

Bullish on technology

As they say, what's in a name? Everything — in the case of A9C Capital!

"A9C — or Alpha Nine Charlie — is the International Civil Aviation Organisation code for Bahrain; it means the registration of any Bahrain-based aircraft commences with A9C," explains Prof. Dr Bernd J. Hoefer, chairman and CEO. The name is a euphemism for the company's activities in the Kingdom — bringing technology and Bahrain together.

Why would a German businessman establish such a company in Bahrain? Dr Hoefer says A9C Capital was set up as a natural consequence of living in the Kingdom since 2006, pointing out the high quality of life, the business-friendly environment, its dynamic development and the excellent growth prospects.

The idea to establish the company was triggered by the firm conviction that investments in science, innovations and technologies are crucial fields of action for the high quality and long-term sustainable development of Gulf economies. Technology is the next key step towards their diversification.

"In simple terms, it is like riding a bike — it is impossible to maintain the balance while standing still," he says. So what does A9C Capital actually do in the area of technology?

"We are the gateway to smart technology investments, bringing excellent technology companies from Europe and private equity investors from GCC together," notes Dr Hoefer. "We identify investment opportunities in technology companies with substantial return potential and a clear perspective to establish elements of their value chain in Bahrain."

These investment services are complemented by technology advisory and research work, which both aim at helping governments and investors in the GCC to flesh out their long-term strategies for science, technology and innovation. A9C Capital is active in six technology sectors with strategic relevance to the Gulf.

"We focus on information and communication technology, multimedia, logistics, energy and clean technology, new materials and aerospace," explains Dr Hoefer, a passionate pilot.

"For example, there is a diverse list of projects including a telecom company in the EU, an integrated satellite provider and an electric automotive and mobility concept from Germany. There are also advanced materials for yachts and sailing boats, design and manufacturing of very light business jets, advanced logistic systems and photovoltaic thin-film production."

But not all is business. In March this year, A9C Capital commenced a series of events labelled 'A9CtechTALK'. These are designed for a distinctly Bahraini audience and aim at providing a forum to foster the discussion of science and technology-related issues. The series kicked off with an evening with Thomas Reiter, Europe's most experienced astronaut.

"At A9C Capital, we are passionate about technology and are convinced that it will provide an important contribution to Bahrain's development; we are here to help to make it happen," Dr Hoefer says.



Prof. Dr. Bernd J. Hoefer

Gateway to smart technology investments

Founded by German businessmen and registered in the Kingdom of Bahrain, A9C Capital provides private equity investment opportunities in small and mid-sized technology companies to Gulf investors. It also develops technology projects in the Gulf region.

Many technology companies are aware of the excellent business environment in the Gulf and willing to relocate elements of their value chain to this region.

The company focuses on technologies with excellent growth potential and a high strategic relevance for the Gulf countries. The ultimate goal is the generation of value for investors, in terms of financial return and diversification, as well as the generation of value for the Gulf societies via economic development.

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