

Shadow AI in Swiss SMEs: Ban or Channel It?

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY & CORE TAKEAWAY

Nearly 30% of employees using AI at work rely on tools not provided by their employer. A blanket ban only drives usage underground. The pragmatic path is channelling: a sanctioned company account, clear data categories, and a one-page AI policy that reduces revDSG risks.

CONTEXT & EXECUTIVE RELEVANCE

The question is not whether your employees use ChatGPT, Claude or Gemini. The question is whether you know what data leaves your company – and who bears personal liability if something goes wrong. The answer is not a ban, but channelling. Blanket bans push shadow AI underground. A sanctioned company account, clear data categories and a short policy work better.

The IW Köln brief from September 2026 puts the share of professional AI users relying on tools not provided by their employer at 29.1%. Other surveys show 42% of companies report employees occasionally using unapproved AI tools, 34% frequently. Only 9% fully prohibit AI. The grey zone is large – and growing.

COMPARISON & BENCHMARK MATRIX

Customer personal data	Never in private tools; only via sanctioned company account with DPA and anonymisation
Financial figures / budgets	Only with explicit management approval
Internal emails and HR topics	Off-limits for external AI, even with good intentions
Source code / product know-how	Only in a sealed, contractually secured environment

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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