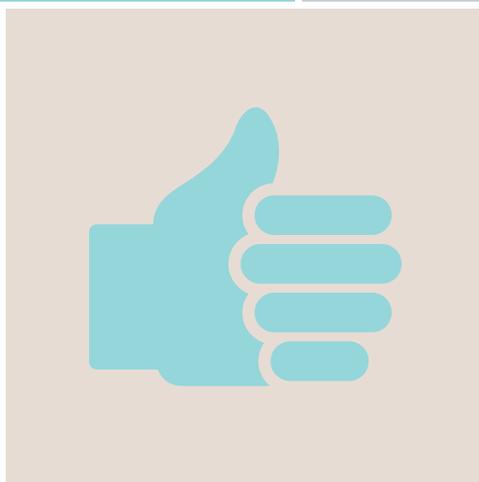
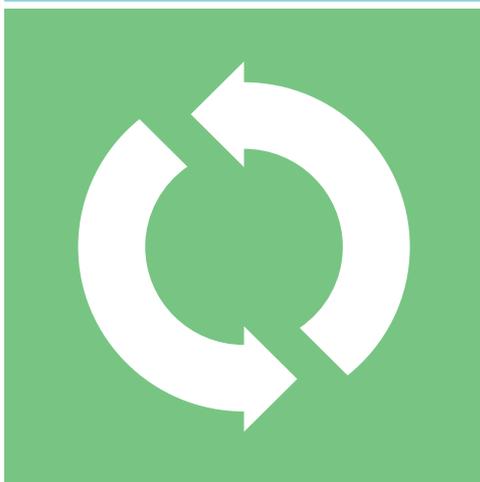


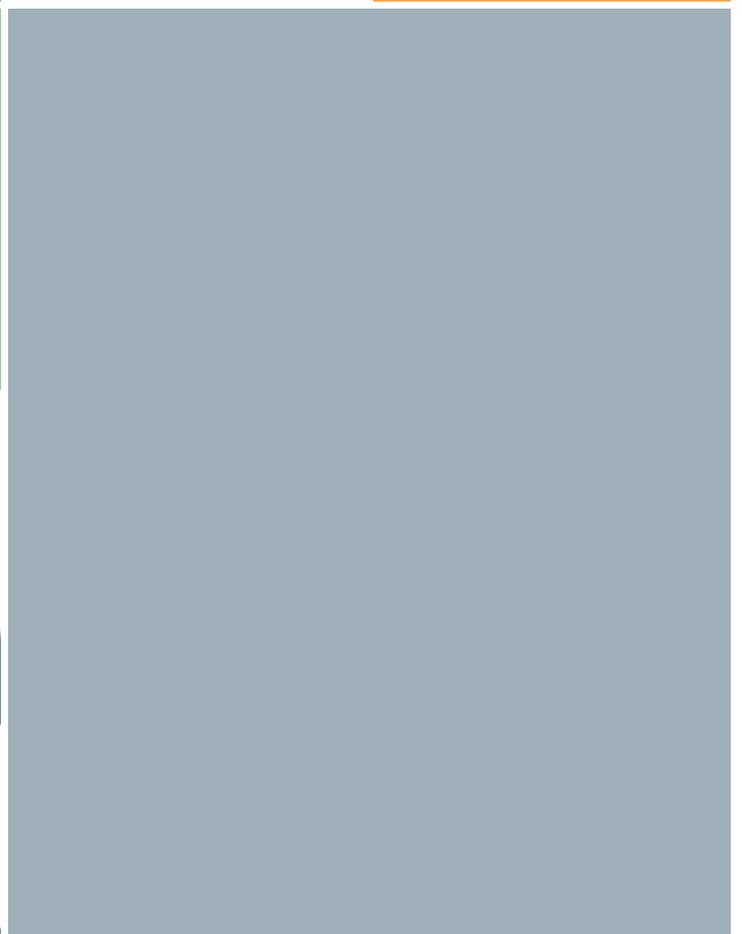
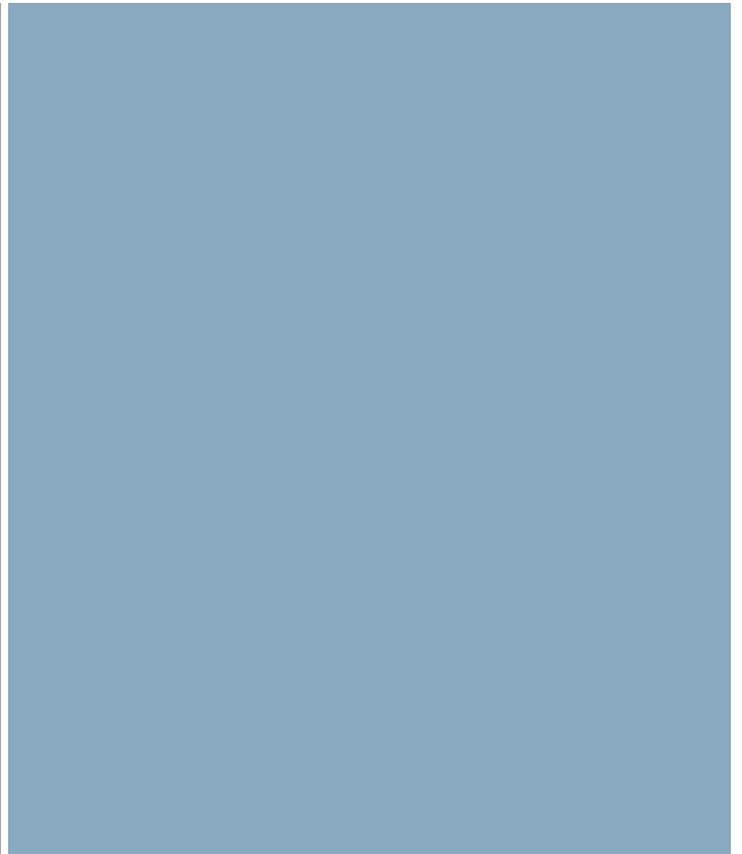
# Bechtle Sustainability Code.

