. In 2011, she was named head of Marketing & Sales at TÜV SÜD Management Service GmbH in 2011, and later became Head of Region for TÜV SÜD Akademie GmbH in Stuttgart, Germany. Ms. Vogt has also been conducting third-party audits as a TÜV SÜD Management Service GmbH auditor for years. Ms. Vogt holds a BA in business administration and an MA in organization studies. She is the author of the book 'Quality Management – Terms and Definitions,' published by TÜV SÜD Akademie.

AutoForm Opens New Head Office and Training Center in Shanghai

AutoForm is a software provider for the sheet metal forming industry, catering to international carmakers and domestic brands. In order to be closer to their customers in China, AutoForm Engineering opened a new head office and training center in Shanghai. Christoph Weber, General Manager at AutoForm China, said: "Quality upgrading of Chinese OEMs, dynamic new entrants in the new energy vehicle (NEV) field, and further localization of international car brands are the three driving forces for the sheet metal forming industry in China. We aim to support our customers in China closely on this journey to streamline sheet metal forming."



Busch China Delivers Vacuum Pumps to Wuhan Hospital



On 25 January, Busch China received an emergency order to supply vacuum pumps to Wuhan's Huoshenshan Hospital. Several Busch China employees volunteered to prepare the delivery during the holidays, and installed the vacuum pumps in the new hospital on 1 February.

Vacuum pumps are used to suction body secretions or breathing air in operating and treatment rooms, supporting the treatment of coronavirus patients.

ifm China Relocates Warehouse

ifm China relocated its warehouse in April to North of Ground Floor, Block T52-11, No. 1201, Guiqiao Road, Pudong, Shanghai. This is the third relocation of warehouse



since the establishment of ifm China in 2005. The new warehouse covers an area of 2000m² – 1.8 times the volume of the current one. With the relocation, ifm aims to own a larger space to store and ship products in a more efficient way. During the coronavirus outbreak, ifm China has optimized the storage, transportation, and payment processes to accelerate delivery, resulting in customers receiving 90% of the orders within 3–4 weeks.

Arineo Extends Services to China



Arineo extends its IT services to China, making it the first overseas subsidiary of the company outside of Europe. Arineo Shanghai office opened in December 2019, inviting Mr. Philip Zhang – a seasoned professional with over 20 years of experience in the industry – to serve as General Manager.

Arineo's operation in China focuses on enterprise application services (SAP S/4HANA, Microsoft Dynamics 365), digital workplace, Artificial Intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), cloud computing, etc.

Arineo GmbH is an employee-owned company, headquartered in Göttingen, Germany. The company was founded in December 2018 and has 220 employees.

MAHLE and Triumph Join Forces to Manufacture Face Masks

MAHLE and Triumph Holding AG teamed up to manufacture face masks. MAHLE is providing an FFP3-rated filter medium that can absorb viruses. Triumph initiated the production of respiratory masks, with an estimated capacity of 1.5 million masks per



month. Furthermore, MAHLE is examining the possibility of producing additional masks in-house, as well as employing 3D printers to manufacture components for other medical equipment.

"At MAHLE we are currently exploring all means available to us to help in this emergency situation – with our technical know-how, test labs, clean rooms, and our production facilities within a very short time, together with Triumph we have checked the feasibility of manufacturing face masks, produced prototypes, and set up the supply chain and the production process," says Dr. Jörg Stratmann, Chairman of the Management Board and CEO of MAHLE.

MANN+HUMMEL Organizes Blood Donation Event



In March, MANN+HUMMEL set up a CSR event of blood donation to support medical institutions that suffer from blood shortages due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The event, coordinated with the Shanghai Jiading Industrial Zone local government and supported by the Jiading District Blood Station, included a blood donation vehicle that parked at the MANN+HUMMEL office and provided blood collection services. Under the guidance of the medical staff, employees donated their blood following the highest standards of safety and infection control.

HARTING Donates Equipment to Affected Areas

In order to support China's fight against COVID-19, HARTING raised funds for the China Charity Federation. The company



donated 120 HARTING connector sets to equip 20 face mask machines and shipped them to COVID-19 affected areas. Finally, sets of HARTING customer's gene sequence equipment, installed and supported by HARTING customized RFID Automatic Identification System, were distributed to affected areas.

Entrepreneurs Sign RMB 5.15 Billion in Project Deals in QIECZ



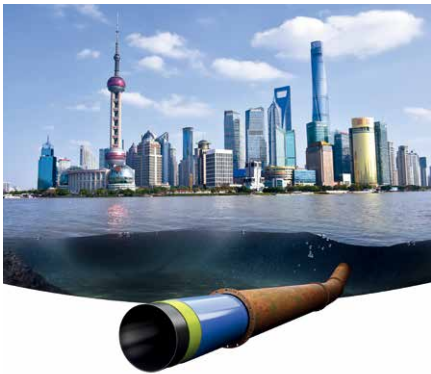
An online signing ceremony for 10 key projects was held on 19 March in the Qingdao International Economic Cooperation Zone, aimed at maintaining economic growth amid the coronavirus outbreak. Representatives of the QIECZ and entrepreneurs from six countries and regions, including Germany, the US, Australia, and Hong Kong, China, signed cooperative agreements through a video conference. The projects, receiving a total of RMB 5.15 billion (USD 726 million) in investment, involve semiconductors, IoT, artificial intelligence, high-end equipment, new-generation information technology, and more. One of the projects – an international semiconductor industrial park – will receive a total of USD 300 million in investment. Covering an area of 300,000 square meters, it will house semiconductor research, development, and production centers for chips, robotics, 5G equipment, IoT sensors, artificial intelligence, and a variety of other next-generation information technology industries.

Tünkers Holds Roof Capping Ceremony for New Factory



On 11 January 2020, Tünkers held an official roof capping ceremony, where Tünkers leaders and employees could witness the last roof beam being raised. The company's CEOs, Mr. Olaf Tünkers and Mr. Andre Tünkers, delivered speeches during the event. The automotive company's new factory is located in the Taicang High-tech Industrial Development Zone in Jiangsu province, and covers an area of 26,000 square meters. The company will use the facility to develop R&D and design concepts, as well as produce fixtures, conveying equipment, pneumatic equipment, and related parts.

Primus Line GmbH Hosts First Major Event



Primus line GmbH held its first major networking event during April. The company wishes to create an innovative platform that encourages the development of new environmental solutions, while connecting industry professionals with local operators. Further events are planned for 2020 in different cities across China.

