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THE TRANSFORMATION MAGAZINE OF SIEMENS GLOBAL BUSINESS SERVICES

We create the bigger picture

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Re-modeling Business

Innovating business models with a holistic methodology.

Mastering Data

Saving time and cost with master data up to date.

SIEMENS

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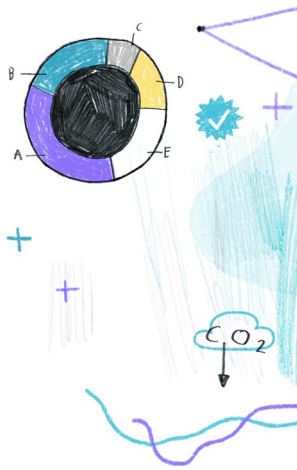

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Illustration: Silke Werzinger

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Dear readers,

Your vision for the future of your business is enabling you to create an impact on society. Whether you are operating in energy technology, healthcare products and services, industrial automation, infrastructure, or mobility, you envision an increasingly more sustainable and digital future. The advent of revolutionizing technologies like generative AI has again proven the potential of bringing together technology, processes, and people. It also implies transformation: a new focus on digitalization, platforms, software, and AI. Because this is the best way to foster innovations and higher productivity.

At Siemens Global Business Services (GBS), we are helping you turn your vision into success. Read on to discover how we think and work digitally to make processes, products, and people better every day.

Processes: Manual activities cost time, often fray nerves, and are also likely to cause errors. GBS experts take a close look at these processes and develop solutions to optimize and automate them – across all areas of the company, from purchase order management to local financial reporting.

Products: New technologies, digitalization, social trends – they all challenge existing products, but also create new opportunities. We rethink our clients' business models and develop a plan for positioning them on the market.

People: Process automation, AI, and the like are tools that make employees more productive. Provided they know how to use them. In programs such as our AI symposia or regular analytics and low-code trainings, we coach and empower teams to prove themselves in a digital working environment.

What matters most to us in all of this is that you, our customers, are successful. That's why we approach every day with all our passion and innovativeness: to accelerate your digital business transformation.

Yours sincerely,
Eckard Eberle,
CEO Siemens Global Business Services

Photo: Stefan Koeppel

"AI amplifies our human capabilities"

Watch the video here: www.siemens.com/gbs-digitalization

They both are pioneers and thought leaders in technology and digitalization: *Matthias Egelhaaf, CIO/CTO of Siemens GBS*, began implementing technologies like Robotic Process Automation and accelerating workflows five years ago. He is now relentlessly advancing the use of generative AI within the company. *Andre Kiehne*, on the other hand, is familiar with many companies facing the same challenge. The entrepreneur, supervisory board member, former Microsoft manager, and founder of the consultancy decode.forward, supports both large corporations and medium-sized businesses in innovation and digitalization projects. Like Egelhaaf, he is convinced that people and technology are not adversaries but can become an unbeatable team. In an exclusive *Inside* video interview, they discuss what needs to happen – both technically and personnel-wise – for the symbiosis to be successful.

"AI already delivers tangible results, but realizing the full potential requires vision and courage."

Matthias Egelhaaf,
CIO/CTO of Siemens GBS

"Not starting now is the riskiest strategy of all. You really need to implement a mindset of "let's try it out" to gain efficiencies, learn, fail fast, and learn again."

Andre Kiehne,
CEO and founder of decode.forward and author of "Digital Leadership Culture"

Photo: Siemens

Survival of the smartest

Text Sebastian Wolking

Companies strive to survive, grow, and improve – a principle as old as life itself. Since Charles Darwin, we've understood that the drive for survival affects all living beings. Economic research shows that this also applies to the corporate world. The parallels between natural and economic evolution are, in fact, striking.

Just as flocking protects starlings from airborne predators, collaborations and partnerships can ensure the survival of businesses.

Photo: iStock

Darwin's theory of evolution centers on one key principle: survival of the fittest. In the business world, this concept seems just as relevant, though the pace is significantly different. In nature, it can take centuries or millennia for traits to impact a species' prospects positively or negatively. In the fast-paced economy of the Anthropocene, companies often have mere months or years to adapt in order to secure their survival.

The mechanisms behind this dynamic are studied in evolutionary economics, a field of economic research that emerged in the 1980s. It posits that markets – and therefore businesses – are never in a state of equilibrium. Instead, they are characterized by constant competition among companies, products, and systems. As in Darwin's observations in nature, only those that adapt to their environment emerge victorious. Companies must navigate this challenge daily, adapting to new regulations, shifting consumer preferences, demographic changes, and long-term trends like climate change. But the most transformative and rapid force shaping today's business landscape is digitalization. Companies not only need to keep pace with it but, ideally, drive it to remain competitive and ensure their survival.

Swallowed by evolution

There's another parallel to Darwin and his ideas: visionaries, like the naturalist himself, are often met with skepticism. Modern business leaders such as Steve Jobs or Mark Zuckerberg were also viewed with suspicion. When Apple launched the iPhone in 2007, Microsoft's then-CEO Steve Ballmer famously mocked the device as too expensive and impractical due to its lack of buttons. Yet the iPhone revolutionized the mobile phone market, while Microsoft exited the smartphone arena within a few years.

The business world is rife with examples of companies that failed to evolve. Nokia resisted the transition from push-button cell phones to smartphones. Kodak missed the digital camera revolution. The US video rental company Blockbuster declined to acquire Netflix before the streaming service sealed its demise. These companies might have avoided being casualties of natural selection – a main principle of Darwin's theory – if they had embraced traits critical to survival.

Today, critics suggest that German carmakers have been too slow to adapt to the shift toward electric vehicles. Whether that judgment holds will only become clear with time. Evolution, after all, is neither linear nor entirely predictable. It operates according to several principles, both in the wild and in business.

Companies must navigate various challenges, adapting to new regulations, shifting consumer preferences, demographic changes, long-term trends like climate change, and above all: digitalization.

Adapting to the environment is key, both in natural and economic evolution.

Variation and coincidence

Evolution thrives on variation. Genes combine in ever-new ways, much like shuffling a deck of cards. For a technology company like Siemens, this could mean leveraging existing expertise to create new innovative products and services. Nevertheless, evolution often happens unplanned. The tales of accidental discoveries by Alexander Fleming (penicillin) or Wilhelm Conrad Röntgen (X-rays) are widely known. But many industrial products also owe their existence to sheer coincidence. Take engineer Percy Spencer, for example. While working at Raytheon on a magnetron – a tube later critical for radar systems – he noticed a chocolate bar melting in his pocket during an experiment. Intrigued, he tested with other foods, and the idea for the microwave was born – a kitchen appliance that has since become a staple in households around the world.

Replication

Once an idea succeeds, replication ensures its spread. Fast-food chains exemplify this principle, passing their "genes" to franchisees to ensure rapid growth and widespread success. McDonald's leveraged replication through franchising to become a global fast-food giant. Replication, additional to constant change, is a critical driver of evolution.

Rapid growth

Replication also enables businesses to dominate niches quickly, often outpacing competitors. In nature, growth is limited by resources or predators. In business, constraints like employees or raw materials apply – until technological breakthroughs reset the playing field. Companies that grow faster than their rivals gain a significant advantage.

Stagnation

However, success often also brings saturation. This is understandable but dangerous. Established routines that have ensured survival for years are hard to abandon. Economist Clayton Christensen highlighted this in his work "The Innovator's Dilemma". Those who are successful, do not feel any pressure to develop further, to adapt to future changes about which they do not yet now and therefore run a paradoxical risk of failure.

Cooperation over competition

Of course, biological and economic evolution are not entirely analogous, nor are they perfectly interchangeable. For instance, there is no structured unit of selection in economics akin to a genome. In business, outcomes often hinge on individual decisions of leaders, unlike in nature. Moreover, while natural evolution is unguided, companies must adapt to politically driven goals and regulations.

It would be a mistake to view evolutionary competition as a kind of physical, relentless contest without exception. On the contrary – over time, cooperation has emerged as a powerful force in nature: take flowers and bees, for example, with the former providing food and the latter spreading pollen for reproduction. Or the symbiosis between algae and corals in coral reefs. The algae provide oxygen and nutrients through photosynthesis, while the corals provide protection and access to sunlight.

Similarly, companies leverage joint ventures, strategic partnerships, and research alliances to succeed. Or they collaborate with Global Business Services, which, in turn, bring together various companies or business units, acting as a kind of catalyst for evolution. Siemens GBS, for instance, defines its purpose as: "We enable our customers to accelerate their business transformation."

Biology teaches us what happens when isolated species suddenly face intruders or new competitors: they go extinct. Global Business Services, however, achieve the opposite. They create new ecosystems or interconnect existing ones – to the benefit of all. After all, evolution, even in business, need not be a zero-sum game. It can foster – to translate the linguistic jargon into the modern world of business – a "win-win" dynamic, offering mutual growth and survival. ◗

Photos: iStock, Getty

Fast, accurate, and innovative: GBS is using the power of artificial intelligence to support end-to-end sales processes. Its latest innovations enhance the O2C journey, from pre-sales right through to tenders and contracts. These improved processes can help customers to increase productivity and thereby achieve higher revenues.

Text Louise Anderson

Supporting end-to-end sales with *AI*

Photo: iStock

GBS enhances O2C processes with cutting-edge technology

It is still groundbreaking technology that offers companies new ways to optimise and innovate: artificial intelligence. GBS is, among other things, applying AI's potential to Opportunity-to-Cash (O2C) services to increase productivity – and to help generate higher revenues. Its exciting new use cases support customers end-to-end through O2C processes.
Alina Engbert, Head of AI at Siemens GBS, says: "AI is a toolbox that we can customize according to a customer's needs. We work to understand their pain points, then apply and adapt the technology as needed. We have the experts and the knowledge to co-create tailored solutions."

