



# A Sustainable Cycle for IT Equipment

## Magdeburg firm IT4Trade GmbH extends the service life of IT equipment

Companies based in Saxony-Anhalt are developing intelligent ways of saving energy and resources. Sustainability has become an important issue in all industries, including the information technology (IT) sector. Green technologies are in demand, as are solutions for the efficient use of electronic equipment and the avoidance of e-waste. IT4Trade GmbH based in Magdeburg is a prime example of how companies in Saxony-Anhalt are rising to the challenge: the online retailer for new and reconditioned network hardware is doing its bit by extending the service life of IT equipment.

We produce many millions of tonnes of e-waste globally each year. But much of what ends up on the scrap heap could be reused, repaired or recycled, which would help to protect the environment and save resources. Steffen Huntscha, Riccardo Clauß, Andrius Gelazius and Alexander Kashetsky made this their mission and founded IT4Trade GmbH in 2015. Their strategy was to buy and recondition used network hardware and to then sell it on for reuse. "We started out with network hardware, storage servers and other equipment," explains Alexander Kashetsky. It was clear to him and his colleagues right from the start that if something can be fixed, it can also be reused. They soon realized that they were blazing a trail in that regard. "We had a hard time convincing people at the beginning," says Riccardo Clauß. "Not everyone was persuaded that a used switch or router would work just as well as a new one."

### High-end IT at affordable prices

Steffen Huntscha has seen how this attitude has fundamentally changed over recent years as awareness of environmental issues and climate change has increased. "People are now much more open to the idea of reusing equipment," he says. Companies and private households are now using reconditioned IT hardware discarded from data centers and other businesses. "This allows small and medium-sized businesses with a limited budget to install a high-end IT infrastructure at affordable prices," says Alexander Kashetsky. "They can rest assured that we will supply them with excellent quality equipment as everything undergoes rigorous testing in our certified technology department. That's why we include a two-year warranty."

### Committed to complete recycling

In addition, the portfolio of IT4Trade GmbH includes new products and equipment that has been reconditioned by the manufacturer itself. Its scheme also works in the opposite direction: individuals and companies can trade in their old or surplus hardware to IT4Trade in return for payment, completing the sustainable cycle. For IT4Trade, the advantages of this type of sustainable business model are plain to see. "Using second-hand equipment saves money and a considerable amount of resources," says Andrius Gelazius. That is the company's primary focus. However, not all of the equipment that it receives can be put back on to the market. If a device cannot be saved, it is not simply thrown out: the IT experts remove everything that can still be used, which is often many valuable components such as the main memory or printed circuit boards. They then give the remaining materials to a recycling company that they work with, which recycles and reuses as much of the raw materials as possible.

### Next stop: expansion and more expertise for sustainable IT solutions

The four founders have now made a name for themselves with their sustainability expertise as an online retailer for new and reconditioned network hardware from the leading manufacturers. The company headquarters in Magdeburg is a hotbed of IT expertise and environmentally friendly ways of reusing IT equipment. "This is an ideal location for our work," says Clauß. "It's well connected, there is great interest in what we are doing and we can tell that there is a lot of engagement with sustainability issues. We couldn't think of a better location for our company." IT4Trade GmbH works for individual firms and local small and medium-sized businesses, but also for multinational companies. It now has its sights set on further growth and plans to hire new recruits and expand its customer base. "We want to become a system developer that offers everything from system analysis to technology installation," says Steffen Huntscha. Their plans are already underway. IT4Trade is currently supporting doctors' practices with software and hardware solutions, and intends to continue their work in this area. "We want to establish ourselves here in Saxony-Anhalt as the go-to point of contact for sustainable IT solutions," says Clauß.

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