

A Digital Security and Sustainability Dream Team: the Companies of Schwarz Group become partners of VfB Stuttgart

- **Strategic collaboration: the companies of Schwarz Group and VfB Stuttgart promote digital sovereignty and circular economy**
- **Schwarz Digits becomes "VfB Stuttgart's official cyber security partner" with XM Cyber and "VfB Stuttgart's official cloud service partner" with STACKIT**
- **PreZero becomes "VfB Stuttgart's official circular economy partner" and will help promote sustainable waste management and resource conservation at the club**

Neckarsulm, Stuttgart, August 27, 2024 – Bundesliga heavyweight VfB Stuttgart and the companies of Schwarz Group have partnered up to conserve resources and promote digital sovereignty in professional soccer. The stated aim of the partnership is to ensure maximum data security and get the club's fans excited about circular economy and environmental sustainability.

Stout defense – both on the pitch and in the digital realm

"VfB Stuttgart has selected the sovereign solutions offered by Schwarz Digits to protect the club's entire IT infrastructure and all of its data. We are thrilled about the trust club officials have placed in our expertise and the vision we share, namely driving innovation, digitalization and sustainability and being an international player," emphasized Rolf Schumann, Co-CEO of Schwarz Digits. "We find it refreshing that the club is tackling the challenges associated with digital transformation head on. In choosing XM Cyber and STACKIT, the club has teamed up with strong players and vigorous experts specializing in digital sovereignty," added Christian Müller, Co-CEO of Schwarz Digits.

As the IT and digital arm of Schwarz Group, Schwarz Digits offers forward-looking solutions to help promote cyber security and cloud services at the club. XM Cyber will monitor VfB Stuttgart's IT infrastructure 24/7 all year round, fully automated. This will enable the club to identify and remedy any vulnerabilities before attackers can exploit them to launch cyber attacks. Thanks to the sovereign cloud services of STACKIT, the large volume of data from match days, as well as fans, employees and supporters will be processed and hosted in Germany.

More sustainability is the name of the game

PreZero, the environmental division of Schwarz Group, is supporting VfB Stuttgart as a new, strong partner in its transformation towards a more conservative use of valuable resources. The cooperation will make VfB Stuttgart a pioneer in German federal state Baden-Württemberg on the ambitious "road to zero waste". Together, PreZero and VfB Stuttgart will improve the waste levels in the MHP Arena, the club's home match venue. The two partners will be introducing waste separation systems and plan to significantly reduce the amount of residual waste. This will enable the MHP Arena to qualify for independent certification as a "road to zero waste" stadium.

"As one of Germany's most popular soccer clubs, VfB Stuttgart embodies the values of fair play, regional solidarity, team spirit and absolute commitment – all while remaining grounded. By entering into this partnership, we are laying the groundwork for protecting the environment and responsibly consuming resources in the greater Stuttgart area. Working hand in hand, we will make circular economy a permanent fixture on the pitch, throughout the sport and in society as a whole," explained Wolf Tiedemann, Chief Executive Officer of PreZero International.

Fits like a glove – partnership increases visibility for recyclable materials management and cyber security

"By landing Schwarz Digits and PreZero as partners, VfB Stuttgart has teamed up with two key divisions of one of the most important companies in our region. This partnership harbors enormous potential, and we are immensely proud of reaching this milestone after lengthy discussions built on mutual respect for one another. The motto 'from the region – for the region' once again demonstrates the important steps we are taking together to secure VfB Stuttgart's sustainable and successful future," said Alexander Wehrle, Chief Executive Officer of VfB Stuttgart 1893 AG. "The opening bell for the partnership with the companies of Schwarz Group ushers in a host of opportunities and is the start of an extensive cooperation for everyone involved. Our collaboration with Schwarz Digits will provide a major boost to our digital transformation and our cyber security and cloud efforts. PreZero, one of the leading environmental service providers in Europe, will be an incredible multiplier, helping us to promote sustainability in our stadium, our everyday work and, perspective, also together with our other partners. We all believe in the necessity of advocating socially-important issues, and we will therefore be gradually further expanding our cooperation with Schwarz Digits and PreZero. The common ground we found coupled with the candid atmosphere of our discussions over the past few months is a strong basis for this," added Rouven Kasper, Chief Marketing & Sales Officer of VfB Stuttgart 1893 AG.

With marketing measures such as perimeter advertising at VfB Stuttgart's Bundesliga home matches, placing logos on interview boards and branding mobile waste containers on the club grounds, the companies of Schwarz Group together with VfB Stuttgart will draw attention to the issue of digital sovereignty and the "road to zero waste". This is all about avoiding non-recyclable waste and recycling as much as possible. Recyclable materials are reused wherever and whenever possible. The partners also aim to involve the public in their endeavors by putting on public events and forums.

Additional Information

For further information on the Schwarz Group, see www.gruppe.schwarz/en/press.

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