



'STRONGER TOGETHER'

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Christian Hürter, Director Global IT at Bizerba. discusses how the company is overcoming new challenges in a rapidlyevolving digital landscape

> or more than 150 years, Bizerba has been a pioneer in the food industry with its world-leading weighing, slicing and labelling technologies.

Underpinning the German firm's everyday operations is the motto 'stronger together', which is adhered to and embraced by every team, from sales to human resources.

The IT department, containing around 150 employees in locations across the globe, is no different.

Heading up this function is Dr Christian Hürter, Director Global IT, who joined the company just over two years ago in February 2021.

Dr Hürter leads the talented team of IT specialists, around 100 of whom are based at Bizerba's headquarters near Stuttgart, Germany, with the other 50 spread all over the world.

Revealing his approach to the role, Dr Hürter said efforts to "lift IT to the next level" at Bizerba could be broadly summarised by two pillars.

"We want to reach the next level in terms of standardised architecture, enabling a stable development application-wise," adds Dr Hürter.



Why Bizerba prides itself on being 'stronger together'

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"With one pillar we are really working to global IT standards, so we are not reinventing the wheel. We are working closely with Gartner to establish those standards.

"On the other side, we have six strategic initiatives which help us bring Bizerba to the next level. These are things like the introduction of business relationship management, as it's very important for us to be business-centric; another initiative is IT performance management which means being transparent in what we are doing and shifting focus from running IT towards growing and transforming business with IT.

"And so, with those two pillars, we are evolving as a global team step by step."

Bizerba: A company 'stronger together'

Dr Hürter cannot emphasise enough the importance of staying 'stronger together'. So endemic is the mantra that it has actually extended to Bizerba's customers through the 'MyBizerba' initiative.

Given the business' multiple areas of expertise, MyBizerba allows clients to benefit from an entire portfolio of services, tailored to their own specific set of requirements. This includes full technical training and extensive maintenance and support packages.

"Our claim of MyBizerba means we create unique solutions for unique people, combining functionalities like advisory services, hardware and software products, accessories, services and financial services together in this 'stronger together' thinking," says Dr Hürter. "Because we are a global company in several different countries, our people must work together to come up with a working solution for our customers.

Christian Hürter

TITLE: DIRECTOR GLOBAL IT

COMPANY: BIZERBA

INDUSTRY: IT

Since 2021:

Director Global IT (CIO) at Bizerba

2018-2020: Co-Founder and Managing Director (Co-CEO) at ZIP Software, acquired by Würth group in November 2020

Since 2017: Professor for Process Management in SME at Baden-Wuerttemberg Cooperative State University (DHBW) Stuttgart

2007-2018: Managing Director (CDO) at Heinrich Schmid group

2007: Doctor of Engineering from Wuppertal University

2003-2007: Senior Consultant & Manager (E4) at DaimlerChrysler

2002: Industrial Engineering
Diploma from Karlsruhe Institute
of Technology (KIT) and Master
degree (D.E.A.) from Institut National
Polytechnique (INP) and École
Nationale Supérieure de Génie
Industriel (ENSGI) Grenoble, France

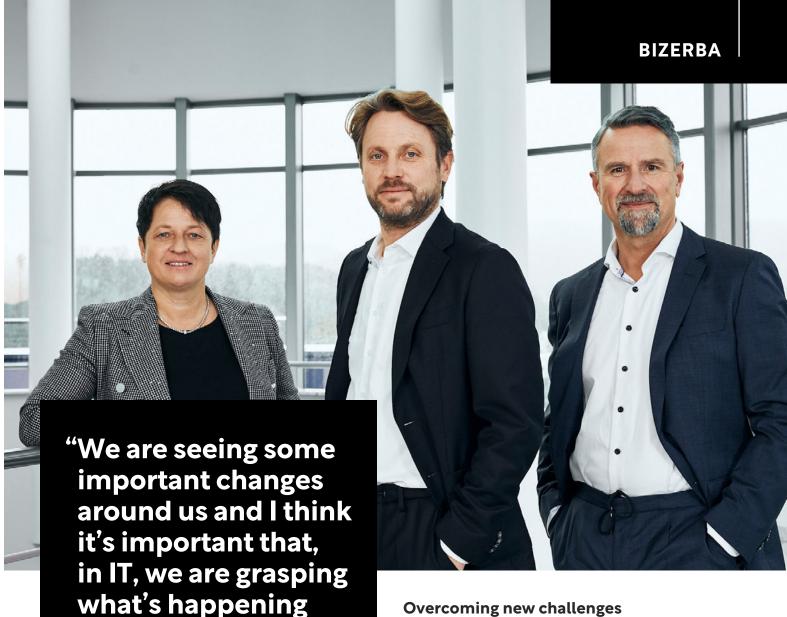
1978: Born in Munich

"Because we are a global company in several different countries, we all must work together to come up with a working solution for our customer"

