NEW BEGINNINGS MEAN SETTING THINGS IN MOTION. HAVING THE COURAGE TO EXPERIMENT. REFLECTING ON THE PAST AND FREEDING OURSELVES FROM OLD BAGGAGE. FINDING COURAGE AND TAKING CHANCES. CHANGING AND GROWING!
NEW BEGINNINGS – INTRO

We are looking forward to spring! There is a confidence in the air we hope to carry over into this latest issue of WE MOVE.

The focus of this issue is NEW BEGINNINGS. The winds of change are blowing here at our offices – starting with our Düsseldorf colleagues’ move to the METRO Campus. The theme of change continues like a golden thread throughout all areas of the company. We are changing the way we view the world, taking in new perspectives and expanding our horizons.

It’s time for a new beginning, TOGETHER. A new beginning means we’re on the move: it demands courage and motivation to forge a new path and leave the past behind.

In our latest issue of WE MOVE, we have another feature interview, this time with Joana Breidenbach, founder of the platform betterplace.org; she spoke to us about NEW WORK. In our conversation, she shed light on new beginnings in a new COMPANY CULTURE, with an eye to the needs of employees going beyond the physical design of the workplace.

Our new category, FAST FORWARD, is a place for pioneering ideas and innovation in the industry. To start out, we turn our attention to the United Nations’ 11TH SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL and our contribution to achieving that goal.

These are just 2 of the highlights in our latest issue of the WE MOVE magazine. We hope you find this to be an enjoyable, inspirational and insightful read!
NEW BEGINNINGS – MANAGEMENT VIEW

WE ARE RELAXING OUR EXISTING STRUCTURES AND MOBILISING OUR ENERGY.

Our management duo Jean-Christophe Bretxa and Jürgen Schwarze are looking at new beginnings and a shared focus on the future-oriented development of METRO PROPERTIES. These are challenging times, and they are demanding us to stay on the move.

WHY NEW BEGINNINGS KEEP US ON TRACK FOR SUCCESS

We started this year focused and optimistic, and we have big plans. It takes a great deal of courage and candour to leave old structures behind. We are experiencing a real spirit of optimism about this new beginning, which is both inspiring and energising. We are driving change in line with our motto, ‘WE MOVE’. We are launching into new beginnings, physically and mentally. Our Düsseldorf colleagues’ move to the METRO Campus is also a paradigm shift in terms of our working structures. We need to be open to a new way of working, a form of #NEWGETHER in our collaboration. We need to find ways to respond to the transformations occurring all over the world, on many levels and in our professional lives in particular. We believe our path is a future-oriented process that we will shape together, as a strong and cooperative community.

A LOOK BACK SHOWS US THE ROOTS OF OUR STRENGTH

Before we can talk about our destination, we should take a moment to remember where we’ve come from. 10 years ago, METRO Group was a conglomerate with sales lines in many different industries. Step by step, our ‘Wholesale 360’ strategy sharpened the company’s focus on wholesale, with the sale of Galeria Kaufhof, the split-off of Media-Saturn, and ultimately the sale of Real SB-Warenhaus. There are a number of parallels in the development of METRO PROPERTIES here: we started by focusing on bolstering our 3 core competencies - asset management, project development and transactions - which primarily acted within their respective scopes of responsibility. Today, they work together across all areas of the company, and our departments are growing into a tightly coordinated competence team step by step. Our expert functions are also becoming more closely integrated. As we transform into a project-oriented organisation, we want to eliminate barriers and develop into an inclusive team with a shared purpose.

THE POWER OF RELATIONSHIPS: 10 YEARS OF METRO PROPERTIES

10 years ago, METRO Group Asset Management became METRO PROPERTIES, and it was around that time that we first met, too. That was in 2012, in Manchester. Back then, Jean-Christophe was travelling to different countries in his role as Regional Director Europe, and Jürgen was the CEO of MAKRO UK. (Editor’s note: during our conversation, the 2 gentlemen reveal in their fond memories of the time. The mood is relaxed, and we all share a lot of laughs.)