Primus line GmbH offers specific solutions for water pipelines, focusing on tackling water shortage and pollution using the existing infrastructure and environmental conditions.

tesa Greater China Launches Trade Partner Program

In 2020, tesa Greater China has introduced its new tesa Trade Partner Program



within its General Industrial Markets (GIM) division. The customer loyalty program is meant for the company's closest strategic cooperation partners in the industrial B2B segment. Participating trade partners play a key role in distributing, converting, and re-selling tesa's adhesive tape solutions. With their three different customer segments, namely Platinum, Gold, and Silver Trade Partner, tesa Greater China follows its plan to expand its outreach within the country, with a special focus on Central China.

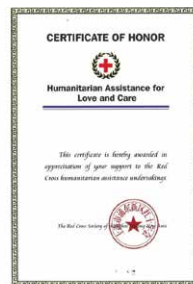
Ingenics Marks 15th Year in China



2020 marks the 15th anniversary of the founding of Ingenics headquarters office in China. Until today, Ingenics performed over 360 projects in China, providing strategic and digital services to mid-sized and large enterprises across all industries in Asia.

Fighting COVID-19: Mazars Donates RMB 250,000 to the Red Cross Society

On 28 February, Mazars donated RMB 250,000 to the Red Cross Society to aid in the fight against the pandemic. Mazars partners and staff continues to ensure the safety and health of its employees, while committed to supporting the medical staff fighting in the frontlines of the COVID-19 "battlefield."



VIRTUARCH and WILLERS forge New Cooperation



VIRTUARCH, an architecture, interior design, and project management company with a strong focus on Asian markets, started a new cooperation with WILLERS, a Swiss Engineering company specializing in MEP, cleanroom technology, and energy saving technologies with a focus on the European market. Both companies strive to realize projects related to production, R&D, and learning environments.

"Looking at the challenges linked to global warming and urbanization, we see a big potential in implementing projects in Asia – and especially in China, using our combined know-how in the field of high-quality industrial and R&D projects" said Daniel Heusser, General Manager at VIRTUARCH Shanghai and President of VIRTUARCH.

Hoffmann China Welcomes New General Manager

Mr. Shane Lee joined the Hoffmann Group in China as the new General Manager. Mr. Lee has rich experience in managing distribution businesses in South-East Asia and China, as well as prior experience with German companies in Germany. "With Mr. Lee, an experienced manager has joined our team, which will help Hoffmann reach the next level" commented Dr. Christian Kober, SVP Asia.

Hoffmann is an international distributor of industrial tools, focusing on cutting tools, hand tools, metrology, workshop equipment and PPE. It has subsidiaries in most European countries as well as the US, Mexico, China, India, Singapore, and Malaysia. In China, Hoffmann has 135 employees, as well as a warehouse in Shanghai.



Walter Greater China Expands Online Operation



Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, Walter Greater China increased its use of remote engineering and virtual presence – with customers as well as employees. Customers can now use one of several Walter online tools, such as the Walter Global Productivity System (GPS) and TOOLSHOP, allowing clients to find machining solutions for components online.

Conti Zhangjiagang Plant Goes Greener and Smarter



The ContiTech Surface Solutions' Zhangjiagang plant has been investing in upgraded processes for years – in line with the China Manufacturing 2025 Strategy. On 16 January 2020, the 1.918 megawatts (MW) roof distributed photovoltaic power generation project (Phase I), with an investment of RMB 7.5 million, was officially put into operation. Phase I of the project is expected to generate 1.8 million kilowatt-hours of green energy every year – meeting around half of its operational energy demand by using solar power. By implementing the project, the Zhangjiagang plant has optimized its energy structure, thus laying a solid foundation for a sustainable and smart future. "The long-term target is to reach a carbon-dioxide neutral operation for our plant," stated Plant Manager, Dr. Antonio Teng.

TIGER China Wins Socially Responsible Enterprise Award

TIGER China was awarded "The Most Socially Responsible Enterprise" in the selection activities of "2019 China Petroleum and Chemical Industry – Excellent Enter-



prise," sponsored by China Chemical Industry News. TIGER China received the accolade due to its outstanding performance in transformation, scientific and technological innovation, energy conservation and emission reduction, safety and environmental protection, social welfare, and other aspects in 2019.

German School Shanghai Continues School Life Online



Maintaining classes and education quality during the current school closure is a challenge that German School Shanghai has been facing since February 2020. At short notice, school life as a whole was transferred into online classes, leaving the community to cope with extraordinary circumstances. The students continue to study according to the regular schedule and are in close contact with both their teachers and their classmates on a day-to-day basis.

The current challenge is demanding for students, parents, and staff alike. The schools highly appreciate the remarkable engagement from the entire community, and they are looking forward to welcoming everybody back on campus as soon as possible.

SITEC Laser Technology Shanghai Marks First Year of Operations in China



Founded in April 2019, SITEC Laser Technology Shanghai Co., Ltd. – a wholly-owned subsidiary of German high-tech company SITEC Industrietechnologie GmbH – is looking back to a successful start of its China endeavors. During the past year, SITEC hired the first service engineers and project managers in order to process Chinese customers' requests. Customers now benefit from communication in Chinese, as well as shorter delivery time. To accommodate the growing customer base in China, requests with a lower complexity – as well as all maintenance and service activities – are now directly processed in China, for China. "This gave us the opportunity to introduce a set of new service products and makes our business fit for the future" says Elvis Han, Office Manager at SITEC Laser Technology Shanghai.

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IFA Powertrain Appoints New General Manager for China



IFA Powertrain Group appointed Johann von Gersdorff as the new General Manager in China, effective December 2019. Mr. Johann von Gersdorff joined the IFA group in 2010 and relocated

to IFA's Shanghai plant in 2013 as Vice General Manager and Program Manager of China project. During his seven years working in the IFA group, he has created his own practical and groundbreaking business philosophy, helping to further strengthen IFA's market position in China while developing new partnerships. Now he will lead IFA Shanghai into a new phase with half-shaft business and deep localization strategy.

ESMT Berlin Shifts to Online Courses

On 17 March, ESMT Berlin started trans-

Please watch the presentation below to get started:

As I noted in the presentation, if you only seek to innovate your way into new niches—or if you focus exclusively on protecting your existing territory—your organization's risk of mortality rises. Can you think of other organizations that didn't survive, or that were forced

ferring its traditional classrooms to online courses on a larger scale. The move comes after ESMT Berlin joined FOME (the Future

of Management Education Alliance) two years ago as a founding partner, a collaboration first of its kind in the business education sector aiming to transform the future of management education. On this platform, ESMT Berlin could redefine, customize, and digitize the portfolio of programs, from online part-time MBA courses launched early this year to shorter executive education programs.

