The Cloud Print Hub creates a bridge between consumers with their photos and the individual retailer who offers printing services in his store or webshop.

The Cloud Print Hub from di support

Photo printing without limits

While the German software specialist di support may be a young company, it would certainly be wrong to describe it as a start-up. Since its founding in the year 2000, di support has become successfully established as a provider of solutions that make photo printing as easy as possible for consumers, retailers and service providers. With the Cloud Print Hub, the company now wants to take another big step forward: The open platform aims no less than changing the game of global photo printing.

For its ambitious project, di support has a healthy base to build on because the company's list of customers sounds like a Who's Who of the print business. It includes not only large drugstore chains but also industrial print service providers, manufacturers, online platforms and owner-managed photo retailers. They all appreciate the successful principle of the software solutions, which, with their intuitive interface, make it easy for consumers to design, order and print personalized photo

A store locator makes it easy for consumers to find the next retailer offering print services.
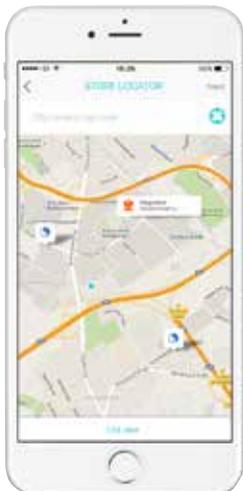
Picture products are created right on the mobile device before sending the order to the selected retail location.

products on a kiosk in the store, a PC at home or a mobile device. In fact, di support has already installed nearly 12,000 kiosks and instant printing solutions at its retail customers. The company's apps have been downloaded more than 6 million times, and the servers process an annual volume of some 54 million orders with 1.4 billion data files. With this success story, di support has made it several times into the Deloitte Technology Fast 50, the ranking list of the fastest growing technology companies in Germany. In 2015, the company won its first German Design Award, and was awarded again this year – namely for its G3 ID touch terminal for passport photo and studio photography.

Open borders

With the Cloud Print Hub, di support is now addressing the problem that has basically stood in the way of the photo print business ever since the invention of digital photography, namely the fragmentation of the market through numerous closed eco systems that make it difficult for consumers to transfer their images from one platform to another and select in each case the print services that are the most suitable for a particular project. At the same time, giants from the IT sector such as Apple, Google, Facebook or Snapchat truly soak up the consumers' pictures and make it easy to communicate with the photos via different platforms.

So far, however, the explosive growth rates of digital image communication via social networks have only shown a limited effect on the photo print business. It is precisely this that the Cloud Print Hub, as a global retail and photofinishing network, aims to change. "Through the dominance of the big platforms, the photo industry is no longer the king in the castle in the print business, but merely a recipient of data files that belong to others," explained Ralph Naruhn, CEO of di support. "This situation can only be changed if all photo providers – or at least a large proportion of them – work together on a global platform, because no individual company can, on its own,

Ralph Naruhn, CEO of di support: "Only if the photo industry collaborates on an open platform, we will have a chance to become a relevant partner for Apple, Facebook, Google & Co."

match the value chain of Google, Facebook & Co." In Naruhn's opinion, the industry should also be guided by positive and negative examples in other market segments: "We should, in the process of risk management, guard against somebody taking over the link between the providers and the consumers on an exclusive basis, as is the case in the music industry with Apple und Co. Neutral platforms like the travel portal trivago and the consumer goods portals of Amazon show that it is possible to successfully develop the business on a global basis through cooperation between all the players."

The bridge to printing

As an open system, the Cloud Print Hub creates a bridge between consumers with their photos and