



News release

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EY “Digital Nations Study” 2017

Swiss consumers are digital: government and businesses not yet

- ▶ **Switzerland ranks 5th among European countries in terms of ICT network readiness**
- ▶ **90% of Swiss adult population use a smartphone and 80% a portable laptop**
- ▶ **On average, Swiss people spend 8.8 hours per day on digital devices, 1.9 hours on the smartphone**
- ▶ **Businesses have to accelerate digital customer experiences**
- ▶ **Swiss digital brand opportunity: cybersecurity and digital payments**
- ▶ **EY Bitcoin ATMs at World Web Forum for donations to Avatar Kids**

ZURICH, 25 JANUARY 2017 – As presented at today’s World Web Forum, the Swiss population is digitally savvy and always online. The Swiss spends an average of 8 hours and 48 minutes a day on an average of four digital devices, with almost 2 hours on the smartphone (90% of Swiss consumers own a smartphone). The digital world is penetrating all parts of consumers’ lives, and digital mobility has become the new normal. According to the EY Digital Nations Study, the Swiss society is always online: they use their smartphones/tablets on public transport (89% do so at least occasionally), in shopping centers (74%), upon waking up (66% agree), just before going to bed (63% agree), and even in bathrooms/toilets (63% at least occasionally).

Switzerland ranks fifth among European countries on the Networked Readiness Index, which measures a country’s propensity to utilize the opportunities presented by information and communications technology (ICT). In addition to being a secure, stable, innovative and competitive place, Switzerland also boasts a first-class digital infrastructure, with 91% of

households having internet access. “The high ranking of Switzerland with regard to digital readiness confirms that we have the potential to become a leading digital hub in Europe,” says Marcel Stalder, CEO of EY Switzerland.

Digital consumer readiness

For most, the device of choice is the smartphone, which is used for simple, on-the-go interactions and offers the best responsiveness as well as omni-channel possibilities: increasingly, this is a user experience that Swiss users come to expect from businesses. Enhancing integrated payment capabilities is another key factor to consider in improving customer experience. Furthermore, the survey found that the Swiss are strong users of social media channels, with 98% of the population using at least one social media platform. This means that social media remain a key channel for firms to communicate with and attract new customers. In contrast, the Swiss market for wearables and smart watches is still relatively untapped, despite the fact that 32% and 24% of respondents find them either very or fairly appealing, respectively.

The study demonstrates that the Swiss are clearly taking advantage of the digital technologies and possibilities available to them. Digital capability enhances productivity and connects people socially. However, there are also downsides to this development. Unintended consequences include feeling addicted to the smartphone or tablet (21% of respondents said this), feeling overwhelmed by all the sheer volume of information at their fingertips (23%) and experiencing a negative impact on stress levels and sleep (25% and 26%).

Digital government readiness

The government can play an important role in building the Swiss digital brand (digital trustworthiness). Cybersecurity needs to be at the center of such a brand and could be the core of Switzerland’s digital proposition. According to the survey, 33% of respondents believe the government should promote digital innovation in businesses by providing funding or running programs, and 28% think the government is doing a good job in using technology to improve the services it provides.

Digital business readiness

The pace of innovation and digital change is fast and firms need to continually innovate to stay ahead of competition and find “delight” for their ever demanding, increasingly digital-savvy customer base. Businesses in Switzerland therefore have to accelerate to better tap into the digital savviness of Swiss customers and focus on improving customer experiences. “Firms need to push the digital agenda internally to remain globally competitive,” concludes Marcel Stalder. While Switzerland is network-ready to deal with the demands, business still needs to drive these. “This finding is in line with our corporate initiative, digitalswitzerland, where EY Switzerland is a founding and board member. With the Digital Manifesto, digitalswitzerland has developed a framework that supports the digitalization of organizations,” adds the CEO of EY Switzerland.

FinTech, cybersecurity and digital payments identified as digital Swissness factors

Seven in ten Swiss residents (72%) think organizations should be more transparent or upfront about how they use the consumer information they capture. For virtually all Swiss residents (97%), safety and security is the number one driver of high-quality digital experiences, ahead of aspects such as content or user experience. As Switzerland is known to be a trustworthy custodian of personal privacy, cybersecurity and cybersafety could be at the core of Switzerland’s digital proposition.

Blockchain technology will revolutionize the business world

One example of where businesses need to pick up speed to stay in touch with their clients is the world of finance. At this year’s World Web Forum in Zurich, Imran Gulamhuseinwala, global head of FinTech at EY, presented FinTech market statistics and explained the opportunities linked to blockchain technology to an interested audience. Cooperation with startups and innovative business models and next generation blockchain applications were discussed, including their impact on how the world operates. “Simplicity, convenience, cost and speed is where the attraction and value to society lies with regard to future digital developments,” said Gulamhuseinwala. This conclusion is also supported by EY’s Digital Nations survey in Switzerland. With the formation of Crypto-Valley, where FinTech companies are based that develop digital payment and currency solutions, Switzerland has started to host developments in an area that might revolutionize financial services.

EY Bitcoin ATMs at World Web Forum for bitcoin donations to Avatar Kids

To mark the event and raise awareness for digital innovation, EY Switzerland is presenting two Bitcoin ATMs at the World Web Forum where visitors can withdraw bitcoin onto a mobile bitcoin wallet application. The bitcoins can be donated to “Avatar Kids”, a foundation that EY Switzerland supports and will be collecting donations for throughout the year during show cases at various events. “Avatar Kids” is a foundation with the objective to buy a robot that allows long-term hospitalized children to remotely attend their classroom lessons and interact with family and friends. An EY team is present to assist on the bitcoin purchase and spend process.

Access the study here: <http://eydigitalnations.ey.com/switzerland/>

About the Study:

EY Digital Nations Switzerland (2017) is a comprehensive study that focuses on digital engagement, attitudes, and behaviors in Switzerland. 2017 is the inaugural year of the study, providing benchmarks on consumers' digital experience, contextualized with insights from Digital Strategists from leading Swiss organizations. Drawing on robust primary quantitative and qualitative research in Switzerland, the program provides a deep understanding of the digital consumer landscape and provides comparison across the countries. The research unlocks the ‘who’ and ‘why’ of digital engagement. It is a key reference source for informing and optimizing digital strategy, with an international perspective. This international perspective will broaden further as the program expands to cover more countries. The key insights are accessible via our interactive reporting portal, by clicking on ‘Explore the findings’ below. You can explore the data by looking at Switzerland as a whole, or by filtering into sub-categories (age, gender, region, etc.). If you are interested in reading more click [here](#).

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