

IN SIGHTS

March 2024:

**Top Trending Topics Q1 2024 -
Current developments in the SME sector**



As part of our quarterly survey of more than 250 entrepreneurs, purchasing managers and SCM managers in the SME sector in the DACH region, we have identified the top trending topics for the first quarter of 2024.

In the constantly changing economic landscape, SMEs are faced with the challenge of continuously adapting their business strategies. The topics of cost increases and planning security dominate discussions in boardrooms and purchasing departments. Adconia and Adconterra have gained in-depth insights into the specific needs of SME managing directors and purchasing managers and would like to use these findings to offer practical solutions and food for thought.

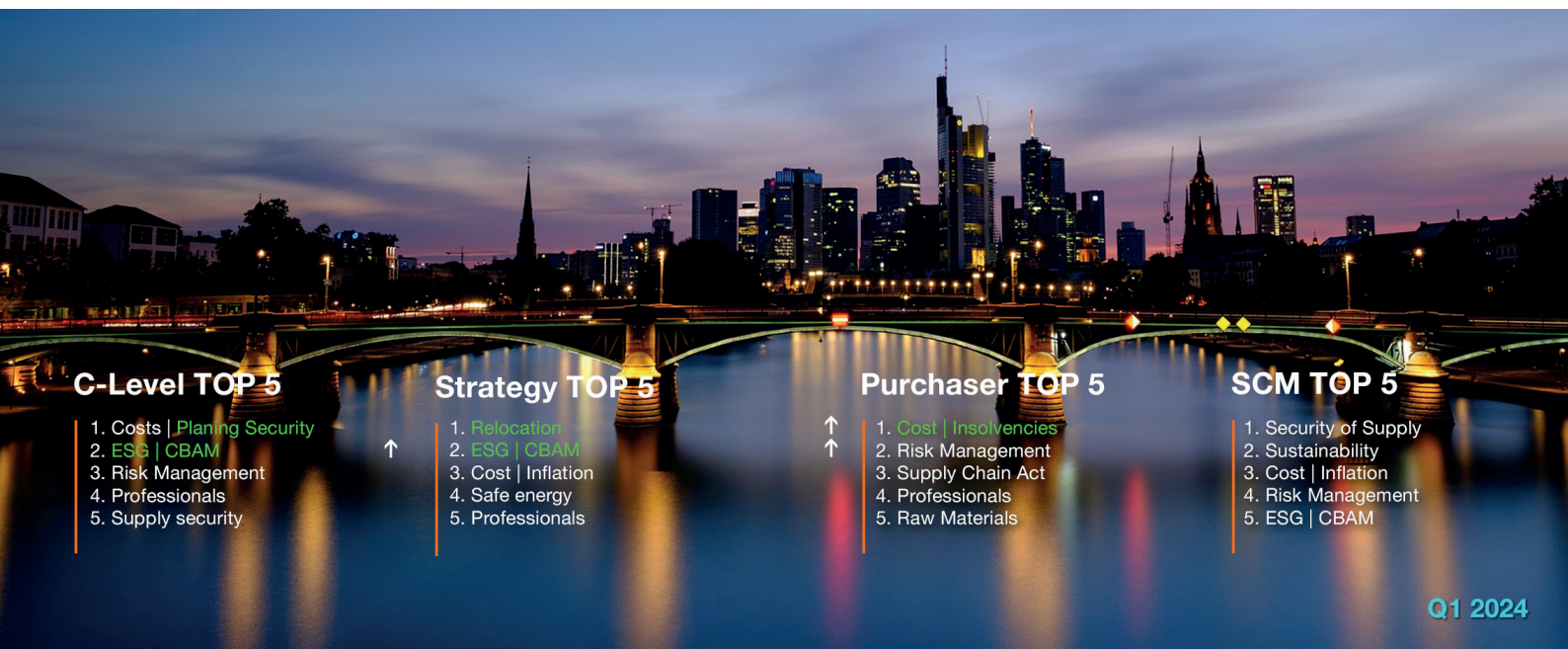
discussions with industry experts have shown that the ability to anticipate future developments and plan accordingly is becoming increasingly important. This involves not only forecasting cost developments, but also analysing the financial stability of suppliers in order to identify risks such as potential insolvencies at an early stage. Differentiated cost level planning that takes various scenarios into account and is based on robust data is essential in order to ensure competitiveness and at the same time create room for manoeuvre for necessary investments.