"A platform built up upon real executive education client needs will give us a great advantage" said Nick Barniville, Associate Dean of Degree Programs & EdTech Lab Director, ESMT Berlin.

Jiangsu Credit Evaluation Organization Awards Gustav Wolf



Gustav Wolf Suzhou was awarded a 5-star credit by Jiangsu Credit Evaluation Organization, for excellent operating and management in 2019. This provides Gustav Wolf Suzhou with brand exposure in the highest channels. The company also received "the Most Attractive Employer" award from the Suzhou Government – a testimony to its devotion toward its employees during times of crisis.

German Design Council Welcomes New Members



In 2019, the German Design Council expanded its international network by setting up a subsidiary in Shanghai. By becoming international members, Chinese companies will have the opportunity to become part of the organization and benefit from many years of experience and the exclusive networking platform. The German Design Council was founded

in 1953, at the initiative of the German Federal Parliament. For over 66 years, the German Design Council has been one of the world's leading centers of expertise for communication and knowledge transfer in the field of design, branding, and innovation. Its foundation currently includes over 320 companies.

5 Star Plus Expands Services to Virtual Retail



Due to the limited in-person interaction caused by COVID-19, 5 Star Plus Retail Design has started providing their clients with virtual retail experiences, 3D-dynamic videos that bring the retail space directly to consumers' homes and interactive virtual stores have replaced physical interactions. The German F&B brand, Brotzeit, utilized this service as a way to market its new Hong Kong location that recently opened. An immersive, interactive VR experience was created for the luxury Swiss athletic brand, KJUS. Customers can enter the VR space and virtually walk through their new flagship store in Beijing, connecting to their online store to shop for products.

Century 3 Donates Masks to Germany

To battle the spread of the pandemic, Century 3 group recently donated over 15,000 KN95 masks to Germany's Red



Cross. The German Federal Ministry of Health arranged transport from China to Germany.

Benefiting from many years invested in nurturing and frequent updates of supplier database, Century 3 has carefully selected medical suppliers whose products proven reliable and are in compliance with the European Standard.

Vitesco Technologies to Open New R&D Center, Underlining the Strategic Focus on Electric Powertrains



Vitesco Technologies, the powertrain business of Continental, will set up an R&D center in Tianjin. The company has signed a corresponding agreement with the Administration Committee of the Tianjin Economic-Technological Development Area. Vitesco Technologies will use the new center to develop technologies for hybrid and electric powertrains, extending the R&D capacity of zero emission propulsion technologies in the Asia-Pacific region. The new R&D center is scheduled for completion in 2021.

Vitesco Technologies offers a broad range of electrification solutions tailored to the customers' needs. Its services range from 48-volt mild hybrid technologies and key components for the hybrid to full battery-electric powertrains like power electronics, charging, battery management system, and electric axle drive.

BearingPoint Becomes SAP Gold Partner

Management and technology consultancy BearingPoint announced that it had achieved Gold Partner status in the SAP PartnerEdge Program. BearingPoint advanced to gold status owing to customer references, innovative SAP solutions, and after achieving various service authorizations in the areas of SAP Analytics, S/4HANA Cloud, SAP Ariba Solutions, and more.

SAP Gold Partner benefits include the option to ramp-up participation, access to road map reviews, executive councils, and strategy sessions. BearingPoint also gained early access to the latest product

functionality of the SAP Cloud solutions and will leverage these benefits to its customers. Meanwhile, BearingPoint China will provide 'digital-as-a-service' as a new segment, to help its clients to discover new capabilities, generate new revenue streams and gain an advantage over other businesses.

Storymaker Germany Names New Head of China Team

On 15 April, Storymaker appointed Theresa



range of services for German SMEs.

Stewart as the new Head of the China Business Unit in Germany. Her responsibilities include expanding the cooperation with Chinese digital partners and broadening the

Ms. Stewart previously worked as an assistant to the CEO and Chairman of the German Centre for Industry and Trade in Shanghai, as well as assistant managing director for the Taicang Centre. She possesses extensive knowledge of the Chinese market, culture, and institutions, as well as an understanding of the interests of German companies. Ms. Stewart will work alongside Storymaker GM in Shanghai and Beijing, Dr. Stephan Justl.

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[Members Only | Webinar]
Experience Sharing on Coronavirus
Outbreak Management in German
Companies
7 February 2020

[Members Only | Webinar Series]
Production, Supply Chain, Logistics
– Experience Sharing on Coronavirus
Outbreak Management in German
Companies
17 February 2020

[Online Press Conference]
Survey on the Impact of the COVID-19
Outbreak on European Companies in China
27 February 2020

[Members Only | Webinar | Taicang]:
Policy Support on Work Resumption in
Taicang Amid COVID-19
28 February 2020

[Members Only | Webinar Series]
Supply Chain and Logistics: Best Practices
Amid Coronavirus Outbreak
6 March 2020

[Webinar | Qingdao]
Policy Support on Work Resumption in
Qingdao amid COVID-19
11 March 2020

[Webinar with Invest Shanghai]
Supporting Policies and Services for
Companies in Shanghai During the
Coronavirus Outbreak
12 March 2020

[Members Only | Webinar]:
Media Image in Times of Crisis – How
COVID-19 Impacts Company Reputation
17 March 2020

[Partner Webinar]
German Health Tech Startup in China
18 March 2020

[Members Only | Webinar]:
Legal and Liability Issues Caused by the
COVID-19 Outbreak – What to Know and
What to Do
19 March 2020

[Webinar]
Understanding Environmental and
Employment Protection in Supply Chains
24 March 2020

Media Image in Times of Crisis – How COVID-19 Impacts Company Reputation

This maXcomm insights webinar is part of the maXcomm series, where the German Chamber provides our members with deep dives into different aspects of communications and marketing topics. In this webinar, Dr. Evelyn Engesser and Dr. Rong Wang from UNICEPTA analyzed COVID-19 related news about 15 companies from 5 industries – IT, Automotive, Aviation, Chemical, Pharmaceutical. The analysis of nearly 5,000 articles published in Chinese print and online media between January 20 and February 19 sheds light on external communication activities. It shows that news about the epidemic can be good news for companies. In terms of communications, COVID-19 isn't a disaster, but a chance for company reputation, a chance for companies to position themselves as close to the customer, socially responsible, committed to the safety of their employees, compliant to all government regulations.

