

About Heinz Prechter

Born in 1942 in Kleinhöbing, Germany, Mr. Prechter began his automotive career at the age of 13 as an apprentice in automotive trim, tool and die making, and coach and body building. After completing his studies at Berufs-Oberschule in Nuremberg, Mr. Prechter furthered his education at Nuremberg's OHM Polytechnic Engineering School.

During his studies, Mr. Prechter gained a wide range of practical experience working for a number of German companies, including Faunwerke (a truck and military equipment supplier), Siemens (an electronics firm), and Deutz (a diesel engine manufacturer).

In 1963, he came to the U.S. as an exchange student. While studying Business Administration and English at San Francisco State College, he began installing sunroofs - a virtually unknown product on this side of the Atlantic.

Fifteen months later, in 1965, Mr. Prechter founded the American Sunroof Company (now ASC Incorporated) in Los Angeles. He spent \$764 on tools, a workbench from an old door covered with aluminum and a sewing machine from a junkyard. This one-man enterprise soon became well-known for its "custom" sunroofs as well as its creative approach to supporting the development of specialty vehicles for the film industry.

Before Mr. Prechter's death in 2001, ASC Incorporated had become a global specialty vehicle and systems company providing specialty vehicle design, engineering, prototype and production services; development and delivery of open-air systems, composite products and exterior trim; and development and distribution of aftermarket vehicle accessories. Headquartered in Southgate, MI, ASC maintained operations in the U.S., Canada, Germany, and South Korea.

In addition to ASC Incorporated, Mr. Prechter founded Heritage Network Incorporated, a group of Southeastern Michigan companies involved in the transportation, hospitality and communications industries. His Heritage Network group included a weekly newspaper chain (one of the largest in the state of Michigan), a real estate development company, and a beef cattle business. In early 1997, he created Prechter Holdings, which owns the ASC and Heritage businesses.

Heinz Prechter was widely recognized for his entrepreneurial accomplishments, broad community involvement, and political achievements. He was named Entrepreneur of the Year by the Harvard Business Club and received the Automotive Hall of Fame's Automotive Industry Leader of the Year award. The business leader sat on dozens of community and corporate boards, including those of Detroit Renaissance,

Comerica Bank, and ThyssenKrupp's Automotive Supervisory Board. He died on July 6, 2001.