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Dr. h.c. Günter F. Thiele celebrates his 90th birthday.

The Günter-Thiele-Foundation for Communication and Management congratulates Dr. h.c. Günter F. Thiele, patron, and mentor of PR research at the University of Leipzig, on his 90th birthday today. Günter Thiele, who lives in Düsseldorf, has played a key role in shaping modern PR consulting in Germany. In May 2002, the University of Leipzig awarded him the title of Dr. h.c. for his services to the development of public relations and PR science in Germany. He is also Honorary President of the Gesellschaft Public Relations Agenturen e.V. (GPRA).

Günter Thiele was born in Bitterfeld on February 12, 1934. He also passed his A-levels there. After working for a year as an assistant smelter in the copper and lead smelters in Eisleben and Hettstedt, he studied at Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg (German studies, psychology, and philosophy) and graduated from the Faculty of Philosophy. His professional career initially took him into journalism at the GDR radio station in Leipzig. After moving to West Germany in 1959, two years before the Wall was built, he first worked as a "plant journalist" in internal communications at Henkel in Düsseldorf and then as a copywriter and chief copywriter at the R. W. Eggert advertising agency.

From 1968, Thiele was co-owner and managing director of the PR agency ABC Presse-Information. Over the following decades, he developed this agency into the largest and market-leading communications service provider in Germany at the time. Among the 175 employees at offices in Düsseldorf, Frankfurt am Main, Berlin, and Munich were many of those who have gone on to shape the industry with their agencies, such as Ralf Hering, Bernd Schuppener, and Egbert Deekeling.

After selling his agency group to the international Eurocom holding company, Thiele became involved in PR research in the 1990s, which was beginning to be institutionalized in German-speaking countries at the time. He co-founded the "Stiftung zur Förderung der PR-Wissenschaft an der Universität Leipzig" and generously endowed it with capital funds. The foundation was developed into the Günter-Thiele-Foundation in 2014.

The Günter-Thiele-Foundation is committed to research and teaching in the field of communication management at the Institute of Communication and Media Studies at Leipzig University and to promoting young academics. This is achieved by supporting various projects: starting with the Günter-Thiele-Prize and the Günter-Thiele-Research Scholarship as well as the initiatives Academic Society for Corporate Management & Communication (www.akademische-gesellschaft.com), the Center for Research in Financial Communication (www.financialcommunication.org) and the Center for History & Corporate Communication (www.historycomms.de), with the pr-museum.de (<https://pr-museum.de>).

The foundation and all of its initiatives are primarily dedicated to the regular exchange of experience between practitioners and academics. The transfer of knowledge between research and practice is thus promoted through many projects. With the commitment of Dr. h.c. Günter F. Thiele, Leipzig's PR research and training has gained national and international renown.

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