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Press Release

Physical AI: Schaeffler and Wandelbots enter into technology partnership

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- Schaeffler and Wandelbots enter into cooperation to develop a digital platform for physical AI and intelligent robotics
- Partnership covers development, validation, and global scaling of robotics applications
- Aim is to integrate physical AI into Schaeffler's global manufacturing network

Motion Technology Company Schaeffler has entered into a technology partnership with the German robotics and physical AI company Wandelbots. The cooperation will focus on developing the Wandelbots NOVA open platform to enable use of artificial intelligence in industrial and humanoid robotics. In the future, the solution should be available to all Schaeffler plants worldwide to facilitate development, testing, and cross-location transfer of robotics applications. In addition, the platform will help reduce the life cycle costs of automation solutions by up to 40 percent – both in new and in existing manufacturing environments. With this, the partners will create the conditions for scalable use of physical AI and further digitalization of Schaeffler's global manufacturing network.

Dr. Jochen Schröder, Chief Operating Officer of Schaeffler AG, says: "If you want to shape the manufacturing of the future, you have to rethink automation. Flexibility and scalability are key to succeeding in today's competitive global marketplace. With Wandelbots, we will take state-of-the-art physical AI straight from theory to industrial practice. This will solidify Schaeffler's position as a technology pioneer and take the digitalization of Schaeffler's manufacturing network to the next level."

Christian Piechnick, CEO and co-founder of Wandelbots, says: "Physical AI has great potential to significantly reduce manufacturing costs while dramatically increasing the flexibility of robots. Over the last 12 months, we have sufficiently demonstrated the technical feasibility. Now we have to ensure that skills can be developed efficiently, transferred to different systems, and deployed reliably in actual manufacturing settings. Our cooperation with Schaeffler combines an open technology platform with comprehensive industrial application expertise. Together, we will show how applications can be moved from development to practice more quickly and scaled across various manufacturing environments."

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Joint development of a scalable robotics platform

Schaeffler and Wandelbots aim to establish the Wandelbots NOVA platform as a standard at Schaeffler within the scope of the technology partnership. NOVA should support Schaeffler in designing applications, digitally testing them, and deploying them in various plants. The platform will connect different robot systems and make it possible to transfer tested solutions to other applications and locations. NVIDIA's Omniverse and Isaac Sim technologies will be used for virtual testing. Manufacturing processes and robot tasks will be able to be digitally simulated, validated, and optimized before being used in real-world manufacturing environments. This will facilitate standardization and support efficient rollout within Schaeffler's global manufacturing network. A skill store will bundle applications, models, and technical knowledge.

Through this, Schaeffler will be able to capture the skills developed in individual projects systematically, use them system-independently, scale them to other plants around the world, and in the future also make them available externally.

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Schaeffler Group – We pioneer motion: The Schaeffler Group has been driving forward groundbreaking inventions and developments in the field of motion technology for 80 years. With innovative technologies, products, and services for electric mobility, CO_2-efficient drives, chassis solutions and renewable energies, the company is a reliable partner for making motion more efficient, intelligent, and sustainable – over the entire life cycle. Schaeffler describes its comprehensive range of products and services by means of eight product families: From bearing solutions and all types of linear guidance systems through to repair and monitoring services. Schaeffler is with around 110,000 employees and more than 250 locations in 55 countries, one of the world's largest family-owned companies and one of Germany's most innovative companies.

Schaeffler will use the "Wandelbots NOVA" platform to accelerate the global deployment of robotic applications. (Photo: Wandelbots)

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Physical AI lays the foundation for the flexible deployment of humanoid robots across a range of tasks in industrial manufacturing. (Photo: Schaeffler)

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CONTACT:

Daniel Pokorny
Head of Communications Technology, Operations & Digitalization
Tel.: +49 9132 82-88708
E-Mail: daniel.pokorny@schaeffler.com

Saskia Bleher
Head of Communications Advanced Technologies, Digitalizations & IT
Tel.: +49 9132 827654
E-Mail: saskia.bleher@schaeffler.com