

Berlin, 8th November 2016

Mercateo Executive Summit 2016**“Digitalize or Die” – how digitalization can succeed in purchasing**

On 8th November 2016, numerous decision-makers from various European procurement departments met at the 4th Mercateo Executive Summit at Berlin’s ‘Adagio’. The participants discussed how the opportunities of digitalization can be used and how variety can be ensured in purchasing. The focus was set by Eva Wimmers’, President Europe Huawei Honor, keynote. The title was “Digitalize or Die”. In this, Wimmers highlighted important points that companies should consider for successful digitalization.

The 4th Mercateo Executive Summit was held under the daring motto: “Shape your company’s future before the future shapes your company.” The keynote speaker Eva Wimmers, President Europe Huawei Honor (formerly CPO Deutsche Telekom), worded it even more directly at the start: “Digitalize or Die” was the title of her keynote. This provocation was chosen deliberately as, according to Wimmers, companies are facing major challenges with digitalization. “Anyone who only ever looks back and thinks about what made them successful in the past, will not miss the boat but they will go down with it at some point,” says Wimmers. She is somewhat critical of digitalization at the same time though: “Whenever common sense and creativity are called for, automation is out of the question. You need a clear head and ideas: the ability to observe, listen and then find new innovative solutions. Which is why digitalization and non-digitalization should go hand in hand in purchasing.”

“Personal business relationships in particular can benefit from digitalization,” said Mercateo CEO Dr. Bernd Schönwälder with conviction in his speech. “The B2B business is a relationship and added value between companies is largely based on precisely these relationships. Digital networks, putting stakeholders in contact with each other, will therefore be an important addition to companies’ digital strategies,” explained Dr. Schönwälder. The most important condition for this is that these platforms remain neutral for everyone involved.

Eva Wimmers, Dr. Ulrich Piepel (CPO RWE/Innogy), Thorsten Woike (CPO SAG) and Dr. Bernd Schönwälder debated “A rethink in purchasing” during the podium discussion. The podium members all agreed that people must not be forgotten in this process. Employees should be put in a position of being creative and making strategic contributions to the company as a result of digitalization. This is the only way to create value contributions in purchasing too. These may be savings as well as optimised processes or a more flexible corporate structure.

The Mercateo Executive Summit traditionally takes place the evening before the BME Symposium. As a BME partner, Mercateo is also represented at the symposium by Dr. Bernd Schönwälder who will be giving a speech. Decision makers and other responsible parties from numerous corporations and various industries come together regularly at this event to discuss the current trends in procurement. With the Mercateo Executive Summit, the company is offering a valuable opportunity to foster and encourage networking and exchange on the most important issues in digital procurement at the start of the symposium.



[Foto: Mercateo]

About Mercateo

Mercateo is Europe's leading B2B procurement platform that combines the advantages of a B2B marketplace and networking platform.

Buyers, suppliers, manufacturers and service providers connect their systems to each other through this infrastructure and process transactions digitally with each other, regardless of their current level of digitalisation. Buyers and suppliers therefore organise their business processes

more efficiently as a result of standardisation and benefit at the same time from the variety on offer and direct relationships with their partners: buyers receive a suitable tailored offer. Suppliers tap into new target groups or focus more intensively on existing customers and

therefore meet customers' expectations of efficient procurement processes and service.

Besides the networking platform, which is positioned neutrally between suppliers and buyers in the B2B segment, Mercateo has also been running Europe's largest B2B marketplace since 2000.

Mercateo increased its sales by 25 % to more than EUR 200 million in 2015. The company operates in 14 European countries and has more than 400 employees.

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