

Agent Standards War: What the MCP Battle Means for Swiss SMEs

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY & CORE TAKEAWAY

In mid-July 2026, Google, Microsoft, Salesforce, Snowflake and ServiceNow formed an alliance against Anthropic's Model Context Protocol, which has become the de facto agent standard with roughly 97 million monthly SDK downloads. For Swiss SMEs, this means the choice of agent ecosystem is a strategic commitment affecting cost, flexibility and data sovereignty — not a technical footnote.

CONTEXT & EXECUTIVE RELEVANCE

In mid-July 2026, Google, Microsoft, Salesforce, Snowflake and ServiceNow formed an alliance to develop their own standard for connecting AI agents to business software. The move is a direct response to Anthropic's Model Context Protocol (MCP), which has effectively become the industry standard with roughly 97 million monthly SDK downloads. For decision-makers at Swiss companies, this is not a footnote from the tech press — it is the question of what foundation your entire agent infrastructure will be built on for years to come.

On July 17, 2026, The Information first reported on the new alliance, which Info-Tech Research Group confirmed and contextualised in its 'Big 5 AI Vendor Roundup' report published July 23. The alliance is notable because it brings together five companies that otherwise compete directly across almost every market segment — cloud, CRM, data platforms, workflow automation. Their common denominator: together they hold the majority of the world's business data, and they want to prevent the agent era from being built on infrastructure controlled by an outside vendor.

CORE ACTION ITEMS

- 01 Browser wars: control over the web standard, not the better product
- 02 USB vs. proprietary connectors: compatibility as a power question
- 03 Cloud standards (AWS/Azure/GCP): migration costs as a lock-in mechanism
- 04 Agent standards 2026: control over data flow between agents and business software

SWISS COMPLIANCE & ARCHITECTURE GUIDELINES

- ☑ Full compliance with revised Swiss Data Protection Act (revDSG).
- ☑ Zero vendor lock-in on closed proprietary models.
- ☑ Seamless integration into Abacus, Bexio and M365 ecosystems.

Non-Binding Process Analysis

Let us review in 20 minutes where AI agents create immediate measurable efficiency in your workflows.

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