**Italian design dominates the new generation of IntercityHotels**

**Conspicuously inconspicuous**

* **IntercityHotel 2.0: Fresh look for new buildings**
* **Filigree design requires reliable hardware solutions**
* **Smartphone key or key card: It’s up to the guest!**
* **Being at home is no longer tied to a certain place –   
  it is a feeling**
* **Design aesthetics and high quality – at a good price**

Like being in your own living room – but much better looking! Italian architect and designer Matteo Thun designed the interior of the IntercityHotels of the future in accordance with this principle. The prototype is the IntercityHotel in Brunswick, which opened at the end of 2016 and will be the pioneering design for all new hotels in the chain that are opening in the next few years. You might assume that a “big gesture” is called for, as is the case in many role model functions such as this. However, Matteo Thun is a master of understatement, and this is precisely the approach with which he impresses the guests. “Zero Design” is the name for the new “less is more” approach of the IntercityHotel managers: Instead of spectacular effects, they put their faith in uncomplicated hospitality in a 100% feel-good ambience. Häfele, the internationally operating company for hardware solutions and electronic access control systems, accompanied the decision-makers involved in construction right from the start as a competent planning partner. They used Häfele’s 360° comprehensive project solutions for selecting many products with which Matteo Thun’s ideas for a new hotel generation could become reality.

**IntercityHotel 2.0: Fresh look for new buildings**

The IntercityHotel Brunswick is one of 42 upper middle class hotels which IntercityHotel GmbH operates as a subsidiary of traditional Frankfurt-based Steigenberger Hotels AG worldwide. Brunswick architects Reichel&Stauth and prasch buken partner architects from Hamburg were responsible for the design and implementation planning of the business hotel with a large conference area. Both of them have already implemented several construction projects for both the hotel operator and the builder, B&L Real Estate GmbH from Hamburg.

The six-storey new development was erected with a gross floor area of about 7,750 m2 in the middle of the BraWoPark business and shopping area, and provides the good connection to all of the important hot spots of the city and the surroundings that is expected by IntercityHotel guests with its central proximity to the main train station. The interior architecture from Matteo Thun is breathing fresh life into the hotel concept of the business brand, and bringing lightness, spaciousness and a harmonious colour concept and pleasant privacy into the world of business travellers and city tourists.

**Filigree design requires reliable hardware solutions**

Conspicuously inconspicuous, filigree robustness: Architectural hardware and furniture fittings have played their part in making these apparent opposites work out in Thun’s design concept. Products from the Häfele product range provide top quality (multi-)functionality in the entire hotel. Some of them are visible, but many do their job subtly installed in the furniture. The hotel furniture is not exactly mollycoddled: In the first three days after opening, the hotel had 100% occupancy, says a satisfied Sabrina Lode, hotel manager of the IntercityHotel Brunswick. With 348 beds and an anticipated average utilisation of at least 70 percent, it is easy to calculate that a large number of guests will use the furnishings, and therefore also put them to the test. All the more reason to pay attention to quality and durability.

In order to show filigree design but still be usable in a practical way, reliable hardware solutions are required. The fittings that are used make easy and smooth operation possible without using a great deal of force, and lead to long-lasting interior solutions. This applies to drawers in the same way as it does to sliding doors, partition wall systems and the many other accessories which make innovative hotel facilities so practical.

**Smartphone key or key card: It’s up to the guest!**

One of the biggest innovations in the new IntercityHotels from a technical and administrative point of view is the mobile check-in concept based on the Dialock transponder-supported, electronic identification and access control system from Häfele and the hotel app of software partner hotelbird. Communication with Dialock takes place using Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE). The guest receives the smartphone key on the app by request, and carries out check-in, payment and check-out at reception casually and in an instant, without waiting times. The guest can open his room door and gain access to all other booked areas of the hotel with the smartphone key. Other individual functions, additional services and offers from the hotel or individual sightseeing tips can also be integrated in the app.