The new intelligent tools combine GBS' expertise in generative AI with its Siemens process know-how throughout the end-to-end O2C process. As a result, customers can improve their efficiency and productivity. "Our knowledge of the business and how we combine it with AI tools is very exciting," says Andreas Wiegand, GBS Digitalization Manager.

GBS is already using AI's tremendous potential and is constantly developing further helpful applications. For example, its new Pre-Sales Assistant can search for – and extract – required information from hundreds of pages of text, tables, graphics and photos. Other AI solutions accelerate and optimize the tender process to help achieve sales. And in after sales, the Contract GPT solution can automate and improve contract-related procedures:

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Example 1: Pre-Sales Assistant

It is a challenge often faced by sales agents: how to quickly and accurately respond to potential buyers' product information requests? GBS Digital Solutions is now helping to transform the very first step of the O2C journey with a digital solution to assist customers with exactly that. AI-powered assistants can for example automatically search for information among various documentation like product manuals including text, diagrams, photos and tables. These tools can accelerate the information retrieval process and thus supports sales agents. Andreas Wiegand, Transformation Architect at Siemens GBS O2C, says: "A Pre-Sales Assistant lets you do more with less. This outstanding example of how AI can extract knowledge from handbooks can be customized for different customers. It has huge potential to increase productivity."

GBS Digital Solutions began this co-creation project with workshops to identify requirements, objectives and the challenges at hand. They found that sales agents often struggle to quickly locate the correct information within product manuals, which often exceed 10,000 pages of documentation. What's more, product manuals often contain technical drawings, tables, graphics and photos in addition to text. This makes manual information retrieval even more time-consuming.

AI-based Pre-Sales Assistant solves this issue by digitally retrieving requested information from thousands of pages of mixed-format documentation. When GBS DS developed the solution's proof of concept, completed in August 2024, it became one of the first gen AI use cases to extract information from diagrams and tables.

Example 2: Tender GPT

While Pre-Sales Assistants support teams who are responding to potential buyers' inquiries, further GBS use cases assist with another important stage of the O2C process: tenders.

Preparing and submitting a tender, i.e. a formal bid to supply a product or service, is often a complex multi-stakeholder process requiring feedback and input from colleagues in sales, admin, customer service and legal departments. What's more, documentation for a tender often runs to hundreds of pages of detailed material.

Tender is a vital stage of the O2C journey – and aspects of it too can be automated and accelerated with a new AI engine called Tender GPT. This digital tool streamlines the document collection process – and even creates proposals.
For example, a feature called "Talk to Your Tender" enables bid managers to ask questions about a tender. The digital tool will then scour the relevant documentation for the answers. Tender GPT accelerates the extraction of required information from unstructured text, which in turn increases efficiency by reducing manual reading and processing efforts. What's more, the digital tool creates transparency by giving updates on users' status.

The very start of the tender process can also be enhanced thanks to the Crawling Tenders feature. This uses technology to search websites for publicly available tenders which may be relevant. The tool will alert the bid manager if it finds a potential opportunity. Antonio Cocozza, Business Analyst at Siemens GBS O2C, says: "We want to scale, be more digitalized, have more automation, more customers – and less work for our colleagues."

Once a tender process has been given the green light to proceed, a front-end application of Tender GPT has been developed as a tender management tool. Called Bid2Win, it is a prime example of workflow process optimization with the integration of document handling.

Bid2Win centralizes tender requests, ensures timely submissions, and offers transparent tracking and reporting to the bid manager. It also provides transparent follow-ups to ensure efficient management and prevent oversights. TenderGPT's integration into Bid2Win enhances proposal creation and submissions. Its focus is on organizing and structuring the Bid2Win process and helps managers work on their proposal creation, organize their team, and make their proposal faster.

Customers using this technology can make informed decisions throughout the bid process, focus on optimizing their tender responses, and stay ahead in high-value tenders. Bid2Win also cuts down on emails and long email communication trails between stakeholders, and reduces complexity. Francesco Naddeo, Head of Tender & Bid at Siemens Healthineers, says: "The agile mindset, which is strongly driven by GBS and Siemens Healthineers, helped the multidisciplinary team develop trust and achieve this great result."

> "We want to scale, be more digitalized, have more automation, more customers – and less work for our colleagues."
>
> Antonio Cocozza, Business Analyst at Siemens GBS O2C

A front-end application of Tender GPT, called Bid2Win helps sales teams to create their proposals faster.

Contract GPT frees up colleagues to focus their time and efforts on other quality work.

Example 3: Contract GPT

Expert
Antonio Cocozza, Business Analyst at Siemens GBS O2C

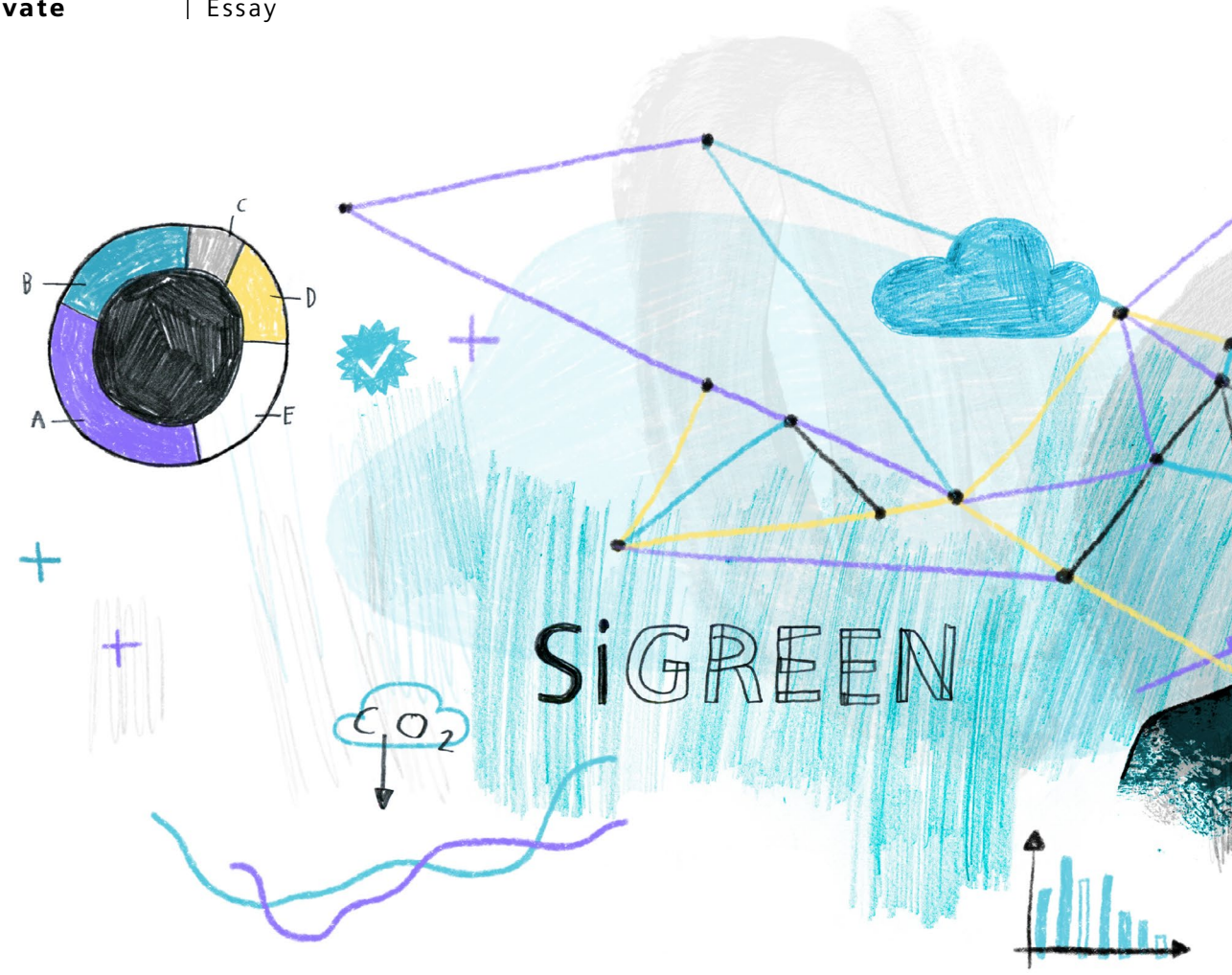
Expert
Andreas Wiegand, Transformation Architect at Siemens GBS O2C

GBS continues to enhance its customers' O2C journey even after tenders have successfully been concluded. Its Contract GPT solution enables customers to apply the power of gen AI to contracts by automating tasks such as data entry and data extraction.

This scalable, customizable solution addresses a clear customer need. Processing and reading contracts are time-consuming manual tasks which are often prone to errors. Data verification and contract approval often entail cross-checking information from scanned or faxed documents, which can be difficult to read. This can lead to inaccuracies. Errors can also occur during manual data entry. What's more, traditional contract processing often lacks integration between different tools, which can lead to inefficiencies.

