

Press Release

The OYO is coming – Thalia is setting a new benchmark in the German-language book market with its own eReader which represents the next step towards the future of reading

***Hagen, 4 September 2010.* Book retailing group Thalia is launching its own OYO eReader in October, marking a milestone in the German-language book trade. The OYO will combine the advantages of the online channel with the expertise of some 5,000 bookshop staff. Its reader's excellent price/performance ratio and an extensive eBook range in German will enable Thalia to underline its multichannel capability and position itself strongly against the eReader offerings of leading online book retailers. Overall, several hundred thousand titles will be available in the pre-installed Thalia eBookshop when the reader goes on sale – and new titles will constantly be added. This means Thalia will have one of the most extensive offerings of German-language reading content available.**

“The digital wave has reached the German-language book market. Sales of eBooks are forecast to top 60 million by 2015 in Germany alone.* In our OYO eReader we are focusing on this new target group of digital book lovers and offering a unique blend of bookselling expertise and one of the largest ranges of German-language reading content,” declares Michael Busch, managing director of Thalia Holding, in explaining the decision to develop a proprietary eReader.

Shortcomings in the launch of eReaders in the past have often centred on the pricing of the hardware, expert and personal advice and attractive content. “As a leading multichannel bookseller in German-speaking countries we are ideally placed to play a key role in the digitisation of the book market,” continues Busch. “At the same time our OYO represents a genuine alternative to the offers of the major online players: our goal is to ensure our customers receive every book in whatever form in the shortest possible time, irrespective of when and where they want it – including first-class advice and unrivalled service, of course. The OYO will enable us to underline our multichannel expertise more clearly than ever before as it enables consumers to fit Thalia in their pocket and represents the link between the high street bookshop and the online shop.”

The OYO was previewed today at the Thalia press conference at the IFA show in Berlin. The reader makes the issue of eReading more interesting than ever before for end customers in

Germany: as the market leader for printed and digital books in German-speaking countries, Thalia offers one-stop expert advice and first-class service through its 5,000 or so bookshop staff. Its approx. 300 high street bookshops and its online shop give Thalia a decisive edge over purely online players.

At a retail price of 139 euros, the OYO has an outstanding price/performance ratio and offers a host of technical highlights: the W-LAN function enables wireless download, a 2 GB memory offers storage space for more than 1,000 eBooks, and a highly sensitive touchscreen ensures user-friendly operation. A clear benefit for customers is that all digital books sold via the Thalia eBookshop are offered in the common eBook formats and can be read not only on the OYO, but also on other eReaders.

The OYO provides access to a specially developed Thalia eBookshop which will hold several hundred thousand book titles when it goes on sale and will be continually expanded. This means customers will be able to choose from the largest German-language eBook range which also contains international best-sellers. The shop also incorporates a search interface optimised for eBooks. A simple press of a menu button takes the user directly to the huge Thalia bookshop from where eBooks can be easily and conveniently purchased, downloaded and read – at any time and without any need for a computer.

The OYO will be available from October from all Thalia bookshops in Germany, Austria and Switzerland and from the online shop. It can also be pre-ordered from Monday, 6 September at mein-oyo.com. Thalia is planning to launch the OYO 3G professional model at the end of the year which will also permit eBooks to be downloaded via mobile phone networks, i.e. independently of a home internet connection.

* Source: "eBooks und eReader: Marktpotenziale in Deutschland" [eBooks and eReaders: market potentials in Germany], Kirchner + Robrecht GmbH. 2009

Pictures may be downloaded from www.thalia.de/oyo_presse

About Thalia:

With almost 300 bookshops in Germany, Austria and Switzerland, more than 5,000 employees and annual sales in excess of 800 million euros (2008/09), Thalia is the market leader in the retail book trade in German-speaking countries. The company is also the only genuine multichannel dealer on the German book market: with equal expertise in classic high street and online bookshops and close to the customer, Thalia offers its customers expert advice and inspiring purchasing experiences in both the "real" and the "virtual" book worlds. In this "best of many worlds" bookselling tradition is combined with great devotion to promoting reading and the arts – while also being absolutely committed to the new digital options for the medium of books: leading eBook retailer, sale of a range of eReader models, and download terminals for "mobile books" (book content on mobile phones); these are just three aspects of the varied digital offer available from Thalia. Thalia, which was established in 1919 in the building of the Thalia Theatre in Hamburg, has been owned by Douglas Holding AG since 2001.

Press contact:

Mirjam Berle, Corporate Communications
Thalia Holding GmbH, Kabeler Strasse 4, D-58099 Hagen
Tel.: +49 (0)2331 690-6319, fax: +49 (0)2331 690-6322, mobile: +49 (0)175 2434539
E-mail: m.berle@thalia.de, website: www.thalia.de