



Strong start to the year for the E/D/E Group – Record in March

§ **Trading volume increased by almost 13 percent in the first quarter**

§ **High forecast target figures clearly exceeded once again**

§ **EVOLUTION should ensure that momentum is utilised**

E/D/E
Corporate Communications

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Wuppertal – The E/D/E Group recorded an excellent start in the New Year. The trading volume grew in the first quarter of 2017 by EUR 168.8 million compared to the same period last year and totalled EUR 1.5 billion. This represents an increase of 12.7 percent. Warehouse turnover also gave a more than just pleasing impression: it grew by more than 15 percent to EUR 76.6 million.

The E/D/E Group and its member companies go hand in hand with this very positive development and demonstrate what can be achieved in a strong alliance: the current E/D/E economic report recorded an increase of exactly 5 percent in the overall development of business for its members in the first three months of the business year. This is more than twice as much as the average in 2016. For the second quarter, 95 percent of the E/D/E members assume a better or at least constant level of company development. Hence, the E/D/E partners support the view of research economists for the entire economic climate in Germany: "The recovery is gaining strength."

Dr. Andreas Trautwein, Chairman of the E/D/E Management Board: "Our growth is based on two pillars: sustainable organic growth of the E/D/E Group together with our existing partners. And positive effects from new members with market relevance. In this way, we are well above our own forecasts after just three months into the new business year. This is an excellent intermediate result and demonstrates quite impressively the

strength of our members in the E/D/E network and the excellent work of our E/D/E colleagues."

Whereas the positive development has continued in April, it is worth looking especially at March, in which the E/D/E Group achieved with EUR 559 million the highest monthly trading volume in the history of the business enterprise. Overall, the first quarter saw some quite considerable growth rates for the entire E/D/E core business – steel and building services stood out once again. The steel sector further benefited from an increase in price levels and, of course, from the new members – Partner für Technik as well as FAMO – and increased by more than 45 percent compared to the same quarter of last year.

The trading volume in building services increased by more than 17 percent over this total period, amongst other things, thanks also to new members. Dr. Trautwein: "We have made some critical strategic changes in the past 24 months for building services in E/D/E. The main components, which make up the service modules in Germany, include a professional data management, building services with a central warehouse aligned in terms of product mix/strategy and availability, which also meet the high demands of our customers, common purchasing strategies of the cooperating dealer groups in the EHH and, of course, the exhibition and consulting competence of the WUPPER RING. With this, we are able to offer building services dealers within the E/D/E Group a unique range of services with added-value, through which they are able to differentiate themselves in competition."

The current momentum is a perfect starting point for the further strategic orientation of the E/D/E Group. This includes changing the perspective in rapidly changing markets and to look from the outside to the inside. What does the customer want? That is the central question.

"We in the E/D/E Group fully rely on the change of perspective and are currently aligning ourselves with our strategy and organisation development program EVOLUTION to meet our needs of the future," said Dr. Trautwein. "Providing perfect solutions tailored to meet the needs of the customer – this is the challenge that industrial B2B members have to face. In order for this to succeed, we support our members with innovative sales concepts and strong trademarks. At the same time, they increasingly rely on our

warehousing concept and thus reduce their own warehousing – this applies for Germany and our partners in other European countries. Taking this as a healthy basis, we then set up EVOLUTION. We concentrate on the topics that are important for our partners and their customers, and make them the focus of our work. In this way, we can also offer the added-value they need in the future, in order to be successful in the competition."

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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