NEW BEGINNINGS MEAN CHANGE

We are moving with the times, and we have evolved. By focusing on wholesale, METRO made a strategic decision that is also very important for us. Our real estate portfolio changed as a result.

Now is the time for visionary solutions and change. Our proactive transformation is driving this development and laying the foundation for our future. We are becoming more agile by relaxing our existing structures and thus mobilising our energy.

We are developing a new company culture and new ways of working together, which are both a manifestation of our new direction and a means of facilitating this process of change. The architectural design of our offices on the METRO Campus promotes collaboration and communication both within teams and across teams. Consequently, when we talk about the new office concept, we like to call it a ‘place of encounter’.

‘GAINING EXPERIENCE IS THE MOST IMPORTANT PART. WE PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES.’

Jürgen Schwarze

FROM SERVICE PROVIDER TO SOLUTION PROVIDER

Our future will present us with challenges and opportunities. We look back on the last 10 years with pride; we gained experience and expertise, and we built a strong foundation of trust. Today, we are a valued, esteemed partner to METRO AG and its operational units, assisting in all real estate issues. We have grown from a service provider into a sought-after, proactive solution provider with visionary ideas. Our success is proof that we are on the right path, and it motivates us to keep moving forward. It is time for a new beginning, and to continue shaping our future.

Change is in the air:

Our location in Saarbrücken now has a new branch manager: Dr Christian Gatzi.

Our joint venture MEC METRO-ECE Centermanagement GmbH & Co. KG will become independent at the end of 2021.

Last but not least, there will be a personnel change at the very top of the company: Dr Steffen Greulich will become the new CEO of METRO in May.

‘OUR SUCCESS HAS COME FROM A CLEAR STRATEGY AND EXCELLENCE IN EXECUTION. I AM CONFIDENT THAT OUR ONGOING TRANSFORMATION WILL CONTRIBUTE TO AN EVEN MORE SUCCESSFUL FUTURE.’

Jean-Christophe Bretxa
DÜSSELDORF: GREEN THUMBS WANTED!

The ‘Essbare Stadt’ (Edible city) initiative in Düsseldorf has many facets: harvesting your own tomatoes right on your doorstep, picking fruit in public parks or front gardens, or making sure that the currant bushes planted near your local playground get enough water on dry days.

The idea originated in northern England: it was developed under the name ‘edible cities’ in Todmorden in 2008 to help improve the supply of local produce and strengthen the sense of community.

Since then, many German cities, local communities and districts have also started gardening and harvesting the fruits of their labour. There were around 140 locations in 2017, and the numbers have continued to climb steadily.

All these initiatives are united by a desire to make urban spaces usable for growing food and to set up systems for local supply. On a small scale, the goal is to foster community and simply make the city greener; on a larger scale, the dream is for cities to become more resistant to future crises.

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The edible state capital

In Düsseldorf, urban gardens and farms are a matter of local politics. Residents can submit an application for the various schemes. Funding is drawn from the climate budget. Helga Stulgies is the head of the environmental department and has been overseeing the project in Düsseldorf since its inception in 2019. She believes interest in the project will be even greater this year, ‘because promotions at events like the farmers’ markets in the Rhineland region will attract attention. The idea is to get members of civil society more involved.’ Helga Stulgies explains.

Of course, there are already a number of initiatives in Düsseldorf that rely on residents getting involved, including the ‘Ernährungsrat’ (Nutritional Advisory Council), the Arbeitsgemeinschaft Nachhaltiger Konsum (Working Group on Sustainable Consumption) and Solidarische Landwirtschaft (Community-Supported Agriculture, Solawi). Everyone would likely subscribe to the idea that precious local produce should land on our plates, not on the global market. Making this vision a reality will require people promoting it at all levels, creating the conditions to make it happen and embodying the idea – people like Helga Stulgies, who spoke with WE MOVE in front of a raised bed in winter. She is already looking forward to receiving a flood of applications from motivated Düsseldorf residents.

The beds are supplied with organic soil, clay, organic fertiliser and organic seeds. A sign points out the project and that the produce can be harvested by everyone.