Everyone wins. If we all work together.



Your strong IT partner.  
Today and tomorrow.





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# Foreword.

## Sustainability – Our Corporate Identity.

Globalisation, relocation of entire industries, social cutbacks, climatic catastrophes, ageing populations, a disproportionate intergenerational contract, a shortage of skilled labour. And that's just the tip of the iceberg when describing the present and future world we live in. The challenges we face don't have easy solutions; governments and organisations across the globe are all searching for answers. They've drafted approaches to enable us to meet these challenges head on, rather than ignore their existence. The key element is not to react to short-term symptoms, but to act for long-term success. The Brundtland Report of 1987 defines the principle that guides not only international decision-makers but also Bechtle's leadership:

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

**Part of Vision 2020.** Bechtle defines sustainability as the ability to handle both present and future economic, social and ecological challenges, risks and opportunities in such a way as to realise the growth and profitability goals outlined in our Vision 2020 in a responsible and sustainable manner. Corporate social responsibility also means acknowledging the social and environmental impact of our actions. We at Bechtle strive to foster sustainable growth for our company and society as a whole through transparent, ethical practices. To do so, we must consider the interests of our various stakeholders—above all customers, employees, shareholders, manufacturers and suppliers—when taking corporate decisions. It also requires us to adhere to all applicable laws and comply with international norms of business conduct. One of our goals, therefore, is to firmly anchor the principle of sustainability in Bechtle's identity and practice it in all we do, starting with our in-house relationships.

**Governance requirements.** The German Corporate Governance Code repeatedly calls on executive and supervisory boards to make sustainable value creation a priority, basing their respective obligations and functions on the German Public Companies Act and Commercial Code, as well as the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) and German Accounting Standards (GAS). It is the responsibility of Bechtle's corporate management to identify different stakeholder interests and address them individually when developing the company's long-term strategy. They are also specifically tasked with finding conscientious solutions to conflicting goals in order to secure Bechtle's long-term commercial success.

