



**EDIH-DO**

European Digital Innovation Hub  
Dortmund

**D1.2**

## **Dissemination and exploitation plan**



Co-funded by  
the European Union

## D1.2 Dissemination and exploitation plan

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## Executive Summary

This document refers to deliverable D1.2 and provides a detailed view on project activities of EDIHDO in terms of dissemination and communication. The objective of the dissemination and communication strategy is to ensure that all activities achieve the greatest impact possible and that they benefit from a high level of visibility amongst the target groups and other potential stakeholders, so that they bring overall societal and economic benefits. To achieve this objective, this document puts forward a dissemination and communication approach building on different key pillars.

In this concept, the focus is on the target groups of the EDIHDO, as there are SME's, multipliers and start-ups. The communication measures are adapted to these target groups with the appropriate channels. This includes the selected measures via social media, the website, events and print materials. According to the target groups, the central communication messages such as to make EDIHDO well known and visible in its region or industry and to establish it clearly with its services have been defined. For the external presentation of the project, the claim "More than just a network: We make you ready for the digital future" was defined to communicate the goal of the project directly in one sentence.

Further strategic success factors of the EDIH project include the development of a brand identity that is fundamentally oriented to the external appearance of the Digital Hub Logistics. The EDIHDO logo and the corporate design are based on the Digital Hub Logistics. The project's own website, on which all important information is presented, is of central importance.

The entire innovation ecosystem at the Dortmund location is also central to the project's communication work. The project's own offerings are then also clearly communicated to the public via this ecosystem. Here, the project clearly benefits from the communication work of the entire network and thus makes EDIHDO known throughout the region. In order to present the contents and the services provided to the target groups, certain success stories are published.

It is always important to consider the specifics of the region and to support the companies individually in their needs. This challenge must also be taken into account in the communication work. Accordingly, all measures have been adapted to the current circumstances and are constantly being adapted.

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## Definitions and acronyms

AI	Artificial intelligence
B2B	Business-to-Business
B2C	Business-To-Consumer
BMWi	Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs
BMWK	Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action of Germany
BVMW	Bundesverband mittelständische Wirtschaft
DEA5 Arnsberg	Administrative district of Arnsberg
DHM	Digital Hub Management GmbH
Dipl. -Ing.	Diplom-Ingenieur
DIWODO	Digital Week Dortmund
DVZ	Deutsche Verkehrs-Zeitung
e-commerce	electronic commerce
EDIH	European Digital Innovation Hubs
EDIHDO	European Digital Innovation Hub Dortmund
EEA	European Environment Agency
EU	European Union
fintech	financial technology
Fraunhofer IEM	Fraunhofer-Institut für Entwurfstechnik Mechatronik IEM
HPC	High Performance Computing
IG Metall	Industriegewerkschaft Metall
IHK	Industrie- und Handelskammer
IoT	Internet of Things
IT	Information technology
KOFA	Kompetenzzentrum Fachkräftesicherung
LNI 4.0	LNI 4.0 - Labs Network Industrie 4.0 e.V
Midcaps	Medium-sized companies
NIRO Netzwerk	Netzwerk Industrie RuhrOst e. V.
NRW	Nordrhein-Westfalen
NUTS 2	The nomenclature of territorial units for statistics
OWL	Ostwestfalen-Lippe
Ruhr-OWL	Ruhr-Ostwestfalen-Lippe
SME	Small and medium sized enterprises
SWF	Südwestfalen
TU Dortmund	Technische Universität Dortmund
UI design	User interface design
UX	User Experience
VDE Rhein Ruhr	VDE Verband der Elektrotechnik Elektronik Informationstechnik e.V.
VDMA	Verband Deutscher Maschinen- und Anlagenbau



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# 1 Introduction

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The European Digital Innovation Hub Dortmund (EDIHDO) offers small and medium-sized companies around the City of Dortmund, the County of Unna support for digital transformation projects. The aim of the Digital Hub Logistics Dortmund as EDIHDO is to increase the dissemination, acceptance and adoption of digital technologies and their successful application for the development of product, process and business model innovations by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). To this end, EDIHDO offers support formats and services in the categories Test before Invest, Skills & Training, Support to find investment and Innovation Ecosystem & Networking.

A total of five partners are behind the EDIHDO consortium: The Digital Hub Management (DHM), which operates the Digital Hub Logistics in Dortmund and carries out numerous European projects. TU Dortmund with the Center for Entrepreneurship & Transfer and as an interface to the regional economy the TU Concept GmbH. Furthermore, the innovation promotion company of the city of Dortmund TZ Net and the economic development agency for the county of Unna (WFG Unna) are part of the project.

The project volume for the EDIHDO is four million euros. The EU is contributing half of the funding as part of the "Digital Europe" program. The EDIHDO started its work in November 2022, and the funding period will run for three years. With the European Digital Innovation Hubs, the EU wants to pave the way for new digital technologies in companies. Companies are given access to the latest technical expertise as well as research halls and test fields. This gives them the opportunity to "test first, then invest" - a basic idea of the European innovation hubs currently being installed throughout Europe. The Digital Hub Logistics as EDIHDO will thus also become part of the European Digital Innovation Hubs network.

Communication work is a key success factor in achieving the goals of EDIHDO and a broad impact for companies in the target region. This communication concept describes the goals and target groups as well as the messages for the respective target groups. Based on the initial situation and the special prerequisites of EDIHDO, strategic success factors for the communication work are worked out. On this basis the instruments of communication used to convey the messages and transfer content to the respective target groups and to activate them will be described. In addition, quantitative and qualitative indicators are developed to measure the success of the communication work.

The experiences of the project partners with communication work in similar projects with the same target groups, such as the Mittelstand-Digital Zentrum Ruhr-OWL as well as other projects and activities for the target groups, will be incorporated. The EU specifications for the operational implementation of the communication work (logo use, color tones, text modules) as well as design templates are observed.

This dissemination and exploitation plan is intended as a dynamic instrument for managing communication work. The communication goals, strategic approaches and instruments are reviewed through continuous performance measurement. The evaluation of services and exchange of experiences within the consortium is also relevant. If channels or formats turn out to be particularly or less successful, the concept and implementation will be adjusted accordingly in the sense of a continuous improvement process.

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## 1.1 Vision and objective

The overarching objective of the dissemination and communication strategy is to maximise the impact of all activities carried out by the European Digital Innovation Hub Dortmund project thus ensuring that a) all work packages benefit from high levels of visibility and reach their targets in terms of community engagement and participation and b) the overall society benefits from the knowledge and services offered by the project, and knowledge is disseminated as far as possible.

Overarching goal of the Digital Hub Logistics Dortmund as EDIHDO is therefore to promote the dissemination and acceptance of digital technologies and their successful application and implementation for the development of product, business model and process innovations in SMEs and medium-sized companies.

## 1.2 Funding objective of the European Union

As part of the digital Europe strategy, the EU is pursuing the goal of sustainably advancing the digital transformation of the entire SME economy in Europe with the network of EDIHs.

Small and medium-sized enterprises are to be supported in tackling digitization strategically and designing it as a holistic process based on the operational requirements of the respective company. To this end, the EDIHs will introduce SMEs to innovative digitization applications. The focus should be on the business perspective. SMEs should be qualified for routine interaction with relevant players (platforms, supporting IT service providers, value networks) and the transferability of new business models to their own companies.

The offerings of the European Digital Innovation Hub Dortmund are intended to improve the holistic understanding of digital transformation in companies and to support the implementation of digital applications. The focus is deliberately not on technology as a driver, but on the company's view of how to act strategically and economically with the help of digitization. Approaches for overcoming technical, economic, organizational and social challenges are to be developed in a way that is suitable for SMEs, prepared in a practice-oriented manner and communicated in a way that is appropriate for the target group.

"Companies learn from companies" has proven to be a successful transfer method and is to form the central principle for knowledge transfer in the future network. This also serves as a guiding principle for the EEA. Digitization projects have a demonstration character with reference to the focal points of EDIHDO and serve as practical and easily comprehensible illustrative objects.

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## 2 EDIHDO: Success factors and challenges

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The EDIHDO is characterized by the following success factors:

- Extensive experience in the digitization of products and services, business models and value chains in manufacturing SMEs.
- Practical and low-threshold support services that address the different needs of small and medium-sized enterprises and build on one another.
- Examples of success and practical experience in the field of technology transfer through many years of work by the project partners in various projects that address SMEs.
- Proven research expertise in the areas of digital strategies, digital platforms and intelligent systems / Industrial Internet of Things.
- Numerous accesses of the partners to small and medium-sized enterprises in the target region as well as experience in addressing and activating new companies
- Expertise in the areas of network management and communication work among the regional transfer partners
- Large cooperation network of transfer agents from economic development agencies, chambers, industry initiatives, digitization initiatives, associations, trade unions and credit institutions
- Integration of the EDIHDO into regional development strategies and close dovetailing of offerings with other activities
- Joint communications work by the project and cooperation partners to address small and medium-sized enterprises and to communicate the right solutions.

The EDIHDO is the central anchor for all activities in the field of digital transformation in small and medium-sized enterprises in the target region. Based on the experience of the partners and the close cooperation network, the offers address specific needs of the target group, complement existing offers (such as digitization and transfer vouchers of the state) and thus close gaps in the region. Close cooperation with the transfer agents in the region and individual dialog with the companies ensure that the companies receive the most suitable offers. Events and industry circles offer the opportunity to exchange ideas with other companies and learn from each other.

