





**Hartmut Jenner**  
CEO  
Kärcher



**Benjamin Hermann**  
Managing Director  
Zoi

# Resetting a Lived-out Company Philosophy

---

A reset is done when a system is no longer functioning properly.

But what about when the system involved is an existing company ecosystem, and the reset is equivalent to starting over completely? And what does “properly” mean anyway?

This is a plea for more courage to use the reset button.

**Z**oi is a newly-formed innovative company founded in 2017. We specialize in developing sophisticated software systems and providing guidance to companies for the use and application of the cloud. We recognize the need to use new technologies and to always work closely with the customer to ensure objectives are met as standard. Despite being a recent entry to the market place, we possess a great deal of know-how and remarkable knowledge of the industry. Zoi is the abbreviation for Zero One Infinity – underpinning the essence of IT together with our ethos and drive. The definitive between 1 and 0 or yes or no, for example. We pride ourselves on clear decisions while also being aware that there is no time for standing still, and that there is no such thing as a standard solution. We have reset everything to zero in order to resurface again within our new company. We can facilitate this reset within our customer base so that progress and success can be created moving forward.

At Zoi, we transformed an existing work structure into a new company by performing a complete reset. Today, I would like to present our philosophy using five key indicators and explain how fruitful it can be to place service and the company philosophy on an equal footing.

# 1 TRU ST

## Encourage your team

“Get out of your comfort zone!” While this may sound like the shrill whistle call of a run-of-the-mill fitness trainer, for me and my current business partner, Dr. Daniel Heubach, it was this uneasy feeling that was our main motivation. We have both worked in similar company structures and, ironically, around 20 of our current employees have also experienced the same kind of working environment that was not creating the culture that led to a productive, creative, and forward-thinking workforce. Together, we shared our experiences and encouraged each other to break out of our comfort zone, to transform it, and, most importantly, to digitize it. We all believed and still believe in the entrepreneurial force of new technologies in the corporate environment. And yet, in the old prevailing structures, there was little room for our technological vision to unfold and be implemented. We emboldened each other and had faith in the successes that we had already accomplished together. We set our sights on new goals, which we defined as a team. This made it possible for us to extract the synergistic part of the team from existing work structures and agree on how to start over as a new company. We pushed the reset button ourselves.

# 2 SYN ER GY

## Entering into partnerships

An essential part of our transformation was and continues to be our partnership with Kärcher. This is an absolute win-win situation for both parties. Kärcher profits as the investment partner of a new, constantly developing team and from a large pool of knowledge that is partly fed by previous and existing business relationships with Kärcher. So, how do high-pressure cleaners and cloud computing, artificial intelligence, etc. fit together? First and foremost, we are really involved in keeping the cloud-computing sector up-to-date at all times which is crucial for a global market leader. Secondly, and more importantly, we are an ideal sparring and operational partner for promoting the digitization of Kärcher’s portfolio. We had our first “sandbox” and Kärcher had its “wild youth”; it was also addressing its digital structures in a controlled and courageous manner.

Since then, we have been noticeably influencing each other’s company cultures and profiting from an open exchange of information – helping both of us to grow.

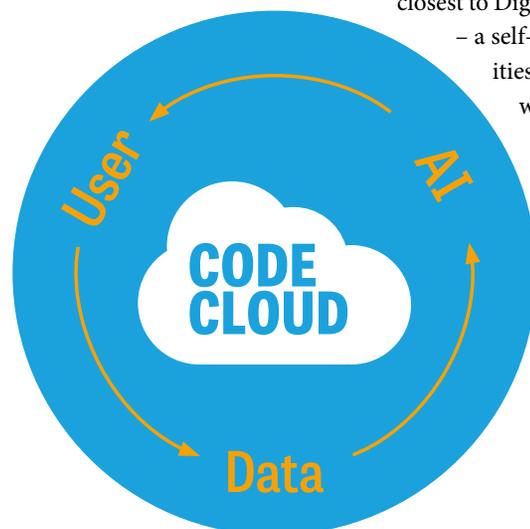
An example of this is our new perspective on product management. We start with a simple, reduced product and put it in the hands of our users, while using existing MVP approaches in the process. We gather data on the use of these products on every possible channel. Code and cloud are the basis of this. We also use AI, which helps us to discern from all our user feedback those additional functions in our product which will bring the greatest benefits to customers. This takes place in an open dialog. In this way, we can be assured that our products are as relevant to the customer as possible: The products are decisively influenced by the usage behavior of the customer.

