



Dr. Sven Olaf Eggers

Dr. Sven Olaf Eggers studied business law after training as a banker and he also received his doctorate while working. In 2011 he moved to PATRIZIA WohnInvest KVG mbH firstly working as Director of Fund Accounting. In 2013 he was appointed Managing Director of PATRIZIA WohnInvest KVG mbH. That same year Dr. Eggers became Group Head Platform Administration of PATRIZIA Immobilien AG acting as responsible for managing the back offices of all European investment platforms. Since February 2017 Dr. Eggers additionally became Managing Director for the regulatory affairs of PATRIZIA Institutional Clients & Advisory GmbH embedding PATRIZIA's worldwide sales activities.

Dr. Sven Olaf Eggers holds a doctorate in business law from University of Siegen, Germany



Digital transformation

An asset manager's view

Digitalization is a buzzword that transcends all sectors of the financial industry, including real estate. How does it affect the strategic orientation and business models of a real estate asset manager? What are the key areas to address? How should professionals prepare for the future in terms of smart buildings and sustainable use of resources?

Deloitte Partner Andreas Meier talked to Dr. Sven Olaf Eggers, Group Head of Platform Administration of Patrizia Immobilien AG, to address these topics from an asset manager's point of view. 

In relation to the field of digital transformation and innovation in general: Have you already set focal points for these areas in your current processes or strategic orientation? Do you see this topic becoming more important on the client side?

Yes, we recognize its importance. About three months ago, we founded and staffed a digital transformation unit and an innovation lab to centralize these new areas and topics within the company. Manning this digital transformation unit with an expert and an accompanying team has allowed us to make targeted know-how acquisitions on the market in response to increased client demand. We are also watching our competitors and have seen them creating their own innovation departments with corresponding accountability. We have identified increased client demand in the area of digitalization in particular, especially in client reporting and dashboards, where we see the need to increase the digital aspect of our offering. One interesting factor here is that clients don't really seem to mind where the data

comes from. The important thing is to have it and to be able to use it effectively for reporting purposes.

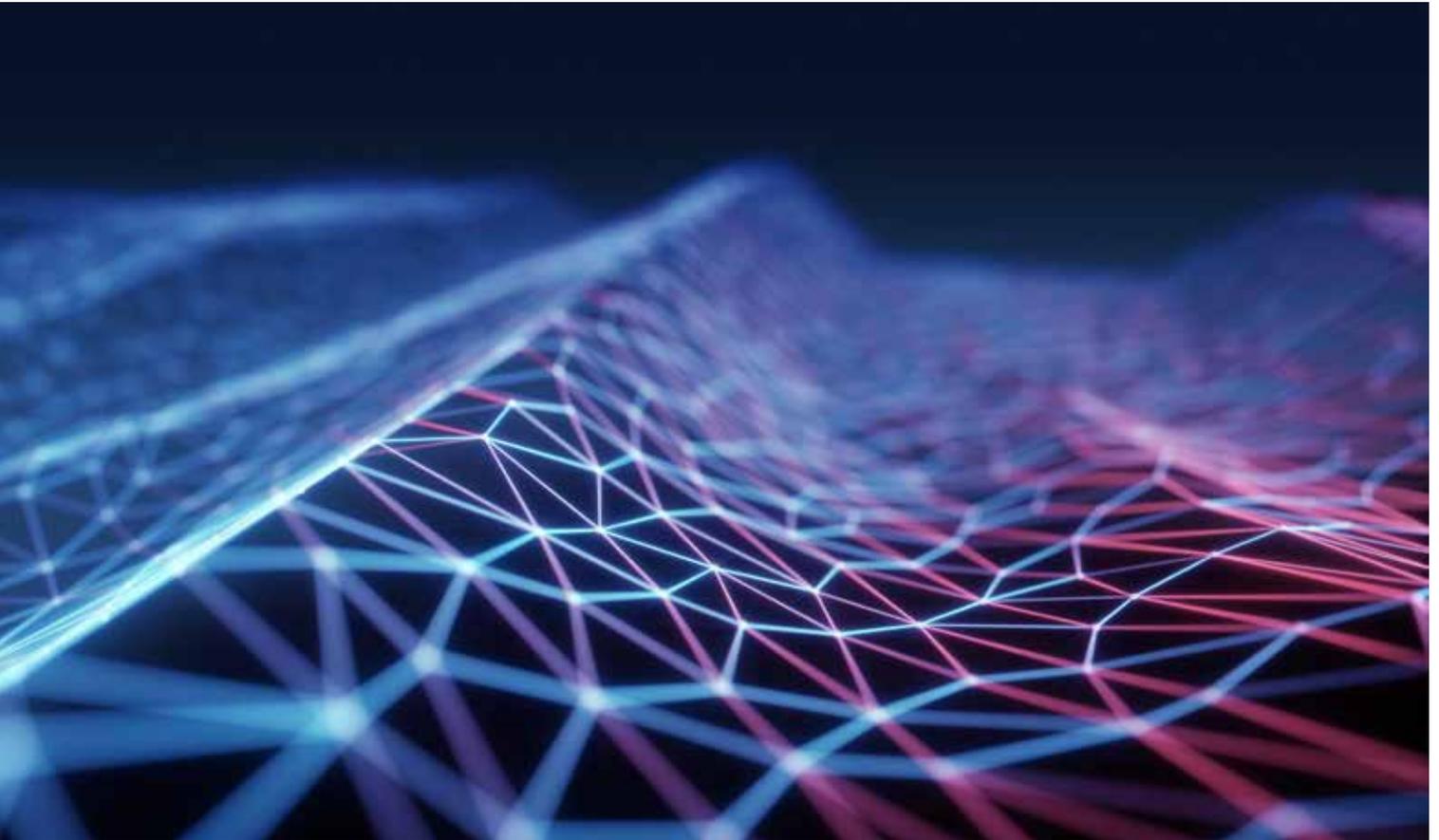
Does this mean good data management can give a company an edge on its competitors?

