



ŠKODA
SIMPLY CLEVER

World Premiere ŠKODA OCTAVIA

Prague, 11 November 2019

Speech Bernhard Maier

CEO ŠKODA AUTO

Ladies and Gentlemen,
distinguished guests,

Welcome to the world premiere of the new ŠKODA OCTAVIA!

I am very delighted to have you here as our guests this evening!

If you allow me to welcome one very special guest from the Czech Republic:

Prime Minister Babiš, we are very honoured that you take your time to join us this evening.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Do you remember this famous picture, created by the world-known street artist Banksy that was shredded live at a Sotheby's auction?

Just a few seconds after the hammer fell, 'Girl with Balloon' became a new piece of artwork titled 'Love is in the Bin'.

It was the first piece of art ever being created live at an auction.

Well, maybe shocking for the highest bidder, but what a spectacular and disruptive approach! Which, by the way, quintupled its value due to the procedure.

Why am I telling you this story? Because it shows how fascinating it is, to gain a new perspective and how quickly things can change 😊

Ladies and gentlemen,

The automotive industry is not transforming within seconds like Banksy's artwork. Nevertheless, the speed of change is faster than ever – and it still continues to accelerate.

There are numerous indices for the change we are all experiencing, not only in perspective and speed, but also in terms of data processing for example:

A modern car of today generates 25 gigabytes of data per hour. Self-driving cars in the future will generate no less than 3,600 gigabytes per hour.

Autonomous driving is – let's say – one reason, why the auto industry will look significantly different ten years from now. Electric drivetrains, mobility-as-a-service and digitalization are going to be further relevant game-changers.

At ŠKODA, our goal is to emerge even stronger out of this fundamental process of transformation. To succeed in it, it also requires – next to outstanding products and services –the right mindset.

And this is where art comes back into play: it's about creativity, curiosity, courage and unconventional approaches:

- Art inspires us to look at things from a different, new perspective.
- It encourages us to think outside the box.
- And it often it's the arts that bridges the gap between the past and the future.

There's barely no better place than Prague to experience this kind of mindset: This city is a true eldorado for enthusiasts of culture and the arts. And we at ŠKODA are more than happy to support all three Czech "crown jewels":

- The Prague National Theatre.
- The Czech Philharmonic Orchestra.
- And the National Gallery Prague, where we are today.

This building fits perfectly for this evening's event, not only because of its unique architecture. This masterpiece of Czech functionalism stands for

- 'Reduced to the max' instead of ornamentation,
- Clarity instead of playfulness and
- Focus instead of distraction.

We at ŠKODA put our minds on these essentials as well. Our cars fit like a perfect second skin: whenever you enter a SKODA and get familiar with it, you will feel at home immediately.

And that's because of the clear set of values our models embody. They offer

- Maximum functionality.
- Superior roominess.
- Convincing value for money.
- Many 'Simply Clever' ideas.
- And a clear, timeless, crystalline design language.

These qualities precisely, distinguish each ŠKODA from the competition and establish the strength and power of our brand.

By the way, as the biggest private enterprise, ŠKODA is currently acting in more than 100 international markets. This also underlines our relevant role for the Czech Republic: Together with our suppliers, ŠKODA accounts for nearly 10% of the GDP.

In other words, one can consider SKODA as a true asset of this country that is likewise picking up the pace and preparing itself for the future. Two examples: the initiatives 'Country for the Future' and 'Digital Czechia'. In both of them we are actively participating. Because it's all about working together with determination in order to find perfect solutions faster – because silo mentality is out, partnering and speed are key!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At ŠKODA, we are consistently implementing our future program:

Our Strategy 2025 is effective, ŠKODA is on track:

All in all, our operating business is strong, and we are financially sound. We could be even selling a lot more cars if we had the capacity. And you all know: We are working very hard on that. Promised.

