

FAQs for Kai C. Thomas, Founder and Managing Partner of XCYPDE GmbH

Mr. Thomas, how did you become involved with digital material selection for real estate?

Kai C. Thomas: We were originally active with our software applications in the mechanical engineering industry. We developed educational solutions for training employees on machines back then. One of our customers then asked if we could make it possible to tour his new office building in virtual reality since it was difficult for him to imagine the plans. That was when we started considering the different realms of construction work. We quickly realized there was a potential gap in the market where it would be possible to not only tour properties in virtual reality, but to also select real products as materials – and to do it all automatically. That laid the foundation for PORTER.

What vision did you have when developing PORTER?

Kai C. Thomas: The goal was to create an intelligent software platform that provides device-independent, interactive high-end visualization in real time. I know, that sentence needs some explanation... Okay, real time means the data is made available to our customers at the exact second they need it. That allows us to sustainably support the various stages of real estate marketing.

Why do you connect to “real” manufacturer products instead of using standard 3D libraries?

Kai C. Thomas: The point was not to create stylish renderings that might not reflect reality, which is why we decided against using standard libraries of 3D products and instead connect to real products from manufacturer databases. We also didn't want to use chic textures that might raise expectations if they aren't feasible within an end-customer's budget. End users should have control of their budgets at all times. And our actual target customers, real estate project developers, should be able to optimally advise their customer groups at all times and control the sales process with more time efficiency than has ever been possible before.

And what exactly does “device independent” mean?

Kai C. Thomas: It means that PORTER can be used on any end device, meaning a computer, smartphone or tablet. Device independence was particularly important because you can never expect a user to always be equipped with the latest technologies. At the same time, every user has a “right” to make their own processes even more efficient and to improve them. Digitization offers so many opportunities. With our vision of software for material selection and interactive visualization, we want to help make SMEs in the real estate industry even better and make the benefits of digitization even more useful. That's why we also offer different technologies, so we can give users custom-tailored and leading-edge support in every stage of construction and sales.

Which technologies and features make PORTER stand out?

Kai C. Thomas: Virtual reality in conjunction with artificial intelligence (AI) are the core technologies of the software platform. Our AI interprets 2D plans, which it uses to build BIM-ready 3D data. We open up a pathway for users to save lots of time early on in the design and planning stage that would otherwise be spent on the often complex transformation of “thoughts” into data that you can actually

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walk through. It can also be used, for example, during the approval process. We of course also process 3D data directly from different planning tools.

So when is it actually possible to virtually tour a real estate project?

Kai C. Thomas: Immediately. Once the 3D data is available and has been automated and intelligently optimized for real-time applications, the data or project can be toured immediately using the cloud-based platform. That means you can either immerse yourself in the real estate project in virtual reality or use augmented reality to project the design onto the construction site to then walk through the planned property. Or the web connection can be used to integrate an interactive tour into a website. And all of this is performed against the background of having manufacturer product collections available that can be used to select materials for the property.

How do XCYPDE customers react when selecting materials for their real estate project with PORTER for the first time?

Kai C. Thomas: The advantage is that customers are actually able to walk through the property while selecting materials. And that means with absolute freedom. It's great fun for first-time users and sparks an almost childlike sense of joy. That also has a lot to do with the new possibilities that are offered: We're not talking about some movie that determines what you see. We're talking about customers having the freedom, if they wish, to "crawl" under tables or swap out the basic installations and furniture however they please, and that means they know exactly how their property will look in the future. The application itself doesn't matter at that point. Hotel room planning, yacht interior design, two-room apartments, office blocks – it can all be done. The PORTER user is the king of his data and decides which technologies to use on our platform based on the goal to be achieved.

Who benefits from using PORTER?

Kai C. Thomas: Anyone selecting materials for their property and who want to give an audience innovative access to their real estate.

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