**Success through sustainability.** Bechtle's success is due in large part to our commitment to long-term solutions—seeing the “big picture”, rather than investing in quick fixes. Bechtle is and always has been a future-oriented company, driven by solid, measurable objectives. Sustainability has been a part of our corporate strategy from the very beginning, independent of contemporary trends and philosophies. We are of the opinion that economic, ecological and social responsibility go hand in hand; our success depends on finding the right balance between the interests of society and those of our business.

We believe that the development of society and the well-being of its members should not be relegated exclusively to the political sphere. As an indispensable component of society, businesses, including Bechtle, must shoulder their share of social and ecological responsibility, integrating the notion of corporate social responsibility into their commercial activity. We've got to walk the walk, not just talk the talk.

We're convinced that by contributing to the development of a strong, solidary and vital society, businesses help create an environment in which they can continue to grow. Long-term planning, mutual respect in everyday operations as well as social and environmental responsibility—these are the cornerstones of a sustainable business.

Through this Bechtle Sustainability Code we hope to give our employees and business partners insight into our position on the subject sustainability and the fundamental principles that guide us.



Dr Thomas Olemotz  
CEO



Klaus Winkler  
Chairman of the Supervisory Board



# I. Sustainable Corporate Management.

**Sustainable corporate management means taking responsibility for the economic, ecological and social implications of our business decisions.**

**Corporate goals.** Companies are only successful if they grow and make a profit. And only successful businesses can meet stakeholder expectations, including specifically the creation of secure, attractive jobs. That's why Bechtle aims for long-term, profitable growth.

**Binding principles of conduct.** All of our employees are bound to certain standards of conduct, which are outlined in the Bechtle Corporate Philosophy, Bechtle Code of Conduct, Bechtle Leadership Principles, and Bechtle Guidelines for Social Media. These standards clearly define how we expect them to conduct themselves with respect to our business partners, competitors, fellow employees and the company.

**Open communication.** In these times of increasing geographical and organisational decentralisation, Bechtle makes it a priority to foster an open, constructive environment through dialogue. Wherever required, our decisions and the resulting actions are to be transparent to the public.

**Transparency as a necessity.** Identifying and reporting on the social and environmental ramifications of our business dealings is important to us, and not just because it is required of us as a publicly traded company. This is why we publish information regarding our decisions and activities in our Annual Reports and ISO-14001-compliant Report on the Effectiveness of Environmental Management Systems.

**Accountability and responsibility.** Accountability at the highest level of management means regularly informing the appropriate stakeholders of all significant developments at Bechtle in a prompt, comprehensive manner. This is done primarily through the Bechtle AG Annual Report.

We base our conduct on standards, principles and guidelines that help us find an ethical response to all situations—even the difficult ones. These standards are regularly evaluated, along with the group's business development, by the supervisory board.



## II. Sustainable Human Resource Development.

**Sustainable human resource management is essential for ensuring our company's long-term economic success.**

**Vocational training and further education.** Providing vocational training for the younger generation not only prepares a qualified workforce for the future, it is also a way for us to meet our social obligations. In addition, Bechtle maintains its competitive position through further development opportunities and high employee retention. Responding to both internal and external demands with appropriate human resource development strategies is therefore a determining factor for our success. The Bechtle Academy is just one example of how we ensure our employees are on the cutting edge of their field, providing our customers with competent consulting services and solutions at all times.

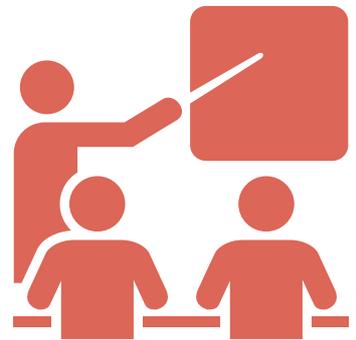
**Work-life balance.** A healthy balance between one's job and private life is the foundation for ensuring high motivation and sustainable performance. In today's dynamically changing professional world it is important to recharge and make time for personal development. Through arrangements such as flexible working hours, we help our employees balance their familial and professional obligations.