Legal and Liability Issues Caused by the COVID-19 Outbreak - What to Know and What to Do

More and more legal and liability questions have been arising due to the COVID-19 outbreaks. The German Chamber of Commerce in China | Shanghai invited three experts from CMS China to share their insights on Force Majeure, Contract and Employment Law during COVID-19. The event attracted over 100 members.

The first speaker, Mr. Michael Munzinger, counsel at CMS China, explained the definition of Force Majeure and what companies should do in the current situation. Then Ms. Jeanette Yu, Partner at CMS China, shared the protective measures, salary treatment and work from home policies for employees, as well as obligations and actions for employer. The last part of the webinar was presented by Dr. Ulrike Glueck, Managing Partner at CMS China, who shared the topic of incentives and support offered by the government to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on business.

Understanding Environmental and Employment Protection in Supply Chains

In this webinar, the German Chamber of Commerce in China, in partnership with econsense Forum for Sustainable Development of German Business, and Systain Consulting GmbH, provided an overview of the changing landscape of sustainability for companies, highlighting aspects and suggestions on management approaches that help foster environmental and employment protection in global supply chains. The webinar wrapped up with an outlook into the training program of econsense on responsible supply chain management. These concepts will allow participants to implement valuable strategies in their day-to-day operations in the future.

CSR Development amid COVID-19

The recent novel coronavirus outbreak has been affecting companies across all industries, making CSR efforts more important than ever. In this webinar, the German Chamber of Commerce in China invited three speakers from Covestro China, SAP Labs China, and SAP Greater China to introduce their CSR strategy and explain how success looks like amid COVID-19. The speakers shared insights on how to engage employees in CSR with regards to COVID-19, explaining from an HR perspective, how departments can better communicate with each other for an increased impact.

These webinars are part of our CSR initiative More than a Market. For more information, please visit our website: www.morethanamarket.cn

[Nanjing Webinar]

Nanjing Women's Forum – Dealing with
Prejudices

25 March 2020

[Members Only | Webinar]:

Technical Insights: How to Harness Digital
Tools to Boost Business Operations During
the Epidemic

26 March 2020

[Webinar | April 2]

Results COVID-19 Flash Survey 2.0:
Shifting Challenges – Future Impact on
German Business

2 April 2020

[Webinar]

CSR Development Amid COVID-19

7 April 2020

[Webinar]

Special Event: CIIE Briefing 2020

9 April 2020

[Webinar]

Special Event: Applying Emotional
Intelligence (EQ) in Digital Teams

17 April 2020

[Webinar]

Legal & Tax (Chinese) 税务及关务手册 ——
政府优惠政策、税务遵从管理、企业所
得税汇算清缴的新内容 Tax and customs
handbook – government incentives, tax
compliance management and what's new
for annual CIT filing

28 April 2020

[Webinar]

Disruption in the Food Industry Amid
COVID-19

29 April 2020

[Webinar]

HR: Enhancing Employee Effectiveness &
Business Efficiency

29 April 2020

Insurance Insights: Completely Covered? –
Social Security for Expatriates

30 April 2020

First Online Briefing Webinar and Signing Ceremony for the 3rd CIIE – China International Import Expo

On 9 April 2020, AHK Greater China | Shanghai, in cooperation with the CIIE Bureau, held the first digital briefing webinar to update German companies on opportunities of participating at CIIE 2020 and give an overview of the current status of the expo. In total, 157 people joined the CIIE Briefing Webinar.

At the time of the webinar, more than 1000 global enterprises – including nearly 100 exhibitors from Germany – had already signed up to attend the 3rd CIIE. By then, the overall booked exhibition area had already surpassed 60% of the planned exhibition area, which was announced during the webinar by the CIIE Bureau project team.

For the third year, AHK Greater China | Shanghai will organize the German Joint Pavilion at this important exhibition from 5–10 November 2020. During the webinar meeting, Mrs. Samantha Tillner, Head of Fairs, Events & Delegations Department at AHK Greater China | Shanghai, introduced the German Joint Pavilion services for German exhibitors and also pointed out results of a survey conducted among German CIIE exhibitors in the first and second edition of CIIE. The CIIE is a good opportunity for German companies to showcase

their newest products in technology, innovation and lifestyle. The CIIE attracts high caliber visitors, ranging from c-suite executives to high-ranking government officials, as well as decision-making purchasers from all over China.

After the briefing webinar, Mrs. Christine Mueller, Deputy General Manager of AHK Greater China | Shanghai, together with Mr. Liu Fuxue, Vice Director at the CIIE Bureau, held the first online signing ceremony, where both parties signed the contract for the reserved German Joint Pavilion areas at CIIE 2020. Due to the significance of CIIE for the Chinese economy, the signing ceremony was covered by multiple Chinese media outlets.

Registration for CIIE is still open. Interested companies are welcome to contact us to receive more information on participation and visiting the expo. The full report of the survey among German exhibitors at the 2nd CIIE can also be shared upon request.



[30 April 2020]

One Goal, Different Approaches: How China and Germany Respond to COVID-19

Virtual Chamber Meeting with Consul General Dr. Christine Althausen

The first Chamber Meeting of the year with Consul General Dr. Christine Althausen took place virtually on 30 April 2020. After an introduction by the former Chairwoman of the German Chamber of Commerce in China | Shanghai, Ms. Bettina Schoen, Consul General Dr. Christine Althausen, commented on the different approaches of China and Germany responding to COVID-19.

China was the first country hit by COVID-19; soon after, the pandemic spread across the globe. Did Germany learn from the Chinese experience? Was it well prepared for the outbreak? And how will a post-COVID-19 Germany look like? What will be the repercussions on the Sino-German relationship, Europe and China-EU ties once COVID-19 will be subdued?

After the speech by the Consul General, the audience asked questions regarding the travel environment after COVID-19, cross-border student exchange, developments in supply chains and its dependence on China, and more.

