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**Press Release**

1st Packaging Valley Makeathon - successfully launched

Enthusiastic participants, great results and a successful event is the result of the 1st Packaging Valley Makeathon, which took place on June 25 and 26, 2020, decentralized at five locations. Packaging Valley member companies, technology partners and universities were involved in the event. At the Sulzbach Laufen (Rommelag), Waiblingen (Syntegon), Kempten (Kempten University of Applied Sciences) sites and with two groups in Schwäbisch Hall (Optima/hfcon in the Optima Digital Innovation Center and KIT/Dassault Systèmes), creative processes were used during both days to work on a wide range of topics related to packaging machine construction. These included human-robot collaboration, online commissioning, digital machine logbook, sustainable shopping of the future from the consumer's point of view, and efficient processes for product development in packaging machinery manufacturing.

A total of 80 people took part in the 1st Packaging Valley Makeathon, distributed over the five locations. A Makeathon lives from the participation of students who came from the universities in Aalen and Kempten for this project. It is thanks to the professors Peter Eichinger, Bernhard Höfig and Dirk Jacob that the event was able to take place at all, because they succeeded in convincing their students of the project, despite the fact that attendance at the universities is idle and the examinations are due soon. For the students, the 1st Packaging Valley Makeathon was certainly the highlight of this semester, which is characterized by online lectures.

The decision to hold the event was only made five weeks before the date, and it was clear to all those involved that this was a pilot project, which could be followed by others if it went well. In addition to the location partners mentioned above, various technology partners were involved, who provided the participants with their software and hardware free of charge, e.g. the companies Wago, Actimage GmbH, H&F Solutions, Dassault Systèmes and IDS Imaging Development Systems GmbH. In addition to the Packaging Valley offices, Packaging Valley member ITQ GmbH played a major role in the organisation. In recent years, the company has already organized several Makeathons at various locations around the world. The decentralised concepts necessitated by COVID-19 has convinced the organisers, and will serve as a blueprint for further events.

Packaging Valley Managing Director Martin Buchwitz concludes: "When you consider that this is the first time we have held such an event and that we only started organising it five weeks ago, then it is fair to say that it was a complete success. The combination of the players involved, consisting of Packaging Valley members, technology partners and universities, has more than proven itself. It's amazing what great results have been achieved in such a creative atmosphere in such a short time - I am thrilled!

Co-organizer Dr. Rainer Stetter from ITQ GmbH is also satisfied with the success of the Makeathon: "I am delighted that the 1st Packaging Valley Makeathon was such a great success for all participants! We had enthusiastic participants who really want to make a difference and make tomorrow's world sustainable. We have thus set a further milestone in digitization for German industry and for adult education”.

About Packaging Valley Germany e. V.

Packaging Valley Germany e. V. is the world's most innovative cluster in the packaging industry. It is the result of a merger of Packaging Valley Germany and Packaging Excellence Region Stuttgart. It networks around 80 companies with a total of more than 20,000 employees. These include manufacturers of packaging systems and packaging machines, suppliers of software and automation solutions, manufacturers of components, suppliers of services for the packaging industry and public institutions.

The companies in Packaging Valley are always one step ahead of the future and offer the market the best technologies in the field of packaging machines. With an export share of over 80%, the technological diversity from Packaging Valley is represented all over the world. International market leaders from the food, beverage, confectionery, pharmaceutical and cosmetics industries are among the customers.

Packaging Valley Germany e. V. is based in Waiblingen, with an additional office in Schwäbisch Hall. The majority of its members are located in the southwest, with a focus on the Stuttgart and Hohenlohe regions.

Captions

PM\_Packaging\_Valley\_2020\_06\_30\_Final Pitch: The team at Optima's Digital Innovation Center at the final pitch.