**Performance-based remuneration.** Because hard work deserves to be rewarded, Bechtle's attractive remuneration scheme consists of variable, results-oriented components based on jointly defined, reasonable and clear goals. This makes Bechtle a stable, dependable employer.

**Management.** Employee motivation and retention are entrusted first and foremost to Bechtle's leadership. In line with the Bechtle Leadership Principles, managers support employees in achieving common goals, and provide the opportunity for feedback in regular performance reviews during which the results of the past year are evaluated and the target values for the coming year jointly established.

**Equality.** Women at Bechtle have the same opportunities to achieve their professional goals as their male colleagues. We consider female managers to be an asset to our company.

**Workplace safety and employee health.** We believe that it is Bechtle's duty to take a proactive and targeted approach to promoting and protecting the health of our employees and their ability to work. However, we also require that our employees demonstrate responsibility for their own health and safety. When it comes to safety in the workplace, Bechtle refuses to cut any corners.



# III. Sustainable Commitment to Human Rights.

**Sustainable commitment to human rights means acknowledging and fulfilling our duty to protect human rights within our sphere of influence.**

**International standards.** We base our conception of human rights on globally accepted standards, in particular the UN International Bill of Human Rights, as well as the International Labour Organization's Core Labour Standards. Our corporate values, as well as the guidelines contained in the Bechtle Corporate Philosophy, Bechtle Leadership Principles and Bechtle Code of Conduct, lay the foundation for an environment in which human rights are intrinsically respected and promoted in our daily business. Bechtle condemns any form of forced, compulsory or child labour in the strongest terms. In addition, we consider ourselves bound by the ten principles of the UN Global Compact and have integrated them into our corporate culture and business processes.

**Discrimination- and harassment-free workplace.** Discrimination of any kind, at any level and in any division is strictly prohibited by our Bechtle Code of Conduct. Accordingly, bullying and other forms of harassment are wholly unacceptable in our mutually respectful work environment.

**Diversity.** Bechtle sees human diversity as a positive contributor to the economic development of our company. Our human resources strategy therefore incorporates the promotion of diversity as a worthwhile means of meeting our business objectives.



# IV. Sustainable, Principled Business Practices.

Sustainable, principled business practices such as honesty, fairness and reliability underscore Bechtle's integrity, and govern our conduct within the company and towards our external partners.

**Code of Conduct.** Bechtle denounces corrupt business practices of any kind—without exception. Giving, authorising and accepting gifts and donations is subject to clear rules in order to guarantee the strict separation of business relationships and private interests. All employees, regardless of position, are bound to these rules, which are laid out in the Bechtle Code of Conduct.

**Competition.** Even in the daily battle for market share, Bechtle adheres firmly to the principle of integrity. Although it may be difficult when standing in direct competition to another provider, we place a premium on treating our competitors and partners fairly. Furthermore, we comply with all applicable competition acts and anti-trust laws. Arrangements that unlawfully restrict free and open competition or that affect prices or conditions are prohibited at Bechtle.

**Corporate culture.** All Bechtle employees treat each other openly and fairly, demonstrating tolerance and understanding—this is the hallmark of our corporate culture. We value honest, candid communication, and condemn the wilful withholding of relevant information.

**Intellectual property and data protection.** Bechtle complies with all regulations regarding intellectual property, data protection and data security. Moreover, we handle not only our own assets but also those of our business partners in a lawful and responsible manner.



