

Media Release

Announcing the finalist who will receive up to CHF 100,000 in technological support and digital expertise:

Federnfabrik Schmid are the winners of the CSEM Digital Journey Award 2019

Basel, 12 November 2019 - CSEM is pleased to announce that it has awarded its 2019 Digital Journey prize to Federnfabrik Schmid, a company based in Oetwil am See (ZH) that specialize in the manufacture of industrial springs. The judging panel were impressed by the innovative idea of the winning company to create "intelligent" springs, which are capable of managing and their own wear-and-tear. An unexpected break in an industrial spring can cause machine breakdowns or costly production interruptions for a company. This new spring would make it possible to avoid these issues and help improve productivity.

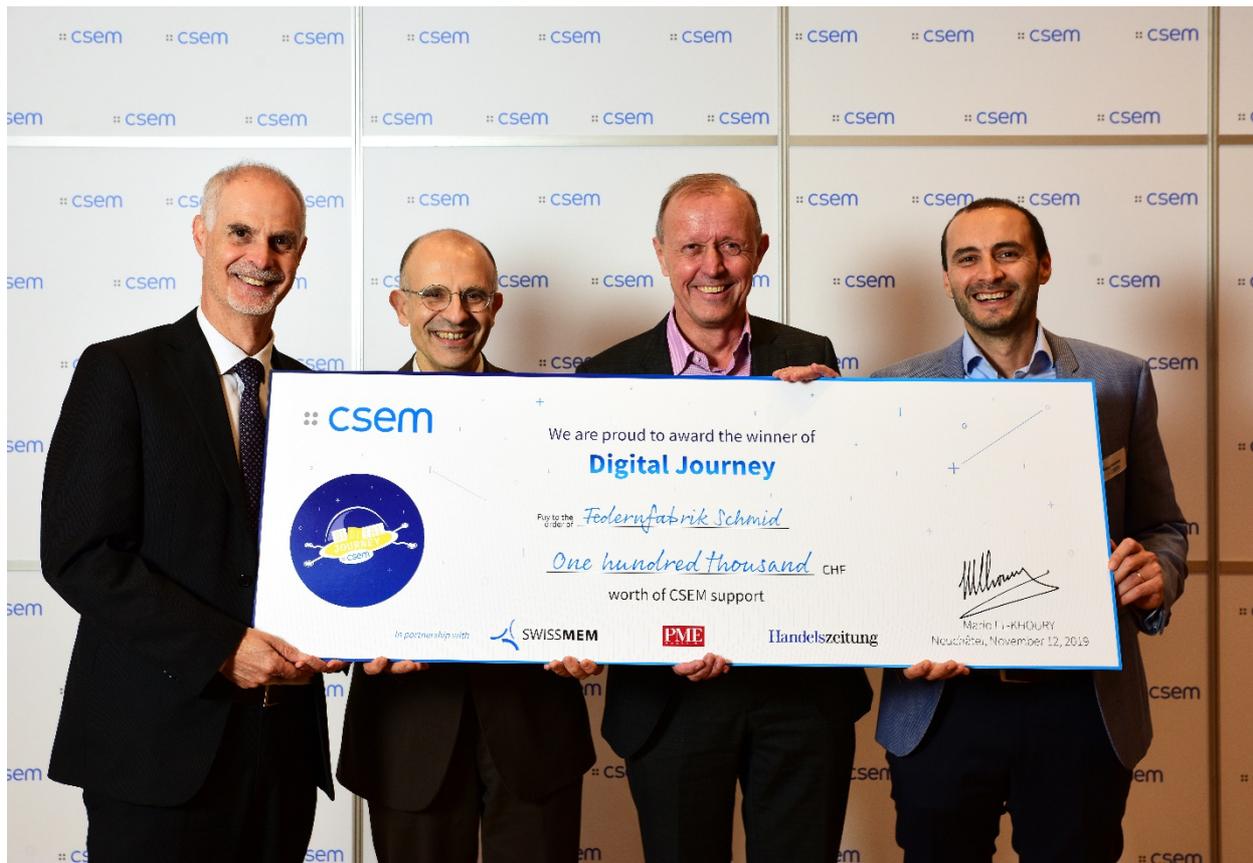
With an extensive background in technological transfer and know-how in advanced technologies, CSEM is offering the winning company digital expertise and technical support to enable it to complete its "smart" spring project. This support will aid in consolidating the company's market position and help it get the most out of its new digital product. The amount of this financial support amounts to CHF 100,000.

