

digitalswitzerland

Change in the Board of Directors of digitalswitzerland: Ivo Furrer becomes President

digitalswitzerland's General Assembly has unanimously elected Ivo Furrer to the position of President. He will take over from Christian Wenger at the end of 2018. Marc Walder, founder of digitalswitzerland: "Christian Wenger has played a key role in shaping the digitalswitzerland initiative for the first three years. Thanks to his tireless efforts, digitalswitzerland has developed into the most important initiative in the country". Since it was founded in September 2015, digitalswitzerland has grown to more than 125 members, transforming itself from a local to a national movement that is now active throughout Switzerland, with offices in Lausanne and Zurich. The aim is nothing less than to turn Switzerland into a leading digital innovation hub globally. To achieve this, the digitalswitzerland initiative is working towards a cross-sector alliance between business, science, politics and civil society.

11 September 2018 – On Tuesday 11 September, digitalswitzerland's General Assembly elected Ivo Furrer as President. Mr Furrer was previously at Winterthur Insurance, the Credit Suisse Group and Zurich Insurance. As one of digitalswitzerland's founding members, he was actively involved in the initiative at the end of 2014, when he was CEO of Swiss Life Switzerland.

Ivo Furrer's reaction to the unanimous election result: *"I am delighted by the trust shown in me and by the task ahead. digitalswitzerland's goals have always been a labour of love that deserves – and demands – personal commitment. Together with our strong member network, my aim is to develop Switzerland into an leading innovation hub internationally."*

Christian Wenger, Partner at Wenger & Vieli Attorneys at Law, announced at the beginning of the year that he would be stepping down from his role as President: *"I can look back proudly on the last three eventful years and on everything that we have achieved so far with digitalswitzerland. I am confident that, with the election of Ivo Furrer, the initiative is ideally positioned for the future."* Mr Wenger will continue to support the digitalswitzerland association as a member of the Executive Committee.

Anniversary: The digitalswitzerland initiative has achieved a lot in just three years

At the same time as the Annual General Meeting, digitalswitzerland celebrated its third anniversary. In September 2015, Digital Zurich 2025 was launched; after about a year, the initiative was rechristened digitalswitzerland and extended to the whole country. In less than three years, digitalswitzerland has grown to more than 125 members and has become one of the most important voices in Switzerland calling for digital innovation. Renowned Swiss companies, institutions, organisations and universities, as well as innovative locations, are all on board.

The idea began with the need to change and think innovatively

Thirteen founding members of digitalswitzerland launched the association in 2015. Founder **Marc Walder**, CEO Ringier AG: *“I’d like to thank the many innovative companies and the numerous outstanding personalities who, in only three years, have made digitalswitzerland what it is today: Switzerland’s largest geographical initiative. Our country has made great progress in recent years: Switzerland now holds the fifth place in the IMD Business School’s global World Competitiveness Ranking. As a comparison, Germany is in 18th place.”*

It is about achieving widespread awareness: ‘digitalisation affects us all’

digitalswitzerland is aiming for widespread awareness, the promotion of innovation and a lively startup ecosystem through concrete projects: digitalswitzerland offers platforms for digital education and training as well as other educational offers on the subject of ‘lifelong learning’, enables connections between start-ups, companies and investors and creates space for collaboration in order to advance Switzerland with digital innovations, such as the ‘digitalswitzerland challenge’.

One highlight is the second national Digital Day, which will take place on 25 October 2018 under the patronage of Alain Berset, President of the Swiss Confederation, and Federal Councillor Johann Schneider-Ammann, with the support of Federal Councillor Ignazio Cassis. Engagement with the public, however, goes beyond Digital Day: for 2019, additional educational programmes for children and adults have been planned, as well as programmes for SMEs; the digitalswitzerland challenge will be running for the third time and digitalswitzerland will continue to actively support the startup ecosystem.

Pascale Vonmont, CEO of the Gebert RUF Foundation and digitalswitzerland member from the very beginning, says: *“We want to make a difference and move Switzerland forward in order to send a clear signal to the outside world. Education and innovation have always been the basis for Switzerland’s economic and social prosperity. In the digital transformation, however, education and training are of much greater importance. That’s why digitalswitzerland is committed to both tomorrow’s generations with targeted programmes, and also to today’s workforce.”*

About digitalswitzerland

digitalswitzerland is a joint initiative by industry, government and science which aims to make Switzerland a leading digital innovation hub worldwide. digitalswitzerland thus plays an active role in different areas, such as knowledge transfer, training, startup accompaniment and political frameworks. The association groups together more than 125 of the most renowned companies and organisations in Switzerland as well as the most innovative locations. The initiative was launched in 2015.

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