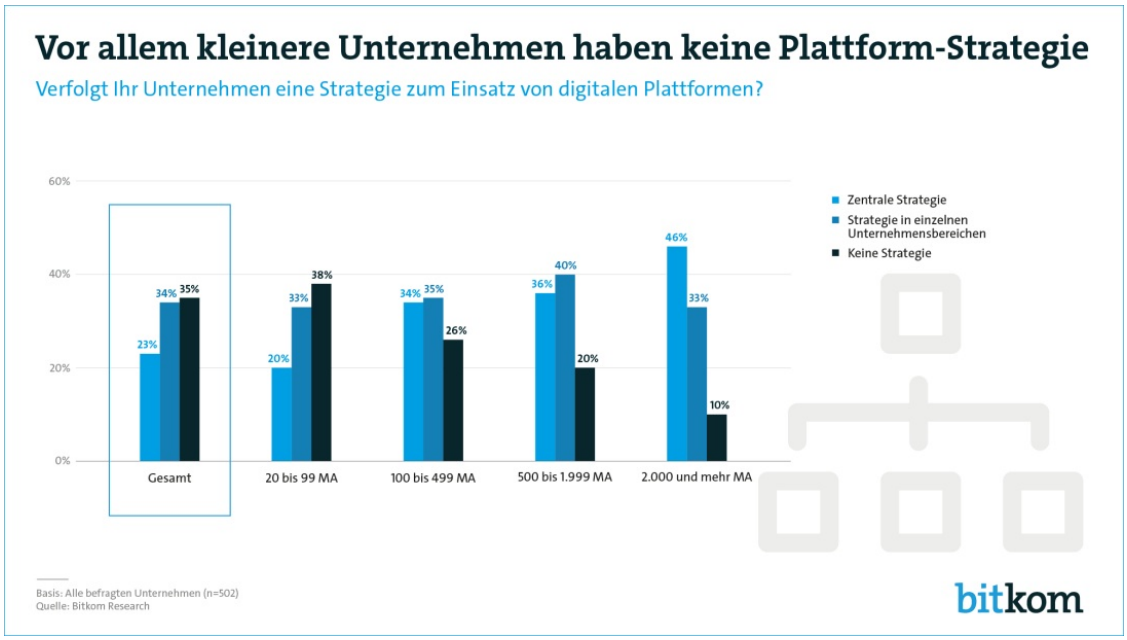
Bitkom e.V. |

German Digital Summit paves the way for the platform economy

- **Survey: Two thirds of companies have a dedicated platform strategy**
- **Political decisions should not hinder development of platform-based business models**
- **Bitkom believes that GAIA-X offers chances for more digital sovereignty**



Berlin, 29. October 2019 - Every company should develop a strategy for the use of digital platforms within the next twelve months. That is one of the key demands of Bitkom President Achim Berg today at the Digital Summit of the German Federal Government in Dortmund. “In Germany and Europe, we have a number of companies that have either successfully built digital platforms, or that are active on platforms. However, the public debate focuses too much on where we are lagging behind and how dangerous platforms might be. Germany’s companies need to establish themselves in the platform world”, says Berg. “Digital platforms are more than additional sales channels, they fundamentally transform our economy. Anyone in charge of a company that has not yet developed a strategy for harnessing digital platforms should start doing so immediately.” Currently, every third German company above 20 employees (35 per cent) states that they do not follow a strategy regarding digital platforms. Every fourth company (23 per cent) has a wide-ranging strategy, another 34 per cent at least have a strategy in specific business segments. These are the results of a representative survey among 502 companies with 20 employees and above by Bitkom. Particularly smaller companies with 100 employees and less do not have a platform strategy (38 per cent). In contrast, only 20 per cent of companies with 500 to 1999 employees, and only 10 per cent of companies with 2000 employees and more are without a platform strategy.

Berg: Support platform-based business models, instead of hampering them

Additionally, Berg called for policy-makers to emphasise the opportunities of the platform economy. “We need a regulatory framework that supports new platform-based business models and does not hamper them”, according to Bitkom’s President. Firstly, by only regulating where existing laws are not applicable and secondly, by taking into account the different kinds of platforms. . With a view to the recommendations of the German Data Ethics Commission on algorithm regulation, Berg warned against misplaced regulatory zeal: “Algorithms are tools. They depend on their application and use.”

GAIA-X can increase our digital sovereignty

The GAIA X project for a European cloud and data infrastructure, which was introduced at the Digital Summit by the German Minister for the Economy, Peter Altmaier, could be “an important contribution to a higher degree of digital sovereignty and data sovereignty”. The questions of secure infrastructure and the one-sided dependencies in the digital world have been raised again in the face of emerging trade conflicts. “In this context we need to ask ourselves carefully: Where do we have to protect our digital sovereignty, and where do we have to get it back?”, says Berg. GAIA-X should be pursued as a European project from the start. Additionally, its functionality, user experience and costs need to withstand market competition. “If GAIA-X is to be a success, the public sector needs to play a key role.” says Berg. Bitkom published its paper on “Eckpunkte für eine souveräne Cloud- und Dateninfrastruktur in Deutschland und Europa” (“A sovereign cloud and data infrastructure for Germany and Europe”) today on the occasion of the German Digital Summit. Please find the paper (only available in German) here: https://www.bitkom.org/Bitkom/Publikationen/Eckpunkte-fuer-souveraene-Cloud-Dateninfrastruktur-Deutschland-Europa

More details on the Bitkom survey on „digital platforms“ are available for download here (in German): www.bitkom.org/Presse/Presseinformation/Deutsche-Unternehmen-zoegern-Plattformen

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