Contract GPT demonstrates GBS' commitment to enhancing all end-to-end O2C processes. It leverages AI to upload contracts and extract the necessary information. It also reduces the time that teams have to spend reading and understanding contracts. As a result of faster contract processing speeds, this digital tool frees up colleagues to focus their time and efforts on other quality work. ◗

Photos: Siemens, iStock

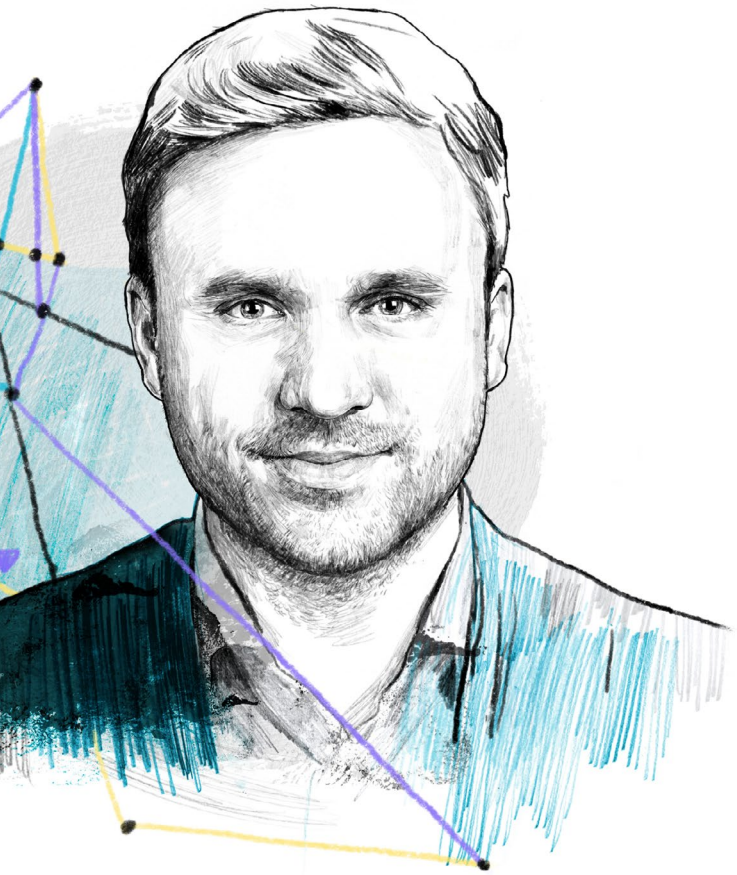


Where future-proof business models *are forged*

Digitalization, new technology, and decarbonization are challenging existing business models – but they also create new opportunities. The Marketing & Sales Consulting Team at Siemens GBS Global Marketing Services (GMS) has developed a holistic methodology for business model innovation – to the benefit of both internal and external clients.

Text Christian Drotleff, Head of Marketing and Sales Strategy at Siemens Global Marketing Services (GMS)

Illustration: Silke Werzinger



Biography

Christian Drotleff is Head of Marketing and Sales Strategy at Siemens Global Marketing Services (GMS), Marketing & Sales Consulting (MSC). The MSC team consists of around 40 employees. They support their clients during transformation using digital, data-data driven, and AI-enabled consulting, solutions, and implementation services along the entire customer journey.

Technological innovation, rapidly shifting customer demands, and the ecological challenges of the 21st century present many obstacles to businesses: those that do not react quickly enough through product and process innovation fall behind and lose customers to competitors. But how can business models be made future-proof? Which new business models are viable as technology progresses? And how can the development of business models be done in a structured way?

At Siemens GBS Global Marketing Services (GMS) Marketing & Sales Consulting (MSC), we specialize in answering these questions hands-on. Around 40 experts worldwide support clients from all global Siemens companies as an internal consultancy for strategy, transformation, and customer centricity. No matter if we are talking about the development of a new marketing and sales strategy, new forms of communication, support with transforming business models, or improved customer centricity: together with our clients, we establish and implement new, mostly digital, business and sales models.

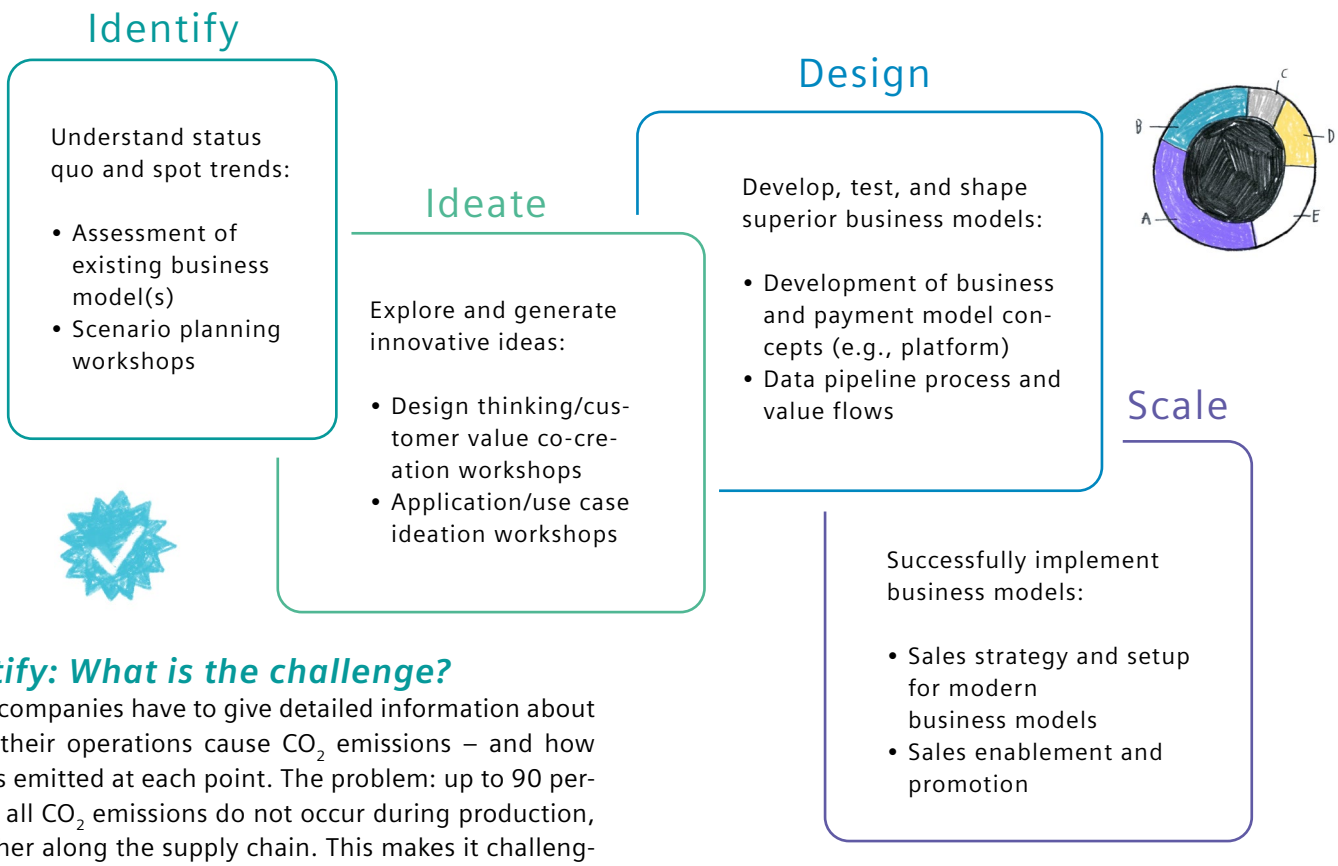
A holistic approach: DNA Consulting Framework

The results often take the shape of platforms or software-as-a-service (SaaS) applications. But there are no one-size-fits-all solutions. Every project is different. Our own consultancy framework ensures an efficient approach to many complex requirements. It enables us to support business model innovations from start to finish or only in specific phases of a project, depending on ist specific needs. We call this framework the DNA Consulting Framework, because it innovates the business from its core and also changes the mindsets of people. Together with the client, we identify the status quo, explore trends, and assess their existing business model. New ideas for future use cases, new business models, as well as new options for monetization are then co-developed in workshops. Subsequently, we implement the new business model and execute the jointly created sales strategy.

Our main distinction: as "Siemens insiders", we know the Siemens world with its key programs as well as rules, regulations, and tools from numerous projects. As a result, we get up to speed fast and can communicate with customers on an equal footing.

Real-world example: decarbonization through data

The development of the business model and the market launch of the emissions management tool SiGREEN in collaboration with colleagues from Siemens Digital Factory Automation is a recent real-world example of our work. We went through all four major steps of our DNA Consulting Framework:



Identify: What is the challenge?

Today, companies have to give detailed information about where their operations cause CO_2 emissions – and how much is emitted at each point. The problem: up to 90 percent of all CO_2 emissions do not occur during production, but rather along the supply chain. This makes it challenging to calculate the exact product carbon footprint (PCF) of a particular product.

At this point, SiGREEN, developed within the N47 Accelerator, emerged as a promising solution for effective carbon footprint management, ready to transition from an internal innovation to a market-ready offering. The primary challenge was crafting a scalable business model and a go-to-market strategy that targeted the right customers and sales channels, ensuring a smooth market entry and long-term success.

Ideate: In what form can we bring this product to market?

Following our DNA Consulting Framework, we focused on developing a future-proof business model for SiGREEN. This involved evaluating various business model alternatives and pricing strategies, defining a strategic vision, and creating a roadmap with measurable KPIs. The analysis provided clarity on how SiGREEN could evolve from a software-as-a-service (SaaS) solution to a platform-based business model. This comprehensive approach ensured that the business model was both adaptable and aligned with market needs, setting a solid foundation for a successful and impactful go-to-market strategy.

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Design: How exactly does the business model work?

We designed a business model tailored to SiGREEN's unique strengths and market opportunities. This included identifying key target groups within Siemens and beyond, analyzing their needs, and defining monetization strategies. Rather than focusing solely on the initial launch, the business model emphasized future scalability, envisioning SiGREEN as a platform for different stakeholders. To support this, we considered the integration of APIs and possible revenue models for external customers. Ultimately, we developed not just a business model but a vision and roadmap for continuous innovation and growth.