### 2.1 Region, industry specifics and unique selling proposition

For small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), digital skills and digitally trained employees are a decisive competitive factor. And in industry, intelligent production processes can achieve higher productivity and efficiency. Young innovative startups need capital and support. There is a particular need for support and advice everywhere here. This also applies to the Dortmund region in the Metropolitan Ruhr Areas the digital supercentre for the areas of the Eastern Ruhr region (Dortmund, Bochum, Hamm, Hagen, Herne and the

districts of Ennepe-Ruhr, Unna and Recklinghausen), Westphalia, Sauerland (Märkischer Kreis, Hochsauerlandkreis) and parts of Münsterland or, looking at the European classification of territorial units for statistics NUTS 2 region DEA5 Arnsberg (administrative district of Arnsberg).

Current studies and surveys show that companies in the region are now sensitised to the challenges of digital transformation. 84% of companies fully or rather agree that the use of innovative digital technologies will be indispensable for business success in the future. They see IoT, robotics and AI technologies as change drivers for the business models in their respective industries. However, the overall digitisation indexes of companies in North Rhine-Westphalia remain low in European and national comparison. The average digitisation index of SMEs in the South Westphalia region was the lowest in North Rhine-Westphalia in 2018, at 3.82 out of 10. Small companies with up to 49 employees in particular are still rather hesitant to take up digitalisation topics. These companies need concrete support to implement digital transformation projects, e.g. networks in which they can exchange information with digital pioneers and learn how to start digital projects without much effort.

It is precisely against this backdrop that the major scientific institutions at the Dortmund location have promoted numerous initiatives and projects in the field of logistics for various industries and digitalisation in recent years, thus creating the structures for sustainable innovation development in the high-tech logistics sector. The result is the Digital Hub Logistics Dortmund - a unique innovation ecosystem for the digital transformation of logistics and supply chain management and its application sectors of manufacturing, production, trade and services. The aim is to support the development and faster dissemination of innovative products and services and to further advance the networking of partners from science, business and public administration. In 2017, the Digital Hub Logistics Dortmund was selected by the Federal Ministry of Economic Affairs (BMWi, since 2022 BMWK) as one of 12 national hubs of the German digital hub initiative (see <https://www.de-hub.de/en/>).

### **2.1.1 Pre-existing work and EU funded projects**

The proposed action EDIHDO integrates, builds on and follows up additionally on the following pre-existing works and EU funded projects. The EDIHDO project also benefits from the existing projects in its communication work, as measures and channels that have been established over many years are also used for EDIHDO dissemination and exploitation work. Since the existing projects also work with multipliers, SMEs and start-ups, the corresponding target groups are also addressed via these channels:

1. **Mittelstand 4.0-Kompetenzzentrum Dortmund**/"Digital in NRW" and **Mittelstand-Digital Zentrum Ruhr-OWL** (Location Dortmund 2016 –2024) – Target Group: SME/midcaps. The competence center's task is to create support services that sensitize SMEs to the topic of digitization and to initiate initial implementation projects that serve as best practices for other SMEs. The center addresses the topics of Industry 4.0, (process) digitization, and digital product design in 17 services. Since 2019, the topic of AI has been increasingly targeted through AI trainers. The EDIHDO consortium benefits from the experience in addressing SMEs, the SME-oriented transfer of content and formats, and the large network of regional and industry-specific multipliers.

EDIHDO will also raise awareness of HPC, data spaces and cyber security among SMEs in the region. These are not yet key topics of Mittelstand-Digital Zentrum Ruhr-OWL at the Dortmund location. In addition, services in the area of "Support to find Investment" will complement the portfolio of Mittelstand-Digital Zentrum Ruhr-OWL.

2. **Start-in Factory of Digital Hub Logistics Dortmund** – (since 2017 ongoing) – Target Group: Midcaps/SME. With the Start-in Factory, digital teams (start-ins) from medium-sized companies are supported in digital product refinement, development and the establishment of new business models. Among other things, the Start-in Factory conducts a match making of start-in teams and service providers. The teams are accompanied by an innovation coach. EDIHDO benefits in particular from the success stories already developed from SMEs, the experience with innovation formats in the area of product and business model development and the networking with service providers from the areas of cyber security and UX/UI design, among others. Sensitization of medium-sized companies, through an initial offer of free "Schnupper-"formats to set up first steps for the implementation of digital products and business models. This also supports the joint development of a vision for the digital transformation of companies.
3. **Centre of Excellence for Logistics & IT** – (2016–2024) – Target Group: Researchers, Companies. The main objective of the performance center is the cross-organizational bundling of science and research in the competence field of logistics and IT as an open innovation ecosystem at the Dortmund site. Scientists work in interdisciplinary research groups on topics such as cognitive ergonomics, autonomous logistics systems, digital health care, machine learning and human-technology interaction. The center prepares the research content for transfer into teaching and application and thus lays the foundation for the transfer services. EDIHDO supplements and develops existing and new transfer formats for the transfer of knowledge from basic sciences to applied research and practice, with a target group-oriented focus on SMEs and start-ups.
4. **Digital Logistics Award** – (since 2017 ongoing) –Target Group: Startups. The Digital Logistics Award has been granted annually since 2017 as part of the Future Logistics Congress. The award is looking for innovative digital logistics solutions for production, retail, automotive, farm & food, mobility, the financial sector or other industries. With this award, the Digital Hub Logistics recognizes, honors, and promotes creative business solutions for the digital working environment in logistics. The Digital Logistics Award is one of the highest valued awards in the logistics start-up scene. The eight finalists can pitch in front of more than 500 decision-makers from the logistics industry at the Future Logistics Congress. Thus, the award is a contribution to the structured matching of investors and founders.

5. **Digital Week Dortmund** and Knowledge creates success–Target Group: SME, midcaps, startups, Talents. The Digital Week Dortmund DIWODO, organized and carried out by TZ Net GmbH on behalf of the Dortmund Economic Development Agency, is the largest decentralized digital festival in the region and offers a platform for bringing together solution seekers and digitization providers in a value-creating way. The event week shows the organizers and the network which topics SMEs are currently dealing with, and which innovations and ideas are being worked on. Impulses and ideas from the personal discussions with the participants provide valuable insights and impulses that can be considered in the offers and services of EDIHDO.
- The current project "Knowledge creates success" of the WFG Kreis Unna is funded by the ERDF. Its goal is to transfer university knowledge to SMEs in the region and to keep young skilled workers and students to the region. Successfully tested formats, such as makeathons, IT boot camps and cross-innovation workshops, will be added to the EDIHDO spectrum in the future.

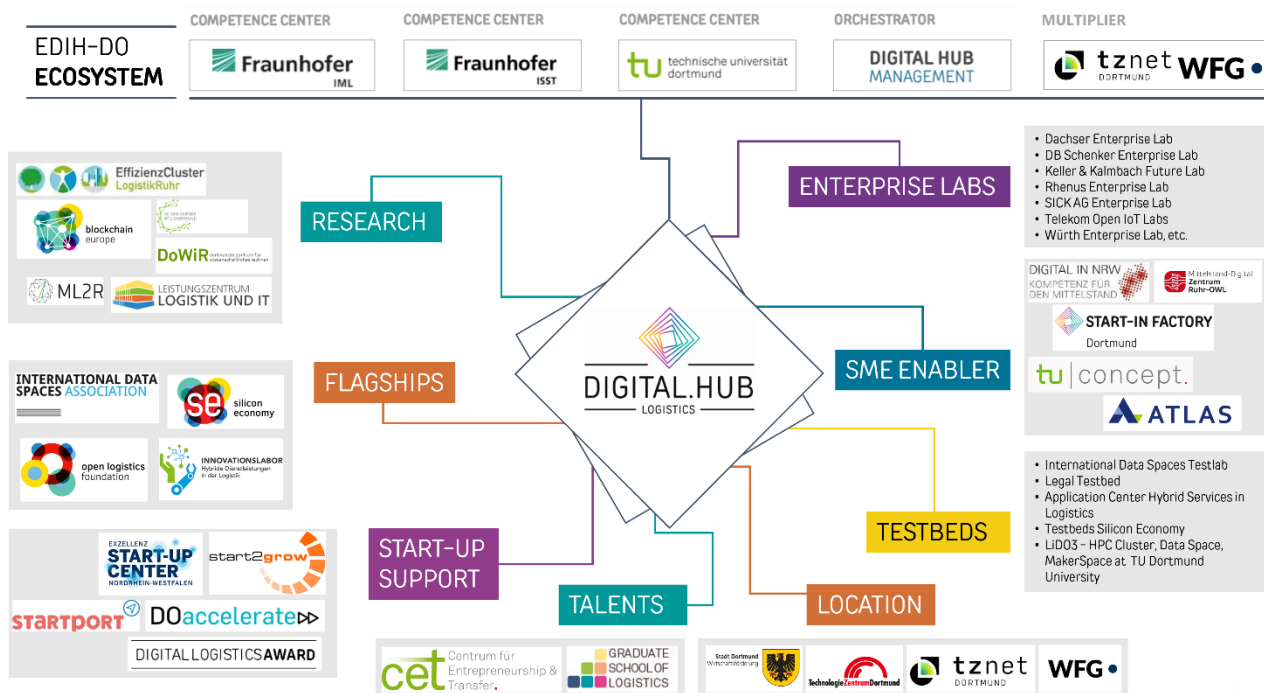


Figure 1: EDIHDO Ecosystem



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## 3 Target group

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The target groups of EDIHDO are SMEs and midcaps, multipliers and start-ups. A description of the target groups and the challenges they face is given below. All benefit from demand-oriented services, matchmaking with potential cooperation partners or supporters and find out about new topics relevant to SMEs, such as building methodological competencies in the field of AI and formulating new business models based on new technologies.

