

A Perspective on tomorrow's digital world.

Manifesto from professional
digital user associations to
European decision-makers.

Feb. 2024

 **Beltug**

Cigref
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WITH DIGITAL

 **PLATFARM
NEDERLAND**

VOICE
Bundesverband der
IT-Anwender e.V.

Executive summary.

In recent years, the European Union (EU) has dedicated significant efforts towards regulating the digital space and data economy. These efforts have resulted in the establishment of clear rules, rights and obligations. However, it is imperative that the EU pairs these efforts with an ambitious innovation and technological leadership agenda. As representatives of business users of digital solutions, our four associations are prepared to take on this challenge. This document aims to provide insights and solutions to three crucial questions : what is the desired impact of digital technology in Europe? How can the EU achieve leadership in this area? And, what are the necessary conditions for an industrial vision of the digital future?

Our four associations collectively represent over 1035 major European companies that are business users of digital technologies. We have identified four key priorities that we believe should be given due consideration in the upcoming mandate for the development of our digital ambitions and the strategies to achieve them.

Competence.

- Provide digital technology skills to all citizens.
- Equip professionals with the necessary digital skills for their workplaces.
- Provide experts with the skills required to develop new technologies.
- Incorporate digital skills into the curricula at all levels of education.
- Establish European universities that offer programmes focusing on digital courses such as coding, algorithms and artificial intelligence.
- Ensure that students with digital proficiency are provided with the opportunity and motivation to remain in Europe and collaborate with businesses and public organisations.
- Take up or continue the work being carried out in Europe on the formalisation of talents, supported by existing digital skills and professions frameworks.

Diligence.

- Set regulations with a global impact that align with European principles in the data economy.
- Institute an IPCEI for critical raw materials, to prepare strategically and durably for Europe's energy and digital transitions.
- Establish regulations for crucial digital technologies and infrastructures that all suppliers of goods and services on the EU markets must adhere to.

- Intensify the EU's strategic research initiatives to explore alternatives for the present digital technologies and their fundamental components, to decrease the reliance on them.
- Ensure a level playing field for innovation and market competition in Europe. This can be achieved by:
 - Promoting the emergence and growth of new European players, thereby ensuring that future unicorns remain within the EU.
 - Providing backing to a pioneering open-source community that can create secure software and digital solutions that are distinctly European.
 - Establishing a stringent monitoring system for European assets, to prevent the acquisition of European strategic firms by foreign funds.

Vigilance.

- Propose new regulations compelling manufacturers of IT equipment and providers of digital services to publish and decrease their environmental impact.
- Create an eco-design standard for software that incorporates sustainability in the design process.
- Define a multi-criteria measurement standard for organisations' digital environmental footprint, encompassing factors such as carbon emissions, water usage and resource consumption.
- Enhance the reuse, repair and recycling of IT devices, and put a stop to programmed obsolescence, especially caused by software updates, in order to minimise the production of waste.

Governance.

- Enhance cooperation between relevant regulatory agencies within Member States as well as between Member States, in order to harmonise the efficiency and effectivity of enforcement.
- Develop agile soft regulation to expedite the legislative and governance processes.
- Collaborate with business users to establish structured consultation processes for the implementation of existing EU regulations.
- Take measures to prevent vendors from establishing or perpetuating technical, organisational or commercial barriers, especially in the realm of cloud services, to guarantee the ability to change between services.
- Hold data processors accountable for their actions towards data subjects, regardless of their location.
- Enhance compliance with Regulation (EU) 2019/1150, which aims to promote fairness and transparency for business users of online intermediation services (the platform-to-business or 'P2B Regulation').
- Hold IT providers accountable for complying with EU legislation and standards across the entire value chain, including cyber security and AI.

Foreword.

In recent years, the European Union (EU) has dedicated significant efforts towards regulating the digital space and data economy. These efforts have resulted in the establishment of clear rules, rights and obligations. However, it is imperative that the EU pairs these efforts with an ambitious innovation and technological leadership agenda. As representatives of business users of digital solutions, our four associations are prepared to take on this challenge.

This document aims to provide insights and solutions to three crucial questions: what is the desired impact of digital technology in Europe? How can the EU achieve leadership in this area? And, what are the necessary conditions for an industrial vision of the digital future? The answers lie in a genuine industrial policy for the digital age. Inspiration can be drawn from the treaty establishing the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC), which facilitated cooperation in energy and heavy industry. The ECSC successfully established quantified objectives and organised markets, and established a robust governance structure in 1951. We should aspire to achieve similar success in the next decade.

