

## PRESS RELEASE

### **New study: Business apps are a critical competitive factor in supply chain management, global trade, and logistics**

- 89.5% of those surveyed see mobile applications (apps) as a competitive factor
- Usage mainly in transport management and for technical information
- Transparency, flexibility, and control are the main benefits of business apps
- Overall usage of apps is still relatively low



**November 17, 2016 – Apps have become part of everyday private life. But what is the role of business apps in global trade, logistics, and supply chain management? A new study by software provider AEB and the University DHBW in Stuttgart (Germany) provides the answer. It is available free of charge at [www.aeb.com/gtm-study](http://www.aeb.com/gtm-study).**

The Global Trade Management Agenda 2017, a study conducted by AEB in cooperation with University DHBW in Stuttgart, Germany, features responses from 330 experts in the fields of logistics, global trade, and supply chain management.

The result: Nine out of ten participants consider business apps as a critical, competitive factor in global trade and logistics. Most (86.7%) agreed that the importance of business apps will continue to grow in these areas. "The results show that the topic is highly relevant and that we are only at the beginning of a dynamic development," emphasizes Prof. Dr. Dirk H. Hartel, Head of the Department of Business Administration Service / Logistics Management at DHBW Stuttgart. "The respondents agreed on this even though business apps are not yet being used in many companies."

#### **Logistics is leading the way in spite of low overall usage**

Only 17.6% of respondents are already using apps in supply chain management, logistics, or global trade, while another 21.1% are planning to introduce them. Together with the areas of administration, sales, and marketing, logistics plays a pioneering role when it comes to using apps, while their use in management accounting (4.7%) and procurement (10.2%) is lagging behind.

Survey participants use apps for the research and provision of technical information in logistics (28.4%). Furthermore, they are relatively widespread in transport management, with more than a quarter of respondents using them in transport control (26.1%) and about one-fifth in fleet management (20.5%) as well as container management (20.4%). Use of apps is much rarer in other logistics areas, such as order management, personnel planning, or loading. However, roughly another third of respondents in all application areas are planning to use apps in these areas in future.

The study also looks at the use of apps in global trade, where terror list screening is the most common area: already 29.4% of respondents are using apps for this purpose, with another 33.8% planning to do so in the future. The use of mobile applications is especially rare in export controls, although 36.8% of companies are planning to change this. Business apps are also becoming more widespread in the area of customs management, where they are used for classification in only about one-fifth of companies, although nearly 50% have plans to use them in the future.

### **The main benefits: transparency, flexibility, and control**

Transparency (46.9%), flexibility (46.4%), and control (46.0%) are essential advantages of mobile applications for nearly every second respondent. However, only 30.4% consider it “very likely” that apps will contribute to a competitive edge.

Upper management is particularly optimistic when it comes to business apps, regarding the realization of the above-mentioned benefits as “very likely”. Employees without a leadership role are much more skeptical.

“The views of upper management should not be seen merely as strategically calculated optimism. They are actually often based on personal experience,” says Dr. Ulrich Lison, Portfolio Manager and Member of the Executive Board of AEB who has conducted the study together with Prof. Dr. Hartel. After all, some 80% of top-level managers currently use business apps most intensively.

The study also asked about the top 3 success factors for using apps. Results reveal in-house IT integration to be considered an app’s most critical success factor by nearly every second respondent (47%). For 33.3%, an app’s functionality across different operating systems is important, while 29.4% emphasized the added value by the app.

### **About the study**

The study “Global Trade Management Agenda 2017 – Apps in global trade and logistics, and the top priorities in global supply chain management” is based on a cross-industry survey of 330 experts in the areas of logistics, global trade, and supply chain management who work at companies of various sizes in different countries, with nearly 49% based in Germany. Some 67% of respondents hold leadership positions as the head of a company, department, team, or project. The annual survey has been carried out by software company AEB and DHBW since 2013.

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**About AEB ([www.aeb.com/uk](http://www.aeb.com/uk))**

AEB is one of Europe's leading providers of supply chain logistics software, consultancy, and services and has been delivering solutions to customers for over thirty-five years. The company has over 5,000 customers worldwide, supported by offices in the UK, Germany, Singapore, Switzerland, Sweden, the Netherlands, Czech Republic, France, and the US. AEB's core product - ASSIST4 - is the comprehensive solution suite for all logistics processes in global business. ASSIST4 offers a complete set of business services for end-to-end logistics, including international goods movements, making it possible to standardize and automate business processes in supply chain execution. ASSIST4 also creates transparency and provides a reliable basis for making the right decisions about the planning, monitoring, control, and continual optimization of supply networks - even beyond the boundaries of the business. The ASSIST4 suite offers full functionality via a wide range of modules including Visibility & Collaboration Platform, Order Management, Warehouse Management, Transport & Freight Management, Customs Management, and Compliance & Risk Management.

**About DHBW Stuttgart ([www.dhbw-stuttgart.de](http://www.dhbw-stuttgart.de))**

Baden-Württemberg Cooperative State University, with some 8,400 Bachelor students, is among the largest higher education institutions in the Stuttgart and Upper Neckar regions of Germany: The Schools of Business, Engineering, and Social Work collaborate with about 2,500 carefully selected companies and social institutions to offer more than 40 nationally and internationally approved Bachelor courses. According to the cooperative concept of the university, research at DHBW Stuttgart is application-oriented. The three departments therefore have their own training and research centers and focus on various research topics.