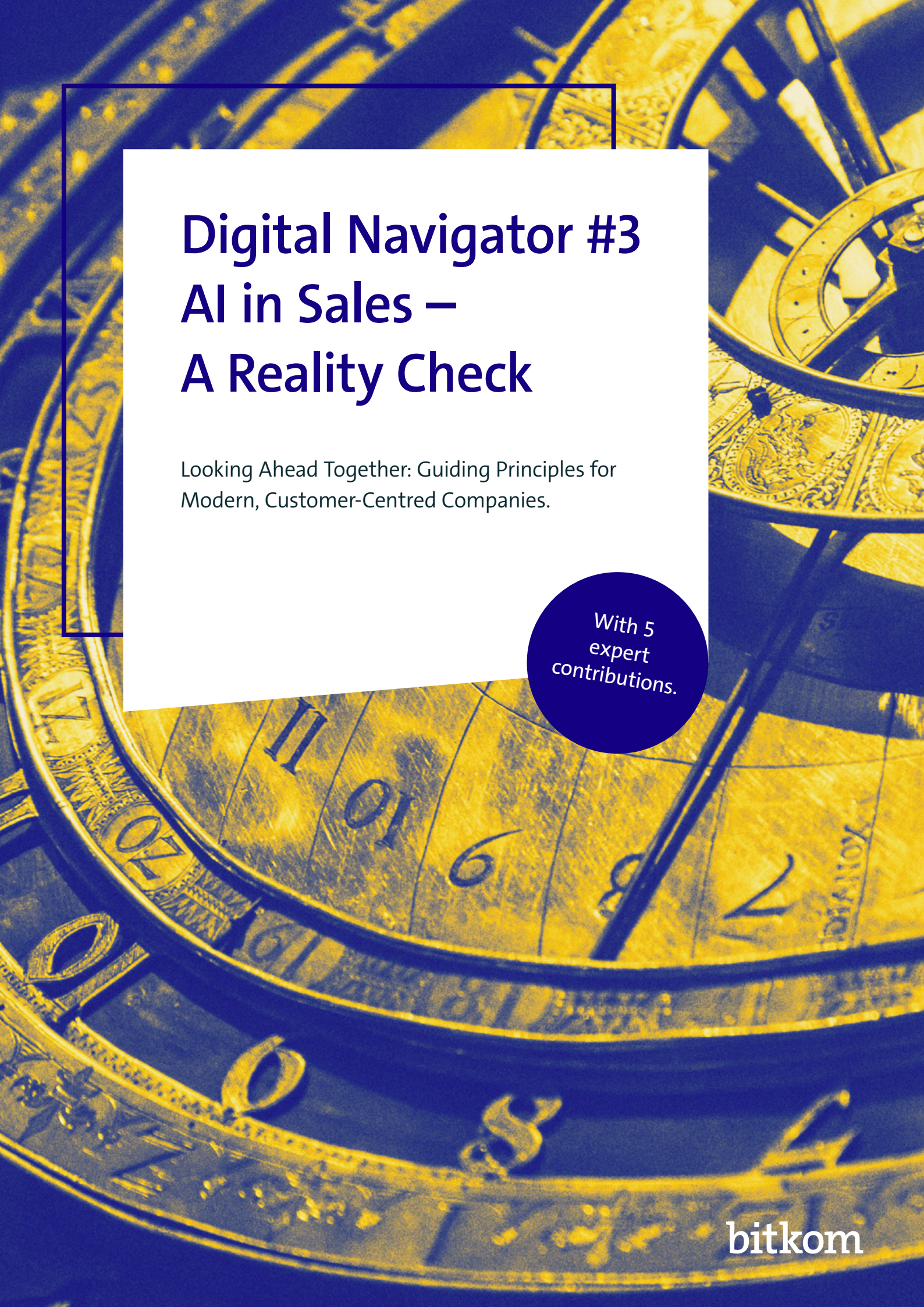




Digital Navigator #3 AI in Sales – A Reality Check

Looking Ahead Together: Guiding Principles for
Modern, Customer-Centred Companies.

With 5
expert
contributions.

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1 Digital Navigator #3

AI in Sales – A Reality Check

Digitalisation is a collective endeavour involving business, society and policymakers. To shape our digital future, visionaries, industry professionals and decision-makers develop ideas for the future and think boldly about what lies ahead. Their collaboration drives progress and helps new technologies realise their potential.