### 3.1 SMEs and midcaps

SMEs and midcaps are the EDIH's core target group. It is very heterogeneous, as SMEs have different levels of prior knowledge and basic requirements in digitization. Many companies in the core target group can be described as "digital beginners," and some of them are rather closed to the topic. Accordingly, there is a great need for education and support in this segment. Other companies have already reached a higher level of digital maturity and expect to be met at a different level in terms of communication.

A survey conducted by the Mittelstand 4.0 Competence Center Dortmund in the summer of 2020 revealed that the digitization of business processes and digital, standardized data exchange are in particular demand in the Ruhr-OWL target region. These topics are addressed in the service portfolio of the EDIHDO and are fundamental for the further development of SMEs - starting from a low level of digitization to networked value creation. The study also shows the increasing importance of AI. Thus, 75% of the companies surveyed name AI as a relevant technology for them. Thus, many companies have already become aware of the topic of AI.

An industry analysis by Fraunhofer IEM shows that digitization has progressed to different degrees in the various industries. While SMEs in mechanical engineering, electrical engineering and supplier industries are tapping the potential of digital transformation, there is a lot of catching up to do in the food, furniture, metal and plastics processing, construction, healthcare, B2B and technical trade sectors. The main obstacles are low resources, a high workload in day-to-day business, a lack of willingness to invest and a lack of tailored solutions and infrastructure.

Against the background of these analyses and the experiences of the project partners, the EDIHDO will particularly target SMEs from the core industries of the target region: Manufacturing, Construction, Healthcare, Logistics, B2B and Technical Trade.

**The following aspects are of particular importance for communication with SMEs:**

- Many SMEs are suffering from the multitude of crises (such as lack of resources, energy prices and other effects of war and pandemic) and are difficult to reach when it comes to topics that go beyond the everyday business. This applies, for example, to future topics such as digitization, but also to fundamental fields such as communication, stakeholder management and leadership. There is often a lack of the necessary skills, time, personnel or financial resources.
- Many SMEs that are currently still successful are delaying their strategic realignment in digitization and remain in traditional business models and processes.

- Overall, many SMEs are aware of the need for change; however, there is often a lack of orientation and assistance in prioritizing possible measures.
- In terms of communication, the EDIH faces the challenge of having to reach the management in most cases; however, in many situations - especially in medium-sized companies with around 50 or more employees - the experts who represent the topics covered by the EDIH (e.g., IT, corporate development, human resources).
- Depending on the function in the company and the level of digital maturity, the prior knowledge of leadership and communication as well as the topic interests within the field of digitization differ significantly even among employees of the same company.
- The EDIHDO addresses companies from different industries. Industry-specific aspects in communication are important elements for achieving credibility and creating benefits. This also includes the use of industry-specific media or communication channels.
- Representatives of SMEs can be reached via various communication channels: Media channels of established multipliers (e.g., IHK magazines, association media), trade media (print and online), regional media, direct online channels including specific responses to search queries.

Different personas were created by the project partners to understand the target group as specifically as possible.


Persona: Senior CEO 				
<b>Key Data</b>	Name: Jürgen Gender: male	Age: 65	Education/Title: Commercial education	Occupation: Owner, operative
<b>Personality</b>	Patriarch	Introvert	Conservative	
<b>Company Profile</b>	Industry: Metal processing B2B on the way to B2C	Size: SME up to 250 employees	Area of operation: Dortmund, SWF, OWL	Challenges: End customer interface, industry 4.0
<b>Field of responsibility</b>	Decision maker			
<b>Motivators</b>	Financial prestige		Knowledge sharing	
<b>Values &amp; Goals</b>	Good turnover		Remain strong	
<b>Fears</b>	Shortage of skilled workers	Market take over by international competitors		Missing the boat
<b>Interest in EDIHDO</b>	Network	Know-how	Talents	Visibility

Table 1: Persona Senior CEO





Persona: Junior CEO 				
<b>Key Data</b>	Name: Jan	Age: 32	Education/Title: Business studies	Occupation: Successor
	Gender: male			
<b>Personality</b>	Openness for Digitalization + Technology		Open to cooperation	
<b>Company Profile</b>	Industry: Metal processing B2B on the way to B2C	Size: SME up to 250 employees	Area of operation: Dortmund, SWF, OWL	Challenges: End customer interface, industry 4.0
<b>Field of responsibility</b>	Decision maker for "new stuff" e.g. for new services / business models / business processes			
<b>Motivators</b>	Proving himself		Tools for the future	
<b>Values &amp; Goals</b>	Good turnover	Satisfied employees	Combining old company values and new, innovative ideas	
<b>Fears</b>	Shortage of skilled workers	Market takeover by international competitors	Missing the boat	
<b>Interest in EDIHDO</b>	Network	Know-how	Talents	Visibility

Table 2: Persona Junior CEO

Persona: Head of production 				
<b>Key Data</b>	Name: Stefan	Age: 47	Education/Title: Mechanical Engineer Dipl. Ing.	Occupation: Production Manager
	Gender: male			
<b>Personality</b>	Openness	Responsibly	Precise	Conservative
<b>Company Profile</b>	Industry: Manufacturing	Size: 80-250 employees	Area of operation: Westphalian Ruhr + SWF	Challenges: stay innovative
<b>Field of responsibility</b>	Production processes	Personnel + shift schedules	Efficiency increase	
<b>Motivators</b>	Interested in technology	Appreciation + recognition	Long existence of the company	Efficiency increase

<b>Values &amp; Goals</b>	Local patriotism	Perfection	Loyalty + pride
<b>Fears</b>	Mistakes and negative effects of change	Negative impact on the team	Lack of acceptance
<b>Interest in EDIHDO</b>	New technologies, insights, standards + exchange	Application security through best practices	Protected test room

Table 3: Persona Head of Production


<b>Persona: Technical expert</b> 				
<b>Key Data</b>	Name: Richard Gender: male	Age: 58	Education/Title : Dipl. –Ing. FH Südwestfalen	Job: Quality Manager
<b>Personality</b>	Well structured	Interested, accurate and traditional	Family	Reserved, likes to work alone
<b>Company Profile</b>	Industry: Production company (metal)	Size: 110 employees	Area of operation: Westphalia, Ruhr Region + SWF	Challenges: rigid structures, IT systems, IT security
<b>Field of responsibility</b>	Responsible for the subject	If necessary some trainees	Otherwise zero decision-making authority	
<b>Motivators</b>	Praise, incl. address		Technical innovations in his field	
<b>Values &amp; Goals</b>	Security	Pension/retirement	Time for his workshop/garden (he tends to test technical innovations in his garage)	
<b>Fears</b>	Job becomes sacrifice to technical streamlining		His plan cannot be implemented 1.1	
<b>Interest in EDIHDO</b>	Free offers	Professional offer / contact to experts	Meeting like-minded people and professional exchange	

Table 4: Persona Technical Expert


## 3.2 Multipliers

Multipliers are the second important target group of EDIHDO. These are chambers (chambers of commerce and industry and chambers of crafts), economic development agencies of districts and cities in the Ruhr-Region, industry initiatives and technology networks, trade and business associations, trade unions, credit institutions and digitization initiatives. They act as intermediaries between the EDIH and companies. They promote the

EDIHDO services to companies and arrange contacts with experts. In addition, they are partners for the organization and implementation of events, workshops, lab tours and industry circles. They are also involved in public relations activities and communicate success stories and recommendations for action to SMEs.

**The following aspects are important for communication with multipliers:**

- Multipliers have established access to SMEs in their catchment area and often enjoy their trust. Sometimes the offers of multipliers overlap with the planned offers of the centers. Here it is important to use synergies so as not to give the impression that they are working "against each other".
- In most cases, the multipliers are sensitized to digitization, but for them it is often one of many topics; the expertise in this area is very heterogeneous. Accordingly, multipliers hope for professional relief from the EDIHDO.
- Institutions such as chambers or associations have a high degree of internal division of labor, so that it is typically necessary to work with specialist contacts and a communications department with possibly different responsibilities for member communications, online and press work.
- Multipliers have the chance to position themselves towards their members and the public through a joint appearance with the EDIH. Here it must be ensured that the cooperation is profitable for both parties, for example, that the work of the center is not mistakenly perceived as an offer from multipliers. This is especially true for centers that are managed by an important multiplier (e.g. an association). In the external presentation, it must always be clearly recognizable that the centers are an independent offering.