CHRISTIAN HÜRTER DIRECTOR GLOBAL IT, BIZERBA







BIZERBA

CHRISTIAN HÜRTER

DIRECTOR GLOBAL IT,

We see this in every aspect of our work, especially in IT.

on the market"

"I already mentioned we act businesscentric, so what matters most to IT is what our customer needs, and then we make that happen in a joint effort together at Bizerba.

"Being a large, mid-sized business, and given the scale of our products and global footprint, it's all about taking this asset we have as an advantage and combining different people and knowledge to come up with solutions. That's our daily business."

Overcoming new challenges

Evidently, key to Dr Hürter's role – and that of his IT department - is to try and respond and adapt to rapidlyevolving business requirements.

He highlights sustainability, digital transformation and the digital skills gap, which he refers to as the "war for talent", as just some of the biggest challenges to overcome.

"We are seeing some important changes around us and I think it's important that, in IT, we are grasping what's happening on the market," says Dr Hürter. "We have influences like sustainability which is just taking off and that is something we need to take care of everywhere in the company and of course in IT. too.

"We have this war for talents that is definitely affecting us in the IT organisation; we need to continuously ensure that we have



faster than we ever thought we could. We are learning and improving massively on

every aspect"

CHRISTIAN HÜRTER DIRECTOR GLOBAL IT, **BIZERBA**

the right capabilities and stay ahead of our competitors in the market."

New innovations within the food and retail industries are also presenting new hurdles, as are ever-evolving business models.

Unmanned supermarkets and selfcheckout capabilities are becoming increasingly common, while the way in which clients are paying for services is changing, too.

"For example," adds Dr Hürter, "Bizerba is partnering with a start-up called SuperSmart, which is coming up with brilliant solutions for supporting selfcheckout for large bunches of products, as well as for small product bunches.



"Parallel to the traditional selling of products, we have more and more users willing to pay only when they use services. So we are experiencing more of this type of subscription business model."

Bizerba's push for digital transformation falls under its I&T operating model, which has been coined by Gartner to express that the scope extends beyond the boundaries of the IT organisation.

While digital transformation may once have been a department in itself, emphasis now is on this drive being part of an entire company's DNA – another example of being 'stronger together'.

Bizerba 'building back better' after cyber attack

Dr Hürter does not shy away from the fact that Bizerba has been in recovery mode, having suffered a severe cyber attack in June last year.

While basic functions were restored after a few weeks, the establishment of a new IT landscape took several months.

However, the experience served as an opportunity for the company to learn and 'build back better', reinforcing its global infrastructure including networks, server, cloud and security.

"Actually, we weren't bad before and were performing pretty well," explains Dr Hürter.

"But, we were hit and now we are learning from that and improving massively on every aspect. We are at a very good point – much better than we were a year ago, even though we had a good level. Now, ever since the attack, we are progressing faster than we ever thought we could."

In fact, Dr Hürter grows discernibly excited when the topic of security is brought up, even admitting it is his "favourite" part of the job.

He uses the analogy of security being like a fence surrounding Bizerba, with a need to ensure it reaches the same height all the way around.

"The risk appetite that our shareholders define is the fence height, and our shareholders want it pretty high," says Dr Hürter.

"Our duty in IT is to ensure we have the same fence height everywhere in the company, and it's the duty of my colleague, the Chief Information Security Officer, to watch over and inspect the fence."

"Our strategic partners like HPE and All for One are bringing us to the next level, technology-wise, in our global ecosystem"

CHRISTIAN HÜRTER DIRECTOR GLOBAL IT, BIZERBA



The importance of GPOs and IT-BRMs

Bizerba's Director Global IT is unequivocal in his assessment that his team must contribute to the value being added to business processes.

Facilitating this is the global process owner (GPO), defined by Deloitte as an individual who "owns an end-to-end process across functional silos, geographic and business unit boundaries."

Dr Hürter calls this "absolutely crucial" and says his team is working closely with Bizerba's GPO through an IT Business Relationship Manager (IT-BRM), established at the beginning of last year.

