

# **team.blue brand Combell, delaware and imec join forces to help companies keep AI costs and data under control**

*Belgian partners combine AI governance, dedicated European infrastructure and model optimization to help organizations control their AI costs and data sovereignty*



As employees are rapidly adopting artificial intelligence, companies are finding it increasingly difficult to track the associated costs, protect sensitive data and determine where that data is processed. Combell (part of team.blue), delaware and imec have signed a letter of intent to launch the European Sovereign AI Cloud, or ESAI: an offering that gives organizations a controlled route to private AI infrastructure in Europe while allowing them to choose the models that best suit their work.

The three Belgian partners contribute different parts of the offering. delaware assesses the organization's AI use and designs and operates the environment. Combell provides dedicated

GPU capacity in European datacenters. Imec evaluates and optimizes AI model deployment using the customer's own documents and tasks, rather than relying solely on generic benchmarks.

### **AI adoption is outpacing oversight**

Nearly half of employees who use generative AI do so through a personal account, according to cybersecurity company Netskope (2026). Technology company Flexera (2026) reports that more than a third of organizations do not track their AI use against a budget. At the same time, research firm Gartner (2026) expects the cost of tasks performed by AI agents to increase more than fivefold through 2028.

delaware has experienced that growth internally. Nearly all employees worldwide use approved AI in their daily work. Between May and August 2026, the company's AI usage increased by an average of 41% per month.



**"AI costs can grow without being noticed, while employees may use personal tools that move company data outside the organization's control. Banning that use without an alternative is not a realistic answer. Companies need to give their people a secure and useful alternative, with the necessary policies and governance in place "**

Bart Van Kerkhoven, partner, delaware.



**"As we saw our AI tooling costs rise exponentially, we decided to partner with Combell and imec to build dedicated AI infrastructure. It was an obvious next step to offer the same solution to our clients facing similar challenges "**

Benjamin Jacobs, director at delaware

The partnership builds on familiar ground: Jacobs was CTO of Combell for several years, and later led Sentia, a Combell spin-off focused on enterprise managed services. After Sentia was acquired, he joined delaware together with fifteen former colleagues, as part of delaware's continued investment in managed services.

### **One gateway for all AI**

The delaware AI gateway is a single access point placed in front of the AI tools that an organization uses. Requests from employees, applications and AI agents pass through the gateway.

Depending on the organization's policies, the gateway can remove personal data, enforce budgets by team, create an audit log and route each request either to the organization's private AI environment or to an external model. This gives the CFO, CIO and CISO a shared view of how AI is being used , and helps organizations document compliance with the AI Act, NIS2 and DORA.

The gateway does not require companies to abandon the AI services they already use. Instead, it adds a control layer and provides a route to private capacity where the sensitivity, scale or predictability of the workload justifies it.

### **Dedicated capacity in European datacenters**

Private AI workloads will run on dedicated GPU servers operated by Combell in European datacenters.

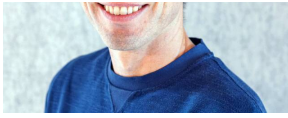


**"Customers want to know where their AI runs and what it will cost once it is used across the organization. Our answer is concrete: dedicated GPUs in European datacenters and predictable capacity for private AI "**

Simon Van der Heyden, Managing Director, Combell.

With datacenters in 30+ European locations, Combell (part of team.blue), expands its datacenter presence in line with customer growth and market potential, so customers can run their infrastructure, including AI, close to their business.





**"Many of our customers already trust us with their business-critical infrastructure. When their teams start using AI every day, they want it handled the same way: a team they know running it 24/7, a cost they can predict, and data that stays in Europe, under European jurisdiction. That is what we offer through Combell: a fully managed cloud and AI infrastructure in certified European datacenter"**

Jonas Dhaenens, Founder and President, team.blue.

### **Tested on the customer's own use cases**

The private environment runs on openly available AI models. Customers are not tied to a single model and can switch as new or better-performing options become available.

Imec brings its expertise across the full AI stack to optimize the models and infrastructure on each customer's own workloads. This produces more relevant evidence than general benchmark scores and helps organizations compare quality and cost for their particular use cases. Imec and delaware help them choose: through imec's Workload Studio, imec.aistack tests which models perform best on each customer's own documents and tasks.



**"Sovereignty is about having the ability to make choices. But choosing the right AI model and infrastructure shouldn't be guesswork. We test different models on each customer's actual workloads and optimize their performance on the underlying infrastructure. By joining forces in Flanders, we can bring these capabilities to market faster and help build a stronger local AI ecosystem. "**

Steven Latré, VP Artificial Intelligence, imec.

### **From assessment to operating environment**

Together, the three partners cover every layer that organizations need to bring AI back under control: governance and operations from delaware, European hosted GPU infrastructure from Combell and independent LLM model evaluation and inference optimization from imec. The three partners are convinced that this combination offers the European market a credible alternative to the large American Frontier AI platforms.

Companies can begin with an assessment of their current AI use: what they spend, which tools employees use, where company data is processed and which workloads may be suitable for European private infrastructure. Initial discussions with customers are underway.

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### **Sources:**

- Netskope Cloud and Threat Report 2026
- Flexera State of the Cloud 2026
- Gartner, “Gartner Predicts AI Inference Costs Per Agentic Workflow Will Increase More Than Fivefold Through 2028” (17 August 2026)

## **About delaware**

delaware is a fast-growing, global company that delivers advanced solutions and services to organizations striving for a sustainable, competitive advantage. It guides its customers through their business transformation, applying the ecosystems of its main business partners, SAP, Microsoft, Salesforce and OpenText. delaware continues to serve its customers afterwards, thus ensuring continuity of operations and continuous improvement. In all perspectives, the company applies its own sustainable business model that targets the long term. More than 5,000 professionals work in 20 countries spread over Africa, Asia, Europe and North and South America.

## **About Combell**

Combella, the Belgian brand of team.blue, has been building and running digital infrastructure since 1999. Organizations from public services and banks to web agencies and media groups rely on it for business-critical hosting and cloud, supported by 24/7 local support. Its range runs from private cloud and managed services to dedicated GPU capacity for AI in European datacenters.

## **About imec**

Imec is a world-leading research and innovation hub in advanced semiconductor technologies. Leveraging its state-of-the-art R&D infrastructure and the expertise of over 6,500 employees, imec drives innovation in semiconductor and system scaling, artificial intelligence, silicon photonics, connectivity, and sensing.

Imec's advanced research powers breakthroughs across a wide range of industries, including computing, health, automotive, industry, consumer electronics, aerospace and security. Through IC-Link, imec guides companies through every step of the chip journey - from initial concept to full-scale manufacturing - delivering customized solutions tailored to meet the most advanced design and production needs.

Imec collaborates with global leaders across the semiconductor value chain, as well as with technology companies, start-ups, academia, and research institutions in Flanders and worldwide. Headquartered in Leuven, Belgium, imec has research facilities in Belgium, across

Europe, the USA and the GCC region, and representation on three continents. In 2025, imec reported revenues of €1.2 billion.

**About team.blue**

team.blue is the pan-European digital partner for small and medium businesses, serving more than 3.5 million customers in 24 countries. From web hosting, domains, email and cloud and AI infrastructure to e-commerce, engagement, payments and compliance tools, team.blue helps SMBs get online, get customers, get paid and stay compliant. Supported by more than 4,000 employees, team.blue's vision is to make online business success simpler, with artificial intelligence at every step.