

‘Alkmaar-based ImpactBuying launches sovereign AI for global retail value chains’

Alkmaar – Retailers, such as supermarkets, need to know where their products come from and under what conditions they are produced. In global supply chains, this involves vast amounts of data. AI can help manage this data, but only if the AI itself is secure and trustworthy.

Companies are increasingly using AI to collect and analyze data from their supply chains. This creates risks, as many AI models rely on data based on estimates and assumptions. In addition, the data often ends up in the datasets of large AI model providers, over which retailers have no control, and where there is a risk that data is not processed in compliance with GDPR.

For 17 years, supply chain specialist ImpactBuying has focused on collecting, verifying and analyzing supply chain data for major retailers, producers and traders. This has resulted in a unique and extensive repository of genuinely verified data on product value chains worldwide.

To keep data secure while making data collection more efficient, the company is launching the AI Evidence Scanner. “This tool has been developed in-house, trained on our own data and is hosted on our own servers within the EU. This means there is a sovereign AI solution for European retailers,” says Leontien Hasselman-Plugge, CEO of ImpactBuying. “We want to build sustainable and resilient supply chains, which means that the AI must also be secure and fully under our own control.”

The better retailers understand their supply chains, the better they can comply with ESG regulations and the faster they can respond to abuses and climate-related or geopolitical risks. AI can play a major role in this by retrieving, translating and analyzing data more quickly.

Retailers and their suppliers spend a great deal of time collecting and interpreting supply chain data. For example, a certificate for an organic production method from Thailand may look completely different from one from Colombia and may also be written in another language. Until now, this has involved a lot of manual work, such as retyping information.

AI reduces the margin of error while significantly increasing scalability. This leaves more time to act on the basis of this data, such as improving working conditions, making production more sustainable and addressing abuses. That is human work. ImpactBuying has been strong in precisely this combination of technology and human expertise for 17 years.

Hasselman-Plugge adds: “This is a major step forward in building transparent, stable, fair and sustainable supply chains. In an uncertain world, we need to be able to stand on our own feet and gain rapid insight into reliable data. Our solution makes that possible.”