Continuous exchange between stakeholders promotes knowledge-sharing, builds mutual understanding and creates new opportunities. Bitkom provides a central platform for this: a thematic forum for dialogue, knowledge transfer and best practice, where all relevant stakeholders work together to shape our digital world.

With the »Digital Navigator« publication series, we support this collective learning journey. We bring together insights, analysis and perspectives on the future and make them accessible to decision-makers – providing guidance for transformation and inspiration for advancing digitalisation within organisations.

Key question:

How do we shape our digital future together?

Click here to visit the
»Digital Navigator« website.



Embarking on the digitalisation journey together as a think tank

The starting point for the third edition of »Digital Navigator« is the wealth of insights generated at a meeting of Bitkom's Sales Working Group. The event took place at Deutsche Bank in December 2025. The central theme of this lively event was »Reality Check – What Happened to the AI Hype?«

Sales is undergoing a period of reassessment after the initial enthusiasm surrounding AI. Automated lead scoring, chatbots and personalised customer journeys promise greater efficiency, relevance and speed. In practice, however, it is becoming clear which applications are already delivering measurable value and where expectations have been overstated. The decisive factor will be whether AI provides better customer insights, supports prioritisation, improves preparation for customer conversations and informs sales decisions. At the same time, one thing is clear: technology cannot replace relationships, trust or a sound sales strategy. The companies that succeed will be those that use AI pragmatically, take data quality and processes seriously, and equip their sales teams to combine human strengths effectively with digital intelligence.



We welcomed guests who enriched the event with their insights, experience and contributions to the discussion.

- »Hype, Cry for Help and Beacon of Hope – Join the AI Expedition«
Jürgen Schmitt, Discoverer and Corporate Content Creator, Deutsche Bank
- »Agentic AI: The Future and Current Limits of AI-Powered Business Processes«
Thomas Hellerich, CEO, Samhammer AG
- »Agentic AI That Sells – Lessons from the AWS Launchpad and Honeysales«
Daniel Brusch, Co-Founder and Managing Director, honeysales, and Eli Huzar, Generative AI and Go-to-Market Strategy Lead for the Startup Segment in Germany and Central and Eastern Europe, Amazon Web Services
- »From Hype to Reality – Five Lessons on How AI Is Really Transforming Sales«
Dr Jonas Soluk, Senior Partner, Diconium
- Panel discussion: »From Hype to Reality – Turning Initial Successes into Genuine Transformation«
 - Hannah Kamijo, Senior Director General Business, ServiceNow
 - Nele Wollert, CSO, muffintech
 - Dr. Jonas Soluk, Senior Partner, Diconium

To extend the exchange of knowledge beyond the event itself, we invited the participating experts to share their key insights, lessons learned and perspectives on the future in »Digital Navigator«.

We hope you find this publication insightful and inspiring.

At a Glance

[More About the Working Group](#)

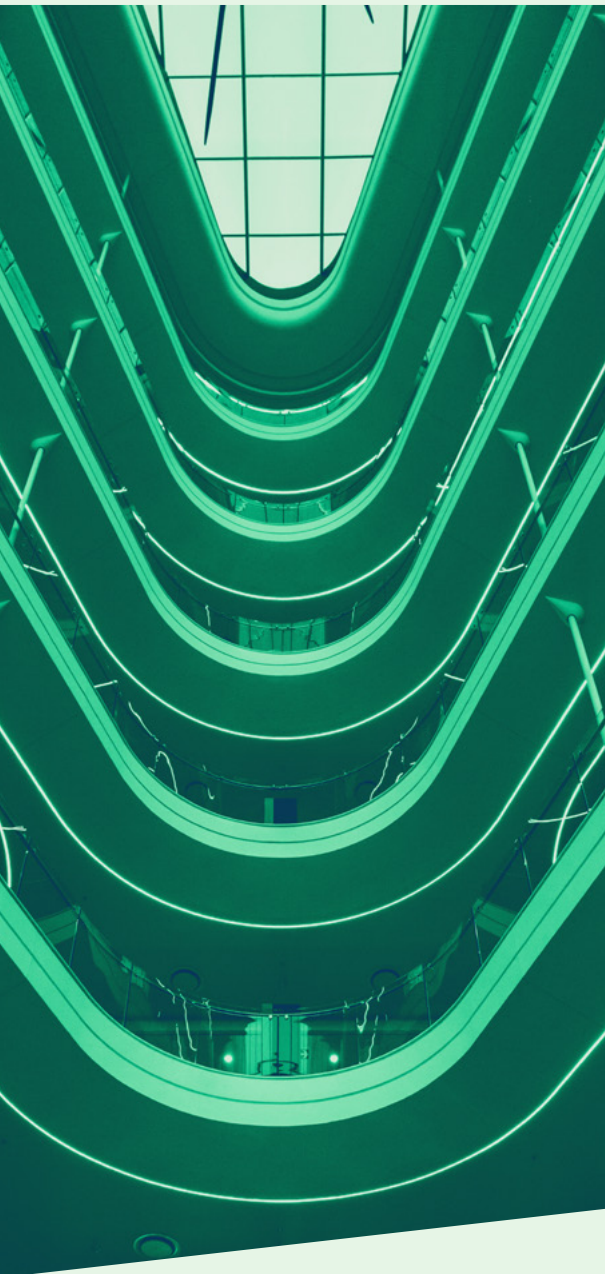
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2

