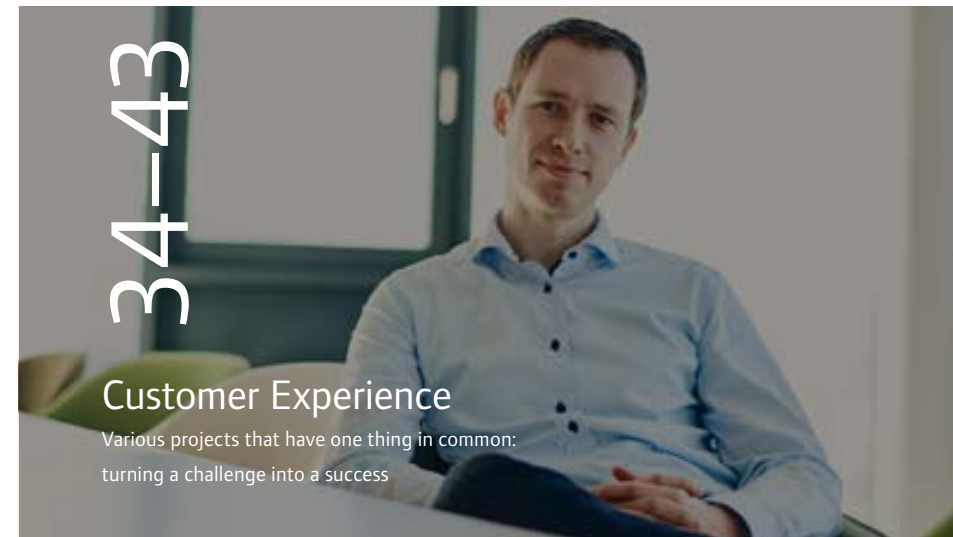
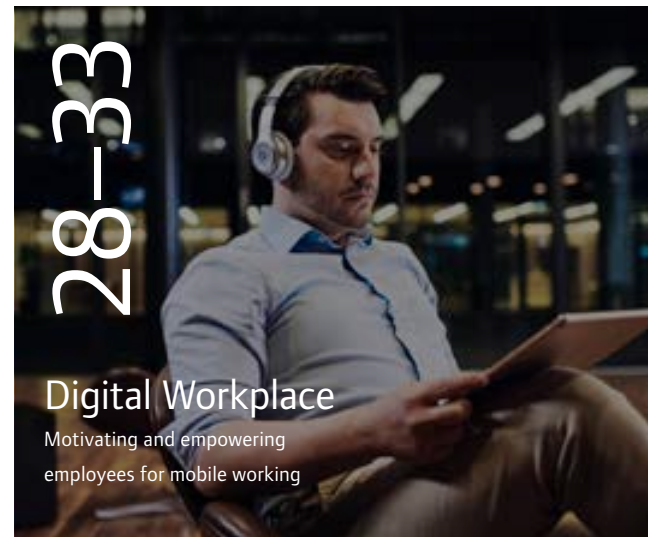
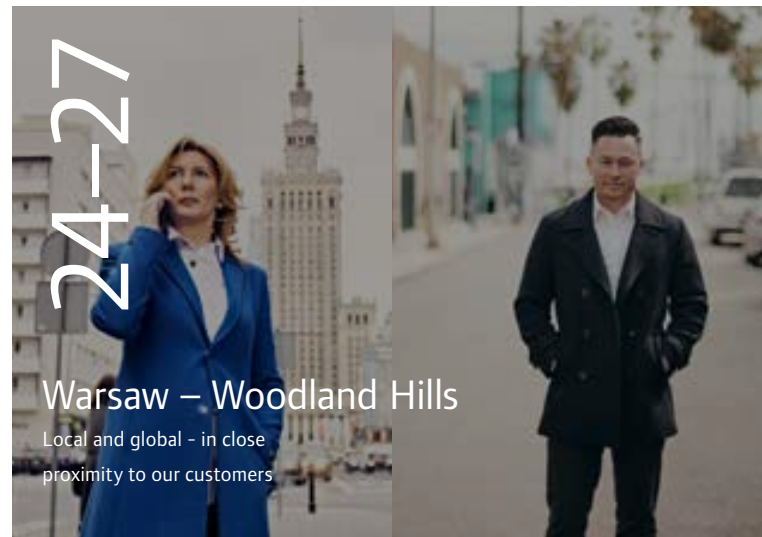
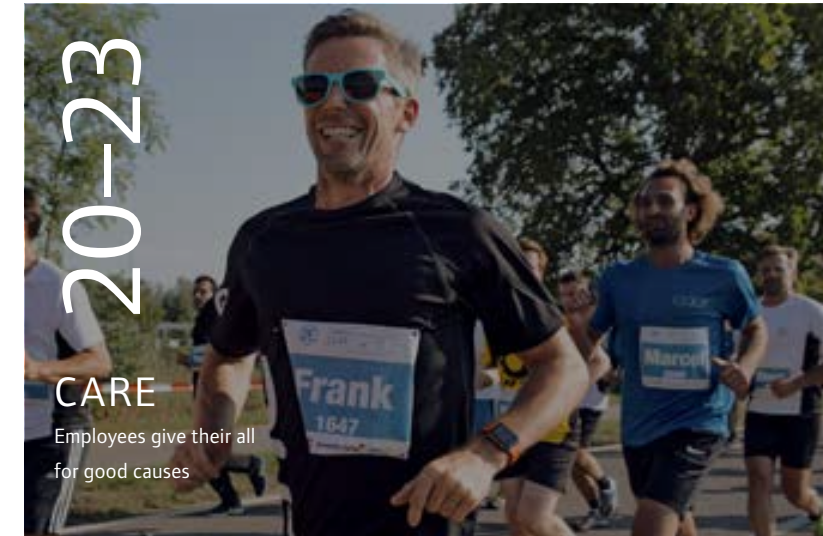