*WE CALL THEM “DIGITAL CREATIVES” –  
A SELF-CONFIDENT GENERATION THAT  
HANDLES DIGITAL POSSIBILITIES CREATIVELY,  
INTUITIVELY, AND HOLISTICALLY.*

# 3 STRATEGY

## **A disruptive new beginning according to plan**

Zoi is growth-oriented, both nationally and internationally. Our team is projected to double by the end of the year. By the end of 2018, it is our goal to have around 100 employees. To accomplish this, we are pursuing three main pillars in our strategy, because the absence of a plan will take the wind out of our sails. We are investing in intensive recruiting and HR measures in order to network with university graduates and young professionals. We are looking for idealists, digital heroes, and visionaries who – just like us – believe in the potential of digitalization. We currently have two main locations in Germany and more are planned. Our main location in Stuttgart is closely linked and networked with the successful medium-sized company structure of this region, including prominent international relationships. Our newest, second location was recently opened in Berlin, where we are closest to Digital Generation 2.0. We call them “digital creatives” – a self-confident generation that handles digital possibilities creatively, intuitively, and holistically. In addition, we also outsource process-limiting tasks and use cost-efficient alternatives, for example, like those available from partners in India or China. Another important strategic point is the decision to pursue more balanced collaboration with all important cloud players in the industry. In this way, we make ourselves and our customers independent.



*WE DO NOT WANT TO BUILD  
CASTLES IN THE SKY TO  
REFRAIN FROM DECEIVING OUR  
CUSTOMERS OR OURSELVES.*

---

# 4 EM POWER MENT

## **Living out diversity**

Our company growth is inextricably linked to cultural growth. Our team was already interdisciplinary at the time the company was founded. This is both a valuable position as well as a powerful resource for us because a tailor-made cloud solution includes our ability to accept very different points of view. In addition to classic IT techs, we also employ biologists, mathematicians, and physicists, with our team being rounded off by lateral entrants from the agency sphere. We are proud of the fact that we have employees who are able to assume and apply an entrepreneurial mindset themselves. The development of the individual is very important to us, since we are striving for a continuously evolving development process and all want to be proactively ahead of the curve. Some 20 percent of the contractually arranged working hours are always available to our employees for empirical and methodical “experiments”. We know how important personal fulfillment is and at the same time how important the accomplishment of successes apart from the normal “Zoi day-to-day” is. This often leads to great ideas and performance transfers. In this way, we are creating our own interactive knowledge pool that all employees can fall back on at any time. Even young start-up entrepreneurs are very welcome in our ranks. They can lean on our team for their ideas, pick up new skills, and complement our projects with their know-how at the same time. Simultaneously, our team profits from new impulses, revitalization, and an ongoing exchange of ideas. We work remotely and have employees based in different countries. This is nothing terribly new, but it is a novel approach for us.

# 5 AUTH ENTI CITY

## Hand-in-hand with our service

This point is the most important one and pervades every aspect of our reset. We do not want to build castles in the sky to refrain from deceiving our customers or ourselves. We are open and transparent in our very nature and in our approach to business and systems. Disruptions always start with yourself. We not only want to preach this, but also practise it ourselves. Our work compelled us to change structures radically. Since the very first day of our company, we have been well aware of the extent of the opportunities, system, and power inherent in a new beginning. We are therefore able to incorporate this knowledge, this certainty, and this self-confidence in all of our projects, thereby making both our employees and customers just as strong and self-confident.

“What would you do if you could start all over again?” This question, found frequently on cards adorning student refrigerators, is one that we actually asked ourselves and put into practice. We had a functioning team and functioning customer structures – in short, an environment in which we thrived. It not only gave us courage, but, above all, security. In addition to the many years of experience in the industry, our team profited greatly from the accompanying customer relationships. This worked for us as a stable base, a kind of foundation for our reset. We started anew because we wanted to, not because we had to. This step also goes hand-in-hand with a great deal of gratitude, which we owe to both our team and our customers. ▀