Data management is certainly a very important topic for us and our clients. Not only have we already largely automated our reporting landscape, we have also created client logins. These allow clients to log in to online portals and access the products they have subscribed to, as well as other useful information, such as customized research findings. There, clients can read current reports on the funds they hold with us in a secure space. This is true for both private and institutional clients. We are tracking development in this area closely, and soon plan to offer an extension containing dashboard features that can be used not just through a stationary internet connection, but also on mobile devices. This information is valuable to our clients, and we intend to develop this feature to the asset level.



How do you manage the risks arising from the provision of personal client data?

Our relationship with our clients is built on mutual trust. The client sees this trust as all-encompassing and expects us not only to act with professionalism and care in the course of asset management, but also to exercise appropriate caution for things like data security. We have implemented the security measures we feel are necessary to



offer our clients the greatest possible degree of protection in line with market standards. One major contributor to the professional treatment of client data is our purpose-created Reporting Management department, whose role it is to generate and disseminate client reports. Employees in this department are fully aware of the extreme sensitivity of client information. We feel the advantages of these kinds of reports and online client resources clearly outweigh the disadvantages, provided the existing risks are appropriately minimized. [➤](#)

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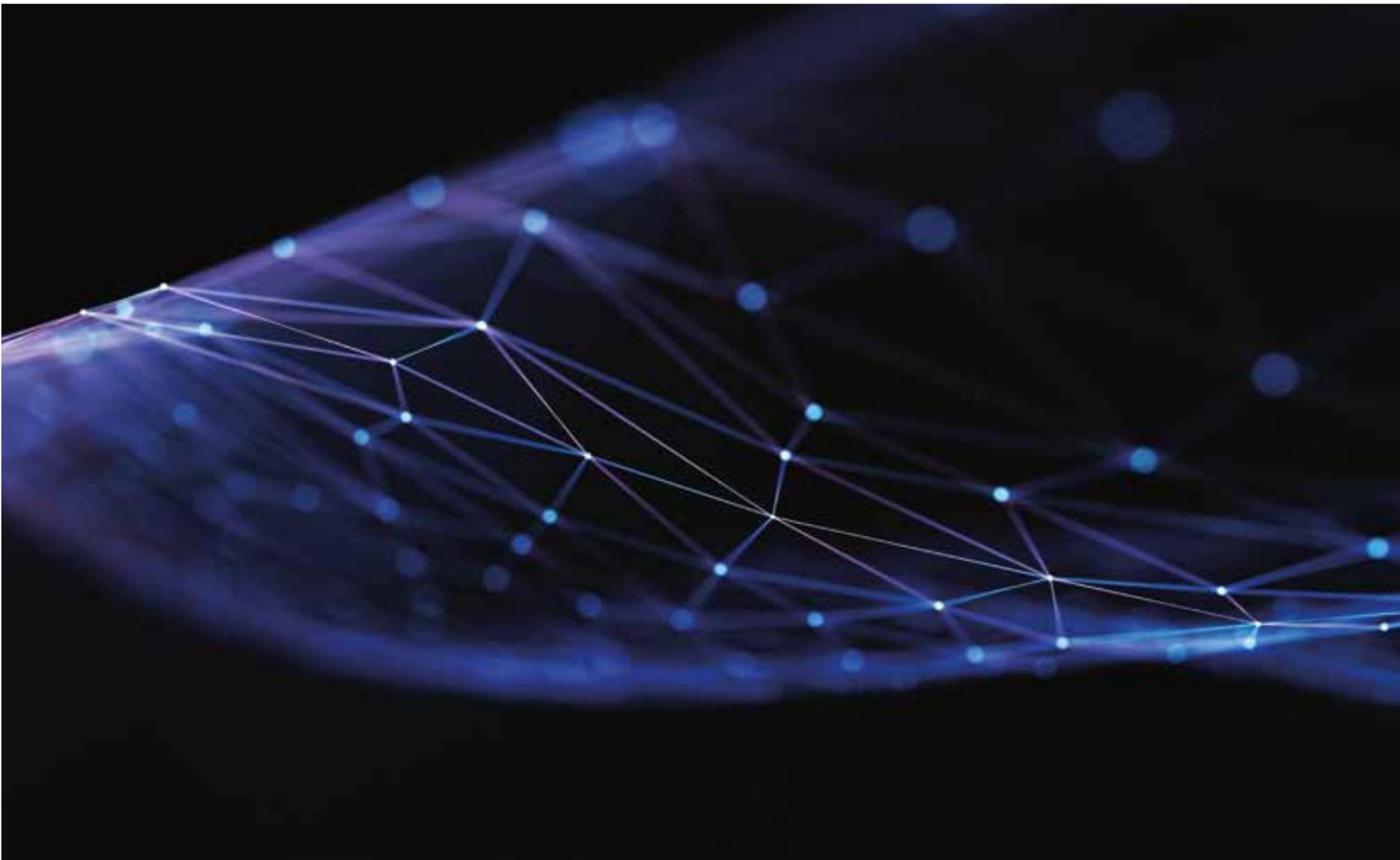
Digital transformation is a broad field. What are the specific key topics for you in this area and what standards do your employees use? What issues do they have to deal with?