THE DIGITAL WORKPLACE – FROM HYPE TO REALITY

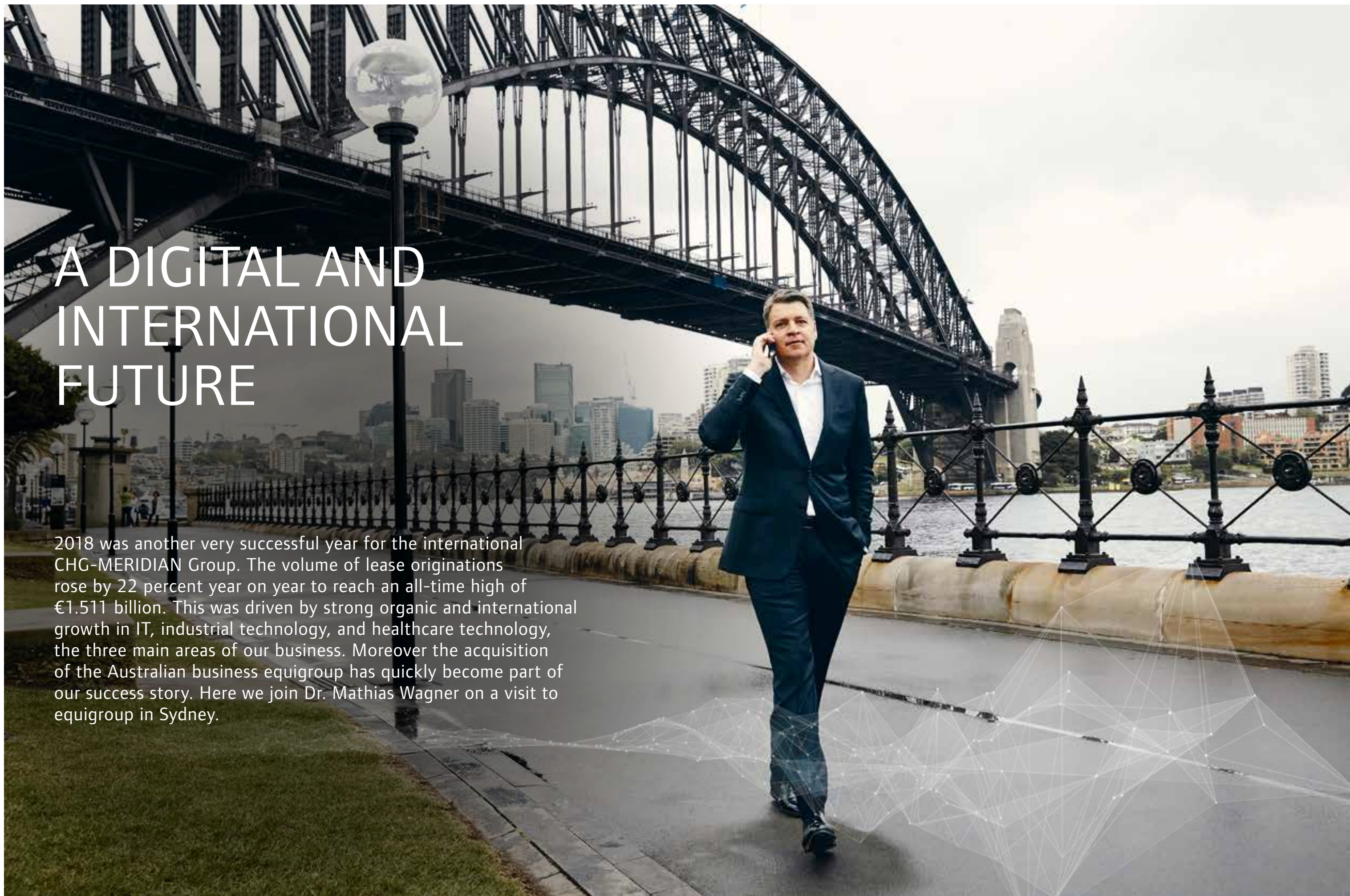
THE DIGITAL WORKPLACE – FROM HYPE TO REALITY

CONTENTS



A DIGITAL AND INTERNATIONAL FUTURE

2018 was another very successful year for the international CHG-MERIDIAN Group. The volume of lease originations rose by 22 percent year on year to reach an all-time high of €1.511 billion. This was driven by strong organic and international growth in IT, industrial technology, and healthcare technology, the three main areas of our business. Moreover the acquisition of the Australian business equigroup has quickly become part of our success story. Here we join Dr. Mathias Wagner on a visit to equigroup in Sydney.



Another year of profitable growth

Circular Quay, Sydney Harbour. The city is buzzing with life at this central transport hub. Swarms of people embark and disembark from buses, trains, and ferries, and make their way to the city center on foot. Last year, we began the process of making the largest acquisition in the history of CHG-MERIDIAN. Since then, I have been to Sydney several times and had the opportunity to get to know this Australian metropolis. Last year's takeover of the Sydney-based technology financing business equigroup was another important milestone in the implementation of our growth strategy.

The inclusion of the Australian company in our consolidated accounts for four months of the year, coupled with strong organic growth, played a key role in our record results. In 2018, our lease originations rose by an incredible 22 percent year on year to reach €1.511 billion. We are extremely proud of this. It is also encouraging that all technology areas contributed to this profitable growth. Our diversification in terms of both geography and technology is clearly paying dividends and helping us to grow at a sustainable and healthy rate.

International: Growing together with our customers

Opera House, Harbour Bridge, Sydney Tower – I have passed these famous sights several times now and they never fail to impress me. Sydney is a magnet for tourists, but above all the city that is home to five million people, is the main industrial, commercial, and financial center of a continent whose economy has been booming for years. The acquisition of equigroup gives us access to this growing and attractive economic area, and the company is also well positioned in western and northern Europe. Together we now serve more than 10,000 customers and employ around 1,000 people across 25 countries.

Our customers value our expertise, which covers both technology and finance and which adds real value to their capital spending plans and how they manage their technology. Thanks to our global presence, they can also benefit from our integrated and customized business concepts across international borders. The way that our employees work together to make this possible and the close relationships that we enjoy with the customers themselves are key factors in our success. Furthermore, by unlocking the potential inherent in digitalization, we hope to do even better in the future.

Digital workplace – from hype to reality

We're not just looking to grow our international presence. Digitalization is also one of our top priorities – both in terms of how we serve our customers and how we work internally. Every day, we gain invaluable experience by working on numerous customer projects and the implementation of our own digital strategy. We then pass this expertise on to our customers, helping them to establish digital workplaces by offering integrated solutions that cover the entire technology lifecycle. Nowadays, people need reliable and secure technology that allows them to work whenever and wherever they want. But this is not yet a reality for many businesses and their employees.

That's unfortunate, because the digital workplace is increasingly key to what we in Germany call 'industry 4.0' and 'work 4.0' and will help to drive innovation in the long term. It's why we start with the digital workplace and only then move on to tackle our customers' other digital projects. Because one thing is clear: if the way that technology is financed and managed is flexible and aligned with the plans for digitalization, then the transformation will be much easier. This is the case anywhere, including in Australia.