Scale: How do we establish this business model on the market?

At Siemens, there is a standard process for the introduction of new products: Product Lifecycle Management (PLM). However, when introducing new digital business models, it is essential to rethink and adapt established processes and tools to ensure a successful go-to-market strategy. A critical component was training the salesforce to effectively communicate the value of SiGREEN, ensuring they could address customer needs and drive adoption. By embedding the business model within existing frameworks and equipping teams with the right tools and knowledge, we ensured SiGREEN's readiness for market success. ◗

on Automation is awesome

POMA eliminates many manual steps in purchasing

In the world of procurement at industrial companies, where many orders are constantly placed and processed, handling the associated data has long been a challenge. POMA, an automated solution from GBS, not only streamlines operations, but also harmonizes global purchasing processes.

Text Calvin Major

The challenge: managing complex purchasing processes

To ensure that various Siemens organizations receive the raw materials, preliminary products, and other goods they require, they place thousands of orders every day. In many cases this involves manually changing and managing data in the purchasing department. For example, orders are placed and shared via email, with corresponding confirmations later individually input into SAP manually.

On average, every employee in purchasing spends at least two hours a day following up on purchase orders and updating the hugely complex data set of orders. This adds cost and carries the risk of errors. It also makes it difficult to track the scope of different orders across various communication channels and quickly check their status with various suppliers. Another key downside: the longer and more complex the purchasing process is, the longer production might have to wait for the components they need.

tomation is awesome

Automation: cloud-based information sharing between buyer and supplier

Purchase Order Management Automation (POMA) developed by Siemens GBS Purchase-to-Pay is the answer to this complexity. Firstly, the purchase order data is retrieved in real time to the POMA system, prompting notifications to be sent to suppliers. Then suppliers have to enter their relevant confirmation and/or delivery information data in POMA. POMA takes over, making follow-up emails a thing of the past, while also automatically updating order confirmations and delivery reminders directly in SAP, thus eliminating another manual step.

A team led by Project Owner Ximena Espinoza from Siemens GBS Purchase-to-Pay (P2P) are the faces behind POMA. They conducted an in-depth analysis to discover what buyers required, and what the answer to their needs should be. Then they developed their solution in house with the help of cloud and platform technology including Snowflake, AWS, and Mendix.

Expert
Ximena Espinoza,
GBS US Purchase to Pay
Process Optimization
and Digitalization Lead

POMA has been fully implemented at four US Siemens Smart Infrastructure locations as well as at three Mexico Siemens Smart Infrastructure locations. These business units have dedicated buyers and expeditors who previously had to follow up with suppliers on purchase orders for issues like acknowledgments, confirmations, delivery dates, shipping information, and delays. The POMA tool greatly supports the team by providing a workflow to track any changes and open orders, relaying discrepancies from the supplier to the buyer for approval before data is entered into SAP. This allows purchasing departments to focus on strategic questions and negotiations instead of operational tedious tasks.

The bottom line: time and money saved every day

POMA currently has more than 170 active users and communicates with more than 1,100 suppliers, sending over 24,000 notifications a year. As a result, orders placed with suppliers are confirmed to be 75 percent faster. The time savings are enormous – as are the cost savings business units using the system often achieve.

On average, customers who adopt POMA see 3.55 percent of orders missing confirmations. For customers who do not use POMA, the average is 26.83 percent. During fiscal year 22/23, POMA is projected to have automated 7,000 hours of manual work. In monetary terms this equates to $480,000 in savings.

Click here to get in touch with GBS

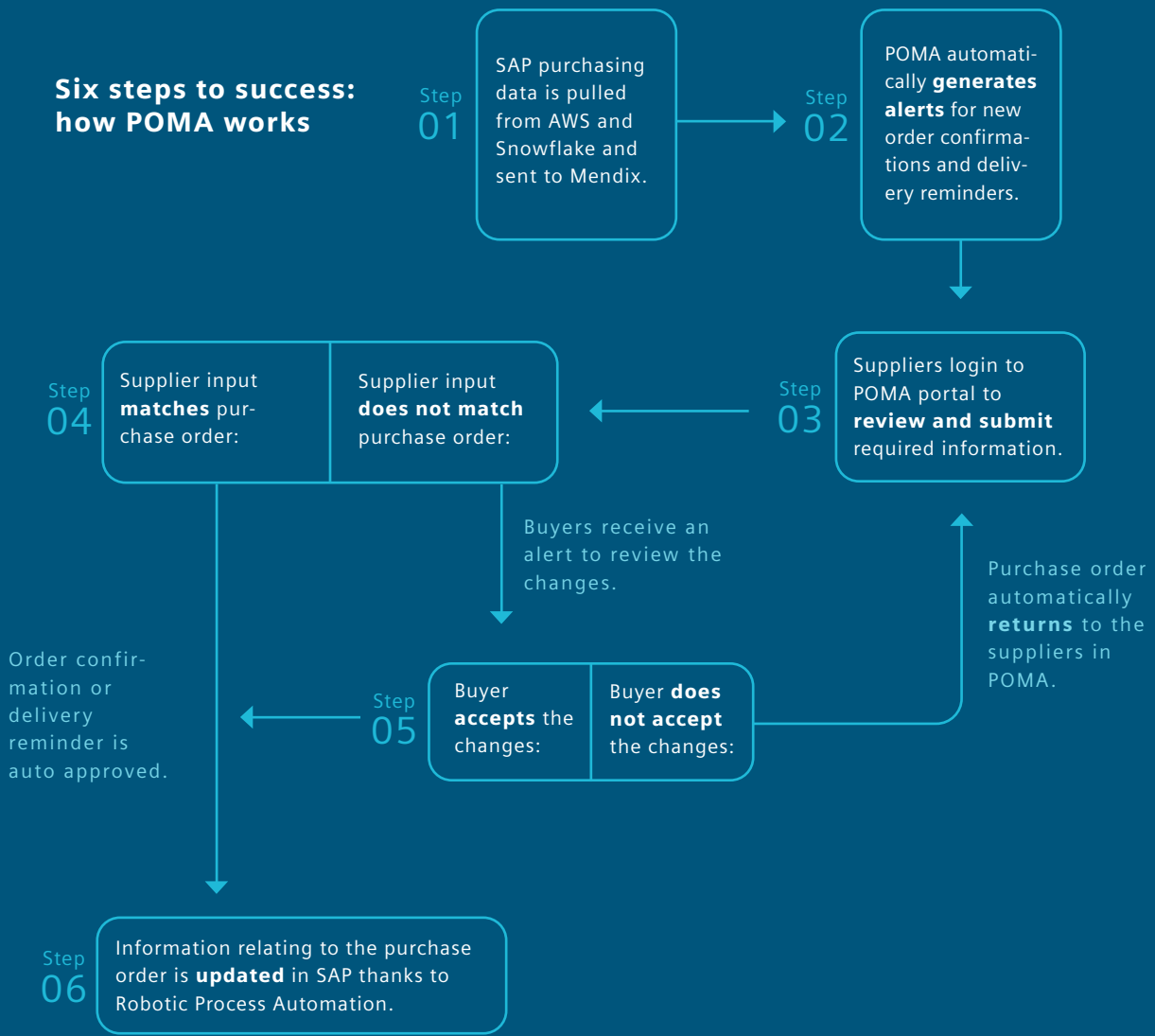
Photo: Siemens

Automation is awesom

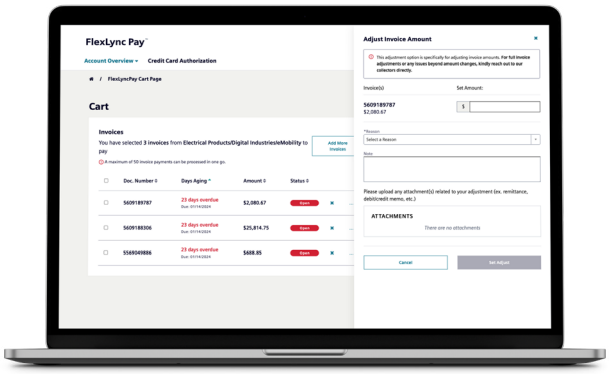
POMA also benefits the global standardization and optimization of purchasing by storing all data in SAP S4/HANA. This streamlines the process, as the application front end and back end are harmonized globally and across different systems.

Jay Singh, Purchasing Director at Siemens Smart Infrastructure Electrification & Automation (SI EA), and his department are among POMA's happy customers. His verdict: "The impact has been substantial. Our confirmation turnaround time has reduced, and the additional bandwidth has enabled us to support a larger volume in our factory without adding personnel."

Six steps to success: how POMA works



FlexLync Pay at a glance



Managing payments independently, intuitively, and on a modern interface seems too good to be true? Not with FlexLync Pay, the Customer Payment Portal by Siemens Global Business Services.

Text Laura Donnemiller

What *is it?*

FlexLync Pay is part of GBS' Opportunity-to-Cash (O2C) portfolio. In this Customer Payment Portal, customers can manage their payments to Siemens autonomously. The system displays open invoices and payment options, and offers the possibility to receive and download invoice copies.

Overall, the platform features:

- A single, dedicated channel to manage their account payables
- Access to multiple payment options including ACH (automated clearing house) and credit card
- Enhanced credit card transaction security by eliminating the need to gather and process card credentials manually
- Largely automized and digitalized payment process including cash application

What *is the customer benefit?*

Customers benefit from a fully automated process that enables significant savings through credit card surcharging. Moreover, customers can work on their invoices independently and do not have to rely on the availability of their contact person within Siemens. This makes it a highly efficient and cost- as well as time-saving tool, so customers can focus more on sales and less on administrative work.

