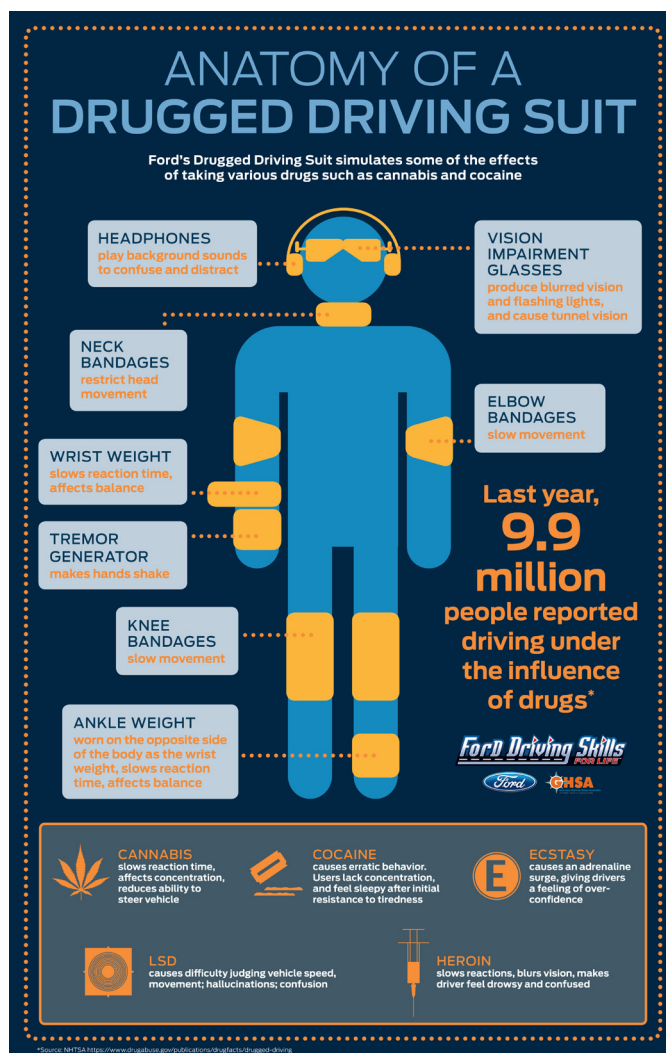




Best Medical Simulation R&D Specialists - Europe

Meyer-Hentschel Institute is a leading company in developing simulation tools for self-experiencing various medical states of the human body. Following the institutes recent recognition in this year's GHP Technology Awards, we invited Dr. Gundolf Meyer-Hentschel, CEO, to tell us more about this new field of simulation.



Inspired by simulation in aviation training, medical simulation has grown in popularity in the last years - from patients played by actors, to computerized mannequins that perform dozens of human functions. To begin, Dr. Meyer-Hentschel, you added a new facet to the simulation game, could you tell us more?

MH: As a behavioural scientist, I have great interest in the thoughts and feelings of others. This led me to the development of simulation tools, that let you walk in another's shoes.

Would you be able to provide an example?

MH: In the early nineties, we started developing an age suit as an attempt for a better understanding the growing numbers of old patients. In 1994, we presented a first prototype which went viral. To my best knowledge, this was the first suit that let probands experience many deficiencies and limitations of old age. Extremely positive feedback from media worldwide encouraged us to continue our work. Over the years, we refined the aging experience in many ways.

On the topic of the age suit, what did the first one simulate?

MH: Hearing loss, age related farsightedness, loss of strength, reduced sensitivity of fingers and loss of dexterity and even the restricted movement of joints.

Which institutions adopted the suit?

MH: Among the first clients were medical universities and clinics, later senior care as well as industrial companies. In the health care sector, our 'AgeExplorer' suit is used in training empathy of doctors and nurses towards older patients. In addition, experiencing old age can help to better understand the sometimes strange behaviours of old people. This strengthens empathy in the end, too.

With regards to the wider industry, why is there such an interest in simulating old age?

MH: Simulation of old age can bring creative break throughs in developing and designing products, which better serves the needs of elderly customers. We did a lot of consulting for manufacturers of household appliances, for instance Miele, Siemens and Bosch. Much interest came from the automotive industry, too.

Ford Motor Company asked us to develop a suit specially for their



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needs in optimising cars for older drivers. We did the job, and they called it 'Third Age Suit'.

Whilst doing the research for our Technology Awards, we discovered some other simulation suits Ford is using. Did you develop these suit, and if so, what are the objectives of these suits?

MH: Ford had the great idea of expanding the simulation game into the field of drivers training. They shifted the focus of feeling like another person, to feeling oneself in a state of being intoxicated or sleep deprived. Our team is very proud that Ford trusted our expertise to develop these suits. Today, they are being used in many countries within Ford's Driving Skills for Life initiative: making driving more safe for young drivers.

Aside from the suits, what about other simulation tools. Which ones have you noticed are the most sought-after?

MH: For educational purposes, we offer goggles that simulate common eye diseases such as cataract, glaucoma or hemianopsia. In addition to this, we also have our impressive tremor simulator and an hemiparesis simulator.

How do you ensure that your products provide the best possible benefit to your clients?

MH: All members of our R&D team have a behavioural resp. medical background. In addition, we cooperate on a formal basis with medical universities, e.g. Charité, Berlin. But maybe most important, is our philosophy: "Obsessed to simulation".

Looking ahead to what the future holds for the firm, do you have any projects on the horizon that you would like to share?

MH: Currently, we are developing simulation tools for various aspects of arthrosis.

