

Attention: Please note blocking period until Thursday, May 2nd - 11am

Bits & Pretzels announces New Leadership for the Next Era of Growth

- > **Britta Weddeling joins as Bits & Pretzels's first Editor-in-Chief**
- > **Dominik Wichmann joins as Advising Publisher**
- > **Christoph Commes joins as Managing Director**
- > **The three Bits & Pretzels hosts want Bits & Pretzels to become Europe's leading platform for startups, entrepreneurship & innovation**

Bits & Pretzels, the Munich based international startup festival, announces a new suite of leadership. "We've come a long way since we started Bits & Pretzels five years ago", say the three hosts Andreas Bruckschlögl, Dr. Bernd van's Gravesande and Felix Haas. "Now, we can build on this foundation and bring experienced professionals on board and together we want to become Europe's leading platform for startups, entrepreneurship & innovation."

To push the conference to the next level, Bits & Pretzels announces Britta Weddeling as its first Editor-in-chief. Starting in August, Weddeling will lead all content & program strategy. In her role, she will also manage the development of Bits & Pretzels's new media platform.

Before joining Bits & Pretzels, Weddeling, 38, worked in Silicon Valley as a technology reporter with "Handelsblatt", Germany' #1 business newspaper. During her five years tenure in the Valley, she won several awards for her reporting, including the Friedwart Bruckhaus-Preis of the Hanns Martin Schleyer-Stiftung and the Georg von Holtzbrinck Preis für Wirtschaftspublizistik. She spoke at major tech-events, e.g. the German-American Conference at Harvard University in Boston.

Dominik Wichmann, 47, joins Bits & Pretzels as Advising Publisher. In his role, the former Editor-in-Chief of "Süddeutsche Zeitung Magazin" and "Stern" will help Bits & Pretzels on its mission to become Europe's leading startup media platform. Before founding the brand publishing house "Looping Group" that now occupies 100 people, Wichmann acted as the Co-CEO of Hubert Burda Media's tech-conference "Digital Life Design" (DLD). Wichmann is also the ghostwriter of several books, his last one, "My Love Story" for Tina Turner, became a bestseller.

Christoph Commes, 31, joins from consulting firm goetzpartners, where he advised multinational and local companies on strategic and digital matters. In his role as Managing

Director of Bits & Pretzels he will oversee all business matters of the grown Bits & Pretzels team & operations. He will complement the Main Producer of Bits & Pretzels, Christian Lohmeier, who is promoted also to Managing Director and will continue to lead all productions of Bits & Pretzels.

The three hosts of Bits & Pretzels Felix Haas, Dr. Bernd Storm van's Gravesande and Andreas Bruckschloegl will continue to act as hosts and are excited about the new team leaders: "Our vision is to empower Europe's startup founders with the coolest formats for startup founders and entrepreneurs. Britta Weddeling has made herself a name as one of Germany's leading tech journalists and the most innovative thinkers of the tech industry. Dominik Wichmann is a well-respected creative and journalistic leader with experience in managing tech-events like DLD. And Christoph Commes will strengthen the Bits & Pretzels team with business and strategic leadership. We are very happy to have them on board and are excited to work with them on our mission to make Europe more entrepreneurial."

The timing couldn't be better: The European startup ecosystem is on a strong rise. February broke the all-time VC investment record for European startups: €2.9B was invested in Europe according to Dealroom. The number of new high-tech startups in Europe did raise by factor four since 2010. Germany especially sees more and more Unicorn breakout success stories and countless new startups manage to attract international growth funding. Bits & Pretzels has emerged as a leading platform with its flagship festival attracting 5'000 founders, investors and media annually at and around Munich Oktoberfest.

About Bits & Pretzels

Bits & Pretzels is an application-only, three-day festival that connects 5,000 founders, investors, startup enthusiasts, and all other decision-makers of the startup ecosystem. The festival takes place in a unique setting around the Oktoberfest in Munich from September 29th – October 1st, 2019. The most successful founders from all around the world, as well as young aspiring entrepreneurs, will meet at the event for inspiration, learning, and matchmaking. On the last day, all attendees and speakers come together in one tent with one goal: liquid networking.

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