Expert
Nikolas Barth,
Head of GBS Digital Solutions Americas

Expert
Wolfgang Satori,
Head of GBS Opportunity-to-Cash Services Americas

What *makes it unique?*

FlexLync Pay makes doing business with Siemens easier. Through enabling flexibility, autonomy, and usability, FlexLync Pay offers significant value-add to customers. At the same time, the portal also adapts to a new generation of buying customers, bringing B2C payment processes to B2B scenarios.

What *is next?*

Discussions are underway to make the service available for even more customers in the Americas, offering FlexLync Pay in additional countries across North and South America. To offer best-in-class service, the team is working on including additional payment methods. Furthermore, future collaboration opportunities with Siemens Financial Services in terms of extended payment term options are being investigated at the moment.

FlexLync Pay in three words?

Intuitive, modern, reliable.

Click here to get in touch with GBS

Photos: Siemens

Logistic Services: *Innovating* transport

Getting something from A to B seems easy at first glance, right? Pick it up, pack it up, send it out, deliver it – done. While in theory that might be true, our fast-paced world presents the field of logistics with many challenges. Logistic Services at Siemens Global Business Services tackles them all.

Text Laura Donnemiller

How convenient it would be to have a reliable, experienced and innovative partner that not only takes care of managing your shipments, but is also an expert in improving and streamlining your logistic operations. Logistic Services at Siemens Global Business Services is just that.

With many Siemens Businesses among its customers, Logistic Services manages, for example, freight clearing for eleven million shipments per year. In eight logistic centers, over 240 employees coordinate transports, provide freight management services or co-create innovative solutions with clients to meet their specific business needs. The portfolio ranges from logistics operations and freight services to expert advisory and digital solutions. Whether you need support with operative transport management, automizing your logistic processes or introducing an optimized logistic network design, Logistic Services serves customers in supply chain strategy, tactics and operations.

The team enables transformation towards a sustainably and digitally optimized supply chain, harnessing the power to co-create value.

Value creation in action: save on transport costs with freight clearing services

In today's highly competitive economy, GBS Logistic Services is committed to creating customer value with professional and cost-effective services to provide a critical cost advantage for our customers. They are continuously enhancing one of their cost-saving offerings, a self-billing process named LP2, which collects, virtually bundles and pays transports, all highly automated based on Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) carrier connections. The solution masterfully handles tariffs with various structures from different service providers and carriers, variable cost factors, surcharges and special conditions, always making sure that the customers pay the most cost-effective option. Thanks to the bundling effect, all customers using this service are able to save costs as the shipments are not paid separately by each Siemens Business. Instead they are consolidated for Siemens AG as a whole if the transports characteristics allow for a virtually bundled payment. This way, Logistic Services creates substantial value for their customers. What this example greatly represents is that Logistic Services not only improves quality and drives automation of processes, but also puts a strong focus on additional customer value creation.

Photo: Getty

Safeguarding value creation in times of digital business transformation

As Siemens undergoes the SHERPA X digital business transformation, Logistic Services' commitment to safeguarding the future value creation of their services remains essential. In the context of SHERPA X, Logistic Services is proactively adjusting its current processes and routines in collaboration with customers already at an early stage. In this regard, the focus lies on adopting agile ways of working, streamlining processes, and adapting or modernizing services – not only to further enhance efficiency, but to ensure value creation in the upcoming system and process environments. By ensuring that shipment data is available, reliable and displayed in a more user-friendly manner, Logistic Services is reducing errors, lowering costs, increasing transparency, and mitigating risks – all of which is highly appreciated by their customers.

Expert
Paula Kral-Serrato, Head of Delivery Management GBS Logistic Services

Furthermore, the digital business transformation is also impacting the freight clearing process, which involves the way transport companies like DHL and FedEx are being paid. Logistic Services is collaborating with customers' SHERPA X teams early on to achieve a clearer view of transport details, applied rates, and associated payment obligations. This increased transparency and data availability is a prerequisite to further scale highly automized freight clearing solutions and is expected to result in a lower error rate and higher cost reduction among freight payments.

The team has already started to collaborate and work on a proof of concept not only to ensure a seamless transition, but to guarantee that all processes and associated services exploit the full potential that SHERPA X is promising: "I trust that we have the expertise to ensure a smooth execution of projects because Logistic Services knows their customers' needs by heart," states Paula Kral-Serrato, Head of Delivery Management.

By prioritizing transparency, agility, and process optimization, Logistic Services is well positioned to safeguard the future value creation of their services during and after this transformative period.

GBS Logistic Services

Serving you in supply chain strategy, tactics and operations

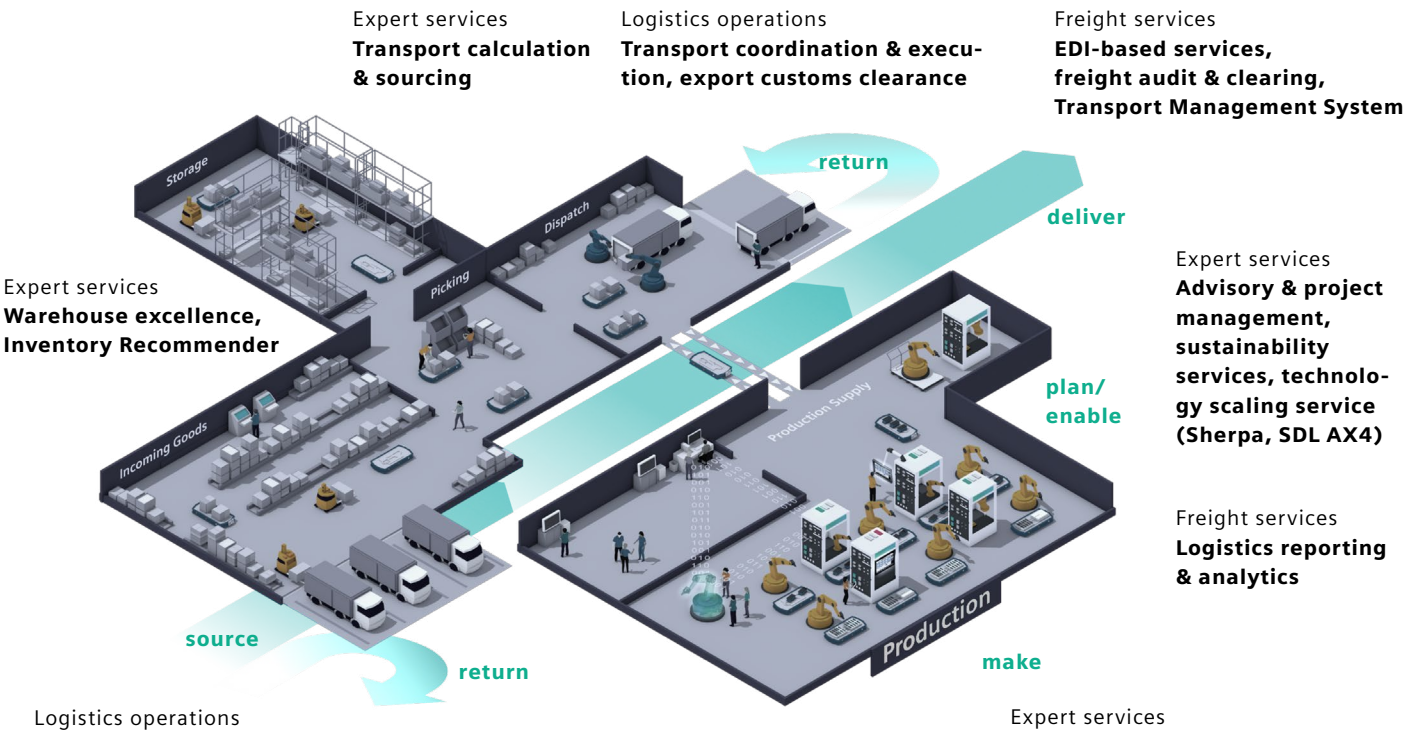


Photo: Siemens

Logistic Services at a glance

Expert services

Advisory & project management

- Optimize, realign and build resilient supply chain organizations
- Supply chain strategy and planning
- Operational logistics process optimization and sustainability advisory

Transport calculation & sourcing

- Planning, sourcing, coordination and fulfillment of project logistics

Inventory Recommender

- Transform inventory related data into knowledge
- AI-based prediction of critical information such as expected raw material demand, supplier lead times, safety stock levels

Digital Planning Board

- Support for shopfloor planning process
- Updating tasks and statuses of customer orders
- Real-time and bi-directional based on SAP order information

Logistics operations

Transport coordination & execution

- Experienced logistics operators
- All necessary activities throughout the logistical operational process

Import & export customs clearance

- Compliant import/export and customs declaration with all relevant authorities

Freight Services

EDI-based services

- Automated solutions to simplify logistics operations
- Improved transparency based on reliable EDI carrier connections

Transport Management System

- Onboarding of suppliers inbound and outbound
- 1st and 2nd level user support
- Trainings, data maintenance, reporting

Freight audit & clearing

- Automated solutions and experienced experts
- Support in freight audit and payment process

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It's about the processes – but also about the people

If there is one thing that helps the team at Logistic Services to work effectively, it is the ongoing exchange with colleagues from different regions and Siemens Businesses. To make sure that their offerings work for everyone, it is important to not only have the processes and systems ready, but also the people. Everyone needs to be on track so that no details get lost. Supporting each other with adjustments and being open to new routes is their recipe for success, which is also reflected in the customer feedback they receive: "With their strong network, fruitful technical knowledge and expertise in transport operations, the GBS Logistic Services team is the perfect partner for us to make the impossible possible," states Blanche Kong, Head of Logistics Operations at Siemens Smart Infrastructure AP Hub.