Dr. Mathias Wagner
Chairman of the Board of Management,
CHG-MERIDIAN



SYDNEY
AUSTRALIA



↑ Dr. Mathias Wagner:
He joined the CHG-MERIDIAN Group in 2013
and has been Chairman of the Board of Management
since 2017

DRIVING INNOVATION THROUGH PROFITABLE GROWTH

Our extremely positive and robust results allow us to look to the future with confidence. They provide us with strong financial foundations that will enable us to give our customers the best possible support in their innovation and digitalization projects.



An interview with Andrea Bonin, Vice President of Finance for Italy, in which he looks back on the past financial year on behalf of the international CHG-MERIDIAN Group.

In his assessment of his home market, he highlights the tension that has arisen between Italy's domestic economic policy and its relationship with Europe.

Mr. Bonin, the CHG-MERIDIAN Group continued to grow in 2018. How highly do you rate this achievement?

Bonin: We can look back on 2018 with real pride. Lease originations totaled €1.511 billion, which was a new record and equated to excellent year-on-year growth of 22 percent. Even if our new Australian subsidiary equi-group had not been included in the scope of consolidation for four months, we would still have reported very robust organic growth of 15 percent compared with 2017. Profit from ordinary activities amounted to €95 million, up by 9 percent from 2017. There was an increase in net income as well, which rose by nearly 15 percent to reach €66 million. It is also encouraging that almost all countries and technology areas contributed to this profitable growth.

2018 was not an easy year for Italy on the political front. How do you assess the current situation in your country?

Bonin: The first half of 2018 was indeed marked by major political difficulties. Following the elections in March 2017, a coalition of the majority parties was formed only after lengthy negotiations, though this did then lead to greater stability. Of course, the disputes with the European Union contributed to what was already a precarious situation. It remains to be seen whether the budget adopted at the end of the year will actually result in any structural improvements to the Italian economy.



VIMERCATE ITALY



The Torri Bianche multi-function center is a modern urban complex located in Vimercate, in the heart of the prestigious Northeastern Technology Center of Milan and in a strategic position for the main transport routes in northern Italy. The site covers around 110,000 square meters and is home to offices of around 150 local and multinational companies, including CHG-MERIDIAN.

↑ Andrea Bonin:

46 years old, 20 years in the international leasing market and 15 years at CHG-MERIDIAN.
Vice President of Finance for Italy since 2004

You talk about the current economic situation in Italy. What does this mean for CHG-MERIDIAN in the country? Do the trends, particularly in the financial sector, match up with your targets for 2019?

Bonin: The forecasts for GDP growth in 2019 are not exactly positive. The Banca d'Italia (Italian central bank) is projecting an increase in GDP of only 1 percent instead of the 1.5 percent predicted by the government. Moreover, there are signs of an economic slowdown across Europe. Fortunately, the Italian leasing market is bucking the trend, having expanded by 5.3 percent compared with 2017¹. The market for operating leases, in which we have historically been active, grew by an average of 6 percent to well over €9 billion. And we are only talking about the customer finance side of the business here. If we are also able to sell our services to customers in this environment, I see that as a big positive.

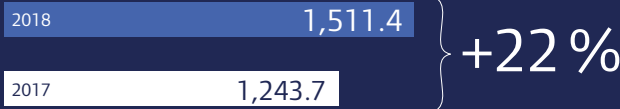
¹ Source: Assilea

The CHG-MERIDIAN Group in numbers: 2018

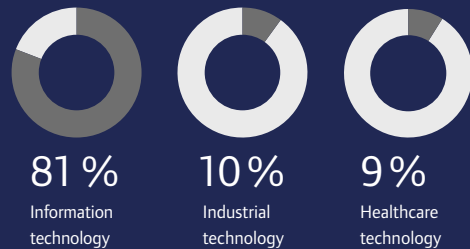
Lease originations

€1.511 billion

Up by 22 percent on 2017
Lease originations (€ million)



Volume of lease origination broken down by
technology sector



Profit from ordinary activities

€95 million

2017 ——— +9% ———→ 2018

Net income

€66 million

Key financial performance indicators

KEUR

	2018	2017	
Equity (IFRS)	501,452	453,553	+11 %
Group's total assets (IFRS)	2,806,471	2,306,372	+22 %
Net income (IFRS)	65,798	57,270	+15 %
Corporate lending	372,400	175,700	+112 %
Non-recourse funding	1,028,300	790,600	+30 %

25 countries
Around 1,000 employees

Despite these difficult conditions, CHG-MERIDIAN Italy contributed to the Group's overall success in 2018 with lease originations of around €81 million. Does this make you doubly proud?

Bonin: Definitely. It makes the year that we had all the more remarkable. Despite all the obstacles we have faced, we have always managed to keep our focus on our customers and to meet their needs in these unstable times with our lifecycle management. We helped existing customers to establish innovative digital workplaces and completed digitalization projects for new customers. In addition, the past year has confirmed that our customers are now looking for more than just financing solutions. They are looking for a partner to actively support them in implementing their digital strategies.

The CHG-MERIDIAN Group's non-captive funding strategy is another key factor in its success. How would you rate 2018 from this perspective?

Bonin: Across the Group as a whole, we obtained a record amount of external funding for our customers' technology investments. The total funding volume of €1.466 billion was up by 45 percent on 2017 – yet another huge year-on-year increase. This rapid rate of growth demonstrates the breadth, strength, and global reach of funding sources that we are able to draw on. No fewer than 74 partners provided direct funding for our new business, and we worked with financial institutions from a total of 23 countries.

Can you give us a breakdown of the total funding volume?

Bonin: The non-recourse funding transactions, which always play a key role for us, surpassed the billion euro mark for the first time, reaching €1.028 billion. This also indirectly demonstrates the excellent creditworthiness of our customers, which we have been able to maintain

thanks to clear internal credit procedures and our experienced in-house analysis departments. At €372.4 million, corporate lending also reached a new high. This volume was secured by eight of our Group companies. We entered the market for the sixth time with a bonded loan and were again able to acquire the target volume of €75 million. Over €300 million had been raised from inter-company financing by the end of the year – the first time it had reached this level. This diversified funding strategy was successful again in 2018 and leaves us well equipped to support our customers' innovation and investment projects. We look forward to doing so!



“The secret to our success is undoubtedly our ability to respond to the needs of customers and to meet these needs with our lifecycle management.”

Andrea Bonin
Vice President Finance Italy

PROGRESS WITH VISION – AS A COMPANY AND EMPLOYER

We actively support the personal and professional development of our employees – whether they're students, trainees, young professionals or experienced and highly skilled individuals.