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Multi-use makes the neighbourhood even more liveable
The METRO wholesale store borders on a densely built-up residential area and is easy to reach on public transport – consequently, the unused car park space seemed like an excellent area for new development. The plan is to work with a strategic partner to construct residential complexes designed as a modern interpretation of traditional Russian architecture.

METRO PROPERTIES recognised the potential of the well-connected location at an early stage; in recent years, the district has moved farther and farther away from its industrial roots. Today, it is brimming with modern residential quarters, shopping centres for local supply and a well-established social infrastructure.

For Gündüz Bayer (Director Region Asia), the analysis is decisive: “We need to be able to predict the life cycle of a property and anticipate developments. This knowledge will allow us to create a concept that delivers real added value – for the local community and for our sales line.”

St Petersburg is a THRIVING city. The world’s northernmost metropolis has always been a gateway to the west. METRO RUSSIA has been operating a very successful wholesale store in the city’s attractive Primorsky District since 2003.

Better living with a view
The existing linearity is broken up for the new construction, making the high-rise residential buildings appear more open and giving residents views of the surroundings. Ground-level spaces can host retail outlets, service providers and restaurants – adding enormous value for the surrounding community.

Local supply and accessibility is on trend at the moment. Multi-use concepts put the focus on interpersonal contact and communication, boosting the vitality of the surrounding location.

St Petersburg: Wholesale meets multi-use concept

Evrenos Şengönül
Head of Project Development
Region Asia

‘You just have to create an innovative concept and seize the opportunity!’

FOR GÜNDÜZ BAYER (DIRECTOR REGION ASIA), THE ANALYSIS IS DECISIVE: “WE NEED TO BE ABLE TO PREDICT THE LIFE CYCLE OF A PROPERTY AND ANTICIPATE DEVELOPMENTS. THIS KNOWLEDGE WILL ALLOW US TO CREATE A CONCEPT THAT DELIVERS REAL ADDED VALUE – FOR THE LOCAL COMMUNITY AND FOR OUR SALES LINE.’
It’s time to not only reinvent our workplaces and ways of working; it’s also time to rethink the culture that defines us. We have a unique opportunity to do just that.

Olivier Blühé, Head of Slack Germany, in ‘Die Zeit’, 18 February 2021

The courage to try new models

The Bridge 1 office concept represents greater cooperation and communication. It is a place of encounter. The spaces create opportunities to make contact with one another and exchange ideas across teams and departments. FlexWork, on the other hand, gives us the option to withdraw and focus. Most METRO PROPERTIES employees have opted for the hybrid work model, which gives them greater flexibility. They can choose the concept that provides them with optimum support for their individual working needs.

The power of relationships

A robust, supportive culture and a strong sense of team spirit make companies more resilient and help them weather crises and changes, as confirmed by nearly 94% of respondents to a survey conducted by the Fraunhofer Institute. And Power of Relationships is also one of our METRO Guiding Principles.

Read more in the INTERVIEW on the next 2 pages

Learn more about the METRO Guiding Principles

Groundbreaking

In 2015, Frédéric Laloux, a former McKinsey partner, penned one of the most influential business books of the last decade, entitled ‘Reinventing Organizations’. It is considered a standard reference for modern business organisations that base their structures and practices on innovative, evolutionary principles. Laloux touts the highly optimistic hypothesis that life and work in organisations as well as organisations’ contributions to society can be radically changed for the better. His book has inspired and influenced countless innovative New Work theorists and practitioners.

When trust is extended, it breeds responsibility in return.

Frédéric Laloux

We see ourselves as businesspeople who are always looking for ways to generate greater added value for our customers. We take full responsibility for our actions, as we set the METRO Guiding Principles for our organisation.