Persona: Regional Multiplier 				
<b>Key Data</b>	Name: Verena Gender: female	Age: 46	Education/Title: Diplom-Kauffrau	Occupation: Industrial company / network
<b>Personality</b>	Conservative	Eloquent	Open to new ideas	loyal
<b>Company Profile</b>	Industry: IHK	Size: /	Area: Dortmund/ Hamm	Challenges: Pain points of companies
<b>Field of responsibility</b>	CRM	Events on various topics	Team Lead	
<b>Motivators</b>	Good Feedback CEO	Good feedback company	Good external perception of the IHK	Career
<b>Values &amp; Goals</b>	Identifies with target group (SME) and wants to cover the needs well			

<b>Fears</b>	Not representing company goals well	Fear of failure
<b>Interest in EDIHDO</b>	Communicate good, free offers to its audience	Derive current pain points -> provide material for one's own doing

Table 5: Persona Multiplier

EDIHDO currently works with the following multipliers:

**Chambers:** IHK zu Dortmund, IHK Mittleres Ruhrgebiet, IHK Essen, IHK Lippe, Handwerkskammer Dortmund, SIHK zu Hagen, IHK Nordwestfalen

**Economic development agencies:** Business Metropole Ruhr, Wirtschaftsförderung Dortmund, Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaft für den Kreis Unna, EN Agentur, EWG Essener Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaft, OWT Oberhausener Wirtschafts- und Tourismusförderung, Duisburg Business, Hagen Agentur, Wirtschaftsförderung Impuls Hamm, Bochum Wirtschaft, Wirtschaftsförderung Herne, Mülheim Business, Stadt Kamen, Gemeinde Bönen, Wirtschaftsförderung der Stadt Selm, Wirtschaftsförderung der Stadt Werne, Technologie- und Wirtschaftsförderung Schwerte, Wirtschaftsförderung Fröndenberg, Wirtschaftsförderung Holzwickede, Wirtschaftsförderung Bergkamen, Wirtschaftsförderungszentrum Lünen, Rheinisch-Bergische Wirtschaftsförderung, Wirtschaftsförderung Kreis Borken, Gesellschaft für Wirtschaftsförderung im Kreis Warendorf, Wirtschaftsförderungsgesellschaft Ahlen, Stadt Herten, Wirtschaftsförderung Wuppertal, Wirtschaftsförderung Oberbergischer Kreis

**Industry initiatives, technology networks and digitization initiatives (16):** Food Processing Initiative, Zentrum für Innovation in der Gesundheitswirtschaft, International Data Spaces Association, Digital Hub Logistics Dortmund, Kunststoffland NRW, Digitale Werkbank Dortmund, Kompetenzzentrum Fachkräftesicherung (KOFA), LNI 4.0, Digitales Zentrum Mittelstand Soest, Münsterland.Digital, NIRO Netzwerk Industrie Ruhr-Ost, Mittelstand-Digital Zentrum Ruhr-OWL, ATLAS Automotive Transformationsplattform Südwestfalen, Ruhr Hub

**Trade associations (6):** Fachverband Druck + Medien, Fachverband Werkzeugindustrie, Fachverband der Pinsel- und Bürstenhersteller, VDMA, ProduktionNRW, VDE Rhein Ruhr, IVAM Fachverband für Mikrotechnik, Industrieverband Massivumformung

**Economic associations:** BVMW Essen, BVMW Duisburg, BVMW Wirtschaftsregion Ruhrgebiet

**Credit institutions:** Sparkassenakademie Nordrhein-Westfalen, NRW Bank

**Unions:** IG Metall

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### 3.3 Start-ups

The target group of German start-ups primarily includes young companies that are in the start-up or growth phase and offer innovative products or services. These companies are characterized by their high flexibility, creativity, and their pursuit of market success.

Typically, German start-ups are active in the areas of technology, e-commerce, fintech, healthcare, education, and the environment. They are often founded by young entrepreneurs with a strong entrepreneurial spirit and a vision for a better future.

The target group of German start-ups is usually very technology-savvy and has a strong interest in innovative ideas and new trends. They are mostly digitally connected and use the latest technologies and platforms to advance their business and network with customers and other businesses.

In terms of financing, German start-ups are often dependent on investors and capital providers to build and scale their business. They are also open to partnerships and collaborations with other companies to increase their growth and reach.

Overall, the target group of German start-ups is a dynamic, creative, and technology-oriented group of entrepreneurs and business leaders who are striving to find innovative solutions to the challenges of the modern world and successfully establish themselves on the market.

#### **When communicating with start-ups, several aspects should be considered:**

- Clear and precise communication: Start-ups often have a limited budget and time, so communication should be clear and precise to avoid misunderstandings.
- Understanding of start-up culture: Start-ups often have a dynamic and flexible culture that differs from traditional corporate culture. It is important to take this into account and adapt communication accordingly.
- Understanding of start-up needs: Start-ups often have specific needs and requirements, particularly regarding financing and business development. It is important to be aware of this and offer solutions tailored to these needs.
- Honesty and transparency: Start-ups value honesty and transparency in communication. It is important to be honest about one's own capabilities and limitations and to set realistic expectations.
- Openness to feedback: Start-ups appreciate feedback and input from other companies and partners. It is important to be open to feedback and to respond to suggestions and proposals.
- Long-term perspective: Start-ups are often looking for long-term partnerships and collaborations. It is important to have a long-term perspective and build long-term relationships.


Persona: Start-up Founder 				
<b>Key Data</b>	Name: Lisa Gender: female	Age: 25	Education/Title: Master of Science	Occupation: CEO
<b>Personality</b>	Openminded	self-confident	Trendsetter	Future-oriented
<b>Company Profile</b>	Young Company in Logistics	Size: 8 employees	Area: Dortmund/ Ruhrgebiet	Challenges: Finding investors, contact with medium-sized businesses
<b>Field of responsibility</b>	Management	CRM	Team Lead	Events on various topics
<b>Motivators</b>	Turning own idea into a success	Shape the future	successful implementation of the business model	Career
<b>Values &amp; Goals</b>	profitable Start-up	Employee growth	Organizational development processes	
<b>Fears</b>	Fear that the own idea is not good enough		Fear of failure	
<b>Interest in EDIHDO</b>	Matchmaking with SME`s and investors		Business Coaching for Management Skills	

Table 6: Persona Start-up Founder

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## 4 Communication goals

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The main communication goals of EDIHDO are:

- to inform SME and midcaps in business-friendly, non-technical language about the possibilities of digitization and to raise awareness. The focus is not on technical application, but on business perspective in order to create a holistic, strategic understanding of the possibilities of digitization;
- to make EDIHDO well known and visible in its region or industry and to establish it clearly with its services to the defined target groups;
- to ensure the internal communication of EDIHDO and to collaborate with the network of EDIHs, so that the services and competencies are well known within the EDIH network
- exchange with the other EDIHs is guaranteed in order to leverage synergies

### 4.1 Strategic success factors

The following strategic success factors are seen for the communication work:

- **Brand power:** The "Digital Hub" brand stands for expertise, experience, and quality standards nationwide for needs-oriented offerings to support small and medium-sized enterprises in their digital transformation. We build on this presumption of quality in activating companies and disseminating the offerings.
- **We show what is possible:** In digitization projects, demonstrators (such as VR glasses and 3D-printer) and events, we show the potential and possible applications of new technologies and their impact on companies.
- **Reduce complexity and show effects:** Communication focuses on striking examples and success stories that clearly and simply illustrate the benefits and effects of collaboration for SMEs. In particular, we involve representatives from the participating companies as ambassadors.
- **Take into account different starting points and provide customized services:** The different needs and maturity levels of the target groups must be taken into account when aligning communication activities. The direct exchange between the EDIH and the companies offers the opportunity to communicate the most suitable offers.
- **Picking up on current events:** SMEs encounter a large number of crises in their everyday lives, some of which follow on from one another quickly and constantly present the companies with new challenges. Communication work must reflect this, react flexibly and profile the EDIH as a contact partner for overcoming these challenges where it makes sense to do so.
- **Combine forces in communication work and use personal approaches:** Target groups are activated for cooperation via different channels. To this end, we work intensively with multipliers and join forces. The multipliers use their access to the companies, see themselves as mediators and open up the companies for cooperation.



- **Broad communications mix across all channels:** Good examples, success stories and offers are publicized via the channels of EDIHDO and its partners (websites, blogs, social media, trade media, events, trade shows, etc.).
- **Use the broad impact of EDIH network and DTA:** The channels and networks of EDIH are used to achieve broad visibility of the activities and to use additional channels for addressing companies.

## 4.2 Brand identity

Brand identity is part of strategic brand management and serves to differentiate EDIHDO from other projects and organizations. The identification and understanding of a brand are highly influenced by its visual presentation. A project's visual identity is the overall look of its communications. Effective visual brand identity is achieved by the constant use of particular visual elements to create a characteristic, such as specific fonts, colours, and graphic elements. This uniformity creates familiarity, and with it, admiration.

### 4.2.1 Corporate Design

The brand identity of EDIHDO is based on Digital Hub Logistics, which serves as an umbrella brand. The goal is to use the existing brand identity, and to closely link the new funded project with it, both in terms of content and visuals. Thus, the corporate design of the Digital Hub Logistics is used as a basis for the EDIHDO brand identity. This includes in particular the use of the visual brand mark, colors as well as fonts, so that a close connection between EDIHDO and the Digital Hub Logistics Dortmund is visible and a sustainable project development over the duration of the funding project is guaranteed.



*Figure 2: EDIHDO Logo*



*Figure 4: Digital Hub Logistics Logo*

The logo thus becomes the central point of identification and is visible in all communication measures. For better readability and to increase regional affiliation and visibility, EDIHDO is written with a hyphen - in external communication: EDIH-DO. This is also reflected in the project logo. The EDIHDO project and the EDIHDO logo represent a special offer for the target group SME and midcaps. With the Digital Hub Logistics logo, the entire innovation ecosystem and network in the region is visible.

Advantages of the EDIHDO logo:

- Reference to the already known Digital Hub Logistics and thus high recognition value and the visual is already known by the target group
- Attracts attention



- Basis of the brand identity
- Can be used by all partners in all communication measures without major approval processes.
- Easy recognition of the EDIHDO brand through the embedding of a visual element



Figure 5: Corporate Design logo arrangement







This approach also pays off in terms of social media strategy, as no new social media channels are to be opened, but the existing Digital Hub Logistics channel and the partners' channels are to be used - this is explained in detail in chapter 7 Communication Channels.

Additionally, if possible, the EDIH network logo is included in all communication measures. As a basis for a uniform appearance, the Corporate Design Guide of the Digital Hub Logistics will be made available to all project partners. In addition, the following arrangement of logos was agreed upon in the EDIHDO editorial group.