20-21 August	Get Buy-in: Assertive & Gain Cooperation (NEW)
25 August	Excel Data Management and Analysis
25-26 August	Coaching Leadership: Module One (NEW)
26 August	Working with Excel Functions
27 August	Practical Operation of Import and Export Customs Clearance & Risk Control
28 August	Communication and Negotiation
1-2 September	Drive a High-Performance Team (NEW)
2 September	Fundamentals of Access Database
3 September	Introduction of Chinese Trade Administration Measures (NEW)
3-4 September	Advanced Application of Access Database
4 September	Coaching Leadership: Module Two (NEW)
8 September	Motivating and Inspiring People (NEW)
8-9 September	Basic Management Skills Training
10-11 September	Creative Problem Solving
10-11 September	Working with Excel Macro & VBA
14-15 September	Getting it Done- Transversal Leadership (NEW)
14-15 September	Working Smart with Excel
15-16 September	Excellence in Customer Service
15-18 September	Dangerous Goods Transportation: Regulations Concerning Road Transportation of Dangerous Goods
17 September	International Business Etiquette (NEW)
17 September	Rules and Methods of Import and Export Commodity Classification (NEW)
21-25 September	Six Sigma Green-Belt Training
22-23 September	Essential Leadership Module Two
22-25 September	Lean Leadership
24-25 September	Leading with Global Perspective
28 September	Managing Emails and Schedules Using Outlook

Training Highlight - Shanghai

HR Management Skills for Non-HR Managers

Objectives and Content

With the business environment constantly changing, business managers' involvement in HR work is increasingly growing. Professionals today are required to understand and apply scientific methods to attract, develop and retain their talents.

This two-day training course takes line managers through the entire HR life-cycle, from talent selection, development, and retention, to performance management and termination. It provides the methodology and practical tools to help managers cultivate their skills, with practices such as: how to select team members, how to retain talents, how to develop professionals with a high-potential, how to optimize the efficiency of the organization, and how to evaluate the results.

Essential Leadership

Objectives and Content

In this training course, participants will learn to increase awareness of personal effectiveness from a management perspective. They will execute advanced leadership tactics and practice ways to set goals and conduct performance appraisal. They will establish a systematic approach to manage change and find productive ways to lead teams to adapt to various changes.

Shanghai Contact: Ms. Florence Fu

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fu.yunxi@sh.china.ahk.de

Training Calendar Shanghai

Shanghai

16 July	Motivating and Inspiring People (NEW)	21-22 July	Effective Communication Skills
17 July	Managing Emails and Schedules Using Outlook	21-22 July	Five Keys to the Gate of Innovation (NEW)
18 July	Influence & Operation of Golden Gate (NEW)	22 July	Say It with Charts: Presenting Data Graphically in Excel
18-19 July	Production Management Skills for Front Line Supervisor	23-24 July	HR Management Skills for Non-HR Managers
22 July	Excel Data Management and Analysis	27 July	Creating and Presenting Charts with think-cell (NEW)
22-24 July	Webinar: Foundations of User Centered Development (CPUX-F) (NEW)	28 July	Unveiling the Secret of Data: PivotTable in Depth
23-24 July	Leading with Global Perspective	27-29 July	IATF 16949 Introduction (Online) & Internal Auditor (Offline)
7 July	Change Matters – Change Management (NEW)	28-29 July	Basic Management Skills Training
7-10 July	IEC 61508/IEC 62061/ISO 13849 Functional Safety Certification Program (NEW)	30-31 July	Effective Selling Skills
8 July	Building High-Performance Teams (NEW)	4-5 August	Working Smart with Word
8 July	How to be a Professional Receptionist	6-7 August	Secretarial Skills Training
9-10 July	Essential Leadership Module One	6-7 August	Working Smart with MS Project
9-10 July	Essential AutoCAD skills: 2-D Drawing Basics	6-7 August	Lean Bootcamp
14-15 July	Secretarial Skills Training	10-11 August	Working Smart with PowerPoint
14-15 July	Dangerous Goods Transportation: How to Deal with Lithium Batteries	12 August	Successful Design with PowerPoint
15-16 July	Leading without Authority (NEW)	12-14 August	ISO 9001 Introduction (Online) & Internal Auditor (Offline)
16-17 July	Talent Management (NEW)	13-14 August	Developing a Sales Strategy
20-21 July	Working Smart with Excel	13-14 August	EHS- Product Safety Regulatory Compliance: Training of China GHS, Chemical Safety Data Sheet and Label
		17-18 August	MS Excel Advanced Skills for Finance
		18-19 August	Effective Communication Skills
		18-19 August	German Business Culture
		19 August	Office 365/2019: Improved Experience in Desktop Productivity
		19-21 August	Essential AutoCAD skills: 2-D Drawing Intermediate

Presenting the New Board of Directors for 2020-2022



Between 27 April and 17 May, members of the German Chamber of Commerce in China | Shanghai had the opportunity to vote online for the 2020-2022 Board of Directors.

On 21 May 2020, during the Chamber's Online Meeting, the new Board was announced.

The meeting included a review of the Chamber's activities, advocacy work, and finances for 2018-2020. Following the meeting, the new Board assembled for a constituent meeting, naming the new Board's Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and Treasurer.



The German Chamber of Commerce in China | Shanghai is happy to present the 2020-2022 Board of Directors:

Clas Neumann
Chairperson
SAP China Co., Ltd.
Senior Vice President, Head of global SAP Labs Network, Head of Fast Growth Market Strategy Group

Simone Pohl
German Chamber of Commerce in China | Shanghai
Executive Director

Titus Freiherr von dem Bongart
Vice-Chairperson
Ernst & Young (China) Advisory Ltd. Shanghai Branch Office
Partner

Brigitte Wolff
Treasurer
EIM Executive Interim
Management Ltd.
Managing Director

Martin Broda
Landesbank Baden-Wuerttemberg,
Shanghai Representative Office
Chief Representative – Head of China

David Christian Powels
SAIC VOLKSWAGEN Automotive Co., Ltd.
First Vice President and Commercial Executive Vice President

Dr. Verena Schäfer
BMW China Services Ltd.
Head of Automated Driving

Jenny Xiang
Brose China Co., Ltd.
President Brose China

Richard Zhang
KERN-LIEBERS (Taicang) Co., Ltd.
CEO

Thank you to the 2018-2020 Board of Directors

The Chamber team would also like to thank the former Board of Directors. Our gratitude goes to Ms. Bettina Schoen as Chairperson, Mr. Lothar Grad as Vice-Chairperson and Ms. Brigitte D. Wolff as Treasurer, as well as Mr. Michael Maeder, Mr. Clas Neumann, Mr. Markus Mildner (until mid-2019), Mr. David Powels (starting mid-2019), Mr. Titus von dem Bongart, and Mr. Richard Zhang.

