

## More strategic, more digital, more networked: the purchaser's profession is becoming increasingly demanding

- The job description is changing: strategic and digital skills are becoming more important
- Digitalisation and internationalisation demand buyers
- Purchasers in Germany prefer to buy in Germany
- Trade conflict between USA and China hardly influences German purchasers

**Hamburg, 13 November 2019** - Today the BME Symposium, the largest European congress for supply chain managers, starts in Berlin. Visable's B2B marketplace "Wer liefert was" publishes the "Purchaser Report 2019" and shows that the job description of professional buyers is changing. In recent years, the tasks of professional buyers have become more digital and strategic. In addition, there are more and more intersections between purchasing and other areas of the company.

Negotiations with suppliers, market analyses or ordering processes: the tasks of professional purchasers are diverse and require organisational, commercial and business management skills as well as communication skills. Especially in manufacturing companies, the smooth manufacture of products, their quality and the generated turnover stands or falls with the services of the purchasing department. Are the required parts purchased at particularly favourable prices? Do all parts have a high quality? Does the purchaser negotiate price reductions skilfully and does he always have an eye on the necessary delivery periods and inventory? The questions show what a central role this position plays for the success of the company.

For the "Purchaser Report 2019", the leading B2B marketplace "Wer liefert was" surveyed a total of 633 professional buyers in Germany online. The report shows: The career profile of the purchaser is changing. More than a third (35 percent) of the participants think that their area of responsibility has become more demanding in the past three years, 39 percent consider their area of responsibility to be increasingly strategic and almost half of the respondents (46 percent) state that their area of responsibility has become more digital in recent years. In addition, there are more and more intersections to other areas, as 30 percent of respondents find.

The answers to the specific tasks also reflect the breadth of the buyer's job profile today: Negotiations with suppliers with around 18 percent and ordering processes with 14 percent still rank on top of the list among the tasks. In addition, targeted market analyses and evaluations of potential suppliers (15 percent), cost controlling (13 percent) and the coordination of production and purchasing (13 percent) are among the central tasks of purchasing.

Digital tools are becoming increasingly important in order to carry out these tasks efficiently: search engines such as Google (80 per cent) or special B2B purchasing platforms such as "Wer liefert was" and EUROPAGES (74 per cent) are among the tools used by the majority of buyers. More than half (52 percent) also continue to rely on personal recommendations, for example from colleagues.

### Digitisation and globalisation accelerate the change in the job description

What are the reasons for the change in the occupational profile? In addition to digitisation, the increasing internationalisation is primarily responsible for the changes in the profession. International competition is also affecting purchasing: More than half of the respondents (56 percent) confirmed growing cost pressure for German SMEs. As a result of the changed framework conditions, the job



description is also changing - for example, when the demands on negotiating skills or research skills increase in order to find the cheapest supplier of a good. The majority of the respondents (60 percent) buy mainly domestically, 20 percent procure the required goods primarily in Western Europe, followed by Asia (6 percent).

According to the respondents, the relatively low level of purchasing in Asia has little to do with the trade dispute between the USA and China: Around 66 percent stated that their procurement strategy has not changed as a result of the conflict.

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**About "Wer liefert was"**

"Wer liefert was" (wlw) is the leading online B2B marketplace in the DACH region. With a company profile on wlw, medium-sized companies in particular can increase their reach on the Internet. "Wer liefert was" offers access to millions of products and services in the B2B segment as the most visited Internet platform for professional purchasing in the DACH region. On wlw.de, wlw.at and wlw.ch, 1.3 million buyers with real needs meet around 590,000 suppliers, manufacturers, dealers and service providers in around 47,000 categories every month. The precise and simple search provides buyers every month with reliable information on companies and their product portfolios, including current contact data and prices. The service was founded in 1932 and was the first to offer printed reference works for commercial buyers. "Wer liefert was" is free for purchasers and as a standard profile for advertisers. The services have been available online since 1995. Today, "Wer liefert was" belongs to Visible GmbH together with the leading European B2B platform EUROPAGES as a product. Further information on "Wer liefert was" can be found [here](#).