TRAILS – Career springboard for sales talents

Participants in our sales trainee program (TRAILS) are equipped with all the knowledge they need to succeed. They learn on the job and through the Company's HR Academy, work alongside experienced mentors, and are given lots of guidance and support at this fledgling stage of their career. The customized program prepares these talented individuals to take on high-responsibility roles in sales.

No more being thrown in at the deep end

"Out of university, and straight into sales. My career got off to a flying start. Just one day after submitting my bachelor's thesis on the cooperation between CHG-MERIDIAN's international subsidiaries, I started my trainee program at the Company's headquarters in Weingarten. From the very beginning, I was mentored by one of the most experienced senior key account managers in the Industry team, who took me to appointments with customers. I learned a lot just by watching him. But of course you don't learn to sell just by watching. You also need to practice and try things out for yourself. As trainees, we are allowed to play an active part very early on. But, thanks to our mentors, we never feel like we've been thrown in at the deep end."

↑ Selina Gschwind, 1st year trainee,
Weingarten office, Industry team

Learning how to do it properly

"Sales is fun! I first discovered this during my apprenticeship in business. My previous work experience meant that I could have jumped straight into a sales position at CHG-MERIDIAN. But having now completed the first few months of my training, I know that the decision to join the TRAILS program was the right one. It's the perfect way for me to familiarize myself with my new focus industry – I'm in the Public team – and with our business model. Digitalization is a real opportunity for public-sector organizations. However, budget restrictions, mandatory procurement policies, and increasing legal requirements also present them with major challenges. So you need a lot of specialist knowledge to create a customized business concept. The two-year trainee program gives me the time and opportunities I need to learn how to do this properly."

↑ Jomo Zander, 1st year trainee,
Munich office, Public team

CHG-MERIDIAN provides ongoing training for all its employees – around the world and up to management level



96 %

of employees enjoy working for CHG-MERIDIAN
(source: 2018 global employee survey)



Choice of

7 vocational apprenticeships and
3 degree programs



67
apprentices
and students

in Germany since 2010

111



participants in the
international leadership
program

200



training days run by the
HR-Academy in 2018

Together as one team

“The lines between information technology and medical technology are becoming increasingly blurred. The healthcare system is changing enormously as a result. I specifically applied to join this fast-growing part of the CHG-MERIDIAN business. I find it particularly interesting to see how our Company applies its long-standing expertise in other areas of technology to create smart solutions that give healthcare providers access to the latest medical equipment while keeping within their budgets. Ultimately, this means that patients receive better treatment. But it’s not just customers who benefit from the Company’s vast pool of experience. Trainees reap the rewards as well. We learn more and more each day because we get to play an active role and because we have approachable colleagues – right up to the most senior level of management. As a trainee, I had to present fictitious case studies to these managers. It was part of two assessments and proved to be extremely instructive, from the preparation stage through to the detailed feedback that I was given. As a reward for our work we went quad biking and go-karting – the Board of Management and trainees together as one team.”

↑ Götz Bauer, 2nd year trainee,
Munich office, Healthcare team



↑ Our trainees at the International Sales Kick-Off 2019

International experience

“The international assignment, which lasts several months, is the icing on the cake of the trainee program – a chance to broaden one’s horizons and experience other cultures. The CHG-MERIDIAN Group has a presence in 25 countries, so there are a lot of interesting locations to choose from. I spent three months in Stockholm, where I learned how our international offices collaborate and how we add value for our customers by having standardized global processes. Even as a trainee, I had the opportunity to work on a very specific project that involved adapting an account development plan to Swedish requirements. For me personally, helping to create a tool that will be used intensively by my sales colleagues abroad was a real highlight of my international assignment.”

↑ Stephan Kunkel, 2nd year trainee,
Düsseldorf office, Industry team

Good for the growth of the company and for your career

- A total of seven different vocational apprenticeships, as well as three degree programs and one trainee program, are available at nine locations in Germany alone
- Training courses run by our in-house HR academy trainers or by external experts
- Continuously updated online training courses
- Potential development program for employees earmarked for specialist or management careers
- Leadership program for the entire international management team

A HOME-GROWN SUCCESS STORY

Simon Harrsen began his career at CHG-MERIDIAN as a sales trainee. Today, almost four years later, he is Vice President of Sales in Mexico. A home-grown success story.

Mr. Harrsen, from trainee to Vice President of Sales for Mexico in just over four years – you have to tell us how you did it!

Harrsen: (laughs) In one sentence? CHG-MERIDIAN gave me the best possible start! When I started the TRAILS sales trainee program in October 2014, I was given the opportunity to work in parallel as an assistant to the managing director of our industry division. This meant that I was heavily involved in strategic matters for several months while also benefiting from the more systematic introduction to sales offered by the trainee program. But above all, I switched into top gear right from the start, played an active role in business development, and built up my own portfolio. At the beginning of 2016, it was nearly time for me to go on my international assignment. That proved decisive.

Unlike most other trainees, you completed your training outside Europe. How did you end up in Mexico?

Harrsen: Mexico kept coming up in discussions with the sales managers. We had been getting more and more inquiries from German companies that were investing in Mexico and we were – and still are – the only German technology manager with a presence in the country. It sounded like a winning combination to me and so I made my case to be allowed to go to Mexico. When the Board of Management gave the go-ahead, I focused my business development work on Mexico until my departure, contacted any existing German customers that had Mexican subsidiaries, and learned Spanish.

So did Mexico really prove to be a sleeping giant in terms of sales potential?

Harrsen: Yes, absolutely. In my first three months there, we won new projects, including at big-ticket German companies. And the great thing about it was that management didn't care that these ideas 'only' came from a trainee. When I got a lead, I just took the initiative and worked out a plan. If it was good, it was accepted. I think that says a lot about our Company, its culture, and its response to innovation. Shortly afterwards, the Board of Management extended my stay for two more years, and within 24 months we went on to record a tenfold increase in new business with German companies operating in Mexico.

An achievement that automatically earmarked you for the role of Vice President of Sales last year?

Harrsen: (laughs) No, that was by no means a given. Here, too, I took the initiative and fleshed out my business plan for Mexico. I wanted to identify further opportunities for growth as I firmly believe that there is still a lot of potential for transplanting our European business model here. We need to focus on international customers, help them to digitalize their processes, and expand our service portfolio. Our international group gives us a huge advantage here. During the selection process, in which I was competing against other candidates, I presented this overall picture along with my ideas. In the end, the Board of Management decided to put their faith in me.

