

Artefact unveils “I Wear My Heart on My Sleeve” – A Story About Grassroots Football, Humans and Responsible AI.

Munich, February 12, 2025 – Artefact, a global data and AI consulting company, today announces the public unveiling of “I Wear My Heart on My Sleeve,” a season-long initiative that brings responsible, human-centred AI to an unexpected place: the youth football pitch of SV Puchheim in Munich. Initiated by **Niels Thomsen, Partner Germany and Northern Europe at Artefact**, the pilot project explores how AI can support team collaboration, encouragement, and shared growth without evaluating individual performance. Developed together with the youth football team, the initiative introduces non-invasive, human-guided AI into grassroots sport, translating team interactions into visual artworks and community-driven experiences.



The project explores a simple question: *What can responsible AI contribute when the goal is not performance optimization, but understanding collaboration, encouragement, and shared growth in a team of teenagers?*

“AI is often framed as abstract, complex or high-stakes,” says Thomsen. “We wanted to show that responsible AI can be accessible, transparent, and meaningful – even on a youth football pitch. We saw that the same principles guiding our enterprise AI work can also create meaningful experiences in local communities and decided to launch this pilot project. We



believe it can help us see AI's potential in a new light. The core principle guiding this project is that technology should support human interaction, not evaluate or replace it."

A Responsible-AI Approach Designed for Teenagers

At SV Puchheim, Artefact implemented a lightweight AI framework guided by a small set of clearly defined principles:

- **Minimal, non-sensitive data, collected with parental consent.**
- **Human oversight at every step**, with coaches and parents involved in reviewing outputs.
- **Clear, transparent communication** about what data is used – and what is not.

Instead of analysing performance metrics, the system looks for patterns in how the team interacts: moments of support, shared effort, or collaborative play. These patterns will, on a later stage, be translated into visual artworks through a partnered AI artist, turning abstract team dynamics into tangible, creative expressions.

The AthleteAI Ecosystem: The digital setup behind the pilot

At the heart of the pilot is Artefact's AthleteAI ecosystem, a role-based digital platform designed to support the everyday realities of grassroots football while keeping human interaction firmly at the centre. The system offers tailored functionality for players, coaches, and club administrators, helping to organise training, coordinate match days, and facilitate communication across the team. AI-assisted features provide contextual support, such as training suggestions and team-level insights, without automating decisions or evaluating individual performance.

Equally important, the technology is embedded in a strong educational framework. Through the "First Step to AI" workshop last October 2025, participating teenagers were introduced to how the system works, what data it uses, and where its limitations lie. By combining practical tools with transparency and learning, the AthleteAI ecosystem demonstrates how AI can be responsibly integrated into community settings: as a supportive, understandable tool that empowers users rather than replacing human judgment.

"As AI becomes more present everywhere, this felt like a responsible way to introduce it. It supported my judgement, helped me guide player development more evenly, and brought clarity to decisions that should never feel arbitrary," **says Michael Weiß, coach SV Puchheim.**

About "I Wear My Heart on My Sleeve"

"I Wear My Heart on My Sleeve" is a season-long initiative exploring how responsible AI can deepen understanding of human interaction in grassroots sport. Built with strict data minimisation and transparency principles, the project aims to demonstrate that ethical AI



can enhance community experiences without compromising privacy, safety, or agency – especially for teenagers.

The initiative reflects a broader conversation on the role of AI in teenagers' lives, one that Artefact's leadership has publicly embraced. Commenting recently on a *The Economist* analysis of how AI is reshaping childhood, **Artefact Group CEO Edouard de Mézerac**, emphasised the responsibility that comes with technological progress: while AI shows undeniable potential to enrich education and entertainment, "the truly privileged may be those whose parents and teachers know when to turn it off." This perspective directly informs the project's guiding philosophy: AI should enhance human experience without dominating it.

About Artefact

Artefact is a leading global consulting company dedicated to accelerating the adoption of data and AI to positively impact people and organizations. We specialize in data transformation and data marketing to drive tangible business results across the entire enterprise value chain. Artefact offers the most comprehensive set of data-driven solutions per industry, built on deep data science and cutting-edge AI technologies, delivering AI projects at scale in all industry sectors. Our 2000+ employees operate in 27 countries (Europe, Asia, Americas, Middle East, Africa) and we partner with 1000 clients, including some of the world's top 300 brands such as Samsung, L'Oréal, and Sanofi.

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