

# Up and away to new horizons with «Solar Impulse»

**The solar-powered aircraft, the brainchild of Bertrand Piccard, aims to promote research and development into renewable energy. Schindler supports this idea, gaining valuable new experience as a result.**

When the Solar Impulse, an aircraft that uses only sunlight for power, takes off as planned in two and a half years' time to circle the globe non-stop with no fuel, the Schindler CTO Division will share in the excitement on the front line. Schindler is one of four main partners who have joined forces to support the project of visionary and aviation pioneer Bertrand Piccard not only financially but also, and more importantly, through extensive engineering knowledge and capability.

## **Reciprocal know-how transfer**

Following the successful completion of tests with the HB-SIA prototype, the construction of the HB-SIB successor model, which will circle the globe in 2015, began a year ago. Engineers from Schindler have been involved in its production from the start, with both sides benefiting from this cooperation. «I have gained valuable insight into what lightweight structures can achieve», explains Christian Studer, who usually works at Schindler New Technologies (NT).

«This can open up new horizons for an elevator constructor who normally works with solid steel», he adds. He is convinced that the Solar Impulse project offers Schindler an exciting opportunity to participate in the rapid development of sustainable technologies.

## **Valuable experience**

The engineers believe that, in addition to extending their technical knowledge, their commitment to the visionary solar-powered aircraft will give them further advantages. The project is an excellent opportunity for them to expand their network of relations. They are returning to Ebikon having made personal contact with engineering colleagues and armed with the addresses of potential new suppliers as well as knowledge of their products. Enrichment at a technical level is not the only benefit. According to Andrea Cambuzzi from NT, working on the Solar Impulse team is a lot of fun. «All the members of the team are very committed and take their mission very seriously», he observes. The hierarchies are flat and there is a distinctive forward dynamism. This is necessary if all the challenges they face are to be mastered. The prototype has proven that it can fly; now its capabilities need to be developed step by step. The aircraft must be able to

operate in hostile weather environments. Its payload will also be increased, as food, water and a lifeboat must be taken on board for its flight around the globe. The engineers from Schindler will therefore work hard and learn a lot before the Solar Impulse is ready for its flight around the world.



Committed to the work on «Solar Impulse»: Martin Pfister, Andrea Cambuzzi, Christian Studer and CTO Guntram Begle. (left to right).