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Press Report

## Healthier thanks to data and electronics?

By Melanie Ehrhardt (editor at MEDIZIN+elektronik)

*For the first time medics and electronic engineers are discussing the future of medicine together, on the 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018 at the electronica Medical Electronics Conference (eMEC) in Munich. It was a massive undertaking in front and behind scenes.*

Medicine and electronics fit well together. However, they are by far not equally treated. Medics, nurses and other representatives of the health care sector are rarely more than just in the user-position. Even though in the end it is them who decide if a medical device will establish itself or stay unused and gathering dust in a dark corner of the hospital. The reason behind this is that the daily hospital life stands between a well-intended development and an innovative product. Only if it can stand this test, it can help improve the patients care. At best, it can even take strain of the staff during their daily work routine. A device that is neither secure nor has an intuitive operating system, will most likely not stand the test. However, it is exactly this view of things that electric engineers often do not have. Not because they do not want to take it into account, but because they are not doctors. The remedy for this problem is communication. This would help realize visions such as medicine 4.0 – from electronic patient files to intelligent prostheses. It is not about who profits from whom, but how to ensure the best possible care for every patient, together.

Exactly this cooperation was the idea behind the *electronica Medical Electronics Conference (eMEC)* – Medicine meets Electronics. This year it was held for the first time, conducted by the Messe München and WEKA Fachmedien. Communication does not mean classroom teaching methods. In my opinion there is nothing worse than sitting a room for a whole day and having to listen to someone speaking upfront. Of course, speeches cannot be forgone entirely, but they do not have to be the only format. That is why, for the eMEC we decided to try new formats. For example, Open-Space-Discussions, in which the whole audience is invited to participate. They do not follow a script; the course and result remain open until the end. With Pro&Con two persons go into a public debate. Who has got the better arguments? The audience decides via a digital vote – live and on the spot. And what would a conference be without start-ups? They too will receive their chance to present themselves and their ideas in the ICM Munich. However, not far off from the main events, but on stage as a fixed component of the eMEC 2018.

This already sounds good, but it is not yet enough to attract visitors or speakers. However, before the content could be discussed in more detail there was another challenge that had to be mastered. As one or two readers might have noticed, electronica is not the only fair in November. At nearly the same time the fair duo Medica/Compamed, the most important

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medical fair, is being held. To be clear: While the electricians are already in Munich, we had to find a date on which the medics that are in Düsseldorf at this time of year could also attend. In the end the 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018 was agreed on. A Thursday, a good day for a conference.

## **An idea is by far not a finished product**

Therefore, let us tick the box of *finding a date* on our imaginary to-do list. However, by far not all boxes are ticked yet. Program, speakers, rooms and so on are still missing. Help is always good, best in the form of a program-committee that represents both sides. It did not take long to persuade the dream candidates. With Prof. Dr. Oliver Hayden (TU München), Dr. Dominik Pförringer (Klinikum Rechts der Isar), Prof. Dr. Siegfried Jedamzik (Bayrische Telemedallianz), Hans-Peter Bursig (ZVEI), Josef Lechner (Analog Devices), Steven Dean (ON Semiconductor), Reinhardt Keil (arm) and Marc Schieder (Dracoon), everyone from a semiconductor specialist, a software expert to a practicing physician is represented. Program-committee: Check.

Already in the first meeting everyone realized how big this project was. Maybe too big? Not if one looks for a well-structured common theme. This should not only be visible in the program, but also address both sides. If it is too technical, the medics may not want to come. If it is too mainstream, the electricians might not be willing to participate. After multiple attempts it was found: "The Connected Human – Healthier thanks to data and electronics?". Good question, next question. How can this very broad theme best be subdivided? For this, the handed-in abstracts were sorted and chosen; what would be included and what not. In the end four tracks were chosen: "Regulatory & Safety: A Must Have or Brake on Innovation?", "Smart Monitoring: Effective Data versus Doctor Skills", "The Digital Patient: Self-Measuring – Boon or Bane" as well as "The modern Cyborg – Well featured or easy victim?".

Program: Done.

This leaves the question of rooms. The easiest way would probably have been to divide the four tracks into four rooms. However, this conflicts with the concept of the *eMEC*. So only one room? Yes and No. Since the tracks nearly all take place at the same time they should not get into each other's way. Furthermore, it should be possible to easily change from one to the other. Therefore, partition walls were not an option. The solution: Infrared headphones. In their track, the visitors can only hear what was said on their stage. If they change the track and with it the stage, they only have to change the channel accordingly. Embarrassing shoving through crowds or annoying waiting are spared. "Finding rooms": Tick.

## **VIP-Tickets for the eMEC 2018**

Well, then it's all set! Nearly. What would an event with an innovative concept be without visitors? And at this point, it is your turn. We are giving away 100 VIP Tickets (20 % discount on the regular entrance fee) for this year's eMEC on the 15<sup>th</sup> November 2018 in the IMC Munich. First come, first serve. All you have to do, it to write us an e-mail ([redaktion@design-elektronik.de](mailto:redaktion@design-elektronik.de)) with the subject "VIP-Ticket eMEC 2018". (rh)