



FINAL SPRINT TO THE GRAND OPENING

The countdown is on: In two days, Milaneo is due to open its doors to its first visitors, but things still seem chaotic inside. A look behind the scenes at an almost-finished center.



Noise from all sides: Alarms sound, drills howl, from the left comes the steady hum of a cleaning machine, and on top of it all, an announcement from the center management that a van is blocking access. Boxes, barrels, cleaning utensils, and shelves clutter the mall. Most washrooms are closed, garbage cans and places to sit are still missing entirely. Amid the chaos, service staff hang posters or rush to shops in a zigzag in order to stock and hang goods.

It's late morning on Tuesday, October 7, 2014. In two days, Milaneo shopping center in Stuttgart is scheduled to open. It's just two more days until the center is to open its gates and welcome visitors to its 200 perfectly equipped shops. Is that really possible? At least all the heavy work is already complete – half a year faster than originally planned. Up to 1,200 construction workers brought the three-story shopping mall in Stuttgart's European Quarter to fruition. They dug

*The countdown is on:
Milaneo two days
before opening.*



330,000 cubic meters of earth, which corresponds to approximately 33,000 truckloads, built 105,000 cubic meters of concrete, and installed 535 kilometers of cable.

MILA THE BEE, NEO THE LADYBUG

Now, two days before the opening, engineer Daniel Warthemann dryly says just two words: “network problems.” That is the reason, the casually dressed expert explains, why the BW Bank ATM on the first floor cannot be filled with money yet. Deutsche Telekom plans to solve the problem soon. In fact, it will take more than 24 hours before the words “out of order” disappear from the machine’s screen.

Just one floor below, theater painter Christine makes final improvements to the playground. Paintbrush in hand, she explains: “We have taken up the design of the shopping center and implemented it in a way appropriate for children.” The little playground is located in the “Nature” area, which draws on forest and nature themes, with lots of wood and natural colors. A spring rider bee named Mila awaits little explorers, accompanied by ladybug spring rider named Neo, which



together spell “Milaneo.” A wooden beehive perches right next to the two creatures. It has small peep slots through which the children can follow the action in the center outside.

The theater painter’s gaze wanders to a few craftsmen sitting on the floor enjoying a pretzel. They are not the only ones. On the way through as-yet unopened Milaneo, one constantly encounters people with pretzels in hand. The source of the baked goods is located on the first floor: The Bakery Shop “Maurer Brezel & Co” has already begun selling its homemade specialties. As it does not yet face any competition, it is making a roaring trade.



Technician Daniel Warthemann in the fight against network problems. Only when these are resolved can the BW Bank ATM on the first floor be filled with money.

SEVENTEEN BOXES STILL MISSING

“I stood in line for half an hour for a pretzel earlier,” says Evangelos Passenidis, seemingly completely relaxed. The passionate runner works at Runner’s Point. Compared to several other stores, the sporting goods store already looks perfect: The shoes are lined up rank and file on the shelves, the running apparel in assorted colors hangs from hooks, the window displays are great. “Yes, our shop already looks like a painting,” Passenidis’s colleague Michael Aeugle agrees. Nevertheless, 17 boxes of merchandise and the large treadmill that will be placed in the

Theater painter Christine makes a few final improvements to the small playground in the “Nature” area.





The “urban” part of Milaneo reflects the vibrant life of a modern city.

Each building has its own unique look inside: In addition to “Nature” and “Urban,” there is the “Modern” area, which sports a futuristic design.

NIGHT SHIFT IS IMMINENT

At the moment, noise, dirt, and mountains of goods dull the effect of the impressive architecture. A night shift should help several retailers to meet the prescribed deadline the next morning. Very few shops have yet been completed. On the contrary: In most of them, employees are still working furiously. Some retailers have received their goods just a few hours before and are busy unpacking. Others are even further behind: still waiting for shelves and storage furniture.

Roland Wolf, however, is ready for a toast. The retail manager surveys the finished Digel shop contentedly: suits, shirts, coats, and accessories lie and hang in their places, the light floor is as shiny as a mirror. “Everything actually went so like clockwork that we thought we would be done even earlier,” he says. “This was overly optimistic, as some furniture was then delivered late and there were problems with the water supply.” But now he wants to toast the successful store with his staff. He calls it the “home game,” as the men’s fashion label has its corporate headquarters in the nearby town of Nagold.