# V. Sustainable Customer Relationships.

**Sustainable customer relationships are only possible if we place our customers' needs and satisfaction at the heart of all we do.**

**Customer satisfaction.** By continuously improving delivery processes and reducing the purchasing, quality-assurance, packaging, transport and handling costs relative to IT procurement and distribution, Bechtle is able to satisfy the increasing customer demand for flexibility, reliability, innovation, and high-quality, affordable products and services. Satisfied customers are the determining factor for sustainable, profitable growth. That is why we, together with our external partners, continuously search for ways to optimise our processes, always keeping in mind customer benefit and satisfaction. We place a premium on choosing licensed and certified suppliers and service providers for solutions-oriented partnerships.

**Sustainable portfolio.** When choosing products for our portfolio, we look for availability, high quality at affordable prices, innovation, security, environmentally friendly operation and "green" packaging. Through clearly formulated and accurate information, and the elimination of unnecessary clauses, Bechtle provides quotes that are comparable and verifiable.

**Seeing customer claims as hidden opportunities.** Our proactive and accommodating claims management keeps customer complaints and returns to an absolute minimum. Because complaints directly influence customer satisfaction, we challenge ourselves to turn each negative customer experience into a positive one, thereby building long-lasting relationships.

**Out-of-line management.** Even the most sophisticated and optimised processes are not immune to occasional errors and evolving requirements. Bechtle's out-of-line management coordinates with customers and all in-house and external contacts to reach fast, flexible and holistic solutions that meet customer needs.



## VI. Sustainable Environmental Awareness.

Sustainable environmental awareness is the first step towards fulfilling our obligations not only to this generation but also to the next.

**Business and the environment.** Ecology and economics are inextricably linked, as demonstrated by the direct and indirect impact of business activity on the environment. This may result in costs that, in some cases, are borne not by the responsible entity, but by the entire community.

**Our environmental management system.** Bechtle educates its employees about the ecological and economic consequences of resource consumption. Our environmental efforts are inspired by the well-known saying, "If you want something done right, you've got to do it yourself." By implementing an ISO-14001-certified environmental management system, the Bechtle Group's central subsidiary, Bechtle AG, has laid the groundwork for a structured approach to environmental management. We measure our environmental performance with the goal of limiting our resource consumption, emissions and any other negative environmental consequences.

**Measurable environmental impact.** In addition to providing transparency, environmental indicators help us identify areas of improvement, develop a plan of action, monitor success and provide a concise, public account of our efforts and progress.

**Preservation of natural resources.** Bechtle uses natural resources sparingly and prudently. We expect all of our employees to do their part, especially by limiting the use of lights, heating and air conditioning. In addition, we sort and recycle reusable material in order to preserve our planet's resources. Large-scale publications are printed exclusively on FSC-certified paper from responsibly managed forests.

**Reducing carbon emissions.** Bechtle supports carpooling, low-emission vehicles and other alternative means of transportation. Our employees are encouraged to use modern technology to travel efficiently and replace business trips whenever possible. Web-based training, for instance, is common at Bechtle. Likewise, video conferencing with platforms such as WebEx is also routinely used not only for collaborating with colleagues but also increasingly with customers.

**Legal obligations.** Bechtle respects and adheres to all applicable environmental rules and regulations as a matter of course.



## VII. A Sustainable Solutions Portfolio.

A sustainable solutions portfolio is guided by the principle that information and communications technology should be environmentally friendly and resource-efficient throughout its entire life cycle—from the initial planning stages to operation, to end-of-life recycling.

**Energy and resource efficiency.** On average, organisations today use only 15 to 30 per cent of their server capacity. Bechtle wants to put the remaining potential to use and is thus increasingly investing in the development of green IT solutions. Monitoring, consolidation, virtualisation and other innovative technologies that support sustainability are an essential component of our solutions portfolio. We can thus reduce energy consumption while at the same time lowering procurement and operating costs—a goal pursued by all Bechtle sales channels.

**Remarketing services.** In September 2012 Bechtle founded a new subsidiary specialised in the remarketing of used IT equipment. We were thus able to position ourselves as a full service provider covering the entire IT life cycle, including the environmentally sound disposal of equipment.

