

Survey reveals: German companies are overlooking the economic potential of their data

- **A lack of self-assessment: German companies fail to recognize the potential of their data in essential business areas**
- **60 per cent criticize the quality of their data**
- **Only around one sixth of companies have a dedicated team or a Chief Data Officer (CDO) for data strategy**
- **Managers in particular underestimate the strategic value of their data**

Passau, September 10, 2024. In today's business world, data is of crucial importance for the success and global competitiveness of companies: It enables well-founded decisions, optimises processes and drives innovation. At the same time, data is key to utilising future technologies such as AI, GenAI, business intelligence and process mining usefully and efficiently. In Germany, most companies consider themselves to be well-positioned when it comes to handling their data. A recent survey of more than 1,000 business decision-makers and IT managers in Germany conducted by the software company One Data shows that three quarters (59 per cent) of respondents are convinced that they use their data successfully or very successfully to make decisions and increase efficiency.

Nevertheless, there is a tangible gap between the positive self-assessment and the actual reality. According to a recent [Bitkom study](#), only 6 per cent of German companies are exploiting the potential of their data. This is clear: The strategic and economic potential of data continues to be underestimated. This is reflected in various challenges in data management and, not least, inhibits growth potential.

Limited data usage in key business areas

German companies fail to recognise the potential for improving business processes and decision-making in many business areas and are therefore missing out on opportunities for more efficient and productive workflows. Just over half of participants (57%) are of the opinion that their company recognises the potential. However, according to the respondents, only marketing and sales (40 per cent) and customer service (43 per cent) benefit from the use and processing of data - other essential areas such as supply chain (21 per cent), production (27 per cent) or purchasing (28 per cent) are neglected. Yet these business areas offer enormous potential to minimise costs and improve productivity and sustainability at the same time. By analysing past sales data, for example, companies can plan their inventories more accurately, carry out precise demand forecasts, lower warehousing costs and reduce waste. Data can also be used in production, for example to optimise processes, predict machine maintenance and minimise downtime.

The next major jump in productivity can only happen if businesses start using data more effectively. To succeed, siloed data must be transformed into reliable, valuable data products and companies must be empowered to establish consistent data governance. The results include more stable supply chains, more precise forecasts, faster R&D processes and more efficient data terms, 'explains Dr. Andreas Böhm, founder and CEO One Data GmbH.

Lack of data quality as the biggest challenge

Another obstacle to effective data management is the lack of quality of existing data, as recognised by the participants in the survey. More than half (59 per cent) of respondents see this as a medium to major challenge. Data is often not maintained correctly, which impairs its trustworthiness and usability and makes sound decision-making more difficult. The majority of respondents also see technical complexity (55 per cent) and data protection concerns (54 per cent) as challenges. 'Data is key to utilising future technologies such as AI, GenAI, business intelligence and process mining usefully and efficiently. But only if it can be quickly collected, processed, analysed and deployed to create value. Their efficient utilisation is crucial for the future competitiveness of any company,' Andreas Böhm continues. 'So far, however, companies have failed because they do not have their data available in the necessary quality and can only integrate it into other systems with a great deal of manual effort, or because they are unable to provide data company-wide in accordance with data governance requirements. As a result, they are unable to utilise their data effectively, wasting enormous economic potential.'

Lack of responsibility at management level

The One Data survey shows that only around one sixth of the companies questioned have a dedicated team (16%) or a Chief Data Officer (17%) who is responsible for the entire data-related value chain: from planning and procurement to the organisation, integration, use and disposal of data. A CDO at management level is essential for developing a comprehensive and successful data strategy. They play a central role by simplifying data management, selecting suitable technologies and ensuring compliance with data protection regulations. In this way, they drive the necessary cultural change and ensure that all employees have the right mindset and the required skills to use data effectively. This leadership position is particularly indispensable in large companies with complex structures and international locations. However, according to the study, only 21 per cent of companies with more than 250 employees have a Chief Data Officer who provides the necessary structure and bridges the gap between IT managers and business decision-makers. The study results also reveal a significant discrepancy between business decision-makers and IT managers in terms of their awareness of the relevance of company data. While 81 per cent of IT decision-makers believe that data is crucial for business success, only 73 per cent of C-level managers agree. Even more alarming is that only a third (34 per cent) of managers regularly work with company data, compared to 48 per cent of IT managers. Although around a third of C-level managers integrate data into their day-to-day work (34 per cent), 22 per cent of managers still consider data to be irrelevant to their work. In order to build a successful business, a cultural change is therefore urgently required at some management levels. All C-level managers must take a close look at their data in order to create an awareness of its economic importance and promote the responsible use of data within the company.

Summary

Data is the key to remaining competitive in complex, global markets and strengthening your own position. However, although German companies appear to be convinced of their data expertise, they are still not fully utilising the potential of their data and are therefore limiting their own innovative strength. Managers in particular fail to recognise the strategic value of their data. In order to utilise this value effectively, experts such as a Chief Data Officer are needed to raise awareness at management level and overcome uncertainties. Companies should also expand their use of data to other business areas and ensure sufficient data quality. This will not only enable them to meet the challenges of the future, but also make an effective contribution to Germany's economic growth.

***Methodology**

The data used is based on an online survey conducted by YouGov Deutschland GmbH on behalf of One Data from 22 July to 30 July 2024. The survey asked 748 IT decision-makers and 319 C-level managers in Germany about the perception and use of data in their companies.



About One Data

One Data is a German software company and an European leader in data product management. Founded by Dr. Andreas Böhm in 2013, the company – with its 200+ employees in Passau, Munich, Frankfurt am Main and Berlin – provides the first available Data Product Builder designed specifically for innovative and collaborative data teams. This enables such teams to create and use comprehensive data products, establish a data-driven culture and unlock the full potential of data. Data products built in One Data transform raw data into actionable insights, empowering businesses to make informed decisions, optimize processes, and drive innovation. The Data Product Builder streamlines the development process, reducing time-to-market for data products, ensures scalability and flexibility in handling diverse data sources, and ultimately unlocks the value of data assets more efficiently. With the establishment of a Data Product Marketplace, One Data strategically dismantles data silos, creating a central space for data collaboration and seamless sharing. The company concentrates on bridging the gap between data experts and non-technical business users, enabling them to build, manage, and share data products efficiently while ensuring interoperability and high data quality. The outcomes include more stable supply chains, more accurate forecasts, faster R&D processes, and more efficient data teams.

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