

ANALOG SKILLS VERSUS DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

Will the future of technology have a human face? Dr. Marc Wagener, the managing director of LabCampus, is committed to a collaborative and people-centered approach. At this year's SXSW Interactive Conference, he explained how that outlook will define the way forward for Munich Airport's future innovation center.



On the podium (from left): Dr. Marc Wagener, Dr. Olaf Groth, Johannes Kuhn, Ryan Kelly, Fábio Duarte

Munich, March 19, 2019: The LabCampus team is back from South by Southwest in Texas. For digital entrepreneurs and creatives, SXSW provides an annual platform for groundbreaking trends shaping the future of society, culture and technology. Those looking for insights into the role of the individual in this context, attended the high-caliber panel discussion "Will the future of

technology be human?" initiated by LabCampus GmbH. LabCampus managing director Dr. Marc Wagener made his position clear right at the outset: "Technology has the potential to improve our lives as long as we're pulling the strings. It's essential for all of us to play an active role: Otherwise things are created through the initiative of individuals that don't necessarily reflect the will of the majority."

Olaf Groth, a professor of Strategy, Innovation and Economics at the HULT International Business School, reminded the audience: "There is broad divergence around the world in cultural attitudes to data and the resulting power of those who control it." But he dismisses as overblown the grim future scenarios where artificial intelligence does all of the work once done by humans or could even take over the world. Dr. Groth continued:

"The important thing is for individuals and social institutions to be placed in a position to control these developments, to ensure that they remain agile and flexible, and to decide themselves how they are used!" As an example, he added: "A lot of car makers say: 'Our cars are safe. Just look at these test reports. They're fun to drive, too, and the quality is excellent. And that's exactly what you get for your money.' Why don't we hold internet companies to the same standard as everybody else we deal with in our lives?"

Ryan Kelly of Virgin Hyperloop One described how technology is reshaping the way people work in companies: "High-speed infrastructure is no longer a matter of 'mobility' – it will entirely redefine the social and urban landscape. We will commute over distances that were once inconceivable."

Fábio Duarte of the MIT Senseable City Lab explained that the interplay between citizens, digital infrastructure and cities will play an ever-increasing role. "Carpooling would be possible for more than 90 percent of trips in New York if people were only willing to wait just five minutes. But commercialized enterprises with digital sharing services were faster." So if data is the new oil, there's no point just drilling in the hope of striking it rich. The value comes from filtering out the data reflecting real human behavior and building on it. And to do that, human input is probably needed.

But how can we ensure that the technology does not take control? And what will the future of humanity look like? The answer from LabCampus managing director Dr. Wagener: "Technology consists of developments by people. We have to make sure that this development is happening in the interests of the majority, and not for individual interests or just to earn profits. So, when developing new technologies, we need to take different competencies and perspectives into account. And that means extending our collaboration to another level."

Naturally Munich Airport's innovation campus ideally reflects that insight. With the spread of digital communication channels and AI chatbots, there is also an increasing awareness that people need to meet, work on problems together and share ideas. And that is the key to success. This is exactly what LabCampus offers: "Only when people actually meet, work together and pass on what they've seen and learned will it be possible to turn ideas into reality on a long-term and sustainable basis. LabCampus offers a platform to bring together highly diverse analog skills to shape the future," Wagener adds.

"At LabCampus, there is a kind of mini-SXSW happening all year round," says Fábio Duarte. "It brings together high-tech creativity, different cultures and people, life-long learning and inspiration. LabCampus is not a place or a building. It's an attitude."

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Please note that a full recording of the LabCampus panel discussion in the German House at SXSW 2019 is available:

Summary [video]: <https://www.munich-airport.de/labcampus/en/news>

Full discussion [audio]: www.munich-airport.com/labcampus-sxsw

ABOUT LABCAMPUS GMBH

LabCampus GmbH was formed in March 2018 as a 100% subsidiary of Munich Airport GmbH. Its goal over the next 10 years, is to develop an unparalleled innovation center at the site of Munich Airport. This will involve bringing together global players and start-ups, creative minds and research institutes for industry-wide collaboration. In a unique campus environment, residents will be able to develop, test and present new products to the market. The guiding principle of LabCampus is cooperation, with LabCampus itself assuming an active role as catalyst. Together with a network of leading international partners, LabCampus will offer support to companies looking to improve their innovation processes and develop new business models. As a thriving international transportation hub serving more than 250 destinations worldwide, Munich Airport plays the perfect host to this exciting project.

ABOUT MUNICH AIRPORT GMBH (FMG)

FMG (Flughafen München GmbH), incorporated in 1949, operates Munich Airport, which opened at its present site on May 17, 1992. It is jointly owned by the Free State of Bavaria (51 percent), the Federal Republic of Germany (26 percent) and the city of Munich (23 percent). The FMG corporate group, with its 18 subsidiaries, employs around 10,000 people. With a total workforce of about 35,000, employed by about 550 companies, Munich Airport is one of Bavaria's largest workplaces. Within just a few years of opening, Munich Airport developed into a major air transportation hub and was firmly established as one of Europe's 10 busiest airports. Munich Airport now offers connections to more than 250 destinations all over the world. In 2018 Bavaria's gateway to the world has handled approximately 413,000 flights with 46,3 million passengers. Bavaria's gateway to the world became the first – and is so far the only – airport in Europe to be honored with the prestigious title of »5-Star Airport« by the London-based Skytrax Institute.

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