Guiding Principles and Perspectives on the Future

How digital experts assess the reality of AI in sales



Expert Contributions

- »Learning Together: Understanding the Benefits and Role of AI in Sales« **Roland Lunck**, Senior Partner Sales Executive, Zendesk
- »Where Is AI Used in Everyday Finance?« **Jürgen Schmitt**, Deutsche Bank
- »Agentic AI: The Future and Current Limits of AI-Powered Business Processes« **Thomas Hellerich**, Samhammer
- »From AI Hype to Measurable Sales Excellence« **Daniel Brusch**, honeysales and **Eli Huzar**, Amazon Web Services
- »Why AI Fails Even When It Works Technically« **Dr. habil. Jonas Soluk**, Senior Manager, Diconium Strategy

2.1 Understanding the Benefits and Role of AI in Sales

Key Insights

Artificial intelligence is fundamentally changing go-to-market strategies—but how do we move from hype to practical application? From the perspective of the Sales Working Group, we share insights and use cases showing how technology companies are using AI to shorten lead cycles, automate pipeline management and increase conversion rates. We highlight which tools deliver genuine value and where traditional sales skills remain indispensable.

Future Outlook

Where is this development heading in the coming years?

- We discuss the evolution of sales, from the simple AI assistant or co-pilot to autonomous sales agents and AI-driven hyper-personalisation.
- The key question is: How will the role of the account executive change when algorithms take over almost all forecasting and initial customer interactions?
- The focus is shifting: sales professionals are becoming even more important as strategic advisers and relationship managers.



Roland Lunck
Senior Partner Sales Executive,
Zendesk

2.2 Where is AI Used in Everyday Finance?

Key Insights

- Showcasing AI applications through a bold, fresh and contemporary LinkedIn video format – from initial concept and implementation to a discussion of where these developments may lead. Which areas are we focusing on, and where will their impact soon become apparent?
- Providing ideas and inspiration while encouraging discussion through strategic community management across social media. Sharing content, taking action, responding and actively contributing to the community.
- Initiating topics such as AI and building a strong, knowledgeable community whose members work together to advance them. Developing expertise and strengthening market positioning.

Future Outlook

We identify where AI can be used and explore its potential and limitations. Where does it encounter difficulties, and why?

To make topics visible, we need to explore new approaches: Where is our target audience, and how do they consume news about relevant topics? Are we visible to them, and how do we want to present ourselves?



Jürgen Schmitt
Corporate Content Creator,
ExpeditionFinance
Deutsche Bank

2.3 Agentic AI: The Future and (Current) Limits of AI-Supported Business Processes

Key Insights

- Current AI technologies often reach their limits in service contexts because around 80 percent of the available data is unstructured, inaccurate or insufficiently curated. As a result, consistent and reliable outcomes remain difficult to achieve despite growing expectations of automation.
- To use AI-powered services effectively, companies need to fundamentally modernise their data quality, knowledge structures and system architectures. The Knowledge Factory brings curated knowledge together and creates the basis for context-rich, conversational responses.
- Without clearly defined knowledge processes, the use of agentic AI remains limited. Basic RAG models often produce inadequate answers because of poor data quality. Only a human–machine feedback loop can ensure sustainable improvements in quality.
- The growing complexity of service ecosystems – including IoT devices, omni-channel touchpoints and interconnected business processes – calls for new agent-based architectures that can plan, act and integrate autonomously.
- Practical examples show that curated knowledge, AI-powered services and transactional bots can significantly reduce the burden on service teams and transform them into strategic value drivers.