Anyone who does not want to use the smartphone key can alternatively use the branded key card as an access key and room key. This is issued by the staff at the so-called “check-in islands”, the signal red reception cubes in the lobby. Both the smartphone key and the key card correspond touchlessly with the Dialock DT 710 door terminal at the guest rooms and the Dialock WT 210 wall terminals at the main entrance.

Dialock makes the everyday life of the hotelier easier: Access managers can obtain an overview of all locking procedures extremely quickly, organise locking authorisations with ease and change them in a jiffy if necessary. The system can also be configured for many different additional requirements: Be it for the car park barrier, the lift controller, operating the coffee machine or making the connection for cashless payment – Dialock can be flexibly adapted to new and changing requirements.

“In addition to our new hotel in Brunswick, we are also using Dialock in the IntercityHotel in Duisburg, and will also be using it in our new Steigenberger Hotel in Munich. The system simply provides our guests with the best possible convenience, flexibility and independence. Uncomplicated booking, digital check-in and check-out and payment of the hotel bill using the hotel app saves time and money. It also takes a great deal of the pressure off the employees at reception”, confirms Christopher Holschier, Director Corporate Communications at Steigenberger Hotels AG.

**“Being at home is no longer tied to a certain place – it is a feeling”**

… says Matteo Thun. The reception zone of a new IntercityHotel is therefore designed to be extremely homely and spacious. Nature comes into the building like it does in an Italian piazza, with leafy walls and real trees. The guests can spend time in different areas, however they want. There is the long bistro bar made from solid oak and patina-plated brass, large “social tables” or cosy leather armchairs grouped around small tables. Open shelving with cubic wooden compartments separate the areas effectively as dividing elements, but also provide lightness and transparency.

Authentic materials and fresh, fruity colours make the stay a haptic and visual experience – also in the 174 guest rooms which are distributed around the upper floors of the new building. The rooms, which are about 20 square metres in size, are functional yet cosily equipped, and have a comfortable double bed and a compact cabinet combination, which provides convenient multi-functionality with many Häfele products and a design language that fits in with the designs. A wardrobe with a floor-to-ceiling mirror and a robust luggage rack is also integrated here, as is a safe and minibar and a small service niche for making tea in the “Business Plus” category. An eye-catcher is the wall-filling map of the area behind the bed, which provides the guests with orientation in the good old analogue way – in a suitable way for the location of the respective IntercityHotel, of course. On the opposite side is the digital pendant: the media wall with electrification options for the smartphone and a work island for the laptop.

**Design aesthetics and high quality – at a good price**

The wet cells are designed as internal zones and are illuminated towards the room via glazing. The sliding doors save space and give you freedom of movement here: The Slido Design 40-V sliding door fittings allow the door to be moved easily without using force. The soft closing mechanism at both sides ensures that operation is extremely quiet. Slido Design also dominates the room as a visible design element. “Quality and an optimum price/performance ratio characterise all Häfele products which we have chosen for our designs”, say the planners at Matteo Thun. “And the company’s design aesthetics corresponds with our ideas”. This applies to the fire safety tested and certified door handles of the Startec PDH 4 series, which fit in with the overall design concept with satin stainless steel finish and have therefore been used for all of the doors in the building, as well as the Slido Wall partition wall systems, with which the planners have provided maximum flexibility without costing the earth in the conference area. If necessary, the area measuring about 200 square metres can be divided into several independent, soundproofed conference rooms. However, if the room is needed as a spacious unit, the floor-to-ceiling panels disappear discreetly into wall niches with just a few manual operations. In spite of having a wide range of possible shapes, colours and materials, Thun chose an inconspicuous, simple wooden decoration for the wall panels – with a running track integrated in the ceiling and no visible handles, the design is therefore concentrated on the partition wall elements themselves. “The discovery of simplicity” is probably the best description for the design of the new InnercityHotel generation. Stylistically and creatively: Häfele made it possible.