Mario El-Khoury, CSEM's CEO, Georges Kotrotsios, a member of CSEM's Executive Board & President of the judging panel, plus the other members of the panel, extend their warmest congratulations to the winning company. They wish to assure the winners of their full support to help successfully manage their digital transformation through the realization of their project. The teams and experts at CSEM are delighted about this upcoming collaboration.

CSEM introduced its annual Digital Journey Award in 2018, to encourage and support Swiss SMEs in transitioning towards and developing the digital tools necessary to stand out in an increasingly competitive environment. The competition is open to companies with less than 250 employees and who's financial and human resources fall short of meeting the challenges digitization poses.

The judging panel wishes to highlight the exceptional quality of the projects submitted by all the finalists, and are particularly keen to emphasize the potential societal impact of Vivent's project. CSEM will endeavor to support each of the other finalists in their search for funding, so that they may continue their digitization journey.

The core objective of CSEM is to ensure an efficient transition between the world of research, innovation and market production. The company occupies a unique and essential position within Switzerland and beyond. Specialized in microtechnologies, nanotechnologies, microelectronics, systems engineering, photovoltaics and information and communication technologies, CSEM can count on the skills of its approx. 500 highly qualified employees, spread between its Neuchâtel Center and sister sites in Alpnach, Muttenz, Landquart and Zurich.



CSEM Digital Journey Winner, Mario El-Khoury, CSEM CEO, Georges Kotrotsios CSEM VP Marketing & Business Development, Albert Enste Federnfabrik Schmid Managing Director, Bahaa Roustom, Deputy Head of Marketing & Business Development (picture credit: Patrick Di Lenardo)

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Press Pack

The winner:

Federnfabrik Schmid AG is a Swiss spring manufacturer with 64 employees and a turnover of approx. CHF 12 million. Its headquarters are in Oetwil am See, Canton Zurich. The company specializes in the manufacture of metal springs for industrial applications. Its range includes parts made of carbon steel, stainless steel, bronze, high-temperature alloys based on nickel, gold-palladium, etc. These round (wire) or flat (coil) springs can take on different shapes and qualities depending on customer demand: compression, extension, torsion, etc. Federnfabrik Schmid AG sells two thirds of its production in Switzerland and exports the remaining third abroad.

The project:

Springs are generally inexpensive but are an essential within a large number of applications: vehicle engines, industrial machines, nuclear power plant turbines, etc. When a spring unexpectedly breaks, or loses all/part of its power or sensitivity, the entire device to which it is assigned may degrade or even fail. These incidents can be very costly in terms of lost time and repair. The innovative project suggested by Federnfabrik Schmid AG consists of providing the springs with a digital self-vigilance capability that can prevent wear, breakage and costly breakdowns in the event of immobilization. The operation of a power plant, for example, costs between CHF 50,000 and 200,000 per hour. The failure of a spring whose cost ranges from 1 to 500 francs can lead to a very expensive situation. By measuring in real-time—thanks to a digital device integrated into each part—the stresses to which the spring is subjected, makes it possible to prevent its deterioration and anticipate a replacement before it breaks. The project, which CSEM will be joining, consists of developing three essential elements: a sensor to measure the stresses on the spring; a low-power component with a memory (SAM) to store the measured values, and lastly the coupling of these measurements with a device capable of transmitting the recorded data to a laptop or smartphone type device programmed to receive the recorded data.

Judging panel:

- President: Georges Kotrotsios, Member of CSEM's Executive Board, Head of Marketing & Business Development at the center
- Silvio Bonaccio, ETH Zurich, Technology Transfer Manager
- Nicolas Bürer, Director of Digital Switzerland
- Marc Gruber, EPFL, Vice-President of Innovation
- Raphaël Rollier, Head of Innovation, Swiss Topographic Office
- Robert Rudolph, Swissmem, Member of the Executive Board of Swissmem, Head of the Innovation and Digitisation Division
- Christian Wasserfallen, Member of the National Council

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