

Press Release

Experts from politics, academia and business warn against a lack of competition on the Internet

Panel discusses the future of the Internet / ICOMP expands its involvement in Germany and appoints Christoph Waitz as its spokesperson

Berlin, June 8, 2010 – "Politics is called upon to strengthen freedom of information on the Internet and to regulate quasi-monopolies more strictly," demanded the internet policy spokesperson of Alliance 90/The Greens, Dr. Konstantin von Notz, at a panel discussion co-hosted by the German Institute for Economic Research (DIW) and the Initiative for a Competitive Online Marketplace (ICOMP). The British price comparison portal Foundem described how it effectively "disappeared" from the Internet after Google introduced a competing offer to the marketplace. Foundem submitted a complaint to the EU Commission, which is currently reviewing whether to launch an antitrust investigation. The event was moderated by ICOMP's newly appointed spokesperson, Christoph Waitz, who is to further awareness for the issues and goals of the international initiative in the German public debate.

"Dominant market leaders such as Apple, Amazon, eBay and Google are a typical phenomenon of the Internet economy – economists speak of winner-takes-it-all markets. Up to now politics has neglected to counter these developments," Professor Torsten Körber concluded during the panel

AdAudience CEO Frank Herold emphasized, "With our alliance of online advertising marketers we intend to form an alternative offer to the industry leader, which is why we have opened the joint venture to other companies."

ICOMP Director Auke Haagsma underlined the importance of a vibrant and competitive online marketplace: "Competition, transparency and a high degree of user trust are important imperatives to foster innovation and offer high quality services at best prices. The German Parliamentary Enquête-Kommission [Inquiry Commission] for the Internet and Digital Society should give utmost priority to these aspects."

Waitz appointed new spokesperson of ICOMP Germany

ICOMP is delighted to announce that Christoph Waitz, a former Member of the German Parliament and media policy spokesperson of the FDP faction of the Bundestag, has been appointed as its spokesperson in Germany. Waitz will play a central role in raising the profile of the initiative in the key European market of Germany. "Germany continues to be a driving force when it comes to

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preserving data protection and copyright on the Internet. ICOMP will continue to be involved in the public debate with the goal of bring about sustainable solutions at the national and international level," said Waitz.

With more than 40 member companies and organizations worldwide, including prominent representatives such as the English Premier League, the umbrella organization of European picture agencies CEPIC and the Association for the Promotion of Search Engine Technology (SuMa-eV), ICOMP is a forum for companies and organizations that are committed to transparency and competition on the Internet. In this context ICOMP organizes conferences and discussion groups, initiates appropriate research projects and sensitizes decision-makers and the public on the topic.

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