“LESSONS LEARNED” FROM THE CENTER MANAGEMENT

Meanwhile, Florian Brosing, project manager at 3d berlin, goes through the entire mall point by point. The young man photographs all the shopfronts for Milaneo’s guidance system. Heimatliebe, Reserved, Primark, Pull & Bear, tegut, Starbucks, Linas Köttbullar – all the mall’s 200 shops will be easy to find using Milaneo’s 3-D guidance system with both bird’s-eye and walking perspective. “The photos I’m shooting will significantly improve the walking version,” explains Brosing. “In about two weeks, they will replace the visualizations that the guidance system currently uses.”

It is now 5 pm. The ostensible chaos in and in front of Milaneo has been noticeably reduced. It’s time for a “lessons learned” in the premises of the



middle of the store are still missing. The latter is due the next morning at 7 o’clock – exactly one hour before the deadline that ECE has set for tenants to be finished with their stores.

This strict deadline is essential because a little later, journalists and television crews are expected at a press conference followed by a tour of the three sales levels. They shouldn’t end up stumbling over mops or trolleys full of goods. A reception for 1,400 invited guests is planned for the evening. Dominik Tempelfeld, managing director of the concept and decoration company dquadrat, attends the press conference and the evening reception with 12 others. “We have been working since the early hours on setting up the stage, the style, the decorations, and everything that goes with it,” says Tempelfeld. “We’ll also definitely need a night shift to take everything down again.” While his staff builds the stage in the spacious food court next to the Nordsee restaurant and Tokyo Sushi, other members of his staff are working on the decorations one floor below. They’re tying together small table arrangements of white tumeric flowers, the themed flower for the evening gala at Milaneo.

The celebration will focus on the “urban” part of the shopping center, which reflects the vibrant life of a modern city, with lots of glass, lively squares and terraces, as well as a variety of cafes and restaurants. Milaneo stretches over three levels with approximately 43,000 m² of retail space, apportioned into three closely connected buildings.

IN A NUTSHELL: MILANEO

In July 2012, construction began on the new Milaneo in Stuttgart’s European quarter, just a short walk from the main train station. It celebrated its grand opening on October 9th, 2014. Since then, it has been home to approximately 43,000 m² of retail space spread over 200 shops, such as Primark, Zara, Pull & Bear, Media Markt, Calzedonia, crocs, and tegut. The Milaneo quarter also includes 415 rental apartments, a hotel with 165 rooms, and offices with approximately 7,400 m² of gross floor area, scheduled to be built on the floors above the shopping center by summer 2015. ECE developed the quarter together with its partners Hamburg Trust, Strabag Real Estate, and Bayerische Hausbau with an investment of about €550 million.





Roland Wolf of Digel is in a celebratory mood. He is about to toast to the successful store with his staff.

120 PAGES OF CHECKLISTS

“That’s nothing. Yesterday, we worked through 120 pages of checklists,” confides Axel Diewald, Regional Director Southwest & Switzerland at ECE, during the briefing. “Of the 100,000 details to be taken care of before opening a shopping center, we have completed almost all of them. We are officially on the home stretch. We can do it!” Diewald speaks from experience: This will be his 13th ribbon-cutting.



center management, which, by the way, is easy to find thanks to the 3-D guidance system. Full of concentration, center manager Andrea Poul discusses the events of the day as well as some issues yet to be resolved with the opening team of about 40 people as well, of course, as the challenges still to come, of which there are enough. For example, one of the shops on the first floor will definitely not be ready by the deadline. There is still much to be done there. Poul allows an exception as that area is not affected by the evening reception. The four bicycle rickshaws, which are supposed to advertise for the new shopping center in downtown Stuttgart, are still awaiting official approval. Obtaining the permit is just a formality, one employee assures them. The customer parking spaces haven’t been numbered. It has been contracted out, but will not happen for another two weeks, according to an in-house technician. And so it goes on...



Bustling activity – even with heavy equipment – until the very last minute.



Visitors crowd Milaneo for the first time on October 9, 2014.

And he was right. Milaneo celebrated its grand opening on October 9, 2014. 134,000 visitors stormed the center that day, shoppers clustered in front of stores like Primark and Snipes. Once again, shop and center staff had their hands full.