It sounds as if you were in no hurry to leave Mexico!

Harrsen: That's right. I'm now committed to staying here for a number of years. I've also settled in very well outside of work, and I get on great with my colleagues. This is a huge opportunity for me and for the Company that I don't want to miss out on! I can't wait to get started.

MEXICO CITY MEXICO



EMPLOYEES GIVE THEIR ALL FOR GOOD CAUSES

They've been lacing up their running shoes, getting on their bikes and doing great things on stage. Our employees, coming together to make a difference. They showed a huge amount of commitment and team spirit in their efforts to raise money for good causes in 2018. A total of €17,000 was donated as part of the CARE initiative.

CARE: Rewarding in all respects

CARE stands for CHG-MERIDIAN Attends to its Regional Environment. The CHG-MERIDIAN Group is active around the world, and this in-house initiative serves as a platform for employees to come together and actively support charitable organizations in their respective regions. The Company's management demonstrates its commitment to the projects by making a financial contribution.



↑ Over 70 of our European colleagues took part in the CHG-MERIDIAN Soccer Cup, raising money for four charities

Every kilometer counts

Running, swimming and cycling are popular sports – including among our employees, who took part in numerous competitions in these disciplines. In doing so, they not only got some great exercise and fostered a sense of team spirit right across the Company, but they also supported selected institutions that help people in urgent need.

- A CHG-MERIDIAN team entered the ZF business run in Friedrichshafen for the first time last year. The money raised is helping to fund the youth work carried out by the VfB Friedrichshafen sports club.
- During the football World Cup in the summer, more than 70 employees from offices in Germany, Italy, and Switzerland laced up their boots to compete in the now traditional CHG-MERIDIAN Soccer Cup. The three tournament winners and the team with the highest proportion of female players each donated their prize money to a charity of their choice.

- CHG-MERIDIAN employees also worked up a sweat at the Munich Half Marathon, with our team covering a total distance of 127 kilometers. The money they raised went to the Munich Children's Center.
- Stamina and perseverance were the order of the day at the 10 Freunde Triathlon in Darmstadt. Each participant swam 380 meters, cycled 18 kilometers, and ran 4.2 kilometers. Wiesbaden's Bärenherz children's hospice was delighted to receive the money pledged by CHG-MERIDIAN for each kilometer completed.
- At the City Swim in Dobrecht in the Netherlands, every member of the CHG-MERIDIAN Rotterdam team swam 1.5 kilometers in support of the Dutch Cancer Society.
- Towards the end of the year, when many had already started their Christmas holidays, 20 Belgian running enthusiasts took part in the Warmathon in Brussels. A total of more than 100 kilometers were completed – for the benefit of Belgium's Waste Free Oceans organization.


434 km
walked / jogged


21.8 km
swam


180 km
cycled

Doing great things on stage, at the cinema and in the kitchen

It wasn't just in the field of sport that our colleagues achieved great things for the good of others.

- A prime example were the employees who performed the play 'The broken jug' on four consecutive evenings in front of a sell-out audience at Ravensburg Theater. The money raised was donated to the Rucksack Theater project and the Moskito school of theater and circus.
- In Mexico, CHG-MERIDIAN teamed up with the FUNFAI Foundation to arrange a festive evening at the cinema for disadvantaged children. There were surprises, gifts, and Mexican traditions, and some of the employees' families also donated clothing and toys.
- In the run-up to Christmas, an international team from the Communications and Marketing department swapped suits for aprons and baked cookies until late into the night following a company workshop. An incredible 30 kilograms' worth of cookies were sold. The proceeds, topped up by the company, went to the Valentina Foundation, which supports families with seriously ill children.



↑ Baking cookies in Ravensburg for the Valentina Foundation


1,600
Visitors to the
theatre


30 kg
baked cookies


267
committed CARE
participants


17,000 €
Total donation
amount

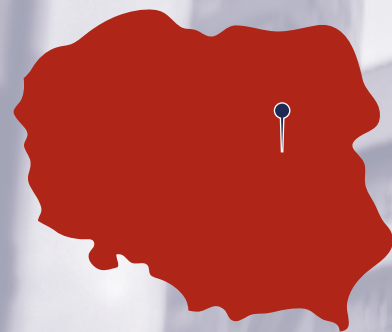
“Corporate social responsibility is firmly established in our corporate culture. Our CARE initiative ensures that our employees' good ideas and community work have the intended impact.”

Dr. Mathias Wagner
Chairman of the Board of Management, CHG-MERIDIAN

WARSAW

Poland

The office in Warsaw was founded 14 years ago.
Our small professional team is responsible for the development
and maintenance of business in Poland.



The heart of Warsaw is the
Old Town, inscribed on the
UNESCO World Heritage List

Palace of Culture and Science Warsaw



It is a destination of many
international companies'
headquarters in central Europe

Inhabitants:

1.8 million

Warsaw – Poland's capital, and the largest city in the country



Food & Drink:
PIEROGI – filled dumplings
GOŁĄBKI – cabbage roll
BIGOS – hunter's stew,
sauerkraut-and-meat stew

Language:
Polish



↓ Iwona Malachowska
Key Account Manager



Our portfolio:

Information technology 
Industrial technology 

11  employees
currently in our team in Poland

WOODLAND HILLS

Los Angeles – USA

Woodland Hills is a neighborhood in northern Los Angeles. It has served as the headquarters for our USA branch since 2009. The office provides outstanding customer service and administrative support for the US and Canada.



Each day, over 100 movie and tv crews are actively filming

Our portfolio:

Information technology

Industrial technology

Healthcare technology



35 employees

currently in our team in Woodland Hills.
Total 45 in US and Canada



Food & Drink – International:
Street Tacos, Sushi, Avocado
Toast, Green Juice

↓ Jason Burbridge
Key Account Manager



Language:
English (US)
(over 200 different
languages in Los Angeles)



Venice Beach

Los Angeles

Inhabitants:

4 million

60,000

Los Angeles

Woodland Hills

THE DIGITAL WORKPLACE – INNOVATIVE AND TRANSFORMATIVE

Our 360° lifecycle concept for the digital workplace cleverly combines state-of-the-art technology with comprehensive financial and technical expertise. It facilitates flexible and efficient work at all levels of an organization.



The digital workplace calls for an integrated approach

The digital workplace has arrived in many areas of working life and is facilitated in a variety of ways, including through state-of-the-art devices and modern IT infrastructures for the remote office. Nevertheless, much of the potential for employers and employees remains untapped.

