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Customcells strengthens sustainable battery industry 'Made in Germany'



Itzehoe (ots) -

Setting a sustainable course for the future of the German battery industry: The Customcells company is investing tens of millions in the expansion of its Itzehoe site in Schleswig-Holstein. The production team on site will be tripled. With more research and innovation as well as joint process development, the specialists for application-specific premium battery cells are boosting Germany's path to becoming an international market leader for green high-performance technology, enabling the mobility revolution thanks to holistic electrification on the road, on water and in the air.

"With the expansion in Itzehoe and the investments we are making here, we are also making a commitment: We believe in Germany as a location for a successful battery industry. We are literally energizing 'Made in Germany' – sustainable, innovative, high-performance, high-tech," Dr. Dirk Abendroth, CEO of the Customcells Group, said while laying the groundwork for the company's expansion at its site in Itzehoe. The experts for premium battery cells are investing tens of millions for the buildings on site alone. During this time, the total number of employees will double.

Opportunities for innovative strength through sustainability

German and European politicians have recently expressed concerns that the US government's Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) could have consequences for the development of the battery industry in Germany.

At the beginning of February, German Economics Minister Robert Habeck (Greens) had campaigned for concessions in the US. In Habeck's northern German home, Dirk Abendroth emphasized the opportunities that would continue to be available to the industry if it focused on the interplay of innovative strength, digitization, and sustainability.

Considerable potential for Customcells in the electrification of aviation

As one of the leading developers and manufacturers of application-specific battery cells, Customcells has its sights set on the electrification of air traffic, among other things. The company sees the considerable potential of high-performance battery cells in Conventional Take-Off and Landing (CTOL) as well as Vertical Take-Off and Landing (VTOL) machines, which, in addition to drones, also include air taxis. Customcells is involved, among other things, in the development and series production of the battery cells for the seven-seater jet from Lilium, one of the leading companies in regional electric air mobility.

"There is no future in which there is no air transport. That is why the electrification of aviation is essential. Customcells has the technology needed to enable the decarbonization of many of these industries, and it's from Germany," says Daria Saharova, co-founder of the World Fund, one of Europe's largest climate funds.

Silicon Valley technology in the far north

Specifically, Customcells is massively expanding its development work at the Itzehoe site and will make the company's research more independent of the project business in the future. In this way, it is possible to significantly strengthen the overall innovative power and the company's product pipeline. At the same time, Customcells and the company's customers will work together much more closely on topics such as process development.

"Above all, I would like to thank Customcells for being willing to invest in the latest technologies in Schleswig-Holstein and for making research and development possible here that is otherwise only known in Silicon Valley. When we look back in a few years and consider where the novel technology for mobility in the metropolises of this world comes from, we will say 'made in Schleswig-Holstein'. And yes, I am proud of that," says Schleswig-Holstein's Minister of Economics, Transport, Labor, Technology, and Tourism, Claus Ruhe Madsen.

Benno Leuthner, Head of Project Planning/Sales and General Operation Manager at Customcells in Itzehoe, explains what holistic process optimization looks like: "The customers develop the processes together with us here on site. In this way, the time intervals between planning, construction, and commissioning of battery factories can be drastically reduced. All they have to do is wait for the cement of their new gigafactory to dry, and then they can get started right away."

Customcells pulls another option for site expansion

As part of the expansion, Customcells is constructing a modern office building and a warehouse or factory building on an area that covers 10,251 square meters. Customcells has also secured the option to expand the property by an additional 5,749 square meters over the next five years. "Due to the high demand and the attractive opportunities that we find here in Itzehoe, we will immediately pull this option," says Leopold König, Co-Founder and Managing Director of Customcells. Together with Torge Thönnessen, König founded the company in 2012.

"Top research and Itzehoe – they belong together now. Companies like Customcells play a key role in the success story of the innovation area. Solutions for forward-looking storage technologies are born here. Thus, strong impulses for the energy turnaround emanate from Itzehoe. We are even more pleased with Customcells' commitment to the location," says Itzehoe's mayor Ralf Hoppe.

Today, Customcells employs more than 150 highly qualified employees and operates development and production sites in Itzehoe and Tübingen. As an independent premium brand, the battery cell manufacturer stands for customized solutions in a wide range of industries and is continually pushing the boundaries of what is technically possible through the use of digital technologies – in the future, increasingly with the help of artificial intelligence (AI).

Sustainable office complex ready for occupancy as early as 2023

The new office building at the Itzehoe site will be ready for occupancy before the end of the year, and the number of employees is to rise from 112 to 160 by October. The new wooden building will create space for new work concepts and will help Customcells to maintain – and even further increase – its development speed in the long term. The size of the production team in Itzehoe will triple by 2024 with the construction of the warehouse or factory building.

The Customcells site is already powered 100 percent by electricity from renewable sources. Additionally, the company plans to install e-charging stations on the factory premises to be able to comprehensively promote sustainable mobility among its employees.

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