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## Midea Sunrise Voyagers In Germany

### assignments and pre-readings

## Welcome,

dear Sunrise Voyagers, to Germany! Germany, like China, is a country with extensive and long-standing history, culture, and traditions. It is also a country that has established plenty of world-renowned brands and global corporations for decades and even centuries. One such company is Daimler AG, the corporation which Mercedes-Benz is a part of. Daimler is at the forefront of innovation and technological advancements, and it is safe to say that Daimler has led the automotive sector ever since they had invented the automobile in 1885. However, such leadership doesn't come easy but is the result of an ongoing process of mastering severe challenges in various fields. Thus, Daimler AG is a great example to examine and discuss about best practices as well as failures, challenges as well as opportunities. In the Midea Sunrise Voyagers In Germany program we will focus on strategic challenges in the areas of production & supply chain management, corporate governance & leadership, and marketing & communication.

Among the many lectures, presentations and company interaction you will experience during the week, we will spend one full day at Mercedes-Benz, where we will meet senior executives who will share their experience with us. However, the purpose of the visit is not to showcase German engineering superiority, but to learn from one another. Thus, I would like to encourage you to also ask critical questions, raise unpleasant issues, and participate in a stimulating debate. Active participation is a precondition for a great learning experience. And for an active participation, a good preparation is pivotal.

Therefore, I am sending attached two assignments that help you to familiarize with Daimler and topics we will focus on during the program.

I am very much looking forward to meeting you in person, on Sunday April 22.

*Best regards,*

*Christian Schimmelpfennig*

# Workshop: Corporate Governance, Leadership, and Communication

**Instructor: Prof. Dr. Robert Lobue**

## Assignment

Please read the case you find attached to these instructions ("Corporate Governance and Communications Transparency in the DaimlerChrysler Post-Merger Era"). In addition, I would like to encourage you to conduct individual research on the DaimlerChrysler merger as well as the Daimler advertising and marketing strategies in different global markets.

Please prepare a response and/or thoughts on the following questions (bullet points are sufficient), to be used and discussed during the workshop on Tuesday evening:

- 1.) How do you evaluate the situation and Daimler's course of action when taking over Chrysler from your objective, non-German/non-American perspective?
- 2.) How would you assess such course of action if the company that was taken over was not American but from your country (China, Egypt, Japan)?
- 3.) What would be considered a respectable course of action in your country?
- 4.) Please report about a controversial takeover in your country and/or involving a company from your country: what was the issue? What problems occurred? What should they have done better?



**Prof. Dr. Robert Lobue.** Professor  
at Reutlingen University. Business  
Executive.

# The case of Daimler: Industry 4.0, Digitization, Marketing strategy

Instructor: Dr. Christian Schimmelpfennig, Günter Walz

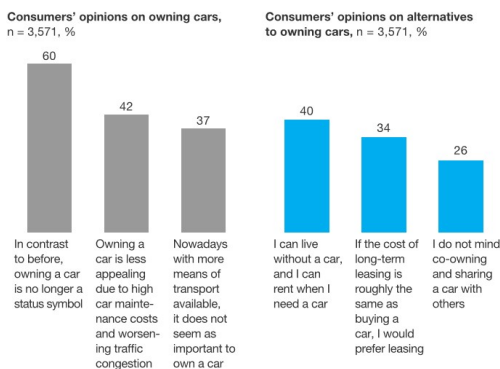
## Assignment

Please read (or flip through) the readings attached: the McKinsey and PWC reports give you a very good overview of future trends of mobility and the automotive sector as such; selected articles of Daimler's innovation magazine "next" provide an overview of the latest and future developments of Mercedes Benz cars. In addition, I would like to encourage you to conduct individual research on and think about likely future trends in the automotive sector and the future of the automobile.

Please consider the following questions. Your thoughts on the questions posed will help you formulate questions to be asked to Daimler executives during the visit. (Written or mentally)

- 1.) How does your country look like in the future? What kind of mobility will be needed in your country in 20 years? What does that mean for automobile manufacturers like Mercedes-Benz?
- 2.) What does digitalization mean for the automobile as a product? What product changes can be expected in the future?

Owning a car is not seen as important as in the past, and consumers are open to renting, leasing, or co-owning cars instead of buying them.



McKinsey&Company | Source: McKinsey 2016 China Auto Consumer Survey

3.) For decades the automobile (particularly a premium brand) has been an object of desire and a means to achieve social status. How important do you consider owning a premium car as a status symbol in your country? How is this going to change if predicted trends prove true?

Apart from technical innovations and new forms of mobility, an increasing number of consumers say owning a car is becoming less important to them (see data collected among Chinese consumers on the left). What would you advise Daimler managers to do in order to cope with it?



Dr. Christian Schimmelpfennig, Head of Program, Executive MBA University of Zurich. Lecturer and Researcher in Marketing.



Günter Walz, former Vice President and Head of Production Planning at Mercedes-Benz Car Group. Consultant and Expert in the automotive industry.