Digitalisation as a new path to endless opportunities

In 2016, Suhrkamp Verlag published ‘Aufbruch’ (New Beginning), a magazine series for Google Germany. The subheading says it all: ‘A magazine for digital education’ – an instruction manual for a new beginning in the digital world. It recounts success stories that were made possible by digitalisation. Every issue is dedicated to a different aspect of the process and invites the readers to find out for themselves what digitalisation holds in store for them. You can download the ‘Aufbruch’ magazines here:

Digitalisierung als neuer Weg zu endlosen Möglichkeiten

A period of transition and growth also demands security, clear rules and transparency. And transparency, in particular, means talking to each other. There are no one-size-fits-all solutions for us to implement; instead, changes will be a process that we tackle together at our own pace. Patience and open communication are 2 important aspects – as Joana Bräidenbach, founder of the platform betterplace.org, knows only too well. She advises numerous companies as they transition to new structures; she recommends not rushing into anything, as the next step in the development process is different for every company.

NEW BEGINNINGS - BACKGROUND

We’re setting off for our new beginning! At the METRO Campus, with new models and structures for our working lives, and with new areas of business. The challenges we face are all very different, but they have one thing in common: they require pioneering solutions and strategies that break away from today and look toward the working world of tomorrow.

All these new beginnings mean new opportunities, but they can also cause uncertainty and doubt. Where will our journey take us? What will our work processes look like in the future? What do we still need to learn?

NEW

HORIZONS!

ONWARD TO NEW HORIZONS!
Every change in our lives has an outer and an inner dimension. We spend an awful lot of time on the outer dimension – around 90% of our time, in fact. And that’s how change processes work at companies, as well: new structures are developed, new organisational charts drawn up, new spaces rented, and so on – all of these are outer changes. But every type of work has its own inner equivalents and requirements. A bureaucracy has a different mindset than a young, agile start-up. We would be making a huge mistake if we believed that in the new, modern working world, everything would be equal.

I believe the opportunities presented by the new working world lie in the ability to do a deep dive into each individual’s needs, particularly as regards the balance between one’s desire for security and what one needs to be creative in the midst of change. For companies, this knowledge and awareness of their employees’ individual nature – and the company culture that springs from that – can’t just be ‘nice to have’; it should be at least as important as all the outer structures into which so much time and so many resources are invested. If a company wants to change, it needs to change holistically, across the board. But we’re not going to make any great cultural leaps if we continue operating based on the same old doctrines and forms of communication.

These learning processes require a great deal of patience. There’s no blueprint that will work for every company. All companies, no matter how conservative, undergo a process of development – and there’s always a next step. Of course, that next step will look completely different for a rigidly hierarchical company whose employees have a strong need for security than it would for, say, a think tank in Berlin whose employees are mostly fresh out of university.

The road to greater freedom and agility has to be the right one for each individual. Employees who have spent their whole life taking orders will probably be overwhelmed if they are suddenly expected to start making decisions. Change processes need to take place in an atmosphere of trust, where teams can develop at their own pace. There is no such thing as one-size-fits-all. Therefore, many companies create agile little islands within their structures or pick individual departments to learn new approaches.

I would define New Work as a paradigm shift that results in growing numbers of decisions being made at various levels throughout the company rather than at the very top; decisions in New Work are made by the people who have the relevant expertise and information. This creates ripple effects that touch all areas of the company; how information is shared, how transparent the work is or how conflicts are managed, for instance. All of these issues and areas need to be adapted gradually, step by step.

The coronavirus pandemic has been a true catalyst for new forms of work that are better suited to our modern era. The strict lines previously drawn between work and private life was a relic of the factory age and is no longer really appropriate for the modern world and the communication tools we have. Growing numbers of people will begin to have the chance to follow their own biohythms and adapt their working lives to their own lifestyles, whether that means spending more time with their children or caring for relatives. In that sense, the working world will become much more humane, because people will demand it.

But these new hybrid structures will also raise new questions: how can we maintain the quality of our work? Where will we find guidance and grounding if we don’t see our colleagues every day? How will we establish boundaries, such as limiting our working hours? People need to learn how to exercise greater self-determination again.

We are currently experiencing a massive wave of transformation, a historic sea change comparable to the developments at the end of the 19th century when many people abandoned their agricultural lifestyles to move to the cities and become industrial labourers. Being aware of the historical dimensions might also help us remember that these things take time, and that we shouldn’t expect immediate solutions. Getting employees on board is more important than ever before – and so is open, honest communication that builds trust and provides guidance.

