Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have to make a confession: At special moments like this I am as excited and curious like a young boy discovering new territories.

As my colleague Manfred Wennemer just stated: After a challenging journey we now have arrived at the gate of new territory. The presentation of the “Global Engineering Excellence” study – the first ever made on this subject.

The experts know:

- In the field of business administration this is an old hat
- nothing to become exited about.
- There you even have global accreditation systems,
- global brands like MBA's from Ivy League Schools: not to speak about worldwide research in the field of global Business Management.

In the field of engineering however – hard to believe – this has never been done. And this is the reason to become excited when a first study ever delivers results.

- Fundamental scientific research and results

  for further improving professional requirements, academic education and career opportunities in the field of engineering science and management
- Crystallization of the contribution of engineering excellence for growth and progress on a global scale

- Advice for growing engineers who strive for the best and who act as entrepreneurs in a global and local high-performance culture
- Contribution of initial capital for the building of an intellectually rich network of eight academic champions

The study is the final outcome of intensive research, expertise based discussions and hot debates, of hard work and deep insight of excellent academic experts into a brand new field of knowledge – the “global engineering”. In real life global engineering is happening since years

- virtual global engineering networks in multinational enterprises
- best practices in leading remote teams around the globe
- expertise in co-designing and – assembling integrated in the global value chain of engineering
- experience in ramping up of R&D-facilities to adjust to local or regional markets – local to local - or to the global engineering network – local to global
- building a global technology strategy integrated into business strategy

Just to mention some of the practical fields of global engineering. But is global engineering also taking place in research and teaching of those institutions which prepare for this global business? Are the universities themselves equipped and equipping for this real life experience? Many schools try, some excellent ones succeed individually and bilaterally, some make achievements in bits and pieces, but there never was an integrated effort bringing together universities from all over the world.

In the early phase of this project we looked for a topic or better an overarching theme connected to “engineering” that would generate two benefits: - While the first aim is to get a better understanding of engineering excellence on a global scale, - the second aim is to advance the profile of Continental as being an innovative company of excellent engineering.

Yes, we confess it’s true: We not only have an altruistic attitude but an egoistic one as well. - Altruistic we are with sponsoring some of the best universities worldwide to commonly search for ways to educate excellent engineers capable of solving challenging tasks on a global scale. - Egoistic we are getting visible around the globe as being a highly attractive employer for the best and brightest minds of engineering.

Some call it the war for talents. For me it is less a martial virtue but a competitive, sportive race for talents. And yes, if a better visibility helps to sell more of our products ranging from tires to electronics we won’t be sad at all!

In that context also a very warm welcome to Mr. Heinz Jürgen Schmidt who left our company recently after 50 years of service. As head of our 2,6 billion turnover business unit Passenger and Light Truck Tire Replacement Europe he invested from his marketing budget to sponsor the “Global Engineering Excellence” initiative.

But most of all we are honored to have the team of the GEE universities with us tonight:

Professor Bernhard Plattner, ETH Zürich.
(Dr. Sibylle Reichert, external consultant – member of team)

Professor Jack Lohmann, Georgia Institute of Technology.

Professor Bernd Widdig, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Professor Nian Cai Liu, and
Professor Shao Xue Liu, Shanghai Jiao Tong University

Professor Shou Wen Yu, Professor Wen Xue Zhang and
Professor Manli Li, Tsinghua University.

Professor Paulo Carlos Kaminski and
Professor Marcio Lobo Netto, Escola Politécnica da Universidade de São Paulo.

Professor Fumihiko Kimura and
Dr. Matthias Wunsch, University of Tokyo.

Students:

Mrs. Elisabeth Bagosy, TU Darmstadt

Mr. Davlid Indacochea, University of Illinois Champaign-Urbana

Mr. Carlos Vitor Hugo de Lima Teixeira, University of Sao Paulo

Mrs. Yao Yang, RWTH Aachen

And last but not least:

Prof. Wörner and Prof. Anderl from the lead university for the research study TU Darmstadt. Without the relentless efforts of all of you we wouldn’t be here tonight. You are the actors in the arena, we actually are the audience listening to your analysis.

Now: Please enjoy the evening and the dinner, the conversations and of course the speeches.