Against all odds, this year will once again be a very successful one for us. And above all, that's thanks to the more than 42,000 Škodians worldwide. They are facing a number of challenges these days, but on the other hand, everything they do, they do it with great passion and dedication! Thank you folks – you`re the best!

Now the question is: What comes next? 😊

Well, we find ourselves in the middle of the biggest product campaign in ŠKODA's history:

From the beginning of this year to the end of 2022, we are planning the launch of 30 new cars, model revisions, derivatives and variants. The signs definitely point to growth. ŠKODA holds the potential to sell up to two million vehicles a year over the next decade.

Our new models are not only winning tests and prizes but also – and most importantly – the hearts of our customers.

That is exactly what we have in mind for e-mobility as well: We are electrifying our entire model portfolio step by step.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

we are not only electrifying our ŠKODA cars, but just as well digitalizing the whole company and our products:

We desire our models to be the 'perfect third place' of our customers – next to their home and their office. Of course, every new product is always online and fully connected.

Again, this will carry us closer to the target vision that we defined as an essential part of our Strategy 2025: 'ŠKODA - the Simply Clever Company for the best mobility solutions'. Our goal: We want to make our customers' lives easier, safer and more comfortable.

Because, in everything we do, the focus is on the customer. Let me put it this way: With each and every product and service which we offer to our customers we want to

- Create the tingle in the tummy,
- inspire the mind and
- convince the heart

Within our product range, one model has been doing this during the past 60 years in perfection: the OCTAVIA, the icon of our brand:

- It is and will remain our bestseller – since production began, more than 6.5 million units have rolled off the lines.
- It is the undisputed leader in its segment in Europe.
- And it's the OCTAVIA alone that accounts for one fortieth of total Czech exports – only this very one model.

In short: a true winner that catches on.

But do you know, where the name derives from? A lot of you of course know the story, but I find it interesting – especially tonight... ☺

OCTAVIA derives from the Latin word for eight 'octo'. Back in 1959, the OCTAVIA was ŠKODA's eighth post-war model.

But, the number 8 does not only represent our OCTAVIA ☺:

- On its side, it symbolizes infinity.
- The 8th day is the start of a new week, a new episode.
- 8 stands for happy new beginnings, for rebirth and is a symbol of joy.

And Ladies and gentlemen,

Today is Monday – it is the beginning of the new week and a very special moment of a new start: ☺

This is the very point in time we have been working towards for years with the utmost diligence, energy and even love. And this is the moment now to clear the stage for our new ŠKODA OCTAVIA!

Ladies and Gentlemen:

The Czech Philharmonic Orchestra and “Time for Three”, our friends, which came all the way from the East Coast, USA:

Thank you very much!

Ladies and gentlemen,
long-awaited by you,
much-desired by us,
now it’s here! ☺

The all-new ŠKODA OCTAVIA!

Isn’t it a great car? ☺ A true piece of art that fits perfectly like a second skin. It stands for the typical ŠKODA Smart Understatement. In other words: It’s the choice for

- the commuters,
- the families
- and for all of us, who just enjoy driving as much as I do! ☺

The new OCTAVIA will give you the peace of mind – in all possible driving situations.

With the new OCTAVIA, we are turning over a new leaf in the success story of our icon. And it shows up perfectly at the right time: Next year, ŠKODA will be celebrating its 125th birthday – and the OCTAVIA is already paving the way. For us, it’s a wonderful motivation to continue on our path with a lot of passion!

In the OCTAVIA you can feel exactly these emotions. As I know, this “moment of birth” is a heart-beating one for the entire ŠKODA family. And I am extremely delighted to present this car to you tonight, Ladies and Gentlemen!

Our Board Member for Development, Christian Strube and Chief Designer, Oliver Stefani, will now take you through the highlights of the new OCTAVIA, before Alain Favey, our Board Member for Sales and Marketing, gives you an insight ...

Christian is making the start, please come forward and join me on stage!

Christian: Great job, congratulations! And now you’re taking over – the stage is yours!