Joana Breidenbach
Founder of betterplace.org and betterplace lab

New Work: PEOPLE NEED TO DIGEST THIS!

It’s an important issue for many companies: a new beginning in a new working world with new structures. The global pandemic has accelerated this development, making many things possible and even necessary. WE MOVE talks to Joana Breidenbach, founder of donation platform betterplace.org and think tank betterplace lab, who wrote a handbook to help organisations navigate these now-ubiquitous processes.

In ‘New Work needs Inner Work’, she makes a case for patience and emphasises how important it is to nurture inner change as well. Large investments are made in outer structures, in flexible models of work or open office landscapes, but no one investigates which skills employees and teams need to develop in order to thrive in these structures. Breidenbach, a native of Hamburg, stepped down as head of betterplace lab in 2014 and replaced the rigid hierarchies with fluid, competence-based structures. She is an investor in multiple start-ups, writes books, holds talks and organises meditation retreats.

WHAT DOES NEW WORK MEAN TODAY, EXACTLY?

The book ‘New Work needs Inner Work’ provides guidance. It describes the exponential growth of something (for example, our behaviour) that ultimately triggers a wave of events.

WE MOVE talks to Joana Breidenbach, founder of donation platform betterplace.org and think tank betterplace lab.
UN Sustainable Development Goal 11:

‘MAKE CITIES AND HUMAN SETTLEMENTS INCLUSIVE, SAFE, RESILIENT AND SUSTAINABLE.’

Visit the United Nations website

The city as a cause of problems ...

There is no doubt about it: we are living in the age of cities. Today, over half the world’s population already lives in urban areas, and that number is projected to rise to approximately 75% by 2050. The magnetic pull of the big city is as strong as ever – and that’s part of the problem. Cities are fuelling global warming. They cover just 3% of the entire surface of the earth, but they are responsible for around 70% of energy consumption and energy-related greenhouse gas emissions. Cities are a perfect storm: heavy traffic, air pollution and constant construction with massive urban sprawl, high energy consumption and enormous volumes of waste and sewage.

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CITIES ARE DRIVING CLIMATE CHANGE.
The competition is heating up! Which of the plans drawn up by architects and urban planners have what it takes to make it to the shortlist? Which 5 of the 15 total submissions will make it to the second phase of the competition and head to the final round? The selection process comprises 2 rounds and also gives Düsseldorf residents the chance to get involved. But first things first …

The considerably interest in the project underscores the location’s enormous potential for urban development.

Ultimately, after completing an onboarding process and taking part in an informal colloquium, 15 participants will draft their designs. We are currently in the first phase of the competition and are awaiting the participants’ draft designs for restructuring the METRO Campus into an urban, diversified, metropolitan space. The submissions will be anonymised, so in mid-April, the jury will be able to select 5 of the concepts based entirely on formal and planning criteria.

They will be presented publicly in our virtual showroom, as well as to our colleagues in a further MORE Stage. It’s an exciting premiere in another way, as well! This is the first time METRO PROPERTIES is holding an urban planning competition digitally. At the same time, the public is once again being invited to participate in the evaluation process. Their feedback will be incorporated into the second, more in-depth phase of the urban planning competition, where the finalists will refine their draft designs.

The process will last until the end of June, so we will just have to be patient until then. It will be thrilling to find out who has come out on top!

The decision will be made by an expert jury comprising representatives of METRO PROPERTIES and Düsseldorf politicians and administrators.

In addition to the 5 pre-selected firms, 59 visionary architectural and urban planning offices have applied to take part in the urban planning competition for the METRO Campus. Nationally and internationally renowned firms such as ACME, MVRDV, Valode & Pistre, HPP Architekten and sop architekten have thrown their hats into the ring. The considerable interest in the project underscores the location’s enormous potential for urban development.

Employees can use a specially developed app to access a digital flea market where they can purchase the used office furniture and equipment that is still in good condition to use for their FlexWork. The money raised by the flea market will be donated in consultation with METRO AG, and the dishes from the former EssArt canteen will go to a charitable organisation.

