

Press release

10 January 2017

With “#openspace”, Commerzbank offers first digitalisation platform for German SMEs

- **First corporate transformation platform to bring together SMEs, innovation partners, and start-ups**
- **New home base for national and international start-ups**

With “#openspace” in Berlin-Schöneberg, Commerzbank has developed the first digitalisation platform for small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). As the first of its kind, “#openspace” is a corporate transformation platform for German SMEs and constitutes a long-term cooperation between SMEs, innovation partners, and start-ups with the objective of successfully tackling the challenges posed by the digital future together. At the same time, “#openspace” is available as a home base for national and international start-ups providing advisory and logistical support.

“Digitalisation dominates the media, sciences, and corporate world like no other topic. But how can companies master the challenges posed by digitalisation? As an answer to this, we have created “#openspace”, a networked platform comprising SMEs, innovation partners, and start-ups. Here, the digital transformation is expedited and accompanied in the long term thanks to customised programmes,” says Holger Werner, CEO and founder of #openspace.

“With ‘#openspace’ we would like to empower SMEs so that they can fundamentally change their business models in line with new digital standards and help to overcome uncertainty with regards to digitalisation. Priority is given to the principle of ‘helping people to help themselves’,” says Joachim Köhler, COO and co-founder of “#openspace”.

In addition to a six week basic module named “#SenseOfUrgency”, “#openspace” offers various advanced programmes to provide a company with long-term support. The “#DigitalLab” module, for example, is geared towards supplementing an existing business model with digital products and processes. By contrast, in the “#DisruptiveLab”, an existing business model is fundamentally adapted over three phases.

In addition to the offering for Germany’s SME sector, with the “#StartUpFactory” “#openspace” also provides premises and support for international start-ups wishing to establish a foothold on the German and European markets or to expand in the region.

Press contact Commerzbank

Bettina Storck +49 69 136-81673

About Commerzbank

Commerzbank is a leading international commercial bank with branches and offices in more than 50 countries. With the two business segments Private and Small Business Customers, as well as Corporate Clients, the Bank offers a comprehensive portfolio of financial services precisely tailored to its clients' needs. Commerzbank finances more than 30 per cent of Germany's foreign trade and is the unchallenged market leader in financing for SMEs. The Commerzbank subsidiaries Comdirect in Germany and M Bank in Poland are two of the world's most innovative online banks. With approximately 1,000 branches Commerzbank has one of the densest branch networks among German private banks. In total, Commerzbank boasts more than 16 million private customers, as well as 1 million business and corporate clients. The Bank, which was founded in 1870, is represented at all the world's major stock exchanges. In 2015, it generated gross revenues of almost 9.8 billion euros with approximately 51,300 employees.

About “#openspace”

“#openspace” is the digitalisation platform for small- and medium-sized enterprises and the new home base for national and international start-ups. It provides them with the space and opportunities to make a success of the challenges posed by the digital future. The two managing directors Holger Werner and Joachim Köhler and their current team of 5 regard themselves as a long-term partner for small- and medium-sized enterprises undergoing digital transformation. “#openspace” is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Commerzbank and is domiciled in Berlin.