With a focus on value creation, full customer centricity and an amazing team spirit, Logistic Services is perfectly equipped to drive transformation forward and find the right solutions for everyone involved. ◗

Master-*minds* for master data

Text Christian Raschke

Photos: Getty, Siemens

Any process is only as good as the data that feeds it. This is especially true when it comes to master data on customers, suppliers, products, and materials. They are the basis for automation and data-driven decision-making. Kept up to date, they help save time and money – and even to use working capital more efficiently.

Expert
Alexandra Strobl,
Master Data Head

If you ask Alexandra Strobl to describe how valuable her team's work at Siemens GBS Master Data Services is, she loves to tell the story of Mayer Inc. and Miller Inc. The names are made up, but the case is real. Both companies are suppliers of Siemens and make fastening bolts for two factories. Mayer Inc. supplies one site, and Miller Inc. delivers bolts to the other factory. But what happens when changing demand requires a shift of production from one factory to the other? "That's when you realize that a bolt that is needed to make a product, for example, in one place instead of in another, comes from a different manufacturer. The question then becomes whether the bolt from Miller Inc. has the exact same specifications as the one from Mayer Inc.," says Strobl, Master Data Head at Siemens GBS.

If she and her team have done a good job, they can find the answer in two or three clicks. Siemens GBS Master Data Services handles master data for customers. They keep track of all information that relate to customers, suppliers, and materials.

Why is master data management key?

Master data is often just a small percentage of all data, but they are some of the most complex and valuable information a corporation has. The reason: they form the basis for all later steps in data processing. If, for example, a supplier ceases production of a particular intermediate product, master data management must ensure this change is replicated in all relevant systems i.e. purchasing, logistics, accounting, and product development. Should this be missed, data can be isolated, out of date, or implausible.

Back to the example of Mayer Inc. and Miller Inc. – thanks to well-managed data on materials, the analysis shows: the bolts are nigh on identical and can be swapped for each other without problems. "As a further example, we could purchase these bolts from Mayer Inc. for both factories in the future if needed," says Strobl. This makes it easier to shift production. And in case of larger order volumes, unit prices could also be lowered through better purchasing power.

Significant influence on the bottom line

This is just one of many examples that illustrate how excellent master data management can benefit corporations. In a study, experts from KPMG showed it can lower purchasing costs by two to five percent and increase revenue by one to two percent. Additionally, between five and ten percent less working capital gets bound up. "The problem is, almost nobody enjoys cultivating this data," says Strobl. "But these advantages help us show our customers why managing master data well pays off."

"Our team are currently gathering comprehensive know-how in several areas and aim to grow the service offering in many data disciplines."

Alexandra Strobl,
Master Data Head

Benefits of efficient Master Data Management

3 to 8 % faster processing time	due to reduced time to find data, faster data consolidation and potential for process automation
2 to 5 % reduced expenses	due to transparent product groups, efficient bundling of orders and a solid basis for negotiations
4 to 6 % lower IT project cost	due to lower data migration efforts, reduced system complexity and less maintenance
1 to 2 % further revenue growth	due to transparent price conditions, analyzable customer master data and hierarchies and the identification of cross-selling opportunities
5 to 10 % less working capital	due to efficient warehouse management, lower inventory cost and efficient invoice and revenue management

Source: KPMG

Duplicate information is another key matter: master data is usually edited by many different employees. Supplier data is a typical example for this. One writes "Street", while another uses the abbreviation "St". This can result in the same supplier or one of their products being included in the system multiple times. "In the course of our work we often find multiple identical entries for the same product," says Strobl. Some duplicates are intentional, but how do you distinguish what is and what is not intentional? What sounds like a small issue can have wide-reaching effects. "Particularly when it means the same product is also in stock two or three times, this binds working capital and storage space that otherwise would not be needed."

This means working with Siemens GBS Master Data Services brings multiple advantages. Not only do the experts make data access reliable and economical, because they are specialized, they also recognize and clear up inconsistencies quicker. For customers like Siemens Digital Industries, this means their own employees can concentrate on the job in hand, instead of handling routine work.

Specialized master data management is on the rise

Strobl's team is currently supporting on Commercial Price Updates for the Product Automation division. "We are working with a set of master data for materials comprising several thousand of entries and updating the prices," Strobl explains. "Our team are currently gathering comprehensive know-how in several areas and aim to grow the service offering in many data disciplines." She points out that, in the past, GBS Master Data Services often just received a data sample and were asked to input into a corresponding system. "However, our goal is to provide value beyond that," stresses Strobl, who is currently pushing forward on further pilot projects for managing master data on materials. She is convinced: "Only high-quality master data creates a reliable basis for Siemens' success as a data-driven company."

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Master Data Management for small and medium sized enterprises: The Master Data Suite

The **GBS Master Data Suite** is a unified data workflow application designed to support a wide range of data management processes, including business partner, finance, and material master data.

The IT-enabled services are based on a Mendix platform and can be integrated seamlessly into customer ERP systems. They include compliance and quality assurance, making master data management smooth, simple, and secure.

The **Master Data Suite** manages all use cases of master data, e.g. Creation, Change, Extend, Block and Unblock. Putting them all together, a user-friendly dashboard offers a holistic overview on KPIs.

In a nutshell

Advice and services from GBS make life easier for employees. In each issue, Inside presents a service that is really worth using. In this issue: ***the Analytics and Low Code Trainings by GBS Project Services.***

Training to *un*lock potential

Hundreds of professionals worldwide have benefited from training that sharpens their skills and improves their daily workflows. GBS experts can empower teams to harness the full potential of tools that automate work processes and handle data.

Text Louise Anderson

Photos: AdobeStock, Siemens

The challenge

Many Siemens teams have access to powerful software tools, but do not have the expertise to use them to the fullest. This lack of knowledge and confidence leaves those colleagues unable to optimize their work processes – or live up to their own workplace potential.

For example, they may spend time manually gathering and transforming data, maintaining systems, or producing reports. Struggling to process large volumes of data can slow down decision-making and increase the risk of errors.

Siemens teams already have the solution in their hands with tools such as the Microsoft Power Platform. Yet Martin Michalský, GBS Manager responsible for Smart Analytics Projects, explains: "People very often don't realize these tools' potential. They're scratching the surface of what's possible because they haven't had any training. This leaves them using just one part of the software for their day-to-day tasks."

The solution

Since the GBS Smart Analytics Projects team launched its training service five years ago, it has taught more than 1,000 Siemens colleagues to understand and utilize their software's capabilities. GBS experts in Europe and India run training sessions in English and German for tools including the MS Power Platform's Power BI, Power Apps, Power Automate, and others.

Participants learn how the tools save time by automating repetitive tasks and reducing complex manual processes. They can even develop their own solutions, such as building dynamic reports and maintaining easily updatable dashboards. "There is currently a big push towards digitalization, and we want to weave this digital mindset into the fabric of everything we do at Siemens," Martin Michalský explains. "We aim to make people more aware of their technology – and help them become self-sufficient at dealing with data."

Training is available in various formats to meet participants' needs. Hour-long info sessions introduce teams to their tools' capabilities, such as their ability to reduce manual work and improve accuracy. Standardized trainings are practical sessions to get participants started with their tool of choice. Custom trainings are tailored to meet teams' specific needs by teaching them skills that apply to real work scenarios. Ultimately, the training aims to help colleagues work more efficiently while reducing the complexity of their tasks. "We provide all the necessary training materials and resources, so at the end of the training session participants can start using their tool – and fully leverage its potential," Michalský says.

Expert
Martin Michalský, Smart Analytics Manager

The application

GBS consultants have trained participants worldwide, from South Africa and Japan to California and Norway. Their expertise is driving digitalization and adding value to the company.

Zoran Blazevic, Head of GBS Project Services & Transformations Department for Central and Eastern Europe, says: "We end every training by telling participants to reach out to us because we are all colleagues. We are focused on creating long-term partnerships across the organization." Demand consistently exceeds the available places whenever training sessions are announced. "Demand is high because people appreciate our customer-centric approach. Although trainings mostly last six to eight hours, our trainers usually spend nearly twice that time sharing individual tips and tricks, and giving hints on problems our students have. Besides that, it is evident that people are hungry to learn," Blazevic adds. Feedback has been extremely positive, with some participants praising the "inspirational" training sessions' structure, organization, and content. For example, a successful training program for Innomotics gave 130 participants the skills to use Power BI for data analysis and reporting processes.

