**Digital security and sovereignty: Companies of Schwarz Group enter strategic partnership with Wire and ServiceNow and publish Cyber Security Report**

* **The report was published, and the partnership announced during the Cyber Security Conference by Schwarz with Federal Minister for Digital and Transport Dr. Volker Wissing, Head of the Federal Chancellery Wolfgang Schmidt, President of the German Federal Office for Information Security (BSI) Claudia Plattner and other high-ranking participants from economy, politics and society**
* **400,000 missing skilled workers and an average of 15,000 security gaps: The Cyber Security Report by Schwarz Digits identifies current challenges in cyber security and provides recommendations for action**
* **Companies of Schwarz Group and the communications services provider Wire are joining forces to provide a service for companies and organizations with the highest security requirements**
* **XM Cyber and the tech company ServiceNow enter into a strategic partnership for jointly integrated security solutions**

**Neckarsulm, April 11, 2024 –** On April 10 and 11, 120 business leaders and renowned experts from business, politics, the media and the public sector came together at the Cyber Security Conference by Schwarz to jointly develop strategies for one of the biggest security challenges in Germany:Cybercriminals caused an estimated total of EUR 206 billion in damages in 2023. By comparison, the losses resulting from natural disasters amounted to EUR 230 billion. Geopolitical disruptions and rapid developments in artificial intelligence led to a further increase in cyberattacks. Means of communication are also being targeted: For example, through vulnerabilities in communication tools, attackers gain access to company secrets or sensitive data that they can use for further attacks.

Artificial intelligence has significantly intensified that threat, since it improved deepfakes, for example, and thus created new opportunities to use stolen digital identities for cyberattacks or targeted disinformation.

“Communication with instant messengers has long since become part of our everyday working lives,” says **Dr. Volker Wissing, Federal Minister for Digital and Transport**. “Companies and public sector organizations, but also every citizen, need to be aware that unsecured communication poses a major risk to our society. In order to protect communication more comprehensively, we will enshrine the right to end-to-end encryption in messenger services in law.”

**Cyber Security Conference and report emphasize the importance of digital sovereignty**

In addition to Dr. Volker Wissing, the conference was also attended by Wolfgang Schmidt, Head of the Chancellery, Claudia Plattner, President of the BSI, and the entrepreneur and former Ukrainian boxing world champion Dr. Wladimir Klitschko.

"Cyber sabotage, blackmail and disinformation have been omnipresent, and not just since the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine," said **Dr. Wladimir Klitschko**. "The free world must vehemently oppose this development. Events such as the Cyber Security Conference by Schwarz are an important format for raising awareness and showing how critical the situation really is."

One in ten companies worldwide is affected by ransomware attacks, while half of global DDoS attacks are being carried out in the context of the Russia-Ukraine conflict. This also includes IT denial-of-service attacks on German infrastructure, such as airports and authorities. The Cyber Security Report, which was published by Schwarz Digits as part of the conference, clearly and comprehensibly presents the current situation and offers specific recommendations for action. In addition to the increasing challenges posed by the use of artificial intelligence, this year's report sheds light on the effects of the shortage of cyber security specialists and the psychological consequences of a cyber attack.

**Unique security standards thanks to joint solution with wire**

“Secure, reliable and user-friendly communication is essential for any successful business,” emphasizes **Christian Müller, co-CEO of Schwarz Digits**, the IT and digital division of Schwarz Group. “We are therefore delighted to have found a partner in Wire that offers unique security standards without compromising on functionality.”

Wire enables the end-to-end encryption of all data directly on the end device and is based on the world’s first open protocol for end-to-end encrypted communication in real time (“Messaging Layer Security”), which the company played a significant role in co-developing.

In addition Wire is GDPR-compliant and also helps companies to meet NIS2 requirements. “In addition, Wire is the only messenger with a release recommendation from the German Federal Office for Information Security (BSI) for the communication of material categorized as ‘classified - for official use only,’” adds **Rolf Schumann, co-CEO of Schwarz Digits**.“The core elements of economic value creation in Europe are innovative strength and technological know-how. We must not surrender these advantages by allowing our communication to run via insecure channels.”

**Partnership with a Vision for a Digitally Sovereign, Secure Europe**

Schwarz Digits and Wire are joining forces: The IT and digital division of the Schwarz Group is planning to acquire a stake in the communications service provider. “Schwarz Digits and, in particular, STACKIT are key players in digital sovereignty in Germany and are therefore the perfect partner for us,” declares **Juan Perea Rodríguez, General Manager and Chief Commercial Officer of Wire**. “With this strategic partnership, we are combining our technological expertise and experience of serving discerning clients with the large network, high security standards and cloud power of Schwarz Digits. We are also delighted to have gained the companies of Schwarz Group as Wire clients and to thus make such a practical contribution to security and sovereignty.” Both companies are also working on a joint service: Wire on STACKIT will be a new, attractive product that redefines the requirements for data privacy and data sovereignty.

**Jointly integrated security solution from ServiceNow and XM Cyber**

At the Cyber Security Conference by Schwarz the co-CEOs of Schwarz Digits, Christian Müller and Rolf Schumann, also announced a strategic partnership between XM Cyber and ServiceNow. The focus is on the integration of the two security solutions and IT security operations tools. "XM Cyber and ServiceNow's SecOps complement each other perfectly. The collaboration combines the permanent detection and prioritization of vulnerabilities with the right tools for remediation and sets new standards for security and the relief of cyber defense teams," says Christian Müller.

**Additional Information**

Find more information about the event and download the report at <https://cyberconference.schwarz>

**Press Contact**

Schwarz Digits

Telephone: +49 7132 30-490490

[presse-digits@mail.schwarz](mailto:presse-digits@mail.schwarz)

**About Schwarz Digits**

Schwarz Digits is the IT and digital division of Schwarz Group. It provides impressive digital products and services, which meet the high German data privacy standards. In this way, Schwarz Digits guarantees the highest possible digital sovereignty. With this ambition in mind, Schwarz Digits provides the IT infrastructure and solutions for the vast ecosystem of the companies of Schwarz Group, continually developing it further for the future. Schwarz Digits creates optimum conditions for the development of groundbreaking innovations for end customers, companies and public sector organizations. As part of Schwarz Digits, there are 7,500 employees in the trademarks Schwarz IT, Schwarz Digital, STACKIT, XM Cyber, Lidl e-commerce, Kaufland e-commerce, Schwarz Media and mmmake.

For more information, please visit <http://www.schwarz-digits.de>

**About Service Now**

ServiceNow (NYSE: NOW) is creating a world where work is less work. Our cloud-based platform and connected solutions enable a great user experience with digital workflows so employees and organizations can work more efficiently. For more information visit <https://www.servicenow.de/>

**About Wire**

Wire offers its customers an end-to-end encrypted communication platform for audio and video calls as well as chat communication and secure data transmission. The solution can either be used as a cloud-based or on-premises service. The German Federal Office for Information Security (BSI) has issued a release recommendation for Wire for the communication of classified information. Over 1800 organizations worldwide rely on Wire’s secure communication solutions, including governments, parliaments, law enforcement and investigating authorities as well as infrastructure providers and companies in fields such as telecommunications or energy.

For more information, please visit <https://wire.com/de/>