He adds: "The important thing is that the GPO and IT-BRM are in close contact, so the IT-BRM can understand and fulfil the needs of the GPO, and consult the GPO on their way of digitally transforming the business."



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A strong partner ecosystem

Bizerba's IT function does, of course, have a whole host of partners with which it works closely on various production and transformation processes.

Once again, this epitomises the 'stronger together' ethos which extends beyond the company's four walls.

"I think today you cannot compete in the transformation and production of an IT organisation when you need to invent everything on your own," says Dr Hürter. "It would be a stupid approach, not taking into account the multiple experiences and sometimes the overarching size of partners in the marketplace. These are important value partners with many more resources or many more specialisations.

"So, it's absolutely crucial and, again, a case of 'stronger together' when you have these long relationships with partners."

He also points out the growing trend in establishing enduring partnerships to ensure long-lasting stability and fruitful relationships.

"We are investing and concentrating on a few very good partners, and I think that's a trend in the market as well." Dr Hürter continues.

"Our partnerships go longer because that's the way we need to work together."

All for One Group is one of the key partners within Bizerba's ecosystem, supporting the company in its transition to SAP's S/4HANA enterprise resource planning software.

"For this transition, we chose All for One as our favoured partner," adds Dr Hürter. "All for One has always been our partner for basic support. Above all, they are now our project and transformation partner who are making our transition to S/4HANA happen. And why? All for One understands



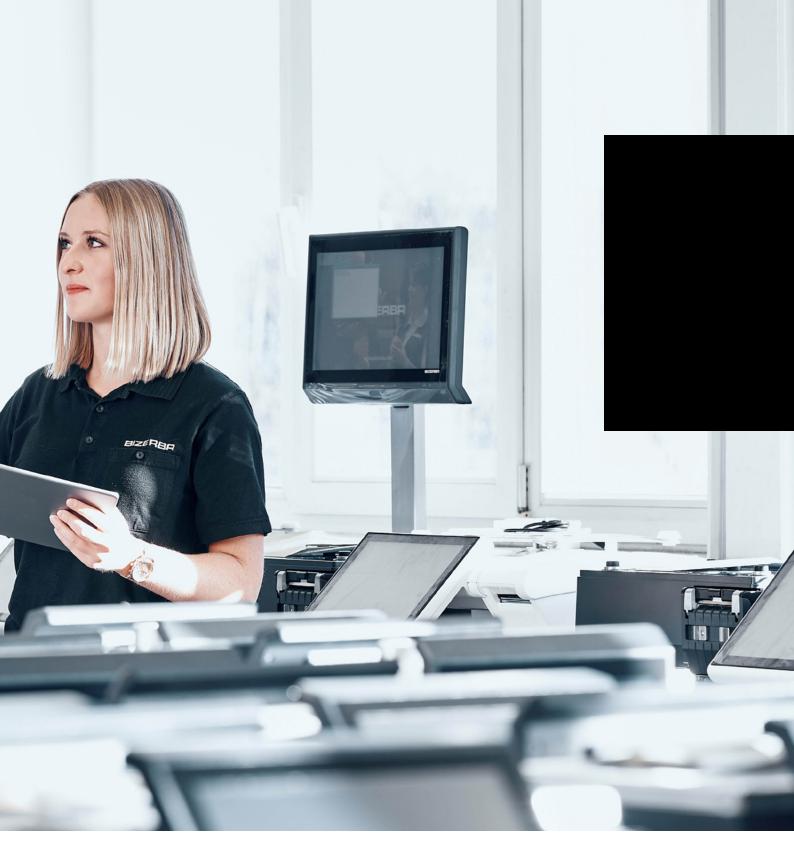
our needs and can advise us individually in our specific situation, but they also have a broad market experience and offer us guidelines and best practices to navigate through business transformation."

Another important partner is Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE).

"HPE is supplying us with storage and computing for our data centre but,

"It's more important to choose the right path and to make the right migration decisions"

CHRISTIAN HÜRTER DIRECTOR GLOBAL IT, BIZERBA



moreover, they are infrastructure problem solvers and precious advisors on our journey to hybrid cloud transition," Dr Hürter says.

He describes hybrid cloud transition as Bizerba's "stepwise move from processing data in proprietary data centres to a hybrid cloud", provided and managed outside Bizerba.

"We are not in a hurry during this transition phase," concludes Dr Hürter. "It's more important to choose the right path and to make the right migration decisions, because mistakes are very expensive. And HPE is helping us avoid such mistakes." •