One thing we focus on is how we can further automate the management of our real estate in order to create value for our clients. We have set the fundamental goal of providing solutions that are at the cutting edge of technology. However, we also regularly assess whether individual measures are actually worthwhile. Digital transformation isn't an end in itself. We implement new technologies in areas where they will create added value for our clients. As for our internal processes, there are certainly places where we could further improve the integration of these issues. We also exchange information with other companies, some of which don't have a customer relationship management

system, for example. This is extremely important for us due to increasing client numbers, more clients with international activities, and the fact that clients have often invested in our products multiple times. With the appropriate systems, we can even ensure that client preferences previously identified with another product originator are taken into account. It is for just this type of data management situation that we see great potential in process digitalization.

One often looks to the more advanced branches of an industry. Are there any interesting use cases for your branch, in the UCITS segment for example?

Yes, we're looking at interesting developments in payment processing, for example. This includes robotic solutions, which have found a foothold in the world of finance and banking in particular, and



which we are reviewing for suitability. In this area, we can already see the first potential within the invoice approval process, for initial plausibility checks on accounting books using standard algorithms, and for booking standard business transactions. However, I should add that in addition to potential implementations, we have also identified clear limits where none would be possible. But we are in tune to the field of robotics, and are looking far into the future.

To what extent will digital transformation change your company and business model in the medium to long term?

I feel it is important to continually compare your own business model and the processes it entails with the developments observed on the market in order to identify room for improvement, and then to ultimately make those improvements.

On one hand, this means speeding up processes and process chains, but it also means maintaining cost efficiency and striving to unburden employees to allow them to focus on the important things. Here, we see ourselves in a continuous process of implementing new technologies to generate added value. This means that when we find a successful concept on the market, we must use it to challenge our own business model and question our current procedures. Disregarding technological advancement will do major damage to a company even in the medium term.

To what extent does the advancement of digitalization influence your company's desired employee profile?

It's not just becoming more important to us for our employees to understand current IT solutions. Even more crucially, they must be of a mindset that not only allows them to adapt to system changes, but that also makes them intrinsically motivated to evolve with our company through this era of technological change. As I mentioned before, automation will give employees more time to assess and evaluate the matters at hand. Logically, implementing new technological solutions means our employees will need to further develop the necessary skills.

Now let's turn to the subject of sustainable building renovation and construction. How realistic do you think it is to imagine people living in smart cities in the medium term?

A few years ago, we appointed a Sustainability Officer to approach the subject of the sustainable use of resources from our clients' perspective and with regard to our company's assets. I think here, too, the key is not to over-technologize buildings, but to invest where it makes the most sense. Particularly in the commercial segment, we are seeing that certified efficient buildings can mean added value for major tenants. In residential property, we observe this criterion being required more and more often, but there it all depends on whether the individual tenants can actually perceive

the advantages; for example, if their utilities costs are actually lower. I believe that we should always take a practical approach, because pumping too much technology into buildings would lead to costs the demand could no longer justify. We have to find a happy medium and take the right measures, although I certainly think renovating buildings that really are old and outdated to save energy is appropriate for our time, and is also necessary to meet the current and future demand for energy-efficient housing. ●

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