

Press Release

Launch of media tech initiative

ETH Zurich partners with private media companies

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ETH Zurich will establish a professorship and new centre for media technology together with media companies Tamedia, Ringier and the NZZ Media Group. The centre aims to better integrate research and practical applications and to help the Swiss media sector make use of technological advances.

The media industry is in the midst of a fundamental transformation that is being driven by digitalisation. Media content is shifting increasingly towards digital, mobile and time-delayed consumption. The boundaries between media producers and consumers are dissolving, while personalised content is occupying an increasingly prominent position. Data science plays a central role in this process. For example, modern analytical methods make it possible to better understand consumers' preferences. Data journalism helps media professionals to verify reports, and thus to improve the quality of the information they publish, and to generate new content and formats. ETH Zurich, which already offers significant expertise in data science, will establish a new group dedicated to research and education related to the digital transformation of media.

Sharing knowledge and attracting new talent

ETH Zurich will establish a new professorship and a media tech centre as part of its media technology initiative. The professorship will provide a solid foundation for media technology at ETH Zurich and offer talented young professionals the training they need to break into a changing market. The professorship will be part of the Department of Computer Science and establish links to other data science experts, both at ETH and outside the University.

The new media technology centre will be a place where researchers can address specific problems and develop projects together with industry partners and other educational institutions. The centre is also to be part of an international network that provides leading researchers in the field a forum for knowledge exchange. “This initiative should serve as a beacon for media technologies, extending well beyond borders to attract the most talented minds,” says Lino Guzzella, President of ETH Zurich. “In turn, we hope to help the Swiss media sector make use of data-driven technological advances.”

Initiative funded by the media sector

Switzerland’s three largest private media companies – Tamedia, Ringier and the NZZ Media Group – will be involved in the ETH Zurich initiative. Tamedia and Ringier will be the main funding partners, with each company contributing 3 million Swiss francs to the ETH Zurich Foundation over the next ten years, while the NZZ Media Group will contribute 1.5 million Swiss francs. An intense collaboration is already underway with the industry partners to examine the most pressing research and practical questions. The media technology initiative is still open to other funding and educational partners.

Data science: a strategic focus

Data science is one of the strategic priorities at ETH Zurich. Considerable resources will be put into establishing new research and teaching activities in this area. In autumn 2017, for example, the University will be introducing a new master’s programme in data science. The media technology initiative is part of ETH Zurich’s university-wide efforts to expand its involvement in the data sciences.

Further Information

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