**//Schriftfamilie**  
TT ROUNDSCONDENSED

**// Schriftschnitte**  
TT ROUNDS CONDENSED REGULAR, GROSSBUCHSTABEN  
TT Rounds Condensed Regular, Kleinbuchstaben  
Lato, Kleinbuchstaben

**// Farben**

					
R 243 G 205 B 19	R 210 G 111 B 54	R 144 G 60 B 138	R 113 G 54 B 136	R 1 G 115 B 150	R 0 G 152 B 152

**// Gestaltung**

**Überschrift 1**  
TT ROUNDS CONDENSED REGULAR, GROSSBUCHSTABEN

**Überschrift 2, 3 usw.**  
TT Rounds Condensed Regular, Kleinbuchstaben

**Fließtext**  
Lato

**Fußzeilen, Marginalien, Quellenangaben, Seitenzahlen**  
TT ROUNDS CONDENSED REGULAR, GROSSBUCHSTABEN

1,5 Pt

- ◆ Überschrift 2, 3 usw. nur in **Violett, Blau, Grün**
- ◆ Fußzeilen und Quellenangaben in 70% Schwarz
- ◆ Aufzählungspunkte 45 Grad Quadrat in Violett, Blau, Grün
- ◆ Bilder können sowohl aufrecht oder im 45 Grad Winkel dargestellt werden. Letzteres eher für Schmuckbilder, Impressionen
- ◆ Fließtext schwarz 100 %
- ◆ Linie dient als Trennung von Abschnitten

Figure 6: Styleguide Digital Hub Logistics (german)

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## 5 Key Messages

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In order to be able to optimally promote the EDIHDO service portfolio, the definition of target groups is not sufficient. Key messages, which are listed in all communication measures, are to highlight relevant topics for the target group. The aim is to be able to address the target group efficiently and precisely and to create a high recognition value through consistent messages.

### 5.1 Project claim

However, in order to find an overarching communication bracket, a project claim was defined - the goal is to get to the heart of the project goal with the claim:

*Mehr als nur ein Netzwerk: Wir machen Sie fit für die digitale Zukunft.*

*More than just a network: We make you ready for the digital future.*

In addition to the target group process, a benchmarking process was carried out to develop the claim, in which the strengths and unique selling points of the EDIHDO were identified. The focus here is on the benefits for the customer. Other messages are subordinated and only integrated when the target group is more closely involved with the project. To ensure that the message reaches the target group, it is carried in as many communication measures as possible via different media.

### 5.2 Key messages for the target groups

Simple and clear language that centrally summarises the important information is crucial for communication success. As we have identified different and very heterogeneous target groups for the project, the core messages for each audience are also defined individually. EDIHDO bases its communication work on the following messages for the target groups.

#### 5.2.1 SMEs and midcaps:

- The digital and ecological transformation to the company of the future is the basis for the competitiveness of small and medium-sized enterprises. This involves the impact of digitalization on processes, manufacturing, business models and the world of work.
- EDIHDO offers numerous support services for small and medium-sized enterprises that are tailored to the individual challenges of the business.
- Through the regional offices, SMEs quickly get the right partner and the right format to continuously take steps on the path of digital and environmental transformation.

#### 5.2.2 Multipliers:

- EDIH is the central regional anchor for supporting small and medium-sized enterprises with precisely fitting offers for digital and ecological transformation.
- The cooperation with EDIHDO helps multipliers to support companies from their environment.

- In direct contact with the office, precisely fitting support offers are quickly arranged. Thus, the multipliers have a high benefit from the cooperation and can make new offers to their customers.

### **5.2.3 Start-ups:**

- **Innovation:** Start-ups should focus on their innovations and potential for change to succeed in the dynamic digital world.
- **Networking:** Networking with other companies, partners, and experts is an important factor for the success of start-ups. It is important to make connections and network to share valuable resources and information.
- **Internationalization:** Internationalization offers opportunities for growth and expansion for start-ups. It is important to learn about the opportunities and challenges of internationalization and take the necessary steps to succeed internationally.

## 5.3 Measures

The dissemination and communication strategy of Digital Hub Logistics as EDIHDO is characterized by a multilateral approach that is directly aligned and adapted to the various competence centers and service offerings of the hub.

To meet the needs, the implementation of a target group-specific enabling chain for digital transformation is pursued as a basic methodological approach. Starting with the basic sensitization for the topic and the development of one's own ideas (IDEATION), through conceptualization and prototypical implementation (PROTOTYPING) to the implementation of technical solutions in the company and the sustainable implementation and scaling of new business areas (IMPLEMENTATION).

Various channels will be used to best disseminate the different service offerings and activities while providing an overview of all relevant initiatives and projects. All communication channels of the six project partners as well as target group related projects form the basis for the dissemination and communication strategy of the EDIHDO. By sharing best practices and success stories of customers and partners via social media, newsletter campaigns, newspaper articles or directly addressing them by mail, customer are presented with great examples of applied research that appeal to their hands-on mentality and give them inspiration, orientation and starting points for the challenges of digitalization in their own companies.

On all published information material of EDIHDO, on the project website and on all other relevant information, the EU funding and the membership in the European Network of EDIHs will be visualized with the EU emblem and the simple financing statement. The main channels and tools used for effective dissemination and communication are:

1. **Website of EDIHDO project:** a fully functional website containing comprehensive information about EDIHDO's objectives, with easy access and a very user-friendly interface to retrieve information and public material produced as part of the project activities. The website will include information on partners, ongoing work, EDIHDO service portfolio, established liaisons and community members, key relevant events, available deliverables, white papers, newsletters, online publications and links to the Innovation Radar and Digital Maturity Assessment.
2. **Social media channels of Digital Hub Logistics and partners (Twitter, LinkedIn):** these channels will be animated by echoing and cross-posting on the channels of the partners and relevant initiatives and associations they are associated with, in order to achieve a wider reach and benefit from the partners' activities, participation and large network.
3. **Newsletter:** A regular EDIHDO event newsletter will be published from autumn 2023 and will be send out once a month. Contacts generated by events in the coming months will be used to build up the distribution list. To avoid duplication of content and minimize effort, only events will be communicated via the newsletter. Longer news about the project will be shared via social media or the existing newsletters of the partners.
4. **Info materials:** both online and offline. EDIHDO will produce a variety of special dissemination materials that showcase the project and its accomplishments, including

slides, brochures, posters, roll-ups, press releases, news stories, flyers, multimedia content, videos, photo galleries, and giveaways.

5. **Event calendar of consortium partners and affiliated initiatives and projects\***. The following table lists the approach of EDIHDO to reach the target group:

\*Digital Hub Logistics (newsletter, website, LinkedIn, YouTube), Fraunhofer IML (newsletter, website, LinkedIn, Twitter), Mittelstand-Digital Zentrum Ruhr-OWL (newsletter, website, LinkedIn), WFG Unna (website, LinkedIn, Facebook, newsletter, event calendar), TZNET + City of Dortmund (DIWODO event calendar, LinkedIn, website), TUDO+CET (newsletter, website, LinkedIn, Twitter, YouTube, event calendar), Centre of Excellence for Logistics & IT (website, newsletter, Twitter)

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## 6 Content of transfer

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The transfer content and formats addressed to the target group are described in Deliverables D2.1, D3.1, D4.1 and D5.1. The initial series formats and possible specialist topics and contents are described there. Please refer to this for further information.

Experience has shown that the presentation of best practice examples in the form of edited success stories with photos, descriptions of procedures and testimonials is a very good tool for transfer to other companies. The preparation takes place in the form of brochures, newsletter articles, presentations and short videos.

Furthermore, the services of the EDIHDO in the areas of Innovation Ecosystem & Networking, Test before invest, Skills & Training and Support to find investment are presented on the homepage in a way that is suitable for the target group. The following services are listed there as initial services to start a collaboration with EDIHDO:

- Open Consultation Hours
- Workshops & Trainings
- Idea checks & Coaching
- Roadmaps & Prototypes
- Recruiting & Talents

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## 7 Communication channels

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Based on the objective and the target group definition, various channels and measures can be derived.

- **Reporting by third parties ("earned media"):** This approach to topic dissemination involves encouraging the media or other multipliers to report about EDIHDO or its topics. This is implemented primarily with the help of press relations (see below) and tandem communication with multipliers. Here, the responsibility lies with all partners within the consortium. The partners also use their own channels with EDIHDO content if the content is suitable.
- **Social media ("social"):** Social media create networking opportunities with target groups and multipliers (including journalists). Here, website content can be extended, interaction with the target groups can be stimulated, and high-quality content from the network can be marketed.
- **Own communication channels ("owned media"):** Owned communication channels have the advantage that communication can take place independently of third parties. The website is therefore the communications hub of EDIHDO. The relevant content can be found there at any time (for details on the website, see below), and it is prepared according to the needs of the target group. Many of the center's other communication channels originate from there.

On this basis, communication activities are designed and described in an annual action plan. The following quantitative indicators are calculated for the individual measures for the duration of the project. Based on an annual evaluation, the key figures are adjusted.

### 7.1 Website

The website **[www.EDIHDO.eu](http://www.EDIHDO.eu)** is the **central digital contact point of the project** and **addresses all target groups**, including multipliers, media and politics. It provides information about the project and the funding, is the platform for disseminating all offers and provides further information about digitization in SMEs.

A new website was developed for EDIHDO, which is closely linked to the existing site of the Digital Hub Logistics Dortmund ([www.digitalhublogistics.com](http://www.digitalhublogistics.com)). For example, the corporate design is based on it and appropriate cross-references are created. The EDIHDO website will be rather reduced in structure and will have only a few, important subpages. The target group should receive information about the service portfolio, the project itself and about events in a fast, target group-oriented and appealing way. The Digital Hub Logistics website features in-depth news articles that appropriately complement the content on the EDIHDO Website. There is also further information here about the innovation ecosystem, membership formats and community behind the Digital Hub Logistics Dortmund, which enhances the information on the EDIHDO page.