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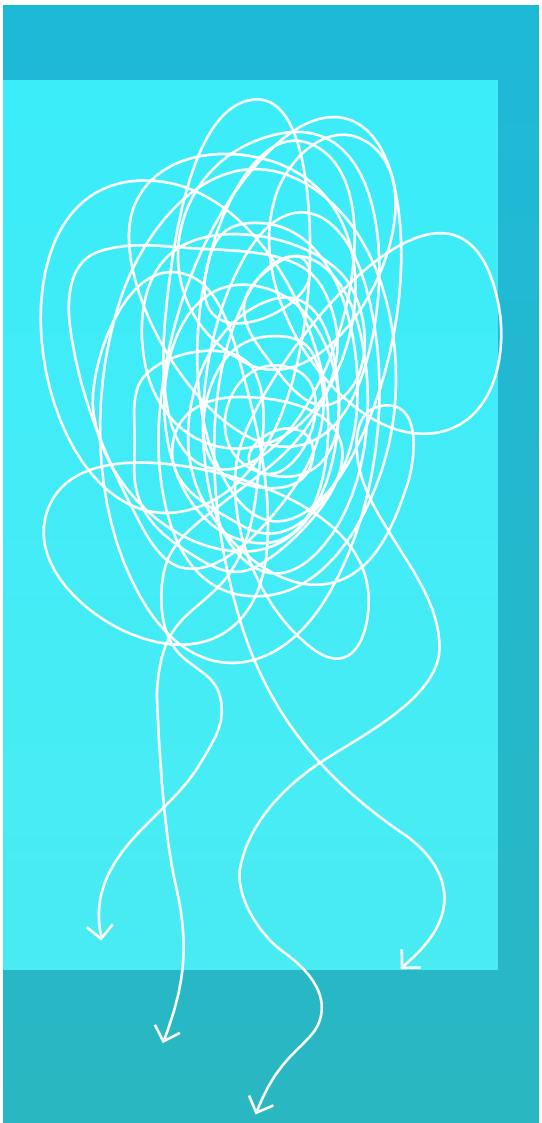

Discover simple solutions to complex problems offered by GBS

SiLoFiT: Local financial reporting made easy

Siemens GBS Record-to-Report (R2R) addresses a challenge that almost all subsidiaries of global corporations face. In addition to the mandatory annual report for the consolidated financial statement of their holding, they also have to report in their local markets, according to country-specific guidelines. The answer to this is SiLoFiT, a joint initiative from GBS R2R Asia-Pacific and the Accounting, Reporting and Controlling organization (CF R SAS) in the Regional Hub South Asia.

Text Alex Williamson

The status quo

In addition to reporting in accordance with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), all Siemens units must also comply with local Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP). These rules differ from IFRS and vary from country to country. The requirements for local financial statements are very specific since no authority wants the exact same information in the exact same format. To satisfy demands, accounting teams have to create multiple unique financial statements. This typically involves manual transfer of a huge amount of data from different accounting systems and a hodgepodge of Excel sheets. If someone finds a numbers issue late in the process, large sections of each individual statement could need significant manual editing. Additionally, different authorities often require statements in different languages. The process is time-intensive, and mistakes are very likely, which is why a complete transformation and

digitalization of this entire process was needed to make it more efficient and effective. A first time right, every time right process, so to say.

How SiLoFiT changes the game

SiLoFiT – an abbreviation for Siemens Local Finance Transformation – generates ready-to-audit results in a few clicks. The tool is fully ensured with cyber security, data privacy, zero trust, and protection concept. It also offers high scalability potential. This also reduces time pressure because as soon as the IFRS books are closed, every country has a different deadline to submit a local financial statement.

The tool takes care of the language issue, too, as it is able to create statements in 45 languages. Another bonus is that users do not have to update changes in various places. SoLiFiT flags accounting errors, and any fixes can be performed once and then automatically applied to all statements being prepared.

Finally, because the tool is cloud-based, there is no need to rely on email attachments to get statement drafts and corrections in front of the eyes that need to see them. Sharing, editing, and auditing can all be done in the cloud. SiLoFiT follows the Accounting System Process, i.e. booking of local GAAP via a separate ledger. This agnostic platform is designed to efficiently and automatically generate financial statements in compliance with various local GAAPs, accommodating multiple languages and including detailed notes and schedules.

What to expect with SiLoFiT

SiLoFiT is more than just a tool. It is an end-to-end process, and the SiLoFiT team helps customers with every aspect of it. Transferring financial data from previous locations into the new tool, setting up and preparing financial statements, editing statements if needed, and providing auditors with needed information: these, and more, are all tasks customers could leave in the capable hands of GBS.

Entities of Siemens Energy, Siemens Healthineers, and Siemens Financial Services India are already using SiLoFiT. And the GBS team at R2R is looking forward to helping more customers discover the huge benefits those entities have experienced. SiLoFit also received an entrepreneurial welcome from CF R SAS. Through it, the entire process of creating local financial statements, including notes and schedules could be successfully transformed and automated. ◗

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PROBLEM

Manually creating financial statements in various formats and languages to meet local and international standards is time-consuming and error-prone.

SOLUTION

Use SiLoFiT (Siemens Local Financial Transformation) to automate generation of financial statements.

TEAM

GBS Record-to-Report

TESTING GROUND

Siemens India

RESULTS SO FAR

By reducing the time spent on the end-to-end preparation of financial statements, 14 Siemens entities have been onboarded so far.

LIGHTBULB MOMENT

"When we were exploring demos of various tools to automate financial statement preparation, we came across this one and we were amazed. In our collective finance experience, we had never seen a tool so promising."

GBS Record-to-Report
Asia-Pacific team

SCALABILITY

SiLoFiT can generate financial statements in 45 languages and could be utilized everywhere those languages are used.

Meet the GBS Global Marketing Services (GMS) team that organizations can depend on to develop marketing strategies as cutting edge as the products and services they are selling.

Innovative marketing for when PowerPoint feels *passé*

Text Alexander Williamson

The Marketing & Sales Solutions team at GBS GMS helps sell their customers' products with modern marketing concepts that don't just inform but engross and surprise. Inspired, *Inside* thought our look at this team's intriguing work should take a page out of their book and do something a little unexpected.

So...it's quiz time! See if you can guess the correct answers to the questions below. You'll find out if you got them right as you read.

1

One GBS GMS team member compares using PowerPoints to market cutting-edge products to...

- **A** ... bringing carrot sticks to an ice cream parlor.
- **B** ... taking a car with a V8 engine to a meeting about electric mobility.
- **C** ... making an Olympic sprinter wear high heels.
- **D** ... using a crayon to fill out a job application.

What video game inspired a marketing tool GBS GMS created to help a security company show off its capabilities at a trade fair?

- **A** Fortnite
- **B** Angry Birds
- **C** Resident Evil
- **D** Fruit Ninja

2

3

Complete this quote: "_____ more or less comes at the end."

- **A** Technology
- **B** The sale
- **C** Collaboration
- **D** A result

Core of the Autonomous Factory Lab is a hexagon, where other units can be docked.

Modern products, modern communication

Hannes Fleischer, Senior Consultant, says that when GBS GMS' Marketing & Sales Solutions team starts a project, they always carefully consider this question: "Which method of communication underlines the characteristics of the product itself?" Using that logic, when you consider that the customers GBS GMS serves tend to offer state-of-the-art products, it only makes sense to advertise them in state-of-the-art ways.

What doesn't make sense to the GBS GMS team, though, is when something as groundbreaking as, say, Siemens' work in digital twins or the industrial metaverse is promoted with a medium as humdrum as a text-heavy PowerPoint.

"To overemphasize it a little bit, if we translate this idea to the auto industry, it's like telling everyone the future is in e-mobility and showing up to a meeting with our V8 engine," Fleischer says.

Fabio Jock, Consultant for Marketing & Sales Solutions at GBS GMS, further explains why the team sees classic PowerPoints as a subpar marketing tool in most situations, especially when businesses want to encourage their customers to self-explore products.

"PowerPoint coexists with someone talking or explaining," says Jock. "It's not meant to have lots of text for people to read through, like a handout – they'd get bored by that. We try to develop solutions people are interested in diving into, like a game or a visual environment."

Marketing that enhances real-world experiences

One project that shows off the GBS GMS approach resulted from their work with a customer launching a cybersecurity tool that automates the process to identify which assets on the shop floor are at risk and vulnerable to attack. The customer was headed to a trade fair and came to GBS for ideas on how to promote their new product there.

"We thought: Well, fairs are always a little more entertaining, so let's take a different approach," Fleischer says.

The GBS GMS team created two touchscreen games similar to Fruit Ninja or Tetris, where cyber threats fell from above at ever-increasing speeds as players scrambled to eliminate them. "Of course, the game was designed in a way that makes you fail," Fleischer says.

Photos: Siemens

Why not let players win? Because it drove home the point that manually fighting off cyberthreats was a losing battle. To win, you'd need security automation – exactly what the customer was selling. Along with getting the point across in an engaging way, the game kept traffic at the customer's booth brisk throughout the event.

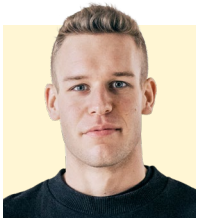
"Our games are designed in such a way that they can be played directly and thus provide quick access to a complex topic. After the game, explanatory videos present the benefits of the product – so the games can be used both by customers on their own and in direct sales talk," explains Samuel Kuhn, Senior Consultant at GBS GMS.

Real world meets virtual world

Another exemplary result from GBS GMS comes from their work helping to promote and enhance the Autonomous Factory Lab (AFL) in Nuremberg, Germany. An extremely flexible modular plant, the AFL allows customers and partners to experiment and collaborate using the most cutting-edge automated factory tools and machines from Siemens – some of which are still-developing future technologies not yet available for general sale.

The Siemens Digital Industries Factory Automation team wanted to give customers who couldn't make it to Nuremberg a chance to experience the world of possibilities AFL offers, and they came to GBS GMS with the project. Though the easiest route would have been to just create a digital copy of the AFL where customers could use the space exactly as they could in real life, GBS GMS always seeks to go above and beyond.

Expert
Dr. Hannes Fleischer,
Senior Consultant Global Marketing Services



Expert
Fabio Jock, Consultant
Global Marketing Services

In the AFL users can call up individual information for each module.

The virtual world also provides a glimpse inside the technology that remains hidden in the real world.

The AFL inspires curiosity and exploration, and the GBS GMS team believed their virtual AFL (vAFL) could help people follow those inspirations further than in real life. Want to check out the inside of a machine to see how it works? It doesn't take an industrial toolkit, just a mouse click. Want to rearrange an entire room full of things that weigh tons? Dragging them around digitally is a lot simpler than doing it physically.