Digital policies deserve a dedicated budget, a permanent EP committee and a vice-president in the European Commission, to actively pursue further progress.

**Let's define
together an
inspiring model
for Europe!**



**What is the desired
impact of digital
technology in Europe?**

**How can the EU achieve
leadership in this area?**

**What are the necessary
conditions for an
industrial vision of the
digital future?**

Introduction.

As we have become increasingly aware over the past decades, digital technologies are important drivers for economic development, innovation and social interaction. Currently, however, the most valuable digital companies are in the United States or Asia. In competition with these two economic regions, Europe finds itself falling behind in terms of digital innovation and IT solutions. With respect to digital technologies, Europe is today reliant on technologies developed abroad.

During the 2019-2024 term, Europe became conscious of the need to strengthen its strategic independence. The digital sphere is a crucial component of this independence. To facilitate Europe's ability to deliver both innovation and fairness, as well as to support a human-centric digital vision, EU policymakers must address several critical issues in the years ahead.

It is high time for the European Union, as a significant market and a realm of liberty and ethical principles, to adopt a more assertive approach towards the digital economy. Digital autonomy does not imply protectionism. In fact, a robust and self-assured digital ecosystem in Europe can foster global competitiveness and prevent protectionist inclinations. It epitomises a distinct, European approach. It entails mitigating risks for Europe in order to elevate the resilience of our society and economy. It involves acquiring expertise and ownership of crucial technologies by shaping international standards.

To attain this aspiration, it is imperative that the EU prioritises an industrial digital policy on par with the green transition. This digital policy should be recognised as a comprehensive policy domain, rather than merely a facilitator for other goals.

Furthermore, it is imperative to highlight the advancements made thus far, notwithstanding the existence of substantial gaps, such as inadequate digital skills, inequitable practices by numerous cloud providers, and insufficient cybersecurity technologies. To ensure Europe's rules of the game are effectively enforced, it is necessary to quickly, efficiently and uniformly implement crucial legislation, including the Digital Markets Act (DMA), the AI Act, the Data Act, and the Cyber Resilience Act. This is fundamental to maintaining Europe's credibility.

The EU's normative ambitions and the «Brussels effects» must be grounded in an industrial political vision for our digital future. The policy must aim to ensure European independence by implementing appropriate regulations and viable solutions for European business users, enabling them to leverage digital technologies to stimulate economic growth.



1035

Our four associations collectively represent over 1035 major European companies, business users of digital technologies.

It necessitates identifying constructive incentives and Europe's key strengths, while being aware of the challenges, with a comprehensive vision that encompasses the EU's industrial capacities and supply chains with a holistic approach (including raw materials, semiconductors, connectivity and networks, data storage, software, cloud infrastructure, and digital business models).

The past 10 years were focused on establishing a digital framework for Europe. The upcoming decade will involve developing Europe's ability to withstand challenges. To achieve this, we propose an approach relying upon four strategic perspectives: Competence, Diligence, Vigilance, and Governance.

Our four associations, which collectively represent over 1035 major European companies that are business users of digital technologies, have identified four key priorities that we believe should be given due consideration in the upcoming mandate for the development of our digital ambitions and the strategies to achieve them.

01. Competence - Improving digital skills to promote innovations made within the EU.

02. Diligence - Ensuring the readiness of European businesses for the future and their ability to compete globally.

03. Vigilance - Committing to responsible digital technologies.

04. Governance - Ensuring the effective enforcement of EU regulations.

Competence.

Improving digital skills to promote innovations made within the EU.

European and global societies are currently undergoing a digital transformation in both their economic and social aspects. This transformation is not solely based on conventional information and communication technologies, but also on emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, the internet of things, and big data. This transformation is having a significant impact not only on digital services offered in a business-to-consumer context but also on all economic sectors and on the way value is produced.

It is the duty of policymakers to create an environment that is conducive to investment and innovation. This necessitates making significant investments in skills development. Without the requisite digital skills, European companies will be unable to participate in the technological transformations that continue to emerge, resulting in the inability to offer European solutions. As a further result, skilled staff will likely seek jobs outside of the EU, further aggravating the situation.

The Digital Decade strategy of the European Commission has highlighted that, presently, only 50% of the adult population in Europe possesses fundamental digital skills. The absence of advanced digital skills is hindering the progress of digital solutions created in Europe.

European and global societies are currently undergoing a digital transformation in both their economic and social aspects.

