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# The Digitization of Exports Produces New Processes for SMEs

Laura Angelstorf, Sibylle Zumstein

[Switzerland \(/switzerland/export/en/country/Switzerland/\)](/switzerland/export/en/country/Switzerland/), [All Industries \(/switzerland/export/en/industry/All%20Industries/\)](/switzerland/export/en/industry/All%20Industries/), [Industry 4.0 \(/switzerland/export/en/topic/Industry%204.0/\)](/switzerland/export/en/topic/Industry%204.0/)

February 23, 2016



Thomas Kofler, Sales Director Amber Road: The digital revolution also changes export procedures.

eFreight is one example of the digital transformation within international cross-border trade. Paper documents are becoming a thing of the past, and for SMEs, this means monetary and also time savings.

## Goods and information flows go hand-in-hand

The fourth industrial revolution has not only digitized industrial processes, as it is also having an effect on international trade. For example, under certain circumstances [customs \(/switzerland/export/en/glossary/term/Customs/\)](/switzerland/export/en/glossary/term/Customs/) declarations can be completed electronically. This in turn

shortens processing times and the goods can reach the customers more quickly. But how can SMEs benefit from the advantages provided by the digitization of customs clearance processes for freight traffic? Amber Road, strategic partner of Switzerland Global Enterprise, provides just the right solutions for this. "Our software solutions have been developed for the digital transformation of manual processes. This is why we can support our customers worldwide with the digital transformation in their companies," says Amber Road Sales Director Thomas Kofler.

### **Networks in the export area will become more important, but also more complex**

The automation of processes is one thing. But the networking of employees, customers and suppliers as well as the product and information flows is also decisive. The flow of goods and products can be visualized through digitization. This means it is possible to monitor the products, container or shipments from the doorstep in Switzerland until they are delivered to the customer. This provides SMEs with security. Sophisticated networks provide this as well: "The increasing volatility of political and economic frameworks is forcing closer interaction and networking between suppliers and buyers," according to Kofler.

### **Automation will become more important for SMEs**

"The customers are more willing than in the past to pay for the automation of processes and for ensuring compliance," says Kofler. And the expectation that the benefits of process automation will be visible on the books is still there. "In order to drive forward modernization quickly with SMEs, 'quick wins' such as automated sanction and embargo checks, are decisive," Kofler summarizes.

### **Forum for Swiss Foreign Trade 2016 covers Industry 4.0**

During our Forum for Swiss Foreign Trade on April 21 in Zurich, Thomas Kofler will talk about how supply chain management can be adapted to these new digital possibilities and above all how SMEs can reduce complexity. [Register today!](http://www.s-ge.com/switzerland/forum/en) (<http://www.s-ge.com/switzerland/forum/en>)

You can find more information on the topic in our dossier: [Industry 4.0](http://www.s-ge.com/switzerland/export/en/topic/industry%204.0) (<http://www.s-ge.com/switzerland/export/en/topic/industry%204.0>)

Article: [Industry 4.0: leading companies on opportunities for SMEs](http://www.s-ge.com/switzerland/export/en/blog/industry-40-leading-companies-opportunities-smes) (<http://www.s-ge.com/switzerland/export/en/blog/industry-40-leading-companies-opportunities-smes>)

### **About the person:**

Thomas Kofler, Sales Director

Thomas Kofler has been head of Amber Road Switzerland AG since 2009. Within the scope of this management position, he is responsible for developing the German-speaking regions in Europe and also supporting Swiss and European customers. Before taking on this role he was managing partner for 10 years in a consulting firm, which focused on Transport & Logistics, Supply Chain Management and International Trade. Kofler holds an MBA from the University of Dallas (Texas) and appears at seminars and events as a lecturer for the areas of [Export Controls \(/switzerland/export/en/glossary/term/Export%20controls\)](/switzerland/export/en/glossary/term/Export%20controls) and Trade Compliance.

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### About the company:

Amber Road

Amber Road is a leading provider of on-demand software and solutions for Global Trade Management (GTM), which automate import and export processes and thus help ensure compliant and cost-effective product flows. The GTM solutions of Amber Road combine a powerful on-demand platform with intelligent foreign trade knowledge and transparent process management, which links together importers, exporters, logistics partners, customs agencies and freight carriers.

[www.amberroad.com](http://www.amberroad.com) (<http://www.amberroad.com/>)

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Given all the changes associated with the digital transformation, IT security is becoming an increasingly important criterion for the digitization of business models.

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The top priority of Swiss food manufacturer Wander AG is aligning its business model to meet customer requirements.

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