

Media release

Informatec develops market-driven BI innovation in the cloud, with the FHNW as a research partner

Informatec is developing an AI-based BI configurator with the Institute for Business Informatics at the University of Northwest Switzerland. Launched in March of this year, the two-year, market-oriented research project will be conducted under the leadership of Prof. Dr. Stella Gatzlau Grivas of the FHNW Olten. The project objective is to provide Swiss SMEs with a digital assistant for business intelligence services in the cloud. The project is funded by the Federal Commission for Technology and Innovation (KTI).

Muttenz, June 26, 2017 - With the aid of business intelligence, companies and organisations can gain valuable insights from their databases and make better decisions on the basis of these. A frequent hurdle however, particularly for SMEs, are the high start-up costs. Before effective BI can be carried out, all existing data in the company have to be extensively evaluated, merged and then linked to corresponding analysis services and configured as KPIs. Thus substantial costs arise at the outset, even before the first practical analyses can be carried out. The objective of the research collaboration between Informatec and FHNW is a self-service configurator for BI applications that already largely cover industry- and company-specific needs.

Clear project vision with high utility potential

The project vision comprises a digital assistant in the cloud, which, with the aid of artificial intelligence, takes over a part of the consultancy services currently provided by consultants. The new digital consultant, SBICC (Smart Business Intelligence Cloud Configurator), learns from past projects and uses knowledge and services that best fit the respective customer requirements. For this purpose, relevant contexts are automatically recognised and proposed directly. If desired, the human BI consultant subsequently builds on the basic principles of the SBICC and helps the client to individualise and optimise his specific case. The main focus of the project is clearly on the question: What effective support can a BI consultant use when advising a client so that BI costs remain acceptable for SMEs?

Artificial intelligence, embedded in a recommender system

The basis for the digital consultant comprises on the one hand semantic technologies for formally describing customer contexts and requirements, and also BI services and their parameters. To this end, a comprehensive case basis is established, in which results of past consulting projects are collected. The case basis is used for the reuse of experience by means of suitable similarity measures and retrieval methods developed by the Institute of Business Informatics. Finally, automatic pattern recognition methods are used to identify historical solutions to current problems and to apply them analogously. Scientifically, this is known as a recommender system, which uses methods and procedures from artificial intelligence.

"The realisation of the SBICC in a research project in collaboration with the FHNW is a great opportunity for us and helps us to further effectively develop our individual standard BI platform and to bring it to the next level". Thus Oliver Ruf, KTI project manager at Informatec, explains his company's motivation.

For more information

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About Informatec

With its clear focus on business intelligence, Informatec has established itself as a specialist for consulting and appropriate implementation of comprehensive BI solutions for analysis, reporting and planning. The Basel-area company, founded in 1998, is a BI innovator for demanding SMEs and large clients and counts leading companies among its continuously growing clientele. With its needs-oriented services, Informatec ensures that the numerous benefits of the self-developed BI platform iVIEW based on Qlik and Jedox are available without limitations. Its services include consulting, conception and client-specific developments as well as implementation, training, maintenance and support.