It is imperative that policymakers collaborate with the private sector to pursue a well-oriented digital transition, involving investments to upgrade the skills of workers and attract talented individuals.

We believe there are three key priorities for achieving this goal:

Firstly, we need to pool resources to strengthen capacity and establish top-notch universities capable of drawing in world-class educators such as computer scientists, mathematicians, software developers and cyber security experts. Additionally, policies must be put in place to retain these highly educated professionals for the benefit of European businesses and public organisations.

It is also necessary to develop the capacity of employees and jobseekers to retrain for the digital world and professions. Here again, this means strengthening or creating organisations specialised in retraining for digital jobs. Addressing the digital skills gap is urgent, not only to ensure that industries and businesses remain up to date with the rapid and large-scale technological advancements, but also to maintain a competitive edge.



One last point is essential: capitalise on the actions carried out over the last few years, but above all on the tools that have already been built, continue to update them, and strongly encourage companies and training organisations to use them, in order to ensure a common language for understanding digital professions at European level in terms of skills and professions, notably facilitating the mobility of talents within Europe. In terms of skills, these existing tools include, for example:

- the e-competence framework, now a European standard (EN 16634:2019), which describes the competences required by digital professionals,
- the DIGCOMP, the digital skills framework for citizens.

Competence.

And on the job profiles side:

- the ICT Professional Role Profiles, which describes some 30 digital professions in a consensual manner.
- ENISA's European Cybersecurity Skills Framework Role Profiles.
- The initiatives that were launched during the European Year of Skills must also be continued, especially to ensure a better balance between market demands and skills development.

The EU must therefore take steps to encourage students to pursue studies and careers in digital technologies, and commit to increasing the number of students in ICT-related study programmes by 30%, by 2030. Providing additional funding to support educational and vocational digital programs is crucial for facilitating the digital transformation of society.

Furthermore, it is imperative to encourage women to take on digital skills, and to promote their increased expertise, helping to anticipate changes in these professions on the job market, where innovation will be essential. Today, women occupy no more than 30% of positions in digital functions, and less than 15% in technical functions. Encouraging initiatives that support women in digital careers while respecting gender equality is a question of social justice, societal equity and economic efficiency.

The success of these efforts will be measured by the scale of future investments in digital skills.

15%

**Of employees in
technical functions,
related to the digital,
are women.**

Our 4 associations call on the European institutions to:

- **Adopt a triple approach to investing in skills**, which includes:
 - providing digital technology skills to all citizens for their daily lives
 - equipping professionals with the necessary digital skills for their workplaces
 - providing experts with the skills required to develop new technologies, tools and services.
- **Incorporate digital skills into the curricula of all levels of education**, starting from pre-school and continuing through higher education and adult learning. It is crucial to have a collective understanding of the skills that need to be achieved.
- **Establish European universities that offer programmes focusing on digital courses such as coding, algorithms and artificial intelligence.** These programmes should receive adequate funding from the EU and establish renewed partnerships with industries.
- **Ensure that students who possess digital proficiency are provided with the opportunity and motivation to remain in Europe** and collaborate with businesses and public organisations.
- **Take up or continue the work being carried out in Europe on the formalisation of talents**, supported by existing digital skills and professions frameworks.



Diligence.

Ensuring the readiness of European businesses for the future and their ability to compete globally.

The digital transformation presents advantages and opportunities, but also introduces evolving challenges, risks and disruptions. Policymakers must strive to maximise the former while mitigating the latter. With the growing use of digital technologies in nearly all organisations, coupled with a limited number of providers for key applications, European businesses are becoming increasingly reliant on these providers, which are primarily located in the USA or China. In the current climate of shifting geopolitical alignments and heightened competition among economic regions, this dependence creates unwanted influence from these non-European entities on European businesses. To safeguard both the operational stability and the sensitive data (IP, trade secrets, personal data, etc.) of European businesses, Europe requires greater autonomy and choice in hardware, software and digital services for all essential tasks and areas of business digitalisation, which must be designed to comply with European values.

In order for Europe to offer a free choice between viable alternatives, it is necessary to define its level of independence and the need for its own technologies. Cyber security is an important aspect to consider in this regard, as it is necessary to anticipate cyber threats in a turbulent world.

A comprehensive vision of the digital industry requires a long-term strategy, coherent policies and strong governance. In this respect, aiming at a better quality of product would enhance security and at the same time reduce the capacity needed for operations support, as a lot of human resources are now invested in working around vulnerabilities in and inadequacies of the commercial software we use.

