

Multimedia Future in Essen

Michael Flögel
Head of Sales
Residential R&M
Germany
michael.floegel@
rdm.com



Each building comprises max. 8 condominiums

How do you install multimedia wiring in housing stock that is decades old? This was the challenge facing Gewobau in the West German industrial metropolis of Essen. The cooperative manages a number of residential properties in and around the city and has recently been able to provide its tenants with state-of-the-art broadband infrastructure that supports all applications of the digital age.

A project with 140 housing units in the north of the city of Essen shows that new structured wiring based on EN 50173-4 can be installed easily and effectively in age-old properties to provide the residents with the facilities appropriate to the multimedia era. With the help of Elektro Eisert GmbH, an installation company, and R&M's home wiring system, Gewobau completed a project that was without precedent.

Generation change on the housing estate

The first thing was to renew the more than 30-year-old coaxial cable throughout the Gewobau housing estate in the north of Essen. At the same time, R&M and Elektro Eisert were given the challenging task of creating a future-oriented and application-neutral infrastructure. The R&M home wiring system with multimedia outlets and communication distributors served as the platform. Detlef Mikitta, managing director of Elektro Eisert and Irfan Zorlu, graduate engineer and project leader from the same company, were responsible for the planning, with Reichle & De-Massari in Germany providing support.

For Gewobau the project was aimed at attracting satisfied tenants long-term whilst using the new network architecture to take account of all future requirements of the world of communications. High flexibility was demanded in order to provide individual possibilities for using computers, consumer electronics and communications technology. At the same time, Gewobau wanted to give its tenants the opportunity of choosing between various cable and DSL providers. All this depended upon a powerful, application-neutral infrastructure.



Project discussion at Elektro Eisert; f.l. grad. eng. Irfan Zorlu, Detlef Mikitta, Michael Flögel



Communication distributor in the basement



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Digital lifestyle and the multimedia experience - that means designing the living area at home so that it is attractive and modern. R&M's multimedia socket in various designs, configurations and circuit programs is just the answer.

Broadband outlet for each condominium

The buildings along Hirsestrasse that were rewired, star-shaped, according to a uniform blueprint, comprise up to eight condominiums. A central communication point was sited in the basement of each house. Each condominium was equipped with at least two multifunctional outlets usually in the combination of living room/main bedroom, or living room/second bedroom or living room, second bedroom and main bedroom.

The outlets incorporate a coaxial broadband connection and an RJ45 port. The infrastructure is capable of transmitting data at the rate of 1000 Mbit/s. Furthermore, in order to be equipped for the future a fiber optic link was installed in each apartment. In addition to the R&M system, antenna technology provided by Triax-Hirschmann Multimedia GmbH was installed.

The entire campus with nearly 20 town and semi-detached houses was integrated in a local network. Apart from the new coaxial and data cables, the house-to-house connections were provided with a fiber optic infrastructure. Gewobau has thus ensured that sufficient capacity is available now for future innovative broadband packages that appear on the telecommunications market. Having to channel under roads in a project of this nature was something that the installation company Elektro Eisert also took in its stride.



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The tenant is also the network administrator. All elements of the home wiring system meet up in R&M's communication distributor. Well-informed amateurs can set up or reconfigure their multimedia network in just a few easy steps.

Information services for the tenants

For the time being the newly installed network is supplying radio and TV programs and the DSL connection. Moreover, Gewobau is now in a position to implement its own, internal communication solution to provide tenants with digital information directly. In the future, other services will also be able to be transported via the network, e.g. billing systems.

Conclusion: The housing cooperative looked at the requirements of the multimedia age and created an application-neutral infrastructure for its tenants. This has of course made the housing estate more attractive. The positive reactions make it much easier to reach decisions on future projects of this nature.

Committed to attractive homes for more than 100 years

Ever since 1906, Gewobau has been committed to the construction, operation and maintenance of affordable housing in the industrial metropolis of Essen. The company is organized as a non profit-making cooperative. The tenants are also effectively members of the cooperative and thus effectively co-owners of the real estate. In principle, they have a life-long entitlement to live in their condominiums. With a balance sheet figure of EUR 213 million, Gewobau posted sales revenues of EUR 29.5 million for 2006. Forty employees manage almost 5500 condominiums and 22 commercial properties. As a modern service company Gewobau provides its members and tenants with fully comprehensive facilities and social management for everything to do with housing.

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