

## PRESS RELEASE

### **Bertelsmann and Microsoft partner to transform consumer experiences in media and education**

- **Bertelsmann CFO Rolf Hellermann and Microsoft CCO Judson Althoff agree on a comprehensive partnership to drive innovation in the media and education sectors.**
- **The vision is to create the next generation of data-driven platforms for entertainment and professional development, driven by talent collaboration between the two companies, and to ultimately open up these solutions for industry collaboration.**
- **The companies will jointly develop a range of cloud-based solutions, using Microsoft's tech stack and comprehensive compliance and trust commitments to advance Bertelsmann's Tech & Data agenda, serving both consumers and businesses alike.**
- **In media, readers and viewers will benefit from personalized, more relevant and trusted content and advertising experiences.**
- **In education, healthcare, and technology, professionals will achieve better learning outcomes with tailored training content.**

Gütersloh / Redmond, November 10, 2021 – Consumer expectations regarding personalized content and experiences have significantly increased in recent years -- as have their expectations for immediacy and choice. Consumers expect personalized experiences, and marketers seek meaningful customer interactions. At the same time, according to the 2021 Edelman Trust Barometer, trust and data privacy are becoming a major consideration.

Addressing this new aspect of competition, Bertelsmann is leveraging data and AI to deliver personalized, brand-safe content as well as tailored and efficient learning experiences, ultimately lowering costs to consumers and business partners alike. This follows a strategic mandate by Bertelsmann's Executive Board to magnify efforts in technology and data-driven business models, setting a clear agenda as Tech & Data Alliance to drive partnerships, build platforms and connect people and skills throughout the group.

Microsoft, with its deep expertise in cloud-based computing, artificial intelligence (AI), and platform development, will support Bertelsmann to power this new generation of data-driven models, bringing even better value, experiences, and products to Bertelsmann's customers, both in business-to-business as well as consumer-facing offerings.

"For Bertelsmann, Microsoft is an ideal partner as we accelerate our transformation journey in tech and data, empowering the information ecosystems of tomorrow through trustworthy news, entertaining content, digital services, and affordable online education." said Rolf

Hellermann, Bertelsmann CFO and Chair of the Tech & Data Alliance and Advisory Board. “We have the momentum to unite our tech and data initiatives, to develop user-centric digital offerings, and to set our sights on truly innovative solutions for the benefit of the employees, the consumers as well as the communities we serve. We can’t wait to experience how this partnership will amplify the more than €6Bn we invest every year in [world-class] content.”

“As cloud and AI transform the media industry, Bertelsmann and Microsoft recognize the tremendous opportunity to use data to deliver better experiences and create more efficiencies, all without compromising privacy,” said Judson Althoff, Executive Vice President and Chief Commercial Officer at Microsoft. “Through this collaboration, Bertelsmann and Microsoft can innovate together to do just that, enabling safer, more relevant, and affordable access to information, entertainment, and education.”

Together, Bertelsmann and Microsoft will create a number of unique and highly scalable platforms that deliver personalized content – news, entertainment, and education – to consumers, learners, and professionals when and where they want it. All this while respecting and protecting privacy in compliance with GDPR, increasing media revenues and gaining substantial efficiencies in content development spend. The initial suite of joint platform developments will include:

### **Enabling Data-Driven Business Models**

A co-engineering effort, Bertelsmann and Microsoft are collaborating in developing “BeData”, a cross-divisional consumer data and analytics platform for Bertelsmann to aggregate and analyze data from Bertelsmann’s consumer businesses. The platform will provide GDPR-compliant insights to inform content investments, create personalized media and services offerings, and provide differentiated advertising opportunities.

### **Serving audiences better**

One of the first new consumer offerings, which will be built on BeData’s data backbone, is RTL+, a German multimedia service combining video, audio, magazine, and book publishing assets into a personalized experience based on references and interests. The applications will drive customer loyalty and engagement, subscription revenues, and higher advertising revenues.

### **Fostering innovation and collaboration**

The Bertelsmann Collaboration Platform (BCP), co-developed by Bertelsmann’s Arvato Systems division and Microsoft, will empower Bertelsmann group’s 5,000+ tech and data experts to seamlessly collaborate across businesses and jointly develop solutions. An integral part of Bertelsmann’s overall tech and data agenda, BCP is part of Bertelsmann’s capability-building roadmap empowering talent to fill skill gaps, collaborate, and grow.

### **Supporting education in healthcare and technology**

Bertelsmann’s global healthcare training and workforce development leader Relias is powered by an Azure-based online education platform for healthcare professionals. Relias helps organizations improve care quality by providing accredited, personalized learning and

development that addresses the specific needs of healthcare workers. Their engaging, multi-format courses ensure healthcare professionals are up to date on the latest methods, enjoy improving their skills, and stay compliant with relevant regulations.

Not only healthcare organizations and professionals will benefit from the partnership of Bertelsmann and Microsoft, but also technology professionals: Udacity, the world's leading technology platform in creating job-ready digital talent, in which Bertelsmann is a principal investor, is integrating its Nanodegree programs into Microsoft Viva, a next-generation employee experience platform. The integration will allow Udacity to continue to expand its global impact, transforming lives, businesses, and nations by providing radical talent transformation in digital technologies.

### **About Bertelsmann**

Bertelsmann is a media, services and education company that operates in about 50 countries around the world. It includes the broadcaster RTL Group, the trade book publisher Penguin Random House, the magazine publisher Gruner + Jahr, the music company BMG, the service provider Arvato, the Bertelsmann Printing Group, the Bertelsmann Education Group and Bertelsmann Investments, an international network of funds. The company has around 130,000 employees and generated revenues of €17.3 billion in the 2020 financial year. Bertelsmann stands for creativity and entrepreneurship. This combination promotes first-class media content and innovative service solutions that inspire customers around the world. Bertelsmann aspires to achieve climate neutrality by 2030. In 2021, Bertelsmann commemorates the 100th birthday of Reinhard Mohn, the Group's late post-war founder and longtime Chairman and CEO.

### **Bertelsmann online**



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