The collaboration between EDIHDO and the Digital Hub Logistics website is closely linked. The Digital Hub Logistics website offers a broad range of services from the entire Dortmund

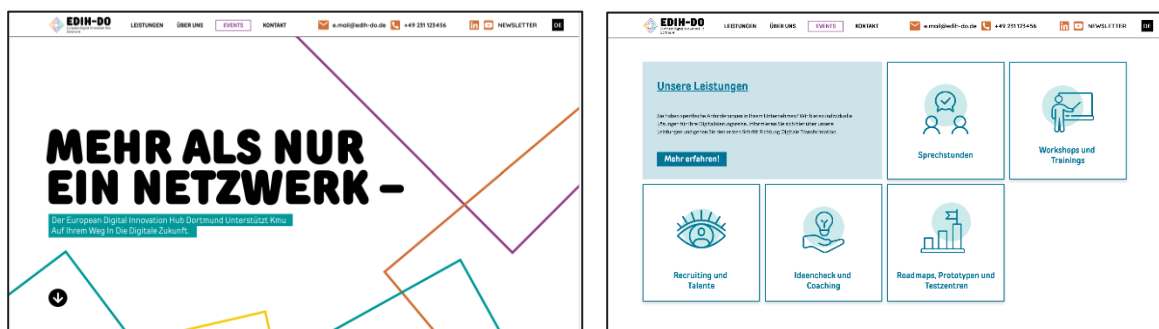
innovation ecosystem. The EDIHDO website, on the other hand, focuses on dedicated offerings for SMEs and midcaps within the EDIH strategy. In order to prepare the EDIH services in the best possible way for the target group, a separate project website is required. This website allows for a more streamlined and pragmatic presentation of content that cannot be appropriately presented on the existing website. Such a separate website enables a targeted approach to the target group and an effective implementation of the EDIH strategy

The **content meets high journalistic standards** and offers added value for website visitors. Furthermore, the website should offer a good orientation function. The website should provide SMEs and multipliers with user-friendly access to specific content (knowledge) tailored to the target group. Companies should be able to get information on the website and register for offered events/webinars.

The website has **static content**, such as project information, contact persons and further links to other relevant initiatives, but the majority has **dynamic elements**, such as a news post and current event information. This ensures that the website radiates topicality and thus motivates all target groups to visit the website regularly.

All posts and pages of the website are **optimized for search engines**, for example by using focus keywords and meta descriptions.

The Content-Management-System Wordpress is used for the administration of the website. The performance of the website is being analyzed by the tool "matomo".



**Figure 7: EDIHDO Website Screenshots**

## 7.2 Public Relations

EDIHDO addresses with its press work all relevant print media, preferably regional or industry-related, but also national leading media. In addition, radio, television and online media should also be addressed in order to achieve the widest possible reach.

Some topics are more suited to specific types of media: For example, digitization projects with a lot to "see" can be particularly exciting for TV journalists, while technical details may be better suited to trade journals. In the course of regional activities such as events, local media in particular should be approached. Press relations are primarily carried out by directly addressing media representatives.



EDIHDO targets especially the following media:

REGIONAL MEDIA	INDUSTRY PRESS	PODCASTS	SUPRANATIONAL MEDIA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ruhr Nachrichten</li> <li>• WAZ</li> <li>• WDR Dortmund</li> <li>• Local radio stations (Radio 91.2, Antenne Unna, eldoradio*)</li> <li>• Ruhr Wirtschaft</li> <li>• TZDOnews</li> <li>• Wirtschaft Regional</li> <li>• City Anzeiger</li> <li>• Derwesten.de</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industrieanzeiger</li> <li>• MaschinenMarkt</li> <li>• Elektrotechnik</li> <li>• Computer und Automation</li> <li>• Logistik-heute</li> <li>• DVZ</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What's hub? (Digital Hub Initiative)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Handelsblatt</li> <li>• FAZ</li> <li>• Süddeutsche Zeitung</li> <li>• Welt</li> </ul>

**Table 7: Media Overview**

Supranational media are approached in individual cases via targeted activities (such as publishing supplements).

Press releases are also used to provide the media with important announcements. The aim is to arouse the curiosity and interest of the media target groups and to be present in the public perception through their reporting. In this way, the digitization of small and medium-sized enterprises is to be brought even more into the public discussion, in order to build on this and enter into a stronger dialog with the content offerings. In addition, individual specialist articles will be produced in coordination with the media, such as success stories with an industry focus.

To achieve these goals, a press distribution list is being set up. This is regularly maintained and expanded. In addition, direct contact with journalists is sought, e.g. in press briefings and individual background discussions.

The media are given the name of a contact person who can respond competently to queries. The accompanying research provides topic plans with suitable specials for addressing the media.

## 7.3 Print materials

Print materials play an important role in communication work to present the offerings, results and effects of EDIHDO to the target groups. A project flyer provides an overview of the offerings for the target groups. Brochures report in the form of short stories about real digitization projects from SMEs, the business effect of the measures, the implementation effort, and the recommendations that the project leaders would give to other SMEs. They offer suggestions for readers and recommendations from entrepreneurs for entrepreneurs.

In addition, brochures on specific topics are conceivable (e.g. a particular technology that covers the focus of the center or similar). In terms of content, brochures can be designed with portrait texts, infographics, interviews and expert contributions, for example.

### 7.3.1 Hub.times

The 7. edition of the Hub.times was published under the brand EDIHDO. Hub.times is used as a marketing tool and presents compact information in a newspaper format.

6 editions of the Hub.times have already been published in the past. Therefore, we are using a well-established brand, which reaches the target group.

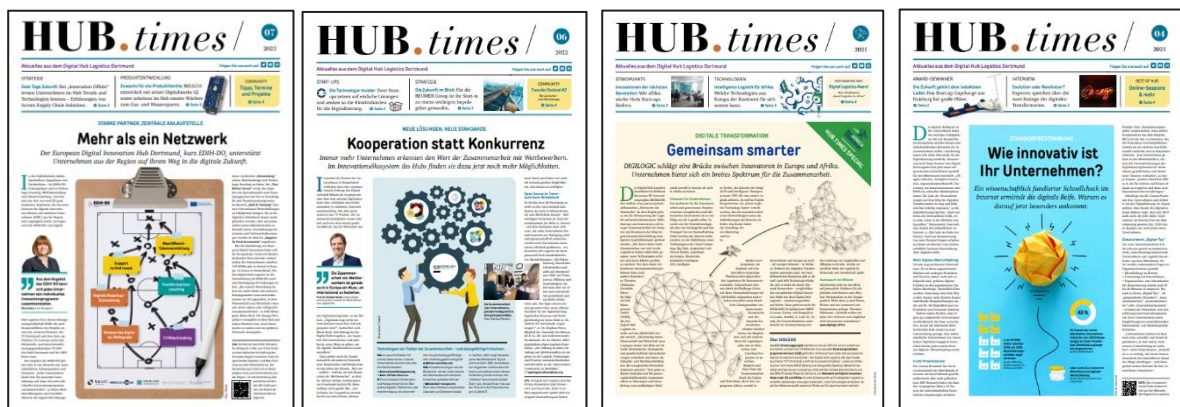


Figure 8: Hub.times Edition 4-7 (EDIHDO Edition No. 7)

The reader can either read the printed version, which will also be distributed at events, fairs and workshops and the EDIHDO brand. Alternatively, all editions can be read online: [Downloads | Digital.Hub Logistics Dortmund \(digitalhublogistics.de\)](https://digitalhublogistics.de)

### 7.3.2 Planned print materials

EDIHDO plans to publish the following print materials in 2023:

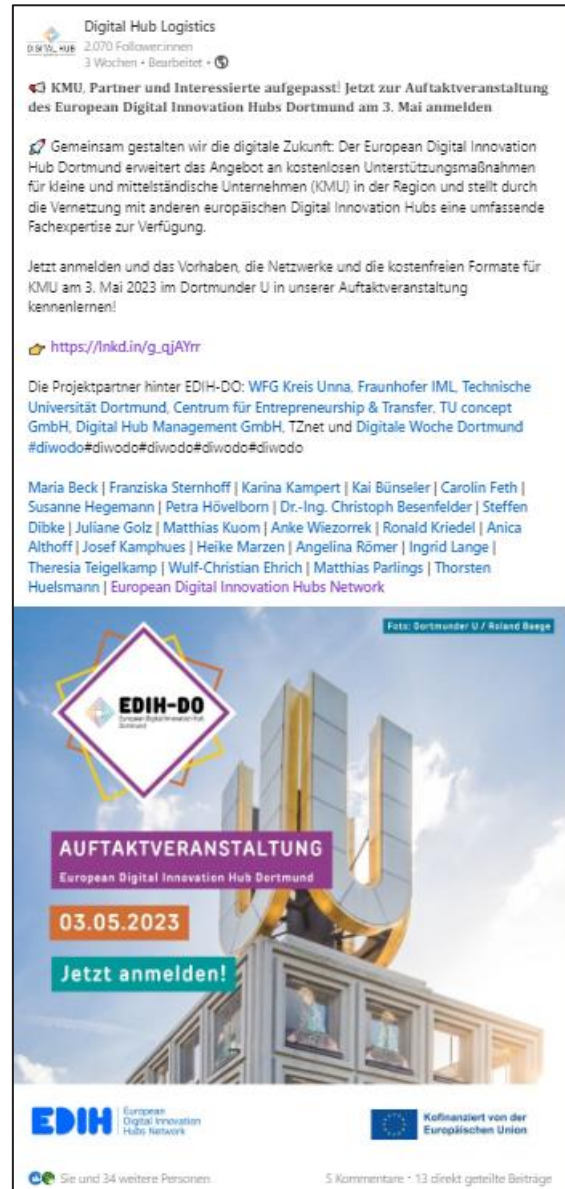
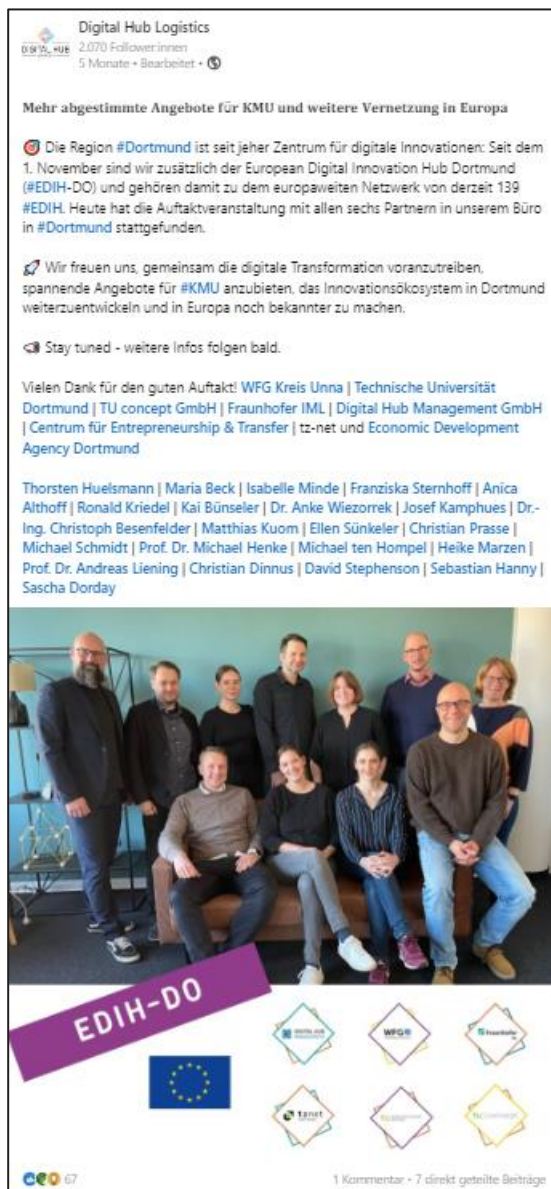
- A poster that presents important information about the project and the service portfolio in a graphically appealing way. This poster can also be used for SME consultation to figure out relevant services, topics and next steps in digitization
- The publication of further brochures will be determined in the further course of the project as soon as the first workshops and projects with companies have been implemented; one conceivable example is a success story brochure

## 7.4 Social Media

All communication channels of the six project partners as well as target group related projects (see section 2.1 + 2.2) form the basis for the dissemination and communication strategy of the EDIHDO are being used. By sharing best practices and success stories of customers and partners via social media, newsletter campaigns, newspaper articles or directly addressing them by mail, customers are presented with great examples of applied research that appeal to their hands-on mentality and give them inspiration, orientation and starting points for the challenges of digitalization in their own companies.

## LinkedIn

LinkedIn is used as the main platform for providing content, news, success stories and events around the project. The big advantage of this approach is that all project partners have a LinkedIn channel and can thus also further distribute the content via their own digital channel to achieve maximum reach. In addition, LinkedIn has established itself as a corporate communication platform for external communication.



**Figure 9: EDIHDO on the Digital Hub Logistics LinkedIn Account**

The project will leverage the social media reach of all its members of the consortium to further increase the number of followers, especially from the target group.

## European Digital Innovation Hubs Network

Social media activities also take into account the EDIH network. This involves the following measures:

- Relevant content (e. g. events, best practices) will be shared with the DTA with the aim to reach out also on an international basis
- Content relevant to the EDIHDO from other EDIHs and the EDIH network will also be communicated through our channels

Social media presences of all partners:

Partner/Initiative	LinkedIn Follower	Twitter Follower	Facebook Follower	Instagram Follower
Digital Hub Logistics	2.070	x	x	x
WFG Unna	545	x	578	x
TZ Net	1.205	735	1.207	1.166
TU concept	184	627	x	1.566
TU Dortmund	47.351	15.016	18.670	21.300
Mittelstand-Digital Zentrum Ruhr-OWL	637	202	x	x
Fraunhofer IML	8.118	2.610	1.166	1.380
Wirtschaftsförderung Dortmund	2.571	106.334	700	2.006

**Table 8: Social Media Follower Overview (Current status: April 2023)**

## 7.5 Event Newsletter

The newsletter is a way to build up the EDIHDO as a brand and to bind interested parties in the long term. As an instrument of push communication, the target groups automatically receive information about current topics, trends or events of the center. In this respect, the goal is to win over random visitors to the website for a subscription on the one hand, but especially the participants of events. At the beginning, a certain dispatch rhythm and a section structure should be defined.

The conception and planning of the newsletter content is based on a topic planning adapted to the target group. For this purpose, each newsletter focuses on a current problem of the German SME sector. Based on this initial situation, interviews with experts are prepared accordingly and events on acute crises are pointed out. This topicality allows us to offer our target group greater added value and also to offer our services in a contemporary manner.

## 7.6 Videos

Moving images are indispensable, especially for digital communication, which is becoming increasingly important. Videos are to be used to promote EDIHDO and can be found in a central location on the website.

### YouTube

YouTube will be used as the main platform for the provision of videos. The major advantage of this approach is, that all project partners distribute the uploaded films via their own digital



channel or embed or link them on their websites or platforms, to achieve maximum dissemination.

As the Digital Hub Logistics, which functions as an umbrella brand, already has a YouTube channel, a new channel for EDIHDO will not be set up, but the existing channel will be used.

The videos will help inform the audience and raise awareness of relevant topics among less digitized target groups with a concise format. In addition, videos that address the more digitized target group in terms of content can inspire them and give them impetus for new trends.

For high-quality video productions, for example for an image film, the video studio of the project partner CET can be used.

## **7.7 Events and fairs**

Under this item falls the coordination and support of internal and external events as well as the organization of workshops from EDIHDO service portfolio, participation in external trade fairs and events in the addressed region or on European level.

Events of the EDIHDO are promoted via the website, social media channels, and personal email invitations, as well as via the event-newsletter, that will be launched in autumn 2023 and via the existing newsletter of all project partners. In addition, the partners use their respective channels to draw attention to the events. Regional journalists are personally informed and invited to the events as the occasion arises, and daily announcements and event tips are sent to the relevant editorial offices and web portals. EDIHDO organizes its own formats and uses regional events organized by multipliers to present its offerings.

- EDIHDO presents itself at regional congresses or trade fairs, in particular
  - Zukunftskongress Logistik
  - FUTURE logistics - Die Innovationsmesse of startport – Duisburg
  - Hannover Messe Industrie
- Other relevant events for EDIHDO are
  - Digital Week Dortmund (DiWoDo) organized by project partner TZ Net GmbH.
- An important event for EDIHDO is the TRANSFER.FESTIVAL, which takes place at the Fraunhofer-Institut for Material Flow and Logistics IML every year and is organized by Digital Hub Logistics.
- In addition, EDIHDO organizes their own events and is taking part in events organized by the Digital Hub Logistics, like the Digital Logistics Award
- Also EDIHDO will collaborate with multipliers on regional and local events. There info presentations, workshops and demonstrators about the project will be presented.

### **7.7.1 EDIHDO official Kick-Off Event**

To promote the brand EDIHDO and to get in touch with the target group, an official Kick-off Event is planned on 03. May 2023. The event will take place in the Dortmunder U, which is a representative event location, which is known beyond the region as a landmark of Dortmund.

Up to 250 guests are expected. The target group are multipliers, small and medium-sized enterprises, network partners and other interested parties. The goal of this high-profile kick-off is to present the service portfolio and expand the network, and in particular to generate business contacts. In addition to the presentation of the service portfolio by the project partners, the agenda includes a panel discussion with representatives of SMEs from the region. There will also be a market of opportunities. There, project partners and partners from the ecosystem will have the opportunity to meet the companies via booths and the presentation of demonstrators.

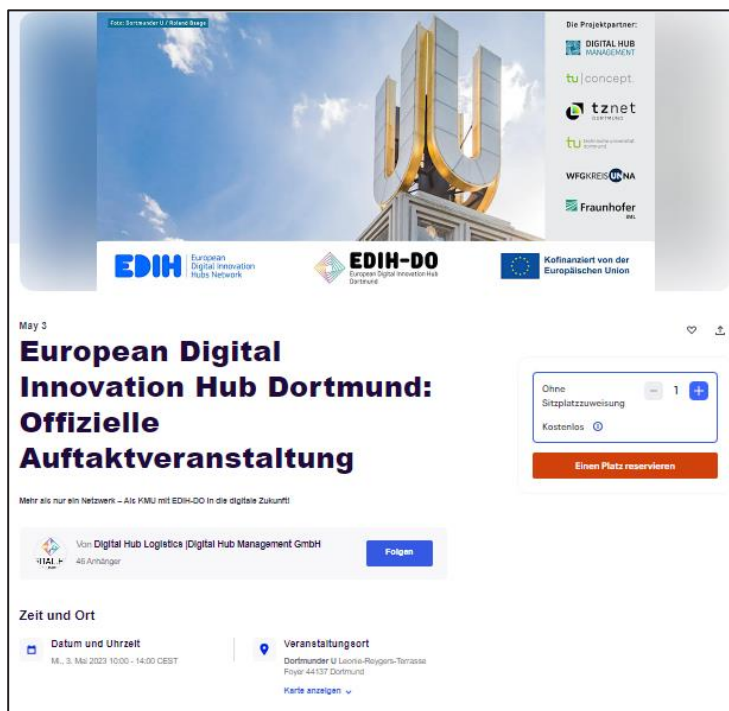


Figure 10: Invitation EDIHDO Kick-Off

## 7.7.2 External representation at fairs and events

At events and trade fairs in which EDIHDO participates, the project is recognizable as such. This means that a fairs, the book will clearly be branded in the EDIHDO / Digital Hub Logistics design. This allows the visitor to establish a direct visual connection to the project. In addition to free consulting services on the contents of the project, visitors are also provided with print materials that give information about the project.