The countdown to the upcoming move to Bridge 7 begins in May. All the remaining furniture still needs to be labelled so that it will wind up in the right place when the removal vans arrive. And then there’s the matter of finding time to deal with the more cumbersome items, like the oversized safe still in furniture storage. Which company will make sure that monstrosity is disposed of properly?

Once that’s all taken care of, we will be ready to go. On 30 June 2021, the empty office spaces, along with numerous keys and files, will be handed over to the new owner, Pandion AG.

And whilst she has help from her own department (Construction Management & Architecture), from Asset Management and from service provider CSG, one has to wonder how Roswitha Luecke is able to forget about all the inventory lists and to-do lists when she goes home in the evenings, given the enormous scope of the project. She loves getting out into the fresh air, she says, either for walks or bike rides – and soon, she’ll even be able to cycle to the METRO Campus. She is really looking forward to that.

‘Roswitha, the bin is full! What should I do?’ – ‘Roswitha, can you bring me another box?’ – ‘Roswitha, what will happen to the flowers we don’t take with us?’

Roswitha Luecke, who is organising the move to the METRO Campus behind the scenes, has an answer to every question. And if she doesn’t already have the answer, she will definitely find it. This may not be the first move the long-standing METRO PROPERTIES employee has helped organise, but it’s certainly the biggest one.

In the coming weeks, she will make sure that the move was in line with coronavirus health and safety regulations.

The former EssArt canteen will go to a charitable organisation.

NEW BEGINNINGS – WE AT METRO PROPERTIES

The competition is heating up! Which of the plans drawn up by architects and urban planners have what it takes to make it to the shortlist? Which 5 of the 15 total submissions will make it to the second phase of the competition and head to the final round? The selection process comprises 2 rounds and also gives Düsseldorf residents the chance to get involved. But first things first …

The considerable interest in the project underscores the location’s enormous potential for urban development.

Ultimately, after completing an onboarding process and taking part in an informal colloquium, 15 participants will draft their designs. We are currently in the first phase of the competition and are awaiting the participants’ draft designs for restructuring the METRO Campus into an urban, diversified, metropolitan space. The submissions will be anonymised, so in mid-April, the jury will be able to select 5 of the concepts based entirely on formal and planning criteria.

They will be presented publicly in our virtual showroom, as well as to our colleagues in a further MORE Stage. It’s an exciting premiere in another way, as well! This is the first time METRO PROPERTIES is holding an urban planning competition digitally. At the same time, the public is once again being invited to participate in the evaluation process. Their feedback will be incorporated into the second, more in-depth phase of the urban planning competition, where the finalists will refine their draft designs.

The process will last until the end of June, so we will just have to be patient until then. It will be thrilling to find out who has come out on top!

The decision will be made by an expert jury comprising representatives of METRO PROPERTIES and Düsseldorf politicians and administrators.

In addition to the 5 pre-selected firms, 59 visionary architectural and urban planning offices have applied to take part in the urban planning competition for the METRO Campus. Nationally and internationally renowned firms such as ACME, MVRDV, Valode & Pistre, HPP Architekten and sop architekten have thrown their hats into the ring. The considerable interest in the project underscores the location’s enormous potential for urban development.

Employees can use a specially developed app to access a digital flea market where they can purchase the used office furniture and equipment that is still in good condition to use for their FlexWork. The money raised by the flea market will be donated in consultation with METRO AG, and the dishes from the former EssArt canteen will go to a charitable organisation.

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A move is so much more than just a relocation to a new space. For a brief moment, you are in transit between the past and the future. This intervening time gives us the chance to free ourselves from old baggage, and we even have the opportunity to reinvent ourselves. A new beginning is in the air.

Goodbye, Albertussee!
8 years ago, the Düsseldorf team moved to the complex in the district of Heerdt on the left bank of the Rhine, and they expanded the site step by step. If you take 2011 as a starting point and observe the development of the property until its sale in 2018, you will see what an impressive success story it was in hindsight. Whilst the building didn’t look particularly inviting or even particularly finished at first, it has since become a highly sought-after property. METRO PROPERTIES showed strategic foresight and has proven its real estate expertise, successfully implementing its mission of Driving Real Estate Value.