According to a report by the Gartner market research institute, only 24 percent of employees feel supported by their IT departments when it comes to technical matters.¹ 35 percent said they did not have access to adequate technology for remote working.² This is where companies should start: by optimizing established processes, integrating employees, and taking advantage of all the benefits of the digital workplace.

The digital workplace offers substantially more freedom and fulfilment for employees: they are less restricted in terms of when and where they work and are no longer

tied to permanently installed devices such as desktop workstations. Instead, they always have access to the latest technology, which is tailored to their individual needs.

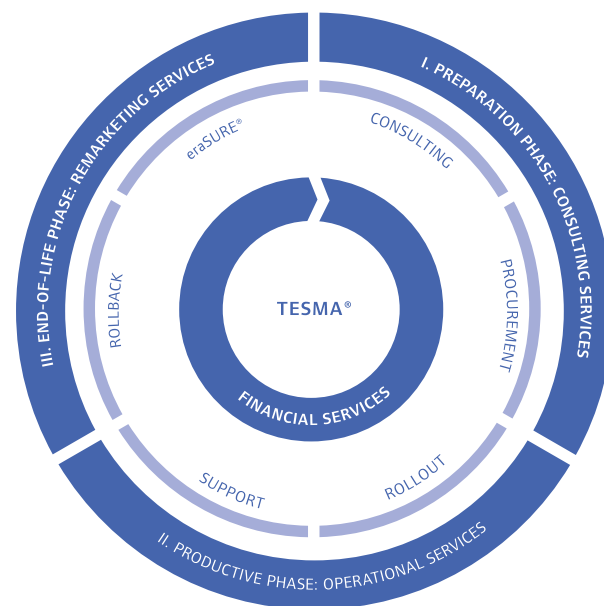
But the assets themselves are just one of many building blocks in the process of digital transformation. For the digital workplace to maximize productivity, employees must want to use the technology and be trained in how to do so. And, of course, they need to be able to access the applications quickly and securely.

Primarily, however, the digital workplace needs to be approached holistically as a 360° lifecycle concept that integrates all the individuals, departments, and processes that are key to its successful implementation.

Planning together, implementing together

We always implement the digital workplace in partnership with our customers and adapt it to their specific needs. A comprehensive project plan ensures that all stakeholders are involved from the outset. Implementation follows a roadmap towards an intended architecture that is then elaborated on and fine-tuned over the course of the project.

“We provide support as a partner and cut back the company’s administrative burden to a minimum. During the preparation phase, we analyze the project objectives, define a joint project management team, and select an appropriate procurement process. In the production and end-of-life phases, we’re then able to reduce deployment, SWAP, and data erasure work to a minimum,” explains Lukas Wojczonek, who works in digital workplace sales at CHG-MERIDIAN.



“We regard the digital workplace as a holistic system that adds significant value in all areas of the company that work with IT.”

Lukas Wojczonek
Digital Workplace Sales



More freedom equals more motivation

How exactly are all the stakeholders being integrated? Firstly, under our corporate owned, personally enabled scheme – which we call COPE – we help to motivate employees by involving them in the procurement of equipment. They can choose their own device from a selection specified by their employer, and have the option of upgrading by making their own financial contribution. Personal use is allowed and employees can keep the devices as their own private property at the end of the lease term.

Throughout the lifecycle, all company data is protected against unauthorized access. There are also no issues when it comes to separating business and personal data. At the end of the lifecycle we guarantee security thanks to our certified system of data erasure.

Secondly, in the shape of TESMA®, we have developed a user-friendly self-service portal that keeps the various stakeholders up to date with all ongoing processes. The TESMA® portal allows end users to select and manage their devices themselves, submit service requests, or have devices replaced. It works in a similar way to the kind of portals offered by mobile providers.



25 %
gain in employee productivity
and motivation³

Transparency is the key to optimization

TESMA® offers a range of departments full transparency in all aspects of an asset throughout its lifecycle and across the digital workplace. The various business and technical processes are covered either by the preparation phase, the production phase, or the end-of-life phase.

No matter what their function in the company, the departments always have access to the detailed information they need: Which devices are in use? How are they configured? How are they being used? TESMA® also offers a transparent reporting system as well as a simple means of allocating costs to specific users.

Scoring points in the war for talent

The advantages are obvious: the employees are involved in the decision-making process, they always have access to the latest technology, and they can use it for their own private purposes too. In return, they contribute the digital skills that they have acquired in a non-work context. Employees can utilize the expertise that they already have, and the administrative burden is lowered.

All in all, this is an investment in a successful future for the company. The structure and shape of their future workplace is a key factor for employees, especially for skilled workers aged 29 years and under.⁴ By offering the latest devices, flexible solutions, and freedom in the choice of workplace, companies can position themselves as progressive and forward-looking employers in the war for talent.



A non-captive concept

In concrete terms, this means that our end-to-end solution ticks all the boxes on both the technological and the commercial front. As experienced technology managers, we are able to create a compelling business case for a customized business concept. Instead of being captive to one supplier and thus tying themselves to particular devices and pricing models, our customers enjoy maximum freedom thanks to our independence from banks and manufacturers.

This means, for example, that the contract and the devices in the digital workplace can be managed separately. There are no high upfront costs for the devices and the company is not tied in to any tariff. Should the employee require an upgrade or a new tariff, it's possible to change both or either one at any time.