**Ecological IT hardware procurement.** Our mission is to realise a large-scale, economically sound implementation of the EU ecodesign directive 2009/125 EG (ErP directive). As an IT company, we are fully aware of our duty to lead by example. Green IT is the best approach to introducing the notion of sustainability into our customers' projects. Consequently, we also take care to follow the ecodesign directive when procuring equipment for our own in-house use.

**Green IT awareness.** The topic of green IT is becoming an increasingly important part of the vocational training, further education and certifications offered by Bechtle.





# VIII. Sustainable Social Responsibility.

Sustainable social responsibility is an integral part of our business paradigm.

**Commitment.** Due to our international presence, we play an active role in several regions, both as an employer and customer. We thus have the obligation and opportunity to help shape the society around us to the best of our abilities. Our goal is to create value for all of our stakeholders and contribute to the economic competitiveness of each local area. Our social commitments revolve primarily around supporting non-profit groups, and donating to select organisations.

**Corporate social responsibility (CSR).** For Bechtle, CSR is our chance to influence the development of society in accordance with our rules and values. Globalisation links companies, organisations, people, products and services, thus changing the requirements placed on us and influencing how we do business. Long-term success is only possible if we create value for all of our stakeholders. Our social involvement, driven by high standards, is therefore part and parcel of our business activities.

**Prioritising.** Bechtle's social commitment focuses on supporting science and education, as well as carefully chosen charitable projects. By sponsoring educational, cultural and sports initiatives, we selectively promote the sustainable development of these areas within our various communities. We also regularly support organisations to which the company's founders have a strong connection.

**Donation and sponsorship guidelines.** Bechtle strives to contribute to society in a meaningful, concrete way and to continuously expand our commitment. In doing so, we focus our efforts on specific areas according to specific criteria. Through clearly defined structures and responsibilities, we also ensure the highest degree of transparency possible when providing resources. To this end, guidelines are being developed to outline clear award criteria and to guarantee that all legal regulations and ethical standards are met.



# Afterword.

## Sustainability is Part of Who We Are.

For a business to develop successfully, it must take into account the expectations of various stakeholders. Far from remaining static, these interests evolve over time, resulting in a dynamic blend of interests that requires constant compromise and continuous evaluation to ensure a fair balance. Incorporating the concept of sustainability within this context means that competing objectives must be carefully weighed, and different company divisions included in the decision-making process. It compels businesses not only to treat partners and employees with respect, but also to pursue profitable growth, secure a competent future workforce, maintain a transparent supply chain, set the example, and the list goes on...

**Actions speak louder than words.** At Bechtle, we take a pragmatic, structured approach to sustainability. That's why we created an interdisciplinary work group to address the topic of ecological, economic and social sustainability—not to bolster our public image or jump on the latest bandwagon, but because sustainable business is a cornerstone of our corporate philosophy. The first step was to investigate the current situation: What environmental protection efforts are already in place? Who already supports social projects, and how? Who is already involved in their community? What does Bechtle currently do to promote a healthy work-life balance? How do we evaluate our supply chain?

**Authenticity and credibility count.** We reject the use of sustainability as a catch-all term to artificially boost Bechtle's public image by creating the appearance of a larger-than-life ecological and social commitment. Rather, our goal is to re-introduce certain fundamental concepts in the minds of both our employees and various stakeholders. For instance, successful companies treat sustainable economic practices as an intrinsic art of doing business. They take care of their customers, refrain from excessive profit withdrawals and pay their employees a decent salary. They don't dodge their responsibilities or base their decisions solely on stock market results. They treat their business partners fairly and their employees with respect. They live out their core values and develop long-term, clear visions. All these elements together define sustainable corporate management.

**Reliable compass for sustainable management.** We value authenticity and integrity above all. Our goal is to embrace sustainability with all that it entails, implementing it in a transparent, measurable form wherever possible, and letting it guide us into a solid, sustainable future.



# Sustainability.

Future-oriented, responsible practices are the key to our success.

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