Thomas Hellerich
CEO, Samhammer AG

Looking Ahead

To deliver compelling service experiences in the future and remain competitive, companies must strategically develop their capabilities in agentic AI, data quality and knowledge architecture. Autonomous AI agents can only realise their full potential when data is curated, knowledge is structured and systems are intelligently connected.

However, one point should not be overlooked: data, models and architectures are tools — employees remain the decisive factor. Successful future scenarios emerge when humans and AI collaborate within a human–machine loop, organisations continue to evolve and service processes are consistently designed around people.

2.4 From AI Hype to Measurable Sales Excellence

Key Insights

- Generative AI only delivers tangible value in sales when use cases are clearly aligned with business objectives and KPIs. Pilot projects without clear ownership are unlikely to deliver lasting results.
- Successful teams focus on a small number of scalable use cases, integrate them deeply into existing workflows, and collaborate across functions and with external partners from an early stage.
- Agentic AI is shifting sales away from tool overload towards action-oriented support. Sales professionals will only adopt AI solutions that deliver immediate value and continuously improve through ongoing use.



Daniel Brusch
Co-Founder & CEO,
honeysales



Eli Huzar
Startup Account Manager & GenAI
GTM Strategy Lead, AWS

Looking Ahead

Sales is evolving from volume-driven automation to precise, data-driven customer engagement. Agentic AI will become the central orchestration layer, bringing together information, setting priorities and recommending specific next steps.

To support this shift, companies need to adapt their organisations by establishing clear governance for AI use cases, defining measurable success criteria and being prepared to reassess their existing technology landscape. Those that prioritise quality over quantity from the outset and systematically build trust will be best placed to remain competitive in the long term.

2.5 Why AI Fails Despite Working Technically

Key Insights

- The main bottleneck in AI projects lies not in the models themselves, but in the lack of organisational ownership and accountability within the business. Many pilot projects are technically successful but fail because they lack user acceptance, integration into day-to-day operations and clear decision-making frameworks.
- Successful pilots can create a misleading sense of scalability. They often conceal process disruptions, tacit expert knowledge and governance gaps that only become apparent once solutions are deployed in live operations.
- Data quality is not merely an IT issue—it is a leadership and organisational culture challenge. As long as the use of data has no tangible impact on decisions, objectives and incentives, AI will remain ineffective.



Dr. habil. Jonas Soluk
Senior Manager, Diconium
Strategy

Looking Ahead

In the short term, AI is unlikely to become established through fully autonomous systems. Instead, its greatest value will come from reliable, unobtrusive decision support in day-to-day business operations. The greatest benefits will be realised where AI consistently prepares, streamlines and accelerates simple, recurring tasks.

In the medium term, it will become increasingly clear that organisations with strong governance, reduced complexity and genuine accountability for data scale far more effectively than technologically ambitious but culturally inflexible companies. The real competitive advantage will lie not in better models, but in better decision-making.

3 Shaping the Future Together

Join us at upcoming events and activities across the Bitkom network.

Exciting Opportunities Ahead



October 13, 2026 | AK Sales in Berlin | Topic: »AI-Native Sales: Agentic Tools & Operational Scaling«



December 1 | Sales Working Group in Frankfurt hosted by PwC | Topic: »Next-Level CX: Marketing & Sales as One System«

Bitkom members can register by clicking on the relevant event. If you are not yet a Bitkom member, please contact Dr. Florian Bayer (see the Bitkom team contact details below).

Bitkom Grand Event:

1. September 22 & 23 in Berlin
AIDAQ – AI, Data & Quantum Summit

AIDAQ is a major European event focusing on the latest developments in data, AI and quantum computing. The summit offers a unique opportunity to explore best practice and engage with leading experts, decision-makers and innovation leaders from industry, government and academia.

13th - 15th October in Berlin
Smart Country Convention

City. Country. Tech
The Smart Country Convention brings together leading figures from public administration, politics, business and academia. Together, they demonstrate how digital solutions can transform public administration, cities and rural communities.