The shortage of skilled labour and its solutions

From inflationary pressure to planning security

In times of volatile markets, it is essential not only to keep an eye on current cost developments, but also to ensure long-term planning security. In addition to general inflation, we have observed that specific material groups are particularly affected. Our

Another key issue that has a direct impact on the efficiency and agility of companies is the ongoing shortage of skilled labour. The search for qualified employees is increasingly becoming a strategic priority. To counteract this shortage, it is crucial to design processes and organisational structures in such a way that they are not only efficient, but also attractive to potential applicants. Automation and digitalisation play a key role here. By simplifying or even eliminating routine tasks through digital solutions, skilled workers can



focus on more complex and value-adding activities. This not only increases productivity, but also makes the company more attractive as an employer.

The strategic selection of the right supplier

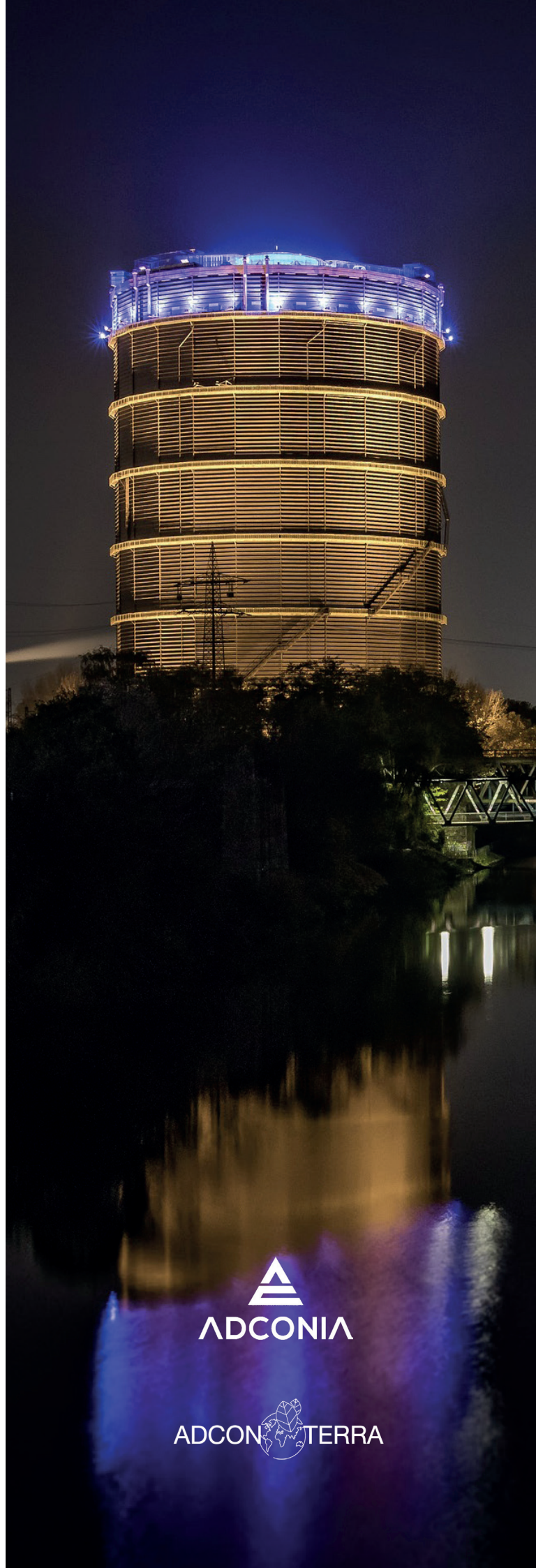
In today's business world, it is no longer enough to select suppliers solely on the basis of the best price. Instead, companies need to develop a comprehensive understanding of the overall value of a supplier, including aspects such as sustainability, ethical standards and risk management. This requires a careful selection process that goes beyond traditional price negotiations and emphasises long-term partnership and reliability. A transparent and efficient supplier qualification process that includes clear criteria and evaluation standards is crucial.

Collaboration and innovation

Meeting these challenges requires close co-operation within the company and with external partners. Adconia and Adconterra see themselves as active partners in dialogue with SMEs. We not only offer insights and analyses of current trends and developments, but also support you in the implementation of customised solutions. Our aim is to work with you to develop innovative approaches that make your company more resilient, agile and future-orientated.

We look forward to travelling this path with you and are always ready to answer your questions and provide detailed information on our services and solutions.

Yours, Adconia and Adconterra
Oberhausen, March 2024




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