



P R E S S R E L E A S E

Digital entrepreneurs for companies: etventure and Kienbaum found “Unternehmer-Schmiede” joint venture

- **Unternehmer-Schmiede combines recruitment with structured profile development.**
- **Companies are looking for specialist knowledge and experts to implement their digital transformation. But real “digital entrepreneurs” are hard to find in the market.**
- **Individual, user-centered development program to become a “digital entrepreneur”**

Berlin/Cologne, March 21, 2016—Digital consultant and company builder etventure and HR and managing consultancy Kienbaum have consolidated their collaboration. By founding joint venture “Unternehmer-Schmiede” (which translates as “company builders”), they have jointly created a factory for leaders with digital entrepreneurship expertise to develop complete digital units in companies.

Execution of new digital businesses requires new skills profile

According to a new, representative study by etventure supported by GfK Nuremberg*, by far the largest obstacle to executing the digital transformation is “defending existing structures in companies” (65 percent). Large companies in particular are often too stick-in-the-mud to initiate radical changes, as required by digitization. Other key obstacles are a lack of time (54 percent) and lack of experienced staff (52 percent). At the same time, 92 percent of companies surveyed are convinced that digitization will change the company's requirements specification and operating methods.

Unternehmer-Schmiede is tackling this issue. Because companies need a new type of employee with specific skills and expertise to execute the digital transformation. Alongside digital expertise and skills, managers in particular need to have the foundation of an entrepreneurial mindset, startup mentality and experience of large corporations in order to drive forward digital transformation. Innovative, agile thinking and strong communication skills are also key success factors. This profile of a “digital entrepreneur” is, however, a rare commodity.

Unternehmer-Schmiede is recruiting suitable candidates and equipping them with the necessary innovation methods and skills to develop digital units and execute digital projects. To make this happen, etventure and Kienbaum are pooling their expertise in

the areas of digital transformation and HR management. The joint venture aims to enable companies to realize their vision of a digital future with the assistance of the digital entrepreneurs' entrepreneurial experience.

Even before the joint venture was officially founded, it was helping companies like Klöckner & Co, Wüstenrot & Württembergische and SMS group to develop stand-alone digital units. “Without the expertise of the managers recruited by etventure, there is no way we would be where we are today in the digitization process,” confirmed Gisbert Rühl, CEO of Klöckner & Co. The collaboration with Kienbaum now sets this offer on a broader basis.

Personnel recruitment, profile development and long-term support

Unternehmer-Schmiede's service range includes not only recruitment of suitable candidates, but also comprehensive profile development through actual and thorough on-the-job training, focusing on the challenges thrown up by the company's respective digital new businesses. The future specialists and managers go through a tailored development program to become a digital entrepreneur in the company. Candidates are supported on specific digitization projects to enhance their entrepreneurial thinking and acting and empower them to lead their own projects in the long term. This also includes imparting methods and approaches such as customer-centric design thinking and agile lean startup process management, as well as providing a network of entrepreneurs. A mentor and contact from Unternehmer-Schmiede also assists them subsequently in their work at the company.

Fabian Kienbaum, Managing Partner of Kienbaum, explained: “Many companies have recognized the need to adapt to the digital world. But they often lack the suitable talent to specifically initiate and execute the digital transformation. With Unternehmer-Schmiede, we have closed this gap in the market with our vertical approach—a depth of digital expertise and understanding of the whole organization combined with ongoing training and support for the employee.”

Philipp Depiereux, founder and CEO of etventure, added: “Unternehmer-Schmiede sees itself as a factory for digital entrepreneurs. Individuality and quality of profile development and support, focused on the individual requirements of the companies, are top priority for us here. We therefore provide a clearly progressive, more success-oriented and longer-lasting service portfolio than conventional HR consultancies and headhunters.”

In contrast to the traditional business model of recruitment service providers, Unternehmer-Schmiede has a phased remuneration approach, directly measured by business success. Instead of the usual one-off payment after successfully filling a position, the client is given direct and gradually increasing added value through ongoing coaching of the candidate.

The joint venture is being headed up on an interim basis by Philipp Depiereux and

Fabian Kienbaum and is based in Berlin.



Caption: The two managing directors of the newly founded “Unternehmer-Schmiede” Fabian Kienbaum (left), Managing Director of Kienbaum, and Philipp Depiereux, founder and CEO of etventure

*About the study: etventure's study “Digital transformation and cooperation with startups in large corporations” with the support of GfK Nuremberg was a telephone survey carried out among 2,000 large corporations in Germany with minimum annual revenue of EUR 250 million in the period from January 11, 2016, to January 29, 2016. Further information can be found at www.etventure.com/deutschlandstudie.

About etventure:

Digital consultant and company builder etventure identifies, develops and tests cross-industry digital business approaches on behalf of companies or on an individual basis. If market tests are positive, a new business model is built from the idea, either as part of a company or as an independent startup. The company's customers include Allianz, Wüstenrot & Württembergische AG, Bank Vontobel, Bonnier media group, Deutsche Bahn, Franz Haniel & Cie., Viessmann, Daimler Financial Services or Klöckner. etventure also operates the Berlin School of Digital Business, the fintech unit FintechStars with the incubator FinTechCube as well as the European Innovation Hub. etventure was founded in 2010 and is led by founding partners Philipp Depiereux, Philipp Herrmann and Dr. Christian Lüdtker. The etventure team has more than 180 specialists in the digital sector at locations in Berlin, Essen, Hamburg, Munich, Stuttgart, London, New York, Paris and Zurich. www.etventure.com.

About Kienbaum:

Kienbaum is one of the leading consulting firms in Germany and Europe. Kienbaum provides its clients with a complete range of consulting services concerning people and organizations. Kienbaum combines high levels of expertise in HR, management and communication consulting with in-depth industry knowledge in interdisciplinary consulting teams, thereby pulling the crucial transformation levers to ensure long-term positive earnings performance for its clients. Kienbaum was founded in Germany over 70 years ago and is run as a family business with a partnership structure. Kienbaum has a presence in all key economic centers in Germany and has 33 offices in 18 countries. Kienbaum advises successful family businesses through to global market leaders and large corporations.

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