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Press release

Revitalized Shopping Center 'Marstall' Opens in Ludwigsburg

Düsseldorf / Ludwigsburg, 29th September 2015 – After a complete refurbishment based on a new concept, the shopping center 'Marstall' will reopen its doors in Ludwigsburg's city center on 30th September. The Hamburg-based company ECE acts as project developer as well as center operator. Schwitzke & Partner was commissioned to create a new design concept; Schwitzke Graphics developed the center's new brand story.

Marstall Center, with a total floor space of just under 26,000 square meters, houses around 70 shops. The new concept and interior design are supposed to breathe new life into the somewhat dated building complex and to attract new customers. More and more outdated shopping centers in Germany have to be revitalized in order to make them profitable again. This process is not so much about applying a fresh coat of paint; in fact, marketing-relevant questions regarding the individual center's positioning, its history and target group must be settled at an early stage. The right selection of tenants, the center's quality of stay, as well as additional service offers and opportunities for recreational activities can create the necessary incentives for customers.

Ludwigsburg, an up-and-coming young city, is prospering not least thanks to several internationally renowned universities. At the moment, however, there is a lack of retail formats tailored to the young clientele. When ECE took over and vacated Marstall Center three years ago, a fundamental refurbishment was in order. Schwitzke Group was involved very early in the development of a radical repositioning strategy. During the elaboration of a comprehensive new design language - from the logo, consistent motifs and storytelling all the way to interior design - the analysis of Ludwigsburg's historic city center was the first focus point. A baroque palace, second in size only to Versailles, is located just a few minutes from the shopping center; in the past, the surrounding area contained a multitude of horse markets and stables. This became the basis for the new design concept, which differentiates Marstall from other shopping venues in the region and lends the center its very own, individual character.

The thematic focus on horses and riding stables is the common theme in the entire building and serves to create the center's brand. Tiles, horse figurines, stirrups at the chandeliers – the leitmotif is integrated in many details to create a holistic overall impression. Consistent design elements like wooden doors, wooden handrails and black steel with studs convey the atmosphere of horse stables. The color concept with its light green and yellow hues is inspired by jockey shirts; horse carriages are outlined on the walls in the parking garage. Despite the distinct design language, the center's tenants have sufficient freedom for their own designs. Considerations regarding functionality played an important role in the refurbishment, just like artistic and design aspects. For instance, an attractive gastronomy zone was created, combining indoor and outdoor areas so customers can sit outside if the weather is nice. An exterior staircase, which also serves as seating accommodation, continues inside the building. Further up, customers reach the food court with its adjacent terrace. This creates places with varying qualities of stay to address different target groups. The mixture of fashion and gastronomy breaks up the monotonous sequence of shops usually found in other centers, and makes Marstall Center's gastronomy zone much more attractive to customers than a single food court. Furthermore, the façade design is deliberately open in order to create a kind of marketplace situation, which removes the natural barrier between center and store and lets the sales spaces blend together, thus creating a coherent, mutually reinforcing shopping experience.

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Karl Schwitzke, managing partner of Schwitzke GmbH, explains the company's design approach: "Our working method is not so much about superficial design. In fact, we must give the customers a reason to shop here by developing and implementing a likeable story. The center must become a brand that allows customers to get emotionally attached. Architecture, interior decoration, design and graphics – all of these are means of expressing the brand story."

About Schwitzke Group:

The Düsseldorf-based group of companies offers services for every aspect of trade and branding and oversees the entire retail process at the point of sale. With a service range including everything from strategic brand management and brand communication via design development to professional construction and interior finishing works for comprehensive store concepts, the group successfully realizes projects for brands worldwide. 25 years of experience and an international company structure with branch offices in Berlin, Dubai, Krakow and Paris make the group an important part of the retail industry. With annual revenue of around € 57 million and a total of 200 employees, Schwitzke Group works for many renowned clients from industries as diverse as lifestyle, consumer electronics, financial services and shopping centers.

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→ Professional photos will be available as of 30th September.
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