As with all activities of EDIHDO, events and trade fairs in particular should be documented and processed for public relations purposes. This includes, photos of the events that can be used for follow-up reports on the website, in the newsletter, or on social media.



Figure 11: EDIHDO Roll-Up

### 7.7.3 Visibility of EU-funding in communication measures

On all published information material of EDIHDO, on the project website and on all other relevant information, the EU funding and the membership in the European Network of EDIHs will be visualized by the EU emblem and a simple funding statement “Co-Funded by the European Union”. It will be used according to the guidelines provided by the EU.



Figure 12: EDIH Network logo and EU emblem

About relevant, media-effective events and major strategic communication measures the EU will be informed in advance and provided with a basis for decision-making, so that EU can decide whether it wishes to be actively involved in the measures.

When participating in or holding our own events, various materials are used to ensure that the visibility of EU funding is present, including e.g. roll ups and print materials.

### 7.7.4 Advertising campaigns (optional)

In order to increase awareness and reach of EDIHDO and especially to reach previously untapped target groups, advertising campaigns can be developed and placed.

Examples of communication channels include posters, postcards and social media posts (including sponsored posts), advertisements in SME media, radio spots, banner and Google web ads. In addition, key multipliers such as industry associations and chambers of commerce and industry were to be involved.

In a first step, a basic ad was developed for EDIHDO, which will be used for selected activities.

## 8 Resources

To achieve the ambitious objectives set by this document, the project disposes of budgetary resources devoted to the development of dissemination and communication material. To carry out all activities and produce the materials and tools presented in this deliverable, 140K Euros have been set aside and allocated to the support and implementation of EDIHDO C&D strategy. This budget will be managed by Digital Hub Management GmbH.

The following initial distribution of this budget was included in the proposal and Grant Agreement.

Communication & Dissemination activity	Cost
Website development	12.000 €
Branding / material design	8.000 €
Materials printing	15.000 €
Others (e.g. editorial support)	30.000 €
Events (per year)	25.000 €

**Table 9: Communication & Dissemination activities Cost Overview**

### 8.1.1 Editorial group

The editorial group is regularly organized as an online meeting, which takes place every two weeks and is scheduled for 45 minutes. Twice a year an on-site meeting is held.

It serves

- to discuss publication and topic planning in order to avoid duplication of work,
- to identify potential for cooperation and to set priorities, and
- to exchange experiences
- to integrate the whole consortium in the social media activities.

An editorial group was founded when the project started. Each partner has named a contact person, usually it is the person responsible for public relations, who regularly participates in the editorial group. If he or she is unable to attend, he or she is represented by a colleague who is informed and able to speak.

### 8.1.2 Editorial plan

News will be published on a regular basis and coincide with key activities and achievements (e.g., participation in an event, implementation of key activities within the project, organization of experts' workshops, etc.). The editorial plan is meant to engage each partner in the story telling process providing their unique expertise, knowledge, and specific contribution to the project into the story. The editorial plan allows the consortium to have a backbone of news planned well ahead, but it remains also flexible to accommodate events announcements, seminars and workshops results, partners' achievements.



## 9 Timeline

The focus of the communication and dissemination activities will shift over time.

At the beginning, in the so-called start-up phase, we will focus on publicising the project and setting up all the channels we need to reach our target groups, as well as reaching a critical mass for these channels. We will focus on publicising the service offers and events.

In the medium term, in the consolidation phase, we will focus on informing about the ongoing activities, workshops and events and further engaging the ecosystem.

In the long term, during the sustainability phase, we will particularly highlight the impact and results of the project and the test before invest projects and emphasise the contribution of the EDIHDO to the overall EDIH network and to the positive impact on EU society and economy.

The following table summarises the duration, priorities and key milestones of each of these phases.

<b>LAUNCH PHASE</b>  <b>(11/2022)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Start of the project EDIHDO</li> <li>- Internal Kick-Off event</li> <li>- Setting up the internal communication structures</li> <li>- Appointment of contact persons within the consortium</li> </ul>
<b>PLANNING PHASE</b>  <b>(12/2022 -04/2023)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Development of the communication strategy</li> <li>- Development of the brand identity</li> <li>- First communication activities via social media</li> <li>- Invitation to the Kick-Off event</li> <li>- Preparation of communication materials</li> <li>- Release of EDIHDO Hub.times edition</li> <li>- Foundation of the editorial group</li> <li>- Publication of 1<sup>st</sup> press release</li> </ul>
<b>EXECUTION AND MONITORING PHASE</b>  <b>(05/2023 – 09/2025)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Publication of the EDIHDO website</li> <li>- Official Kick-Off event in May 2023</li> <li>- First release of EDIHDO event newsletter in autumn 2023</li> <li>- Implementation of own events, workshops, trainings</li> <li>- Implementation of the defined communication measures</li> <li>- Regular review and adjustment of communication measures as needed</li> <li>- Quarterly evaluation of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)</li> </ul>
<b>CLOSING PHASE</b>  <b>(10/ 2025)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Final documentation</li> </ul>

**Table 10: EDIHDO Timeline**

## 10 Evaluation strategy

EDIHDO's communication activities will be closely tracked and analysed during the duration of the project. The evaluation will be carried out on a regular basis to ensure the success of the project.

In the print and online areas, a clipping service documents which articles appear about the European Digital Innovation Hub. A tracking system on the website documents how many visitors are on the website and which content is of particular interest to visitors. The response on the social media channels is also documented.

In order to document the results of the public relations work, continuous performance measurement is carried out. The following key figures are collected:

MEASURE	INDICATOR	TARGET	MEANS OF VERIFICATION
<b>Flyers Posters / roll-ups</b>	No. of flyers No. of posters/roll-ups (by the end of the project)	> 6 > 4	Distribution via participation to and organization of dedicated events. Electronic distribution via the project website
<b>Hub.Times</b>	No. of Hub Times released under the EDIHDO brand (by the end of the project)	3	Publication via the digital hub logistics and EDIHDO website
<b>Project Website</b>	No. of unique visitors to the website (average per year)	> 1500	Matamo (or comparable tool)
<b>Social Networks</b>	No. of followers on LinkedIn (average of new followers yearly)	> 500	Keeping EDIHDO profiles on such networks active via regular posting and monitoring
<b>Press Releases / publication in press (by the end of the project)</b>	No. of press releases (per year)	> 2	Release of press publication on the Digital Hub Logistics and/or EDIHDO website
<b>Event-Newsletter starting in autumn 2023 (published every month)</b>	No. of newsletters (by the end of the project)	26	Recording of subscribers to the electronic newsletter

<b>Videos</b>	No. of videos published on the Digital Hub Logistics YouTube Channel	2 videos per year and 200 views per video	Introduction and informative videos and interviews to support awareness creation, stakeholders' engagement
<b>Participation to events and presentations</b>	No. of external events partners attended to promote the project, including scientific conferences, and number of demos and or presentations (per year)	>20	Attendance proof, presented material, photos
<b>Events &amp; Fairs</b>	No. of events and fairs where EDIHDO is presented - own events as well as visited events (by year)	>15	Attendance proof, presented material, photos

**Table 11: KPI Overview**

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# 11 Conclusions and Future Outlook

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This document provides the framework for the communication and dissemination strategy within the EDIHDO project. The basic pillars for communication have been outlined here. Since the project start, many communicative foundations have already been built from which the project will now benefit.

Structures within the consortium were set up in order to be able to implement the communication with the greatest possible success. A regular exchange between the partners remains an essential building block for this, especially since the partners' communication channels with their existing followers are an important part of the communication strategy.

Moreover, this deliverable provides clear and consistent guidelines for all project partners. Envisioning and outlining the overall outreach plan at the early stages of the project ensures that EDIHDO maximizes the impact of communication, dissemination, and engagement activities and sustains the concepts, achievements, and knowledge developed throughout the project. The advantage of such a comprehensive strategy is that all communication measures can be coordinated. This influences the long-term perception of the EDIHDO brand, which should continue beyond the end of the project and be firmly anchored in people's minds as a point of contact for small and medium-sized enterprises.

In the coming months, the focus will be on making the EDIHDO brand known in the Dortmund / Unna region and generating company contacts. Communication will also benefit further from this, as this is important content that can serve as best practice examples.

This strategy must be understood as a framework for all communication and dissemination activities, but at the same time, communication activities will be constantly examined, and improvements made throughout the project.

The immediate next steps which will be taken will be the following:

- *Finalization of the launch of the website:* the first version of the project website will be online by the beginning of May
- *Conducting the kick-off event and generating important corporate contacts*
- *Identification of key priority stakeholders for establishing communication and dissemination alliances*
- *Development of contents for the project partners' newsletters*
- *Identification of key events for the year 2023*
- *Establishment of initial contacts with the press*



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