

METRO LAUNCHES ONLINE MARKETPLACE FOR RESTAURATEURS

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- METRO expands business model to include B2B online marketplace for hospitality sector
- Online platform launched in Germany, with further countries to follow
- Marketplace open to all retailers, producers and food service professionals
- At launch, far more than 20,000 non-food articles from round 40 partners on offer

Düsseldorf, 13 September 2019 – The wholesale specialist METRO continues to expand its digital offerings for independent restaurateurs. METRO has launched the first B2B online marketplace in Germany specially oriented to HoReCa customers (hotel, restaurant, catering). Through this additional sales channel, METRO doesn't just offer non-food products from its own assortment, but round 40 other partners are already using it to sell their product lines as well. Well over 20,000 non-food articles for the hospitality industry are already available online. The METRO marketplace was launched in Germany first and can be called up via the country-specific domain www.metro.de. If the pilot run is successful, it is to be followed by roll-outs in further European countries. METRO is increasingly developing into a provider of comprehensive services and solutions for independent restaurateurs. Alongside the new online marketplace, METRO offers numerous other digital applications that facilitate the work of food service professionals in the digitalised world.

"We want to be the partner of choice for our professional customers," says Olaf Koch, Chairman of the Management Board of METRO AG. "With the new marketplace, we're significantly expanding our range of non-food products and services. Our aim is to create the greatest and most relevant online marketplace for HoReCa customers in Europe. Together with trading partners from around the world, we want to offer restaurateurs access to a unique variety of products. So we're making our platform and our strong customer access available to our partners. For METRO, this enlarges our spectrum of services and therefore also our relevance for HoReCa customers."

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In summer 2018, METRO Markets was founded as a wholly owned METRO subsidiary for the development and operation of the digital B2B platform. "At METRO Markets, we're responsible for developing and realising the technical platform and for the operation of the marketplace – for the entire business model, so to speak," says Philipp Blome, CEO of METRO Markets. "We set ourselves the task of making market access as easy as possible for other retailers and producers – because we're convinced that we can scale the platform much faster if products can be offered not only by METRO, but also by an infinite number of partners via our marketplace. By the end of the year, we aim to bring together on the platform the most relevant food service industry competence and, step by step, expand the customer experience and augment our services."

With this additional sales channel, the wholesaler facilitates access to its non-food offerings for restaurateurs, as the platform is accessible to the entire industry – independent of the METRO customer card. Food service industry customers in Germany are the first to benefit from the wide selection on the METRO marketplace. Since September they can access the online platform via METRO Germany's country-specific domain www.metro.de.

Marketplaces – a major opportunity

Marketplace models are currently the most successful online business models by far. Their advantages are obvious: more transparency and faster scalability compared to the online shops of individual brands. In addition to this, marketplaces not only offer customers the greatest possible product variety, but also guarantee the most attractive prices through the direct competition between vendors. This has made online platforms an essential component of e-commerce, offering an accessible, secure and effective online venue for vendors and consumers. In the B2B area in particular, digital platforms as a business model represent a great opportunity to strengthen customer loyalty and optimise processes. According to the retail research institute IFH Köln, almost €1,300 billion changed hands between business customers electronically in Germany in 2018. And procurement via the internet is continually increasing, with average annual growth running above 6% since 2012. Websites, online shops and marketplaces are believed to generate around one quarter of B2B e-commerce sales, or a volume of some €320 billion.

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METRO is a leading international wholesale company with food and non-food assortments that specialises on serving the needs of hotels, restaurants and caterers (HoReCa) as well as independent traders. Around the world, METRO has some 24 million customers who can choose whether to shop in one of the large-format stores, order online and collect their purchases at the store or have them delivered. METRO in addition also supports the competitiveness of entrepreneurs and freelancers with digital solutions and thereby contributes to cultural diversity in retail and hospitality. Sustainability is a key pillar of METRO's business. METRO has been the sector leader in the Dow Jones Sustainability Index for the last four years. The company operates in 36 countries and employs some 146,000 people worldwide. In financial year 2017/18, METRO generated sales of €36.5 billion. In September 2018 METRO AG initiated the divestment process for the food retail chain Real with its 34,000 employees. For more information visit www.metroag.de.

METRO Markets GmbH was founded in the summer of 2018 and is a wholly-owned subsidiary of METRO, a leading international specialist for wholesale and food. METRO Markets is responsible for the development and operation of a B2B online marketplace especially designed for HoReCa customers (hotel, restaurant, catering). Through this additional sales channel, METRO not only offers non-food products from its own assortment, but other partners can also sell their product ranges through this channel. The METRO marketplace was launched in Germany first and can be called up via the country-specific domain www.metro.de. If the pilot run is successful, it is to be followed by roll-outs in further European countries. With this new platform, the wholesale specialist METRO is further expanding its digital offering for independent restaurateurs. For more information visit www.metro-markets.de.

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