The development of a sound growth and employment strategy necessitates a substantial boost in Europe's digital solutions providers. To tackle intense global competition, the political agenda should prioritise the emergence of European champions in technologies. Furthermore, it should be a strategic objective to prevent the premature acquisition of significant EU technology providers by non-EU investors in the upcoming years.

Fostering a competitive digital ecosystem.

Our 4 associations call on the European institutions to:

Strengthen the European supply side of IT solutions to enable more diversity in technology and providers in a worldwide competition, thereby fostering a prosperous and competitive digital ecosystem. This can be achieved by:

- **Setting regulations with a global impact that align with European principles in the data economy.** These regulations must focus on enhancing data ownership and standardising data formats.
- **Instituting an IPCEI for critical raw materials,** to prepare for Europe's energy and digital transitions strategically and durably.
- **Establishing regulations for crucial digital technologies and infrastructures that all suppliers of goods and services on the EU markets must adhere to,** as a mandatory aspect of their design, commencing from a specified date that allows these regulations to be effectively met.
- **Intensifying the EU's strategic research initiatives to explore alternatives for the present digital technologies and their fundamental components,** to decrease its reliance.



Diligence.

Prominent global economies are launching investment programs to bolster digital technologies and enhance the competitiveness of their industries. It is essential for the EU to facilitate businesses in adopting novel technologies that enable them to be more efficient and competitive. By studying the measures taken by non-EU nations, we can create conducive conditions for the emergence of European digital leaders.

The emergence of digital innovations from non-EU countries has been made possible by significant investments from private investors or governments. In order to support the growth of European digital companies, without engaging in a subsidy race or draining investment from the EU to third countries, it is essential that European digital industrial policy prioritises the scaling-up of these companies. The goal should be to create an environment in which small technological firms can easily grow and become the unicorns of tomorrow. Investment is a crucial factor in the growth of startups.

Open-Source software among businesses, consumers and governments is in some cases a possible alternative that is able to provide choice to consumers, including options, for example, in terms of cost or accessibility that promotes the principle of user centrality. It provides a level playing field between producers, forcing them to compete on functionality and quality, and ensuring constant innovation.

5G and fibre will be the infrastructure of the future, and crucial for the European economy. Business users need reliable, performant and secure telecommunications networks. In the upcoming initiatives on telecoms, the EU must be vigilant about fair competition between the players.

To meet these objectives, some coordination is needed: between providers and consumers to ensure user centrality, or between providers to ensure flexibility.

To become Europe's deep-tech champions, unicorns need support to scale up and drive the EU's green and digital objectives. Therefore, a key policy area that requires significant attention is access to finance for businesses. Europe needs an investment agenda to advance its digital ambitions.

Access to markets and finance.

Our 4 associations call on the European institutions to:

Ensure a level playing field for innovation and market competition in Europe. This can be achieved by:

- **Promoting the emergence and growth of new European players**, thereby ensuring that future unicorns remain within the EU. This can be accomplished through strategic funding, coherent regulations, public order and a harmonised internal market.
- **Providing backing to a pioneering open-source community** that can create secure software and digital solutions that are distinctly European.
- **Establishing a stringent monitoring system for European assets**, to prevent the acquisition of European strategic firms by foreign funds. Additionally, **European alternatives must be provided to prevent the transfer of civilian technologies to foreign control**. This requires close scrutiny of acquisitions and joint ventures.



Vigilance.

Committing to responsible digital technologies.

Digital technologies serve as a catalyst for economic and societal progress. They also present an enormous opportunity to expedite the ecological transition. On the other hand, consumption of energy and raw materials for the manufacture and operation of digital technologies is taking a toll. Meeting the EUC's goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by a minimum of 55% by 2030 and achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 necessitates a consideration of the impact of digital technologies.

Digital technologies have a significant impact on the environment. For instance, the high combined energy usage of digital products and services results in energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. This impact will increase with the spread of connected devices, the exponential growth of data exchanges, and the anticipated emergence of the metaverse. Furthermore, the digital footprint extends beyond CO₂ emissions, encompassing pressure on natural resources including water, rare materials and the consequences of electronic waste.

The need for digital sobriety is therefore imperative. It is crucial that Europe prioritises the reduction of the environmental impact of digital technologies, both from their manufacture and their usage. Effective policies must be implemented to address the ecological footprint of digital technologies, as well as their consumption of scarce resources.