This concept became their guiding light: designing a vAFL that didn't just recreate the AFL experience but enhanced it. The result is that all customers – near and far – can use the vAFL to examine, experiment with, and get inspired by the technologies on display at the AFL at an even deeper level than was possible before.

"It's a reasonable way to combine both worlds," Fleischer says. "It's an add-on to the real room but still works without having to visit the real room, and the tool underlines the core values of Digital Industries."

Understanding the customers

While those two examples emphasize tech GBS GMS has developed to promote products, it is actually one of the last things the team considers when coming up with a marketing strategy.

"Technology comes more or less at the end," Fleischer says. "We don't start by saying, for example, we want to provide an immersive experience. We want to understand the problem, get an idea of possible solutions, and then we decide on the technology."

Jock says prioritizing full understanding of their customer's aims over offering flashy solutions has everything to do with GBS GMS Marketing and Sales Solutions' primary mission: getting results for their customers.

"A customer might come to us wanting something like a 3D avatar, but our first step is getting to know why," Jock explains. "Once we've understood their goals, we can adjust the strategy to make it as valuable as possible. The result might be something completely different, but it will tell the story right." ◗

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Photo: Siemens

A new training and workshop format helps teams to better understand artificial intelligence, and how it can support their daily work. The AI Symposiums also support teams to identify work process challenges and to come up with potential solutions, which experts from GBS DigiLab can develop into scalable digital tools.

Text Louise Anderson

Gen AI as catalyst for *change*

Symposium sessions showcase AI's potential

Leaders are recognizing and investing in the huge potential of artificial intelligence, which is set to transform work processes across different sectors. Yet many companies still find it difficult to make productive use of this exciting technology.

Research by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) last year found that nearly three-quarters of companies surveyed were struggling to achieve – and scale – value from AI adoption. According to BCG's "Where's the Value in AI?" report, 74 percent of companies had yet to show tangible value from their use of artificial intelligence. Only the remaining 26 percent were already generating significant value, or beginning to realize substantial gains, from their AI capabilities.

Thanks to their deep knowledge of AI, experts at GBS Digital Solutions can help customers across all sectors to harness this cutting-edge technology. They advise teams how to transform everyday work processes and develop technical solutions to achieve their goals. GBS consultants advise on innovation management and the implementation of AI to support companies in data-driven decision-making with widespread digitalization and AI use.

The idea of the AI Symposiums is both simple and good: combining three to four days of training and ideation about how AI can support participants' work.

Photos: Siemens

Clear value-add

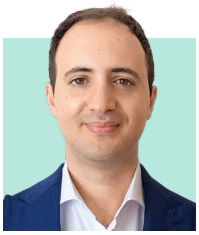
To that end, a dedicated team from GBS Digital Solutions led by Francisco Duarte, Head of Innovation at the GBS Digital Lab, helps customers understand, identify, and implement AI solutions for their specific needs. This is done via a new workshop format called the AI Symposium, which brings a clear value-add to customers by introducing their teams to the technology – and how it leads to faster and more efficient processes.

"GBS has the expertise to support businesses in the arena of AI. Our team is actively developing solutions in this field, meaning we go beyond the theory to get AI technology working in practice for our customers," says Duarte, who runs the AI Symposiums. "Customers are impressed with the AI tools we've created so far. We apply our theoretical knowledge of the technology to make customized practical solutions."

AI Symposiums are three- to four-day training events that teach participants about AI and how it can support their work. The idea for the symposiums emerged following assessments of previous AI trainings. Live, in-person events had proved far more effective than online sessions. Workshops carried out over consecutive days also had the greatest success. The aim of the new symposium format is to bring AI training and hands-on experience to customers, enabling participants to learn about the technology by trying it out for themselves.

"I'm excited to bring back fresh ideas and strategies to apply at our plant, ensuring we stay ahead of the curve in operational efficiency and technological integration."

Icela Garcia Mena,
Plant Operations Manager



Expert
Francisco Duarte, Innovation Manager GBS Digital Lab

Roadmap creation

What's more, the symposiums are a catalyst for change. They can reveal common problems across different sites and empower participants to identify opportunities for solutions. This generates value for customers by increasing productivity and efficiency – and has huge scalability potential.
"AI Symposiums help participants to come up with new ideas to solve their current challenges and pain points, and to become more productive by using AI. We create and support a roadmap to convert participants' ideas into easy-to-use AI solutions," explains Duarte.

The Symposium sessions are available to all business areas in a bid to advance the application of artificial intelligence company-wide. They take place in a multi-module format. The first two modules focus on upskilling participants by introducing them to generative AI, how it can be integrated into workplaces, and shared best practices, as well as to design thinking methods and tools.

During the third module, participants identify workplace challenges and brainstorm possible solutions to them, prioritize those that will bring the major impact, and design roadmaps to implement it. Finally, participants get hands-on experience of generative AI via a demo app. The DigiLab experts then evaluate which potential solutions to develop to the implementation stage.

Sharing ideas

AI Symposiums encourage participants from a variety of professional backgrounds and positions to pool their combined knowledge of both business strategy and day-to-day operations.

After the start in Mexico GBS plans to replicate and scale the AI Symposiums to a variety of business areas.

The in-person format also fosters an open atmosphere of creativity and productivity which encourages cross-sharing of ideas.

The training sessions are by no means limited to participants with previous technical experience: Colleagues from finance, HR, sales, supply chain, warehouse, quality, R&D, operations, and production planning have all participated.

The first AI Symposiums were held at two Siemens Smart Infrastructure Electronic Products factories in Mexico last year. The events, attended by 120 participants, were so successful that the DigiLab team harvested 77 new ideas for AI innovations, from which 27 were selected to further evaluation, and 7 were already selected for implementation. In addition, it was also understood that some of the challenges identified could be solved with existing GBS tools.

"We had a very good response from both factories, where management were also involved in the Symposiums. The teams at these very positive events were highly motivated to work with us on new solutions. We had amazing feedback from participants," says Duarte.

Learning journey

The Siemens GBS DS team is currently working to turn ideas for AI-based and digital tools from the two 2024 Mexico Symposiums into scalable solutions. The events themselves received glowing feedback, such as from Isaac Garcia, Head of Operations at Siemens Monterrey, who said afterwards: "Energy and enthusiasm in the room was inspiring, and we are thrilled to have been part of such a great learning journey."

Icela Garcia Mena, Plant Operations Manager, describes the four-day Symposium she attended as an "eye-opening experience," adding: "I'm excited to bring back fresh ideas and strategies to apply at our plant, ensuring we stay ahead of the curve in operational efficiency and technological integration."

SAP expert Rafael Rodriguez, who attended one of the Mexico Symposiums, concludes: "Together, we're exploring the future of AI and how it can shape our everyday lives."

The next step for the team behind the AI Symposiums is to replicate and scale the format for a variety of business areas. Further events are already scheduled for customers in Mexico, the US, and Czech Republic during 2025. The GBS DS team also has Germany in its sights, with the goal of communicating the Symposium format and rolling it out there. "We are consolidating what happened in Mexico to move forward," Duarte explains. "We started with two SI factories, and they're now interested in further Symposiums, but this can also be replicated and scaled for other business units." ◗

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Photo: Siemens

Taking the *first step* towards innovation

Good ideas don't come about on their own; they are the result of diligent work. Siemens GBS Engineering demonstrates that beginnings don't have to be difficult. They just need a spark of creativity...

Text Florian Hückelheim

When it comes to the use of generative artificial intelligence in companies, chatbots are currently the most widespread solution. But what happens when the data that makes an AI smart in the first place is distributed across various texts, tables, graphics, and images?

"In the engineering field, this is the norm," says Christina Zenefels, Senior Business Excellence Consultant at Siemens GBS Engineering. "When engineers start their work, they usually work with so-called functional descriptions, which record the properties and functions of a solution to be developed for all stakeholders."

To create these, they first review the technical documents and specifications, which can vary in their format – texts, tables, drawings. Machine analysis of these documents has so far shown unsatisfying results due to inconsistent layouts, data formats, and information sources. Consequently, the requirements analysis involves a lot of manual work. But what if AI could still help?

Proactively developing new solutions

One of six engineering teams at the Cracking the Code hackathon by Siemens GBS ENG explored this idea. The goal of the event was to identify innovative AI applications for the engineering customers and to strengthen the engineers' own innovation mindset.

"We are always looking for new solutions that make the work for our customers more efficient," says Christina Zenefels. "That's why we consciously create space for interdisciplinary exchange with internal hackathons and proactively explore and suggest improvement opportunities."

To help the engineers think outside the box during the event on site, but also afterwards in their day-to-day work, they received training on AI, entrepreneurship, and design thinking methods before compiling ideas and developing them further. "Before there can be a concrete solution to a concrete problem, it must be clear where the challenges lie. This first step is extremely important to create real value," says Zenefels. "Now we can aim at testing the feasibility of the ideas in practice with the participants from the hackathon, as well as other GBS experts."

“The advent of technologies like generative AI has proven the potential of bringing together technology, processes, and people.”

Eckard Eberle,
CEO Siemens Global
Business Services

Siemens Global Business Services (GBS) enables Siemens AG units worldwide and external customers to accelerate their business transformation into a sustainable and digital future. Its portfolio comprises services driven by expertise and the latest technology – with a strong focus on innovation and digitalization in areas like business administration, human resources, supply chain management, sales, marketing, and engineering. Siemens GBS provides business services for Siemens AG, Siemens Energy AG, and Siemens Healthineers AG and serves its clients globally out of four major hubs and one service unit. Siemens GBS headquarters are based in Munich, Germany.

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