Thanks to Our Yearly Sponsors 2019/20

Guangzhou Office



Chengdu Office



Shenzhen Office



KK Mold Increases Capacity of Medical Manufactured Products



KK Mold has finalized a capital investment to increase the capacity of its manufacturing facility in Pingshan, Shenzhen. The investment provides an infrastructure platform for annual sales of injection molded products to increase from the current level of USD 20 million to USD 30 million over the upcoming years, where the company believes there will be a post-COVID-19 increase in demand for medical manufactured products globally.

Rödl & Partner China Announces Personnel Changes

Rödl & Partner appointed Dr. Martin Seybold, attorney at law, partner, and former head of Rödl & Partner office in Beijing, to be

responsible for Rödl & Partner's business in Vietnam.

Following its strategic approach, Rödl & Partner also named Sebastian Wiendieck, attorney at law, partner and head of Rödl & Partner's legal advisory services in Shanghai, as Head of Legal Advisory Services China; Christina Gigler, LL.M., attorney at law, senior associate, as head of Legal Advisory Services in Beijing and reports directly to Sebastian Wiendieck; and Kathy Chen, accountant and associate partner, as head of BPO services in the Rödl & Partner Beijing office.

Messe Muenchen Shanghai and Shanghai Donnor Exhibition Reach Strategic Cooperation

On 31 March 2020, Messe Muenchen

Shanghai Co., Ltd. and Shanghai Donnor Exhibition Co., Ltd. reached strategic cooperation. With years of development in the sports industry and multiple prestigious sporting trade fairs organized respectively, both companies agreed to co-locate some of their premium events within the same industry at the same time.

In order to accelerate the fusion between the sports industry and economy and establish a positive role as trading platforms, the two companies wish to bring innovation, better-shaped show images, and re-integrated resources from both sides in the hope of facilitating a steady recovery for the market. Both companies expect the cooperation will bring about positive influence and even help stabilize and develop the sports market.



RIB Care Donates PPE Supplies from China to Germany

On 11 April 2020, the first batch of RIB Care's donated PPE supplies, including over 20,000 masks, protective coveralls, gloves, and protective goggles, touched down in Germany and was welcomed by Mr. Michael Kretschmer, Minister-President of Saxony, and the local hospital in Hessen.

RIB Care is a nonprofit initiative of RIB



Software Group to deliver PPE supplies from China to the rest of the world, supporting communities to save lives in the fight against COVID-19. "Every company is requested to do what they can to end this epidemic as soon as possible" said Tom Wolf, the Chairman and CEO of RIB Software Group.

CW Donates Masks to Project WeCan



CW donated masks to Project WeCan, supporting Project WeCan. 76 schools participate in the "Business-in-Community" project.

Shangri-La's Care Program



In response to the COVID-19 outbreak, Shangri-La, in cooperation with Yihai Kerry, launched the "Care Program" to support the front-line workers. On 16 April 2020, Shangri-La and Yihai Kerry donated supplies worth roughly RMB15,000, including rice, oil, corn flakes, and more to the community of the local medical workers. Thirty volunteers, including the management team, joined the activity to support the local community in building pride and internal morale.

The "Care Program" is a CSR initiative that aims to benefit the local medical workers.

Kautex China Expands Manufacturing Plant in Shunde

Kautex China has completed the expansion of its extrusion blow molding manufacturing plant in Shunde, Guangdong province, within one month. The new warehouse, QC workshop, and assembly workshop have been put into use since late March, and increases the assembly capacity of the Shunde factory by 50%. Local production of KSH machines will also begin in the Shunde factory this year.

Despite the coronavirus crisis, the management team of Kautex China foresees a proper development dynamic for future business. The enhancement of production capacity will better meet the needs of the growing business of Kautex in China.

Mazars Donates to the Red Cross Society



On 28 February, Mazars donated RMB 250,000 to the Red Cross Society in the fight against COVID-19. Mazars partners and staff have been paying close attention to the development of the pandemic. While ensuring the safety and health of its employees, it is also committed to the front-line "battlefield" of the pandemic, and pay tribute to the medical staff and other staff fighting on the front-lines.

The Langham Shenzhen Appoints Scott Murray as General Manager



The Langham, Shenzhen, appointed Mr. Scott Murray as the General Manager. Born in Australia, Mr. Murray has more than 20 years of experience in hotels & resorts and catering management in Asia and the Middle East. He previously took on various key management roles with Burj Al Arab, Jumeirah, One &

Only, Fairmont, Raffles, InterContinental, and Banyan Tree Hotels before joining Langham Hospitality Group. Before joining The Langham, Shenzhen, Mr. Murray served as General Manager of The Langham, Hong Kong, with time also at The Langham, Shanghai, Xintiandi, and The Langham, London.

Rehm Dongguan Moves to Bigger Factory



In June, Rehm Thermal Systems moved from Dongguan's Changan district to a bigger factory at Songshan Lake. With a floor space of more than 12000 square meters, The new factory is

home to more than 250 Rehm employees and allow the company to increase its monthly production volume. Moreover, this year, Rehm's headquarters in Blaubeuren Germany will celebrate its 30th Anniversary in October, commemorating the occasion by expanding its home office to a new, neighboring building.

Since 2007, Rehm Thermal Systems offer innovative thermal solutions and equipment for the electronic and solar industry manufactured in Dongguan, China.

Residence G Shenzhen Celebrates its 3rd Anniversary



Residence G Shenzhen celebrated its 3rd Anniversary on 25 March 2020. Residence G offers services for business travelers, families, and visitors with chic hotel rooms, slick-designed studios, and spacious serviced apartments. It also has been hosting gatherings, fashion showcases, and events organized by Consulates, Chambers of Commerce, and the renowned International Gastronomy Association La Chaine des Rotisseurs.

Severin Staff Donates to Support Frontline Workers

On 3 March 2020, all Severin staff joined the fundraising activity organized by Severin Trade Union and donated nearly RMB 14,000 to BaoAn Charity, supporting the "anti-pandemic warriors" fighting on the front lines. The staff expressed their gratitude to those who have worked hard to save the lives of COVID-19 patients.



ICCS Donates 870 Protection Masks to Cologne



ICCS donated 870 protection masks to Cologne, Germany. The centre received a letter from the Government of Cologne, thanking it for donating masks to the local citizens.

New General Manager in Guangzhou



The German Chamber of Commerce in China | South & Southwest is pleased to announce the appointment of Mr. Ingo Xu as General Manager of the German Industry & Commerce in

Guangzhou office. Mr. Xu joined the GIC 10 years ago and has served in several vital roles. He worked as the Deputy General Manager for four years before officially starting his new position in March 2020.

You can reach Mr. Xu by phone at +86-139-2607-2964 or email at xu.jingbo@gz.china.ahk.de.

