

Dr. Herbert Demel (AT)
 President and Chief
 Executive Officer
 Magna Steyr AG
 Oberwaltersdorf



Born in 1953. Herbert Demel studied at Vienna Technical University. After graduation, he worked as a scientific and engineering assistant at the Institute for Internal Combustion Engines and Automotive Engineering, where he received a doctorate in 1981.

Herbert Demel joined Robert Bosch GmbH in Stuttgart in 1984 as Co-ordinator for Anti-Lock-Braking-System (ABS) Applications. One year later, he was accountable for ABS and ASR applications. In 1989, Herbert Demel became responsible for gearbox control units as well.

His career with Audi AG in Ingolstadt began in 1990, when Herbert Demel started as a Senior Manager responsible for the power train development. In 1993, he was appointed Member of the Board in charge of research and development. One year later, he was named Speaker of the Management Board and Chief Executive Officer with additional responsibility for sales and marketing. From 1995 until 1997, Herbert Demel was Chairman of the Management Board of Audi AG. In 1997, he became President of Volkswagen do Brasil.

Since November 2002, Herbert Demel has been President and Chief Executive Officer of Magna Steyr AG in Oberwaltersdorf.

Theses
**Uncertainty as a
 Daily Challenge**

Uncertainty is a threat to companies stubbornly managing their business by the book – but it can be a chance for those enterprises with a corporate culture fostering a living and permanently learning organisation.

Under conditions of uncertainty, it is advantageous for major players to be organised like a fleet of small, flexible and nimble fishing boats rather than like a huge, inflexible and inept super-tanker.

Uncertain markets are demanding a much greater level of innovative spirit. Working on solutions for the world of tomorrow today

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means creating a path through an uncertain surrounding.

Suppliers to final producers are always faced with – at least – two dimensions of uncertainty: They have to serve customers who have to serve customers for their part, too. One weak link in the chain can develop into a problem for all.

Over the past decade, the automotive industry has experienced an enormous model proliferation. Model derivatives along with new body-styles, drivetrains and other (optional) features result in a more complex demand structure that is a far cry from past patterns.

The growing uncertainty about the right product mix, i. e. which specific vehicles will be in demand by tomorrow's customers and thus succeed on the marketplace, makes careful analysis and planning an ever more challenging, but very important function.

The automotive industry has always been a cyclical one which in addition has seen different players and segments flourish over time. A successful supplier is well-advised to choose its projects diligently and not lay all its eggs in one basket.