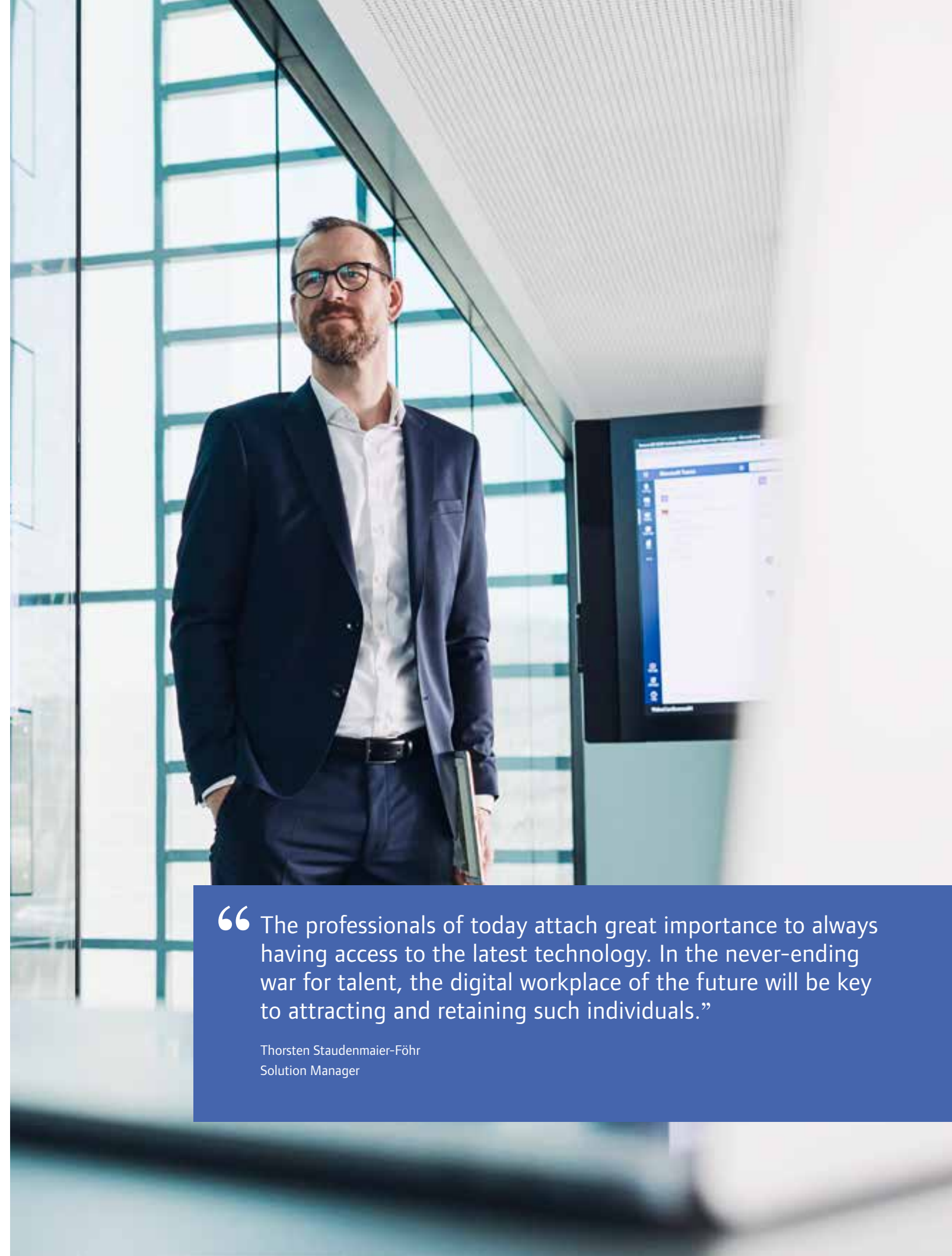
From an organizational, commercial, technological, and human perspective, the digital workplace will succeed if all areas are taken into account and processes and solutions are geared to what employees and companies really need. Let us take you on this journey.

¹ Gartner study 'Digital workers offer a reality check on the digital workplace'

² D21 Digital Index for 2018/2019

³ according to Forrester study

⁴ IDG report 'Workplace of the Future'



“The professionals of today attach great importance to always having access to the latest technology. In the never-ending war for talent, the digital workplace of the future will be key to attracting and retaining such individuals.”

Thorsten Staudenmaier-Föhr
Solution Manager

DIGITAL PROCESSES AND WORKPLACES – THE KEY TO SATISFIED EMPLOYEES

The Freiburg-based Haufe Group is looking to digitalize its internal processes at every stage of the IT lifecycle and transform its working methods with the latest technologies. We are proving to be the ideal partner.



It is subject to ever faster replacement cycles

The Haufe Group, one of Germany's most prominent media and software houses, is regarded as a pioneer in its use of new digital technologies. Its one-stop solutions offer customers specialist content and digital platforms that help them to manage their business, tax, and legal processes. These platforms include content portals, (cloud computing) applications, online communities, electronic procurement services, and HR and organizational development services.

The Haufe Group has transformed itself from a traditional publishing house into a pioneer in the field of digital and web-based platforms.

This is also reflected in the digitalization of Haufe's own workplaces. "We don't just want to offer our customers an outstanding user experience," says Andreas Plaul, Head of ICT Services at the Haufe Group. "We also want to make sure our employees are always equipped with the latest technologies and end devices." According to Plaul, end devices such as laptops, Macs, iPads and smartphones are subject to ever faster replacement cycles. He says that CHG-MERIDIAN's customer finance model enables the Haufe Group to keep pace.



Putting the latest technology at employees' fingertips

We replace the company's existing devices with new ones after a specified period of use. These predefined replacement cycles mean that Haufe Group employees always have access to a high-performance device.

It wasn't always like that. Up until 2017, Haufe was still buying many of its IT and telecoms products outright. The company now leases a wide range of IT assets using our cost-optimized finance model – optimized both in terms of customer needs and total cost of ownership.

"By reducing how much we pay upfront and offering a choice of leasing cycles, CHG-MERIDIAN gives us flexibility and the option of avoiding step costs," says Plaul. "Its finance model has helped us to cut the cost of assets and to optimize the total lifecycle costs."

The number of interfaces has been reduced, leasing processes are now paperless – thanks to DocuSign electronic signatures – and approval processes are digital. There is clarity on the legal front too, including with regard to data protection. "The whole process within the Haufe Group is now completely digital – from the approval of the payment and issuing of the lease schedule to the

collection of the equipment," says Frank Bastuck, Senior Key Account Manager at CHG-MERIDIAN.

It's also been possible to minimize service and maintenance costs. "By automating processes for end devices, we can focus fully on our employees' user experience," says Plaul.

The Head of ICT Services at Haufe is full of praise not only for our process support, but also for the various services it provides throughout the product lifecycle: "The overall package that we use goes far beyond the procurement of IT equipment. We're spending less on IT support and, indirectly, less on our employees too. And it's all thanks to the TESMA® technology and service management system, the certified eraSURE® process, and CHG-MERIDIAN's clearly defined remarketing concepts."

Plaul says that when data is erased and devices are remarketed at the end of their lifecycle, there's now only a minimum of interaction with the IT department, which saves employees time and effort.



← Andreas Plaul, Head of ICT Services at the Haufe Group, with part of his team at the Freiburg headquarters



← Frank Bastuck
Senior Key Account Manager

Working with CHG-MERIDIAN is very straightforward

We have implemented and digitalized a number of processes at the Haufe Group as part of what Plaul calls a very straightforward, flexible, and uncomplicated business relationship.

“Because of the interfaces that have been provided, the way the entire process chain has been integrated, and CHG-MERIDIAN’s non-captive status, we have been able to map out a process landscape that covers the wide-ranging needs of our employees,” he says.