More about Bridge 7
and the move in the construction diary on United
We have too many data silos

Dietrich ‘Dima’ Birt is at home in 2 worlds. In his private life, the father of 2 enjoys the slower pace of all things analogue, but at work, he is a master of high-speed digital solutions. METRO PROPERTIES has been benefiting from his valuable expertise since 2008. That was when Dima, a certified tax consultant, joined our Energy Management team, where he was responsible for SAP accounting processes and preparing data for energy tax returns until 2013.

After spending a few years developing customised software at an IT systems retailer, he returned to us as a portfolio data analyst in 2018. Large volumes of data were his area of expertise once again – this time, he was evaluating them. He quickly spotted the problems in that area: ‘There are a lot of little individual kingdoms of data, each with their own rulers, but the IT systems aren’t networked.’

A single data source would allow all participants to trace the life cycle of a property. And those are just a few of the benefits. Dima believes there’s no time like the present for a field test: the future begins now!

Information in real time

The future will be different: we need holistic real estate management with an overarching digital structure. This will ensure that information can be used across departments and in a role-based way along the entire life cycle of the property. Our vision is a platform that pools and networks all data and software solutions. This will allow us to create a ‘digital twin’ in future – a virtual copy of a property that will accompany its real-life counterpart throughout its life cycle. Every Tesla vehicle has a digital twin, and the cities of Munich, Hamburg and Leipzig are developing ‘urban twins’ as a component of their efforts to become carbon-neutral smart cities. Theoretically, there are no limits.

‘All systems are go!’

Reporting that always uses the latest data available around the world would be a meaningful foundation for decision-making processes. Virtual tours would make it possible to market properties anytime and anywhere.

Analogue at home

When he’s at home in Mönchengladbach, Dima doesn’t need everything to be smart or to work at the touch of a button. In his free time, he leaves the digital fast lane and takes a slower pace – his wife, who has a great deal of responsibility in her job as a surgical nurse, makes sure of that.

And when he does feel like picking up the pace, he takes his gravel bike for a spin. His 2 sons (3 and 7 years old) always help him back down to (the analogue) earth when they play together on the trampoline. Just like his Portuguese mixed-breed dog Uschi.

New beginnings – people

The ‘new normal’ hit us like a bolt from the blue: new ways of working, and new challenges. At a distance, but still closely connected. We at METRO call it #NEWGETHER.

#NEWGETHER represents our new ways of being together and working together, our mutual respect, but also our new strength and energy. And our company culture is what binds it all together.

The Guiding Principles are a cultural link that unites all METRO employees worldwide. They are the key to successfully cooperating to create something new.

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As models of work begin to change, the new work-life blending model raises some questions: when do we actually switch off if our communication tools keep us connected to our jobs and the outside world round the clock? Is there still an end to the work day in the traditional sense if we no longer draw a clear line between our free time and our jobs? Do we still need to keep track of our working hours? The fact is that the blending of areas of our lives that used to be strictly separate presents both new opportunities and new challenges. We need to set boundaries and create our own structures—and that includes planning breaks and time off. You can find some inspiration here.

A new beginning is always a challenge and an opportunity. We know that our path to our destination won’t always be linear, and we will often need a great deal of patience and trust.

We also need a healthy dose of motivation and optimism, along with perseverance and strength.

We have collected some tips for you on overcoming the hurdles you might face; you can find them on our WE MOVE United page, under WE CARE.

We hope you are looking forward to the next issue, which is dedicated to a MILESTONE.

Thanks for joining us for this new beginning! We hope you found your own personal new beginning in one of the many sections of this issue.
YOU CAN FIND MORE NEW BEGINNINGS AND EXCITING TOPICS ON UNITED!

FOR FURTHER ARTICLES, PHOTOS AND VIDEOS, GO TO WWW.MPULSE.DE