



Press Release

GCSC Innovation Award 2019:

ECE innovation project “Digital Mall” receives yet another Industry award

Hamburg, January 18, 2019 – Another accolade for the “Digital Mall”: Yesterday, ECE’s digital innovation project received the “European Innovation Retail Award 2019 (‘Europäischer Innovationspreis Handel 2019’) of the German Council of Shopping Centers (GCSC) at an award ceremony in Frankfurt am Main. Thus, ECE has received three a renowned industry awards in three years as the digital service had previously received the MAPIC Award in 2017 and the ICSC Solal Marketing Award in 2018.

“We are very happy that our digital pilot project has been distinguished with the Innovation Award of the GCSC,” says Joanna Fisher, ECE’s Managing Director Center Management. “It is an incentive for us to drive the development of the “Digital Mall” and to continue on the path to developing the shopping center of the future.”

In its jury statement, the award panel especially emphasized the convincing and future-oriented approach of the “Digital Mall” to meet the widespread customer demand for a holistic and cross-channel shopping experience, connect the benefits of the brick-and-mortar retail with a cross-center data platform for shopping centers and develop a market-ready prototype with real-time availability information which has already been taken live.

ECE will use the “Digital Mall” online product search, which has been considered a unique technological innovation in the shopping center industry, to step by step develop its centers into digital platforms. “With this innovation, we respond to the demand of our customers for a seamless, cross-channel shopping experience and we extend the opportunities of the brick-and-mortar retail and the reach of our tenants in the centers,” says Philipp Sepehr,

Director Digital Innovation & Analytics at ECE. “Customers can use it to get information of the available products from the center website of their local centers, anywhere and in real time. In addition, they can reserve a product and pick it up on site. Thus, when searching for a product online, they will not be automatically directed to major e-commerce websites.”

The innovative pilot project holds potential for further development levels: The “Digital Mall” was first tested at Alstertal-Einkaufszentrum in Hamburg and was extended on four additional pilot centers and is thus available at five shopping centers. At the moment, it shows the locally available products of 35 participating retailers, such as Saturn, Thalia, Olymp, Appelrath-Cüpper, and Galeria Kaufhof, and comprises 400,000 products from more than 60 stores of the five pilot centers. Six further retailers are currently being added to the project and will be included very soon. During the next phase, the “Digital Mall” feature will also be available for other ECE centers. A delivery service for the products purchased at the center to customers living in its close proximity is also being considered in the long run.

About ECE

ECE develops and operates shopping centers and also implements large-scale real estate projects, including corporate headquarters, office towers, industrial buildings, logistics and transportation facilities, hotels, and city districts. The company oversees around 33 billion euros in assets under management and is the European shopping center market leader with around 195 shopping centers under management (over 50 of which under the management of MEC METRO-ECE Centermanagement GmbH & Co. KG) and activities in eleven countries. Every day approximately 4.2 million customers visit ECE centers which accommodate about 19,500 retail tenants on a total sales area of about 7 million square meters, generating annual sales of around 23 billion euros. Through continuous modernization projects, innovative service and F&B offerings, attractive mall designs, and customer-friendly digitalization projects, ECE continually develops its centers to keep them suitable for the future.

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