New Members – South & Southwest China

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Ms. Jia Xu

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Mr. Lars Speckemeier

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SSW Past Events

Virtual GM Roundtable – Best Practices and Experience Sharing in Manufacturing
28 January 2020

Virtual HR Roundtable – the Application of Local Preferential Policies
17 March 2020

Virtual GM Roundtable – The Application of Local Preferential Policies
03 April 2020

Webinar – Latest Tax Policy Implication and Risk Avoidance Schemes Register
09 April 2020

28, 29 April 2020:

International Webinar - Creativity and Opportunities in a Crisis

The German Chamber teamed up with the German American Chambers of Commerce to bring together company representatives from China, Germany, and the US to share their insights and experiences on how to turn creativity into opportunities during crisis. The event was conducted in two webinars in different time slots, and included eight speakers and more than 200 participants. The webinars helped participants understand how to react to a 'new normal' in the midst of COVID-19 restrictions, and how business leaders can encourage creativity and develop new services while dealing with a serious economic crisis.

Training Calendar - Guangzhou

9-10 July	Professional Administration Assistant & Secretary Training (CN)
16-17 July	Key Account Management Workshop (CN)
7 August	Highly Effective Talent Recruitment and Selection Skills (CN)
12-13 August	Leadership Skills for Advanced Managers (EN)
22-23 August	Human Resource Related Legal Management and Risk Prevention (CN)

Training Calendar - Shenzhen

23 June	How to Create a Powerful Visual Strategy for Your Company & Brand (EN)
3 July	Cross Department Communication Skills (CN)
23-24 July	Excellence in Customer Service (CN)
31 July	The Seven Habits of Efficient Safety (CN)
19 August	Effective Time Management (CN)
20-21 August	Supervisory Management Skills (CN)

Training Calendar - Dongguan

29-30 August	Procurement Cost Control and Supplier Negotiation Skills (CN)
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Election of the Board of Directors 2020 – 2022 and Online Conference



On 15 May, The German Chamber of Commerce in China | South and Southwest successfully held the General Meeting and announced the result of the 2020 Board Election. It was a great honor to have Mr. Martin Fleischer, the Consul General of Germany in Guangzhou, and Mr. Wolfgang Rudischhauser, the Consul General of Germany in Chengdu, give a warm welcome to our members.

During the meeting, we reviewed the Chamber's activities and finances for 2018-2019. Following the review, the new 2020-2022 Board of Directors was announced.

The German Chamber of Commerce in China | South and Southwest hereby present the 2020-2022 Board of Directors:

Mr. Ulf Reinhardt, Chairperson,
Mr. Maximilian Butek, Executive Director
Mr. Tim Leitschuh, Treasurer
Mr. Dong Duong
Mr. Bernd Leuthner
Mr. Guido Maune
Mr. Benjamin Alexander Scheidel
Mr. Jan Grigor Schubert

Together with the new Board of Directors, we will continue supporting you and serving your business interests in the most beneficial way. We look forward to a bright future!

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GCC Board North China



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Chairperson
CEO
Volkswagen Group China



Mr. Jens Hildebrandt*
Executive Director
German Chamber of Commerce in
China, North China
Delegate & Chief Representative
Delegation of German Industry &
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Ms. Yasmine Riechers
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Mr. Andreas Feege
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Mr. Yan Leng
Executive Vice President
Daimler Greater China Ltd.



Dr. Björn Lindemann
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Partner, German Attorney-at-law,
Chief Representative
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Representative Office



Mr. Yongxin Wu
Executive Vice President
Chief Government Affairs
Officer General Manager Regional
Organization
Siemens Ltd. China

GCC Board Shanghai



Mr. Clas Neumann
Chairperson
Senior Vice President, Head of global
SAP Labs Network, Head of Fast
Growth Market Strategy Group
SAP China Co., Ltd.



Ms. Simone Pohl*
Executive Director
German Chamber of Commerce in
China | Shanghai



Mr. Titus Freiherr von dem Bongart
Vice-Chairperson
Partner
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Ms. Brigitte Wolff
Treasurer
Managing Director
EIM Executive Interim
Management Ltd.



Mr. Martin Broda
Chief Representative – Head of China
Landesbank Baden-Wuerttemberg,
Shanghai Representative Office



Mr. David Christian Powels
First Vice President and Commercial
Executive Vice President
SAIC VOLKSWAGEN Automotive Co.,
Ltd.



Dr. Verena Schäfer
Head of Automated Driving
BMW China Services Ltd.



Ms. Jenny Xiang
President Brose China
Brose China Co., Ltd.



Mr. Richard Zhang
CEO
KERN-LIEBERS (Taicang) Co., Ltd.

GCC Board South & Southwest China



Mr. Ulf Reinhardt*
Chairperson
Chairman and General Manager
Foshan ARC Industrial Equipment
Manufacturing Co., Ltd.



Mr. Maximilian Butek*
GCC | South & Southwest China
Executive Director
Delegation of German Industry &
Commerce Guangzhou
Delegate and Chief Representative



Mr. Tim Leitschuh
Treasurer
General Manager
Bock China Ltd.



Mr. Dong Duong
General Manager
Trolli Guangzhou Confectionery Co.,
Ltd.



Mr. Bernd Leuthner
Managing Director
Herrenknecht (Guangzhou) Tunneling
Equipment Ltd.



Mr. Guido Maune
General Manager
Shenzhen Melitta Household Products
Co., Ltd.



Mr. Benjamin Alexander Scheidel
President & CEO
Lufthansa Technik Shenzhen Co., Ltd.