**PROJECT DATA IntercityHotel Brunswick**

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| **Architecture** | Reichel + Stauth, Brunswick prasch buken partner architekten, Hamburg |
| **Interior architecture** | Matteo Thun & Partners s.r.l., Milan |
| **Operator / user** | IntercityHotel GmbH (subsidiary of Steigenberger Hotels AG), Deutsche Hospitality |
| **Investor / builder** | B&L Willy-Brandt-Platz Braunschweig GmbH & Co. KG, Hamburg |
| **Size** | 7,750 m2 of gross floor area; 174 rooms, conference area, restaurant, bar, lounge |
| **Year** | 2016 |
| **Homepage** | https://www.intercityhotel.com/hotels/alle-hotels/deutschland/braunschweig/intercityhotel-braunschweig |
| **Project address** | Willy-Brandt-Platz 3, 38102 Brunswick |
| **Products** | DIALOCK ELECTRONIC ACCESS CONTROL SYSTEM   * DT 710 door terminal on room door with BLE / smartphone key * WT 210 wall terminal in the corridors and at the main entrance with BLE / smartphone key * Dialock hotel software with interface to hotel management system (HMS) and to the hotelbird app (for the smartphone key function)   ARCHITECTURAL HARDWARE   * Mechanical locking system * Slido Wall partition wall systems * Slido Design 40-V sliding door fittings with two-sided soft closing mechanism at the bathroom entrances * StarTec PDH 4103 lever handle set * StarTec PDH 4106 lever handle set at the escape doors   FURNITURE FITTINGS   * LED light in the furniture Loox * Wardrobe hooks / folding hooks * Safe * Minibar |

Further information is available from

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Captions:

330917-A\_Fig1\_InterBruns.jpg

The IntercityHotel Brunswick is one of 42 upper middle class hotels which IntercityHotel GmbH operates as a subsidiary of Frankfurt-based Steigenberger Hotels AG worldwide.

330917-A\_Fig2\_InterBruns.jpg

The guest is also given access to the main entrance with a smartphone key and a key card.

330917-A\_Fig3\_InterBruns.jpg

330917-A\_Fig4\_InterBruns.jpg

One of the biggest innovations in the new IntercityHotels is the mobile check-in concept based on the Dialock transponder-supported, electronic identification and access control system from Häfele and the hotel app of software partner hotelbird. Access with smartphone key or key card? It’s up to the guest!

330917-A\_Fig5\_InterBruns.jpg

The reception has not yet quite disappeared, in spite of the mobile check-in facility. If someone doesn’t want to use the smartphone key they can alternatively use the conventional key card, which is issued by the personnel at the “check-in islands”.

330917-A\_Fig6\_InterBruns.jpg

Like being in your own living room – but much better looking! Italian architect and designer Matteo Thun designed the interior of the IntercityHotels of the future in accordance with this principle.

330917-A\_Fig7\_InterBruns.jpg

The guest rooms, which are about 20 m2 in size, are functional yet cosy. The interior equipment contains many Häfele products.

330917-A\_Fig8\_InterBruns.jpg

The bathrooms are designed as internal zones: The sliding doors with Häfele Slido Design 40-V sliding door fittings save space and provide freedom of movement.

330917-A\_Fig9\_InterBruns.jpg

Many Häfele products are used in the rooms: A robust luggage rack is integrated in the wardrobe with floor-to-ceiling mirror, and there is a safe and a minibar in the cabinet next to it.

330917-A\_Fig10\_InterBruns.jpg

The conference area can easily be divided into several independent soundproofed rooms using the Slido Wall partition wall systems.

Photos: Häfele

**Häfele** is an internationally organized family owned and operated business with headquarters in Nagold, Germany. It was founded in 1923 and today serves the furniture industry, architects, planners, cabinet makers/joiners as well as dealers in over 150 countries around the world with furniture fittings and architectural hardware as well as electronic access control systems. Häfele develops and manufactures hardware fittings and electronic access control systems in 6 factories in Germany and Hungary. In the 2016 financial year the Häfele Group achieved exports of 79% with over 7300 employees in 37 subsidiaries and numerous additional dealerships around the world and revenue of 1.3 billion Euros.