At the Haufe Group, product lifecycles are managed along with a variety of other business processes on the ServiceNow platform, which is operated by the US company of the same name.

The interface to TESMA®, our technology and service management system, automates the flow of information between technology partners and the Haufe Group. “This gives us access to all the key data on our assets,” says Plaul. “I can find out which devices are being used where, what their cost status is, and when they will next need to be replaced.”

For Haufe’s main IT manager, it was a marriage made in heaven: “As a software company, we don’t just want to offer products that automate our customers’ processes. We want our own internal processes to be automated as well. In CHG-MERIDIAN, the Haufe Group has a partner who not only shares this goal of automating the product lifecycle, but also helps to implement it.”

Optimizing the IT infrastructure helps employees to work in a connected way

The employees’ user experience – always aligned with the relevant compliance and security requirements – is hugely important to the Haufe Group’s management. After all, the option of working remotely and flexibly is a key aspect of the digital workplace, and meets the needs of a world of work that is constantly evolving.

At the Haufe Group, this doesn’t just entail the use of new and user-friendly technology. It’s also reflected in an open and service-oriented IT department. As well as continuing to automate its internal processes, the IT

department wants to support a culture of connected working within the company. Plaul is looking to make further improvements in the areas of collaboration, data sharing, and IT user-friendliness, for example. The resulting IT processes will facilitate the kind of transformative working methods that are based on connection, communication, and collaboration and that is the key to success in our digital times.

Growing demands on technology

“We are constantly trialing new applications for innovative technology within the Haufe Group and for our customers,” says Plaul. “In five years’ time, we’ll definitely be at a much more advanced stage in terms of the depth of IT usage. The collaborative approach – with the user experience a constant focus – will then have become part of the company’s DNA.”

The digital transformation is placing ever greater demands on the latest technologies, whose lifecycles will become shorter and shorter. In the shape of CHG-MERIDIAN, the Haufe Group has a strong partner at its side as it looks to continue using the latest technologies to transform how it works.

↓ Silvia Igel, Senior Key Account Manager, in conversation with Andreas Plaul, Head of ICT Services at the Haufe Group



THE MILLION DOLLAR QUESTION: WHICH FORKLIFT IS THE MOST EFFICIENT?

The packaging and paper company Mondi asked us for a fleet and TCO analysis so that it could procure the right industrial trucks.



“When it came to the procurement of industrial trucks, we lacked a benchmark for the acquisition costs. This made it hard for us to work out which product was actually the most effective for our particular needs from an overall cost and efficiency perspective. The information that the manufacturers provide, for example on fuel consumption and the turning radius, isn’t enough to draw any valid conclusions that might justify one set of procurement costs over another.” This is how Mariyan Banchev, Category Manager for Technical Services & Automation at the Mondi Group, describes the problem that faced the company.

Mondi, a manufacturer of sustainable packaging, employs around 26,000 people in 30 countries. Hundreds of industrial trucks are in continuous operation in its paper and pulp production plants.

We, as a non-captive technology manager, helped Mondi to design its tender process and compare specifications. Comparability of differing upfront and

lifecycle costs were one of the key issues. The efficiency, availability, performance, fuel consumption, and useful lives of the different makes and models were some of the metrics that could be used as part of the benchmarking process.

CHG-MERIDIAN’s experts began by conducting a TCO analysis of the fleet. A productivity test compared different makes of the same truck type.

The test also formed the basis for a subsequent analysis for when the fleet was in operation, with the aim of establishing a proactive system of fleet management. “The more you can measure how your fleet is performing, the better you’ll be able to manage it,” says Philip Rosenmüller, Senior Technical Sales at CHG-MERIDIAN. “You always want to be optimizing your fleet – by standardizing, consolidating, and minimizing the upfront and ongoing operating costs of the trucks.”

Trucks tested in a variety of work scenarios

At the pilot site of Mondi in Poland, the test trucks were equipped with sensors designed to track their performance and operating data for subsequent analysis. Among the metrics that were recorded were the number of laden journeys made versus operating hours, the duration of loading and unloading cycles, consumption data, driving style, and maneuverability.

“The test drivers had to complete the kind of loading and unloading jobs that they would normally be expected to do for the company – as quickly as possible and at the same frequency. For example, they had to travel a specified distance and then load and unload a product that had been earmarked for picking,” says Alexandra Popowitsch, Account Manager at CHG-MERIDIAN.



During the test drives, the team collected data on loading / unloading performance, productivity, and handling for subsequent evaluation and TCO analysis. “We provided Mondi with a detailed decision-making matrix that

helped them to weigh up the upfront costs in relation to, for example, the optimum useful life, the replacement cycles, and the financial model,” says Popowitsch.

Our aim was to highlight differences in the upfront costs of the various makes and to see whether this was compensated for by any gains in loading / unloading or handling efficiency or reductions in maintenance costs and fuel consumption.

“While buyers make their choices based on commercial data, those actually responsible for operations often rely more on their gut feeling. They prefer to choose the technology leader or the best in terms of quality, service, or both. But it’s then difficult for them to later justify their choice,” says Popowitsch. That’s no longer the case thanks to us.



6 forklift trucks
from different manufacturers
have been tested



2-week
test phase per forklift truck



**Performing TCO Analysis
& ROI Assessment**

Bringing the lifecycle costs to bear in the investment decision

“The new decision-making matrix means that the relevant people at Mondi now know where the break-even point is. Or, to put it another way, the purchasing department now knows that it can justify opting for a brand that is 20 percent more expensive because it can show that the investment will pay off over the lifecycle of the product,” explains Popowitsch.

The international Mondi sites are also benefiting from this approach and from the decision-making matrix. The individual Mondi plants vary in terms of what shifts they

operate, and what discounts they are granted by the manufacturers, but now the purchasing department can easily adjust the individual parameters of the calculation matrix.

This means that the individual countries and Mondi sites also have access to a tool that they can use to weigh up the individual manufacturers’ proposals on the basis of both the upfront and lifecycle costs.



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Assertions relating to the future merely reflect the situation at the time that they were made. These assertions are dependent on risks and uncertainties as well as other
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and other factors are described in detail in the risk report section of the CHG-MERIDIAN AG annual report. CHG-MERIDIAN AG does not intend to update such
assertions relating to the future.

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A modern office interior with large windows and a blue-tinted background. The image shows a glass-walled office space with a desk and chair visible through the glass. The overall aesthetic is clean and professional, with a strong emphasis on light and transparency.

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