According to the French Environmental and Energy Agency (ADEME), 70-80% of the environmental impact of digital technology results from hardware and physical infrastructure, primarily from their manufacturing, with 20-30% from their usage.

Since most of the environmental impact of digital technology arises from the production and distribution of IT equipment, it is of great importance to increase the lifespan of such equipment and combat hardware obsolescence. Software providers must be required to refrain from artificially inducing the obsolescence of IT equipment, such as computers, servers and smartphones.

Most of the environmental impact of digital technology arises from the production and distribution of IT equipment.

The energy efficiency of data centres should also be significantly enhanced. Furthermore, at each stage of a digital product's lifecycle, it is feasible to take measures to minimise its adverse environmental consequences by prolonging its lifespan, while considering cyber security implications. Europe has the potential to serve as a catalyst for creating and exporting a responsible digital technology strategy.

Another troubling aspect of digital technologies pertains to social and ethical concerns. The safeguarding of individuals' personal data, the spread of inaccurate information on social media platforms, and the issue of digital accessibility are all subjects that require careful consideration.

Our 4 associations call on the European institutions to:

Require data centre operators to provide transparent information regarding the carbon intensity of the primary energy source that powers the electricity network. Such reporting should be standardised to enable users to make comparisons between data centres and opt for the one that has the least negative impact on the environment. Furthermore, to:

- **Propose new regulations compelling manufacturers of IT equipment and providers of digital services to publish and decrease their environmental impact.**
- **Design an eco-design standard for software incorporating sustainability in the design process.**
- **Define a multi-criteria measurement standard for the digital environmental footprint of organisations, encompassing factors such as carbon emissions, water usage and resource consumption. This standard would serve as a comprehensive tool to assess the environmental impact of organisations in the digital sphere.**
- **Enhance the reusing, repairing and recycling of IT devices, and put a stop to programmed obsolescence, especially caused by software updates, in order to minimise the amount of waste produced.**



Governance.

Ensuring the effective enforcement of EU regulations.

Data is a prerequisite for innovative digital technologies. The Data Governance Act and the Data Act are recent data regulations that enable companies to capitalise on digital information, while adhering to European values. These regulations have the potential to bolster Europe's self-reliance in data storage, sharing and processing. Additionally, the DMA and the Digital Services Act (DSA) provide a legally binding framework that can be enforced to combat unethical practices such as vendor lock in.

However, our four associations would like to express our concerns regarding the inexplicable exclusion of the leading cloud providers when the European Commission disclosed the list of gatekeepers on September 6th, 2023, in accordance with the DMA. The dominance of the non-European cloud computing providers accounts for three-quarters of the EU market, whereas the market share of European cloud providers is progressively decreasing and is now perilously below the 10% threshold. Consequently, this poses a significant threat to Europe's aspirations for technological independence.

Ensuring the successful implementation of the numerous regulatory and non-regulatory measures that have been put in place is still far from certain. It is crucial to enforce these regulations and other newly established laws pertaining to digital technologies in a manner that facilitates business and government innovation while also ensuring compliance.

It is necessary that the implementation of the Digital Markets Act be standardised throughout the EU, and that the enforcement process be evaluated for efficiency and effectiveness. It is the duty of policymakers to fulfil their commitments and deliver on the expectations that were set when these regulations were adopted. The Digital Markets Act, in particular, has generated significant expectations, and policymakers must ensure that it is implemented in a manner that meets the high standards that have been set.

The swift advancement of technology and markets requires a continual pace of reform, but with greater involvement with the business community, in order to evaluate the impact of regulations on the competitiveness of the EU. Regulation should never be an end in itself; rather, regulations should be proportionate, in accordance with the general principle of EU law. EU policymaking should prioritise smarter and more adaptable regulations, striving towards cross-sectoral legal frameworks whenever possible, and re-assessing vertical regulations when required.

Our 4 associations call on the European institutions to:

