

Sustainable development through technology Investments

Europe's most experienced astronaut Thomas Reiter was a guest at the newly founded A9CtechTALK forum

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Diversification, innovation and technology are playing a decisive role within the "Economic Vision 2030 for Bahrain". To support this vision, A9C Capital Business Consultants & Technology Advisors and Roland Berger Strategy Consultants, both based in the Kingdom of Bahrain, created the forum A9CtechTALK to discuss and foster the awareness for Science & Technology in Bahrain.

The A9CtechTALKs are designed to give handpicked senior administration officials, senior executives from the science, business and financial community and members of the diplomatic corps an overview of the latest technology developments by inviting top-class speakers from all over the world.

For the launch event of the A9CtechTALK series A9C Capital and Roland Berger invited Europe's most experienced astronaut, Thomas Reiter from Germany, to Bahrain to share his views on how space applications can improve our lives on earth and to speak about his personal experiences during his missions in space. His gripping and captivating speech took place under the stars at the Banyan Tree Al Areen Hotel which gave the event an extraordinary atmosphere. The event was under the patronage of H.E. Dr. Majid Ali Al Nuaimi, Minister of Education, and H.E. Dr. Hubert Lang, German Ambassador to the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Thomas Reiter, who has been extensively questioned by the audience, when he opened the floor to address personal questions about his experiences, concluded his speech with the words: "Exploring space is always a fascinating and challenging mission. It enriches a society in terms of mind-sets, education and technological capabilities. I think the time has come for Bahrain to be part of this thrilling adventure and to think about space applications that are to the benefit of the people of this beautiful country."

"We are very pleased and delighted that Mr. Reiter shared his exceptional experiences and views with such a distinct audience." says Prof. Dr. Bernd J. Hoefer, Chairman & CEO of the technology consulting firm A9C Capital, Bahrain. "If there is one thing we should learn from the current financial crisis that is to invest your money wisely and to diversify your portfolio. Direct foreign investments in small and medium sized cutting-edge technology companies might be a good choice for an economy such as Bahrain and therefore cut dependency on Real Estate investments." And having the future of Bahrain in mind, he added: "Bringing these SMEs in a next step to the prosperous Middle Eastern markets will surely generate more sustainable development in the region, than investing in large blue chip companies from abroad that don't intend to set up operations in the Middle East and therefore don't create a single job for the local labour market." A9C Capital serves Middle East clients as the gateway to Venture Capital and Private Equity investments in technology companies

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worldwide with a focus on Europe. “Bahrain with its business friendly economy is well advised to follow a profound diversification strategy, and technology investments are surely a great completion of its current investment portfolio” explains Michael Wette, Partner & Managing Director Middle East, of the consulting firm Roland Berger Strategy Consultants.

In line with the A9CtechTALK spirit, A9C Capital and Roland Berger invited Thomas Reiter to also give speeches at the College of Science at the University of Bahrain and at the Gifted Students Center in Muharraq to raise the technological awareness of the next generation.

Background and contact

Thomas Reiter

Born 23 May 1958, in Frankfurt, Germany, Thomas Reiter is the most experienced astronaut from the European Space Agency (ESA). During his career he has flown two space missions, first with Russia to the MIR space station in 1995 and later with the US Space Shuttle to the International Space Station (ISS) in 2006. Thomas has spent 350 days in space and circled the earth 5,525 times. He holds the permission to operate as a Soyuz Return Commander on Soyuz spacecrafts. He is currently a member of the Executive Board of the German Aerospace Centre (DLR). Please see www.dlr.de.

A9C Capital Business Consultants & Technology Advisors

A9C Capital is one of the leading technology investment and consulting company in the Middle East and serves Middle East clients as the gateway to Private Equity investments in technology companies worldwide with a focus on Europe. In terms of technology the company is focused on the Information and Communication Technology, Aerospace, Logistics and Transportation, Bionics/Photonics/Nanotech, Energy and Clean Technology, and Multimedia Technology. Please see www.a9c.com.

Roland Berger Strategy Consultants

Roland Berger Strategy Consultants was founded in 1967 and is one of the world’s leading strategy consultancies. With 36 offices in 25 countries and over 2,000 employees it generated more than USD 1 billion revenues in 2008. Roland Berger is the only international strategy consultancy with its Middle East headquarters in Bahrain. Opened in 2006, the office has grown rapidly and is now active across the GCC countries as well as the Levant in a variety of industries including Travel & Tourism, Real Estate, Utilities, Financial Services, Telecoms and Basic Materials. Please see www.rolandberger.com

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