

Collaboration launched with ecoATM

Smart disposal of mobile phones: MediaMarkt machine swaps old smartphones for gift cards for the first time

Ingolstadt, 18.09.2019: Germany's households are full of old smartphones. Around 124 million unused mobile phones are lying around in drawers, according to a study by Bitkom in 2018.¹ But for all those for whom out of sight has truly meant out of mind, MediaMarkt now has a solution: the ecoATM mobile phone reverse vending machine. Simply plug in your unwanted phone, have its trade-in value automatically estimated, and then receive a shopping voucher of the equivalent value – all while doing your bit for the environment. MediaMarkt is collaborating with the successful US supplier ecoATM. Customers can already test these phone recycling kiosks at ten MediaMarkt stores in Bonn, Düsseldorf, Erding, Eschweiler, Ingolstadt, Cologne, Landshut, Munich-Haidhausen, Munich-Solln and Rosenheim.



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Old mobile phones are like imminent tax returns: they lurk in the back of your mind, but it's all too easy to prevaricate and not do anything about them! After all, selling second-hand phones in classified ads is often a bit too tiresome. Then again, you shouldn't just throw them away either, because mobile phones contain numerous heavy metals and harmful substances. "By introducing these ecoATM machines, we're augmenting our range of customer services with a practical and above all green way of conveniently disposing of unwanted mobile telephones," explains Sonja Moosburger, Managing Director of MediaMarktSaturn's innovation unit N3XT. Customers can use the machine to dispose of their old cell phones quickly and easily, regardless of brand, condition or model. As well as immediately receiving a gift card, they can rest assured that they're protecting the environment. Phones deposited in the machine are either resold and hence reused, or if they're no longer in working order, properly disposed of.

Pilot project with ecoATM

Mobile phone recycling machines will initially be trialled at ten MediaMarkt stores in Germany. This pilot project is being carried out in conjunction with ecoATM. Founded in the USA in 2009, the company has a wealth of expertise in the environmentally friendly resale and professional disposal of electronic devices using reverse vending machines. So far, ecoATM has recycled over 22 million mobile phones worldwide. "We've been offering our services successfully in the USA and the UK for several years now. By launching ecoATM at MediaMarkt in Germany, we're continuing to expand our global presence," explains Dave Maquera, CEO of ecoATM.

There's no simpler way to get rid of your old phone!

Exchanging an unwanted phone at the kiosk only takes about seven minutes. After answering a few questions, you connect your mobile phone to the machine. The device is then examined electronically and the IMEI number is read. The machine then estimates the phone's value, which depends on factors such as its age and condition. If the customer accepts

the amount offered, they receive a voucher which can then be exchanged for a MediaMarkt gift card at the store and used the next time they buy anything.

Even broken phones may qualify for a gift card

ecoATM kiosks even accept faulty mobile phones, for example with a broken display or water damage. Although they take all types of mobile phones, other electronic devices and accessories aren't accepted. If the ecoATM kiosk assesses a mobile phone as worthless, it still offers to professionally dispose of it free of charge. That's important, since according to a survey commissioned by MediaMarkt, almost 70 per cent of Germans believe that when it comes to the disposal of electronic devices, environmental sustainability is either important or very important.ⁱⁱ But if you'd rather keep your mobile phone after all, the process can be stopped at any time until you finally consent to its exchange.

About MediaMarkt

MediaMarkt, Germany's and Europe's number one consumer electronics retailer, was founded in 1979, and is nowadays managed as an independent retail brand under the auspices of the MediaMarktSaturn Retail Group. The company currently operates 275 stores in Germany and employs more than 14,100 people. All in all, the over 850 MediaMarkt stores in 13 countries throughout Europe have a total headcount of approximately 45,000. MediaMarkt consistently applies its brand core 'Pleasure' to its product range, pricing, customer advice and services. Its declared aim is to make MediaMarkt the most pleasurable place for consumer electronics – anytime and anywhere. In addition to a constantly up-to-date range of brand-name items at permanently low prices, its successful concept includes personal advice and a comprehensive portfolio of services. MediaMarkt has positioned itself as a successful multichannel provider and thus combines the advantages of physical and online retail under a trusted brand.

ⁱ www.bitkom.org/Presse/Presseinformation/124-Millionen-Alt-Handys-liegen-ungenutzt-herum.html

ⁱⁱ Survey conducted by MARKETAGENT on behalf of MediaMarkt, April 2019, representative sample from throughout Germany, n = 1,000, respondents aged 18–69