- **Enhance cooperation between relevant regulatory agencies within Member States as well as between Member States**, in order to harmonise the efficiency and effectiveness of enforcement. The digital expertise of the authorities should also be strengthened, and guidelines should be provided to regulators to prevent disturbed competition and cherry picking by regulated parties searching for the weakest supervisor.
- **Develop agile soft regulation to expedite the legislative and governance processes**. This will enable prompt identification and clarification of situations where digital technology innovations appear to be advancing beyond the existing legislative framework.
- **Collaborate with business users to establish structured consultation processes for the implementation of existing EU regulations**. This will ensure that the current regulations are enforced effectively, thereby preventing market fragmentation.
- **Take measures to prevent vendors from establishing or perpetuating technical, organisational or commercial barriers, especially in the realm of cloud services**, to guarantee the ability to change between services. This can be achieved by enhancing data portability and prioritising interoperability through the implementation of standards and interfaces among related digital services.
- **Hold data processors accountable for their actions towards data subjects, regardless of their location**. This accountability must be enforced through stringent mechanisms and surveillance to ensure compliance with the GDPR and Data Act.
- **Enhance compliance with Regulation (EU) 2019/1150**, which aims to promote fairness and transparency for business users of online intermediation services (the platform-to-business or 'P2B Regulation'). This can be achieved through the promotion of codes of conduct, which will facilitate the practical implementation of the P2B Regulation.
- **Hold IT providers accountable for complying with EU legislation and standards across the entire value chain, including cyber security and AI**. Publish an annual public list of non-compliant companies, to ensure that products and services are designed with compliance in mind.



Conclusion.

With this document addressed to the future European legislator, our four associations wish to achieve the following objective:

Europe is currently engaged in intensive regulatory production in the digital field, with at least the triple objective: the development of the the market, the protection of the final consumer of digital services, and the protection of the environment. While these objectives are very virtuous, they will nevertheless result in an inflation of obligations for our members, if only to demonstrate our compliance with new regulations. It is therefore essential for us that our voice is heard in the development of these laws, as well as in their implementation.

Our goal is to work towards the competitiveness and performance of our companies and public administrations, and to do so, guarantee them access to the best technologies at the best costs, protect their sensitive data (intellectual property, commercially and financially sensitive data, etc.), and secure our supply chains.

The intersection of our needs and the work of the European co-legislator is therefore a difficult but absolutely necessary task.

A genuine European industrial policy in the digital field is needed so that we have alternative solutions to those that currently dominate the market. This is the spirit in which this manifesto is has been drawn up.

It proposes to the European legislator a way forward and concrete measures to continue building a strong European Union in the digital field.

A genuine European industrial policy in the digital field is needed so that we have alternative solutions to those that currently dominate the market.

Who we are?



With over 2300 members from 500+ organisations, Beltug is the largest Belgian association of CIOs & Digital Technology leaders. We cover their priorities such as vendor and software asset management, 5G, hybrid IT, cyber security, artificial intelligence, the hybrid workplace, IoT, privacy, data governance, and many more.

We defend the interests of our members, develop positions, and support knowledge exchanges between our members. Each year, we organise more than 50 events for sharing experiences. Beltug also represents the business ICT users at the European and international levels, in close cooperation with organisations in other countries.



Serving the economic growth and competitiveness of our members, large French companies and public administrations, users of digital solutions and services, through digital success.

Cigref is a network of major French companies and public administrations whose mission is to develop its members' capacity to integrate and master digital technologies. Through the quality of its thinking and the representativeness of its members, it is a unifying force in the digital society. Cigref was founded in 1970 as a not-for-profit association under the law of 1901.



CIO Platform Nederland is the independent association for the CIO/CDO of the major business users of digital technology in the Netherlands, the digital heart of society. More than 140 organisations with CIOs/CDOs, peers and their IT experts are members of this growing community of about 1700 professionals.

Since 2005, the platform has been strengthening its members in their digital transformation through sharing practical knowledge and advocacy. Knowledge sharing takes place through dynamic meetings, newsletters, collaboration and an online community. In addition, because digital technology is so important and omnipresent, the conditions to use it in a responsible manner must be improved. The community aims to contribute with their knowledge and experience. Both by inspiring each other and sharing knowledge within the association, and by contributing to the social debate and policy development.



With over 400 members, VOICE is now the largest vendor independent community of digital decision-makers on the user side in German-speaking countries. The members represent a selection of 2,600 DAX, MDAX and medium-sized companies. As a network, the association brings together IT and digital decision-makers from leading companies of various sizes and industries - in formats such as roundtables, topic-oriented workshops, conferences and networking events, but also virtually on an exclusive online platform.

VOICE offers its members a competent, attractive and dynamic exchange and knowledge platform that benefits them personally as well as their corporate IT and digitalization projects. In the community, specialist information and best practice experiences are discussed and exchanged between decision-makers at all levels. The primary goal of VOICE is to further strengthen the competitiveness of member companies through the use of digital technologies - with targeted exchange on the top IT topics and by safeguarding the interests of user companies towards national and European politics as well as towards the IT provider community.

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WITH DIGITAL

 **PLATFORM
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