Mr. Jan Grigor Schubert
President
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Kunshan Economic & Technological Development Zone (KETD)

昆山经济技术开发区



Milestones

- Established as a self-funded industrial development zone in 1984
- Became the state-level economic and technological development zone (ETDZ) in 1992
- Ranked No. 5 among China's 219 state-level ETDZs in 2018 and 2019

Five Pillar Industries

- Optoelectronics & Semiconductors
- Electronic Information
- Intelligent Equipment
- New Energy Vehicle
- Modern Service

Transportation

- Expressway & Airport**
 40-minute drive to Shanghai Hongqiao International Airport
 90-minute drive to Shanghai Pudong International Airport
- High-speed Railway**
 15-minute ride to Shanghai
 10-minute ride to Suzhou
- Metro Line Under Construction**
 Connecting Shanghai, KETD and Suzhou
- Ports**
 90-minute drive to Taichang port and Shanghai port

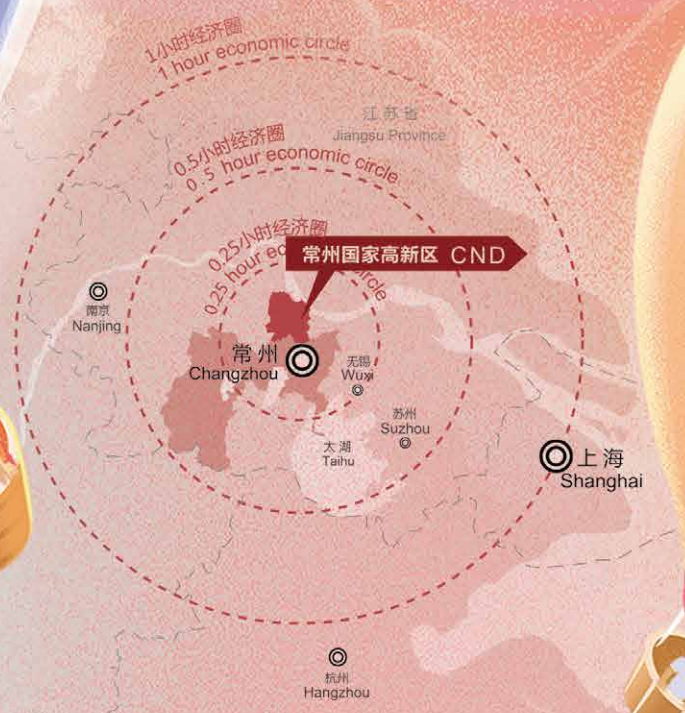
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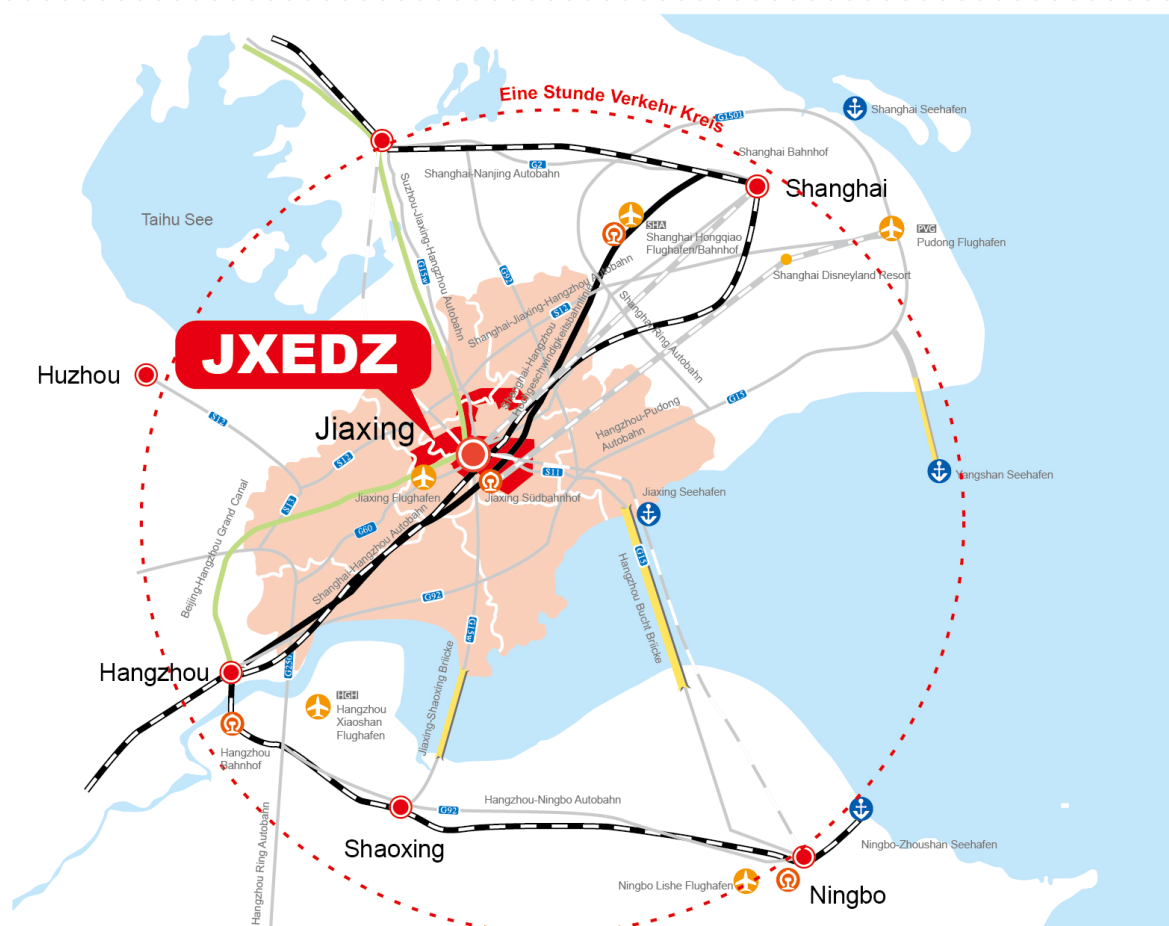
- 1 hour from Shanghai, 30 minutes from Nanjing.
- State Level High Tech District since 1992.
- Strong industrial clusters with German investment atmosphere.
- International airport, high speed railway, high way, ocean going port within district.
- AHK Dual System Training in vocational schools for German companies, with CNC machining, molding, welding, and related training centers.
- Competitive operation cost among the cities in great Shanghai area.
- Cozy living environment with German community.



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常州国家高新技术产业开发区
 Changzhou National Hi-Tech District

国家级 · 嘉兴经济技术开发区 **JXEDZ** National Level Jiaxing Economic & Technological Development Zone



Verkehr

> Hochgeschwindigkeitsbahnlinie

Nach Shanghai	75km	25min
Nach Hangzhou	75km	23min

> Autobahn

Nach Highway Entrance	5km	10min
Nach Shanghai	90km	60min
Nach Hangzhou	85km	60min

> Flughafen

Nach Shanghai Hongqiao Flughafen	90km	60min
Nach Shanghai Pudong Flughafen	120km	75min
To Hangzhou Xiaoshan Flughafen	90km	60min

> Seehafen

Nach Jiaxing Seehafen	30km
Nach Shanghai Seehafen	130km
Nach Ningbo Seehafen	250km
Nach Yangshan Seehafen	70km

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