

PRESS RELEASE

Decision-maker survey: coronavirus induces digitalisation push in processes and in client communications

- **6 out of 10 respondents (around 61 per cent) expect digitalisation to increase in the context of client communications**
- **Nearly two-thirds (around 64 per cent) want more digital processes across sectors**
- **Housing industry and start-ups largely prepared for digital working – most energy industry players not quite there yet**

Wiesbaden, 09 July 2020 – According to a representative survey conducted by the opinion research institute Civey on behalf of Aareal Bank between 8 April and 10 May 2020 among decision-makers and employees of companies in the German property, energy, and start-up industries, the coronavirus pandemic is acting as a digitalisation driver for the three sectors. More than one-fifth (around 21 per cent) of the approximately 1,400 respondents from the housing, energy, and start-up industries state that their own company was insufficiently prepared for performing internal processes digitally. Nearly half of the survey's participants (around 48 per cent) also say that digital transformation has become more important within their company during the coronavirus crisis.

Communications: the future is digital

Communications are a good example for the strong impact the crisis has had on digital transformation in the three sectors: around 61 per cent of respondents assume that – as a result of experience gained during the widespread national lockdown – client communications will become more digital in future. Within this context, more than a quarter (approximately 26 per cent) of respondents state their intentions to take digital client communications actions, or to expand existing measures (e.g. webinars). The new form of cooperation should also influence company-internal workflows: more than one-third (around 34 per cent) of respondents are planning to implement or enhance digital meetings and cooperation via digital tools at their company.

Processes: digital, automated – and across sectors

The coronavirus crisis also highlights the topic of process efficiency, with the survey results indicating room for improvement especially in cross-company or cross-sector cooperation: around 64 per cent of respondents want cross-sector processes to become more digital in future. However, it is not only external, but also company-internal processes where many survey participants see room for improvement: around 36 per cent report that their company is planning to accelerate process digitalisation, and slightly more than 23 per cent assume that their company is planning to automate internal workflows.

Sector comparison reveals digitalisation disparity

A sector comparison reveals material differences in terms of the digitalisation level. Many decision-makers from the housing industry (around 67 per cent) and the start-up sector (around 63 per cent) stated that their company was well-prepared to perform important processes digitally during the coronavirus pandemic, whereas only half (around 52 per cent) of the decision-makers from the energy industry – and thus approximately 10 per cent less – confirmed adequate process digitalisation during the coronavirus pandemic.

Conversely, with around 63 per cent, energy industry decision-makers were by far the largest group of decision-makers to state that the coronavirus-induced situation has given the digital transformation within their companies an additional boost, whereas around 45 per cent and around 42 per cent,

respectively, of decision-makers in the housing industry and the start-up sector – and thus 20 per cent less – confirmed such a development.

Meetings, cooperation, and processes becoming more digital

How will companies put their experiences from the coronavirus pandemic into action? Decision-makers in the energy industry see an especially urgent need for implementing digital meetings and digital cooperation: around 46 per cent of respondents want to accelerate corresponding measures within their company. By comparison, around 37 per cent of decision-makers in the start-up sector and only approximately 32 per cent of decision-makers in the housing industry are planning to enhance digital cooperation. Furthermore, many companies are aiming to digitalise company-internal workflows: more than one-third of decision-makers (around 35 per cent) in the start-up sector want to expedite process digitalisation within their company; similar figures apply to the housing (around 32 per cent) and energy (around 30 per cent) industries.

For further survey results, please refer to our info chart attached to this press release.

Contacts:

Sven Korndörffer

Phone: +49 611 348 2306

sven.korndoerffer@aareal-bank.com

Yannick Houdard

Phone: +49 611 348 2462

yannick.houdard@aarea-bank.com

Aareal Bank Group

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