



Gesellschaft für Kommunikations- und Technologieforschung mbH

SHORT PROFILE

empirica is a private, internationally active research and consulting firm concentrating on the following areas:

- eBusiness / Electronic business
- Telework / The future of work
- Teleservices for the elderly and disabled
- Telemedicine / eHealth
- The information and knowledge society

Our interdisciplinary project teams work on projects such as

- market and accompanying customer needs research
- policy and strategic consulting as well as technology assessment
- consulting on product development and market validation
- the development and implementation of pilot projects
- analysing organisations and business processes
- preparing economic feasibility studies and benchmarking studies
- organising conferences, workshops and seminars

empirica has many years of experience in quantitative and qualitative research methods. Its clients are private companies and public bodies: large and medium-sized companies in the insurance, pharmaceutical and automobile industries as well as software developers and hardware manufacturers. There are also telecommunications service companies and network providers, social services firms, medical facilities, Federal and State Government ministries in Germany and the European Commission as well as the European statistical office (Eurostat).

E-BUSINESS

Electronic business ("e-Business") enables companies to link their internal and external processes more efficiently and flexibly, work more closely with suppliers and better satisfy the needs and expectations of their customers.

E-Business is more than just e-commerce. It covers business processes along the whole value chain: electronic purchasing ("e-procurement") and supply chain management, processing orders electronically, customer service and cooperation with business partners. This applies to traditional and virtual organisations. Special technical standards for e-business facilitate the exchange of data between companies. E-business software solutions allow to integrate intra and inter firm business processes.

[Empirical Market Research in Over 15 Countries](#)

empirica was one of the first companies in Germany to offer a comprehensive research and consulting service for electronic business. Today it is one of the few leading consulting firms in the world which offer international benchmarking studies that show the dynamics and development of electronic business in various sectors and countries.

We have available representative data from recent empirical surveys in all EU countries and beyond. These are based on sound statistical indicators that measure developments within sectors of the economy, regions or even individual companies.

Using our own tools and those of other well-known producers we apply business process analyses to new organisational forms or added value systems. We help clients to analyse and improve their business processes and workflows. empirica has over ten years of project experience in this field in sectors such as insurance, social services or the housing industry.

TELEWORK – THE FUTURE OF WORK

- innovative concepts for the organisation of work
- a consulting package for the introduction of teleworking
- evaluation and economic feasibility studies
- Europe-wide surveys on new forms of work, benchmarking studies
- strategic analyses and political consulting

Companies' requirements for more flexible forms of work organisation in terms of working space and time and the wish of employees for improved harmonisation between their working and private lives have given teleworking much attention in the last few years. The strategic use of IT-assisted forms of work - teleworking, e-work or multi-location work – can increase companies' competitiveness and performance in the public sector in Germany in the long-term.

empirica has twenty years of Europe-wide experience in investigating trends and advice on how to implement new trends in work. Repeated representative surveys in Europe and a large number of case studies carried out since the early 1980's round off this empirical basis. empirica also organises conferences, workshops, seminars and work with groups of experts in industry.

empirica has a modular consulting package for the introduction of teleworking and telecommunications-assisted innovative forms of work-organisation. We moderate and monitor introduction-processes in companies and administrative organisations. empirica also develops sound analyses and concepts for policy measures for all aspects of innovative forms of work.

TELESERVICES FOR THE ELDERLY AND DISABLED

- the development and piloting of telematics-assisted nursing-care services
- international studies on telematics applications for elderly and disabled people
- policy consulting on the use of telematics in various areas of society
- information campaigns, initiating public debate, conferences

Against the background of demographic development and the call for the social participation of elderly and disabled people, government and business circles are

becoming increasingly aware of the potential of new telematic applications for these groups. For example, telematics-assisted, "intelligent" living-space can support an independent life-style in cases of intellectual or physical restrictions over longer periods of time. Even the growing number of internet-users makes clear that telematics applications for elderly people are becoming increasingly important. Social welfare organisations can increase their own efficiency and effectiveness by using appropriate applications.

With the Home TeleService empirica developed and implemented the world's first video service for the ambulant care of elderly people as recently as 1990. As a result we initiated and carried out a great number of other applications projects. The practical experience accumulated with such pilot implementations also plays a role in the development and implementation of strategic studies. In the mid-1990's, for example, empirica carried out the first Europe-wide study on telematics for elderly and disabled people on behalf of the European Commission. And with a large-scale market study which among other things contains a representative survey of the over-50 population in Europe, we have further expanded our competence in this area. An inter-disciplinary team with international project experience ensures that research results always cumulate in practical guidance for further action.

EHEALTH / TELEMEDICINE

For many years the health systems in modern societies have been under increasing pressure due to economic and social change. Improved treatment methods often require more personnel- intensive care and are often more cost-intensive, and the share of chronically ill and very old people is increasing. The challenge is to reconcile higher quality and more innovations with the restrictions on expenditure in the health system. A targeted use of patient-oriented health telematics applications can help

- to maintain and improve the quality of care,
- to better coordinate patient care between the various providers in the health and social care sectors,
- increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the health system.

Beginning with the world-wide first interactive, broad-band video service for seniors (HomeTeleService via CATV) empirica and its European partners have developed, carried out and evaluated a wide range of telemedicine application projects, especially in the home care and hospital areas. In each case empirica works closely with both service providers in the health and social care sector and technology companies. A key example is the internationally hailed prospective, randomised controlled telemedicine trial, the TEN-HMS project. In a clinical trial of over two years' duration in three countries a group of 426 high-risk cardiac insufficiency patients were looked after by 12 hospitals, specialists and GPs. In the telemonitoring treatment group patients used the telemetric recording and automatic transmission of their vital data. - On behalf of the European Commission and the German Federal Government empirica has also carried out strategic policy studies on the use of telecommunications media and services in the health system and organised a national dialogue (working group 7 "The Use of Telematics Applications in the Health System" of the German National Forum Info 2000) and international conferences.

THE INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

Our society and economy are in a transition to the knowledge and information society. At the same time the thrusts of technological innovation are making crucial changes to our media environments in leisure activities and our jobs.

But: without social innovations, technical innovations remain ineffective in the long term. Policies for the future, the development of indicators, monitoring and benchmarking approaches cannot be developed without comparative international studies. And sustainable effects require concomitant measures in respect of job qualifications and media competence ("digital literacy") as well as in the planning and organisation of the use of technology.

empirica contributes to the active development and thorough assessment of such innovations. The analysis of requirements, acceptance, market potential and the long-term effects and impact can be used to develop recommendations not only to for the socially beneficial use of information and communications technologies but also to develop location analyses. In this area empirica regards itself as a service provider offering strategic advice to governments, the commercial sector and various other bodies and organisations.

CONTACT

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