Bitkom Events:

September 17 in Erfurt | **Forum Open Source**

September 29 - 30 Online & in Berlin | **Privacy Conference**

November 10 in Berlin | **Digital Finance Conference**

November 12 in Berlin | **Data Centre Summit**

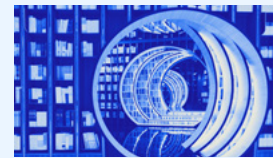
November 24 in Berlin | **Digital Health Conference**



4 Data-Driven Inspiration

Insights Every Digitalisation Professional Should Know

Bitkom regularly publishes studies on key issues of digital transformation. They provide a data-based, well-founded perspective on current developments in the digital world. This allows topics to be comprehensively understood and contextualized. The data, figures, and analyses are transparent and freely available in the Bitkom Dataverse.



Previous issues of the ↗Digital Navigator:

#1: Automation & Analytics – Using Data and AI to Shape Marketing Strategies

#2: Marketing Transformation in the Automotive Industry

Below you will find a selection of relevant publications on the topic of this issue of the Digital Navigator.

Whitepaper »Agentic AI in Customer Experience«

This white paper examines how Agentic AI can redesign customer-centric processes—from the data foundation to the actual interaction—and what conditions must be met to ensure that technical capabilities translate into trust, transparency, and sustainable value. After all, especially in customer-facing areas, the question is not only what can be automated, but also how autonomous systems can be used responsibly: How can decisions remain explainable? Where is human oversight needed? And how can data, organizational structures, and expertise be organized so that Agentic AI can achieve its full potential?

↗ [Whitepaper Agentic AI in Customer Experience](#)



Study: »Marketing in the Digital Transformation 2026«

Marketing is facing growing pressure to deliver greater impact and efficiency while budgets remain unchanged. The study shows how companies are adapting their strategies, priorities and activities in response. It focuses on budget allocation, organisational structures and the impact of automation and regulation. The findings are based on a survey of 180 companies in the digital sector conducted by Bitkom Research and highlight key trends and developments in marketing.

[↗ Marketing in the Digital Transformation 2026](#)



Study: »Artificial Intelligence – Public Perceptions of the New Technology« (2026)

Artificial intelligence is becoming part of everyday life in Germany at remarkable speed — faster than many previous digital technologies. But how widely and routinely is AI already being used? Who uses it regularly, who does not and why? Which concerns dominate public debate? And how strong is the demand for trustworthy AI solutions from Germany and Europe?

The study examines how widespread AI use is among the population, which applications people use and what may prevent them from doing so. It also explores attitudes and concerns surrounding AI, questions of digital sovereignty, and the role of AI in the workplace and in paid applications. The findings are based on a representative survey conducted by Bitkom Research, involving 1,003 people aged 16 and over in Germany who were interviewed using computer-assisted telephone interviewing (CATI).

[↗ Artificial Intelligence](#)

Supplementary Data & Press Information:

- Publication (2026):
 ↗ Artificial Intelligence in CRM – How Artificial Intelligence Redefines Customer Relationships
- Guide (2026):
 ↗ Trustworthy & Responsible AI

[Click here for the latest press releases](#)

[Click here for the latest publications](#)

5 Team Bitkom

Thank you for your interest in Bitkom

More about Bitkom

Bitkom's primary goal is to make Germany a leading digital hub, drive the digital transformation of its economy and public administration, strengthen digital sovereignty and ensure broad public participation in digital developments.

Are you interested in Bitkom's extensive network? Get in touch with us directly.



Dr. Florian Bayer
Head of Digital
Marketing & Sales
f.bayer@bitkom.org
[↗LinkedIn](#)

Not a Bitkom member but interested in the Sales Working Group, the AI Working Group or Bitkom's wider network?

Get in touch with the Bitkom team directly.
We look forward to hearing from you.

Already a Bitkom member but do not yet have access?
Request access directly here: [↗Link](#)

Bitkom represents more than 2,200 member companies across the digital economy. In Germany, these companies generate around 200 billion euros in revenue from digital technologies and solutions and employ more than two million people. Its members include more than 1,000 SMEs, over 700 start-ups and nearly all major global technology companies. They provide software, IT services, telecommunications and internet services, manufacture devices and components, operate in the digital media sector, create content, run platforms or otherwise form part of the digital economy. Of the companies represented by Bitkom, 82 per cent are based in Germany, a further 8 per cent in the rest of Europe and 7 per cent in the United States. The remaining 3 per cent are based in other parts of the world. Bitkom promotes and drives the digital transformation of the German economy and advocates broad public participation in digital development. Its goal is to make Germany a leading and digitally sovereign location.

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