



The E/D/E Group and its partners are on target

- **Trading volume reaches EUR 3.5 billion within the first seven months of 2017– representing an increase of 8.8 percent**
- **Growth in core business and positive effects thanks to new member companies**
- **EVOLUTION: focus on daily business and future viability**

E/D/E
Corporate Communications

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Wuppertal – Following its encouraging start into 2017, the E/D/E Group and its member companies have maintained their joint growth course: within the first seven months of the current year, a trading volume of EUR 3.5 billion was reached – representing an increase of EUR 286.5 million (+ 8.8 percent) compared to the figures of the same period in the previous year. Furthermore, the growth in stock turnover remains in double digits: a plus of 12.7 percent to EUR 175.1 million.

Dr. Andreas Trautwein, Chairman of the E/D/E Management Board: “The market challenges continue to develop dynamically. Our growth reflects the success of our members – their approach to these challenges deserves highest respect. The E/D/E economic report for the second quarter underlines their performance.” According to the report, the total turnover of the Group’s members rose by 3.45 percent. For the months ahead, 92 percent of the E/D/E members expect this trend to improve or at least to remain constant. With regard to the order situation of the skilled craft sector over the coming months, a full 100 percent of members are upbeat about their prospects and expect orders to rise or remain unchanged. 92 percent of industrial customers believe that the outlook will improve or remain constant.

E/D/E is well on track in its core business divisions: the high volume of the previous year was reached or even exceeded.

Many new projects in industrial services

The business division I (precision tools, hand tools, machinery) achieved a year-on-year growth of 2.6 percent. In particular, the specialist area material management and industrial services has been meeting market needs for some time now. With the aid of the procurement software eproc III, for example, distributors raised their E/D/E catalogue turnover by more than 23 percent. As of the reporting date on 31 July, 253 industrial customers (+ 35) benefited from the E/D/E solutions: the number of MRO framework contracts increased by more than 63 percent, the ETT (Electronic Tool Terminal) materials dispensing system projects increased by 180 percent. Background: the specialist area offers ready-to-use solutions along the entire value-added process – from analytics, to systems for nearly all individual needs of industrial companies, and interfaces to all relevant product management systems. The advantages of this end-to-end approach are in ever greater demand of the E/D/E members and their customers.

Both the business division II (fastening systems, building components, building and furniture fittings, safety engineering; + 0.2 percent) and III (power tools, construction equipment and construction tools, factory equipment, welding technology; + 0.6 percent) reached their extremely high prior-year levels. The specialist area power tools of business division III achieved double-digit growth in warehouse turnover (+ 14 percent). Background: the E/D/E experts carefully analysed the member needs over the past two years and thus optimised the inventory assortment accordingly – they are now reaping the rewards of this work.

Members utilise impulses from the overall strategy of the building services division

In a close alliance with its existing and new members, as well as its cooperation partners, the E/D/E building services division continued its positive trend with a year-on-year growth of 14.4 percent. The members utilised the impulses provided by the overall strategy for building services and its various service components, such as the central warehouse for building services and the joint purchasing strategies of the cooperating distributor groups in the EHH, and are successfully implementing them.

The cooperation partner VGH International once again recorded a very encouraging performance and contributed significantly to the strong growth.

There was further significant growth within the steel segment: in the first seven months, the trading volume rose by 32.1 percent compared to the previous year. This was due to price developments and, of course, new members – but not exclusively. In 2017, the ESH Euro Stahl-Handel is focusing on innovative sales activities with the members and has already had initial success.

Members participate through constructive cooperation

An intensive dialogue with partners is also at the centre of all activities in the specialist area industrial safety of business division IV. Based on a carefully developed sales and support strategy, the trading volume of this specialist area rose by 9.1 percent in the period up to July. The three sales groups FAVORIT, Protector and PREMIUM even achieved double-digit growth, while business with industrial customers also made very good progress. Background: the industrial safety market is growing and the E/D/E members and suppliers are participating in this trend while benefiting from the constructive cooperation within the group. The new structure in this specialist area, especially the doubling of resources in product management, places the focus on the needs of members and suppliers. The feedback received so far is very positive.

The successes of the past are the basis on which the E/D/E Group aims to shape its future. Technological progress is causing increasingly dramatic changes at ever shorter intervals. For the industrial B2B sector, digitalisation means that everything which is routine today will soon be automated. Dr. Trautwein: “This trend requires us all to be extremely vigilant. Complacency is dangerous. It is up to us to monitor developments, draw conclusions, take risks and make wise decisions.”

With EVOLUTION, the E/D/E Group’s strategy and organisational development process, “we are laying the foundations to shape both the present and the future,” says Dr. Trautwein. “We are optimising the current E/D/E Group system and are preparing it for future topics. For us, this is not an ‘either/or’ but a ‘both/and’ situation. By maintaining an intensive dialogue with our members, we regularly identify topics that

strengthen the current daily business and at the same time form the basis for future viability. We are actively addressing these topics – such as digital and efficient processes, the automation of routines, innovative and reliable services. Those who are already optimising their daily business and streamlining their processes today are laying the foundation for a successful future.”

About E/D/E

E/D/E (Einkaufsbüro Deutscher Eisenhändler GmbH) is Europe's largest purchasing and marketing association, with 970 associated SME trading companies in the industrial B2B arena and some 260 additional retailers. These companies trade in tools; machinery and factory equipment; building fittings and building components; sanitary and heating; steel and fastening technology; welding technology, safety and industrial engineering; and PPE products. The majority of member companies supply mainly commercial customers from industry, the manual trade sector and municipalities. The E/D/E Group also includes the subsidiaries ETRIS Bank GmbH, Toolineo GmbH & Co. KG, EDE International AG, ESH EURO STAHL-Handel GmbH & Co. KG, e+h Services AG, ZEDEV AG, eDC Haustechnik-Daten GmbH & Co. KG as well as DELCREDIT España S.A., and DELCREDIT France S.A.S. and EURO-DIY GmbH & Co. KG.

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