

Cool Eyewear and “Much More Besides”

Fulfilment by Amazon (FBA) is an important element of Eye-Alpin’s growth strategy that is geared toward expansion beyond its core business. High-quality sports goggles and sunglasses for every sports and leisure occasion are the traditional focus of the company’s activities. Eye-Alpin’s recipe for success unites a design that is every bit as cool as other, well-known, trendy labels with a significantly lower price. Eye-Alpin is not only the name of a retail enterprise owned by Matthias Rosemann but also a registered trademark in all EU states, under which the firm develops and markets its own eyewear line along with various other products.

Retail Revolution

Matthias Rosemann is descended from an old trading family with a long tradition in retail store management. Despite this, he is not ashamed to admit to a revolutionary transformation: “We sell exclusively online today; it’s the key to maintaining our exceptional value.” He was quick to recognize the sign of the times—and make the right choices for the future: in 1998 he launched into electronic buying and selling, initially as a private endeavour, then as a commercial operation in 2000. He bid farewell to stationary trading in 2001, opened his own web store www.eye-alpin.de in 2004, and finally became an Amazon merchant in September 2007—a decision he has never once regretted.

“In 2008 our sales with Amazon were 80 percent of those recorded with another online channel in the same period. This year our Amazon sales passed the mark of the previous 12-month period as early as June 10,” reports a pleased Eye-Alpin proprietor, who goes on to cite several reasons for this resounding success in the same breath: “This is due, at least in part, to Fulfilment by Amazon, even though we only joined in March 2009. End customer awareness of Amazon is rising all the time. Amazon is increasingly attractive because more and more retailers are changing over to it—as a reputable provider on a reputable platform. This is something that every customer appreciates.” Matthias Rosemann’s opinion carries considerable force. After all, he can look back on extensive experience in online selling and as a founding member of BVOH (the German E-Business Association); he has excellent insight into those issues closest to the hearts of commercial merchants.



Matthias Rosemann,
Owner and Managing Director

Products

Sports goggles, sunglasses, sports & leisure goods

History

- 1998:** Start online sales
- 2004:** Opened web store
- 2007:** Selling on Amazon
- 2009:** Joined FBA



“In 2008 our sales with Amazon were 80 percent of those recorded with another major online channel in the same period. This year, our Amazon sales passed the mark for the previous twelve-month period as early as June 10. This is at least partly due to Fulfilment by Amazon.”

Matthias Rosemann



Matthias Rosemann, proprietor and Managing Director of Eye-Alpin



"Fulfilment is easily the best thing Amazon has on the market. This is where the future lies, without a doubt. It lets entrepreneurs concentrate on the essentials."

Matthias Rosemann

Yet how does Fulfilment by Amazon fit into the concept of this retail company, which in addition to Matthias, includes his wife—as a qualified ophthalmic optician, she has a vast knowledge covering all aspects of eyewear—and a third person to handle shipping? According to Matthias, it fits like a glove—for several reasons. FBA gives small teams urgently needed flexibility with regard to storage space, packing, and dispatch tasks. It frees capacity to undertake special campaigns and formulate strategies for long-term business expansion.

"Thanks to Fulfilment by Amazon, we can draw on almost unlimited stock maintaining capacity and are no longer forced to provide huge amounts of warehouse space on our own premises," says Matthias. "We save a lot of time and human resources through not having to pack the goods for shipping to end customers ourselves." What's more, FBA is altogether affordable. "If we deliver from here, the costs are around 90 Euro cents higher per parcel than through Amazon, once we take into account the carton, packing material, etc.," he adds to underline his case. "Sensational" is the word Matthias Rosemann uses to describe the customer service Amazon offers its FBA customers. His experience to date has shown this service to be extremely friendly and fast – an assessment that is equally applicable to Amazon's technical support for sellers.

When asked how long it takes for the goods to become available for online sale after they reach the Amazon fulfilment centre, Rosemann answers concisely, "It couldn't be faster." From what he has seen so far, it is only when Amazon is in the midst of special volume-selling campaigns that the maximum period of 48 hours actually comes into play.

FBA Opens the Door to "Much More Besides"

The company's relatively short experience with FBA has already confirmed one prediction: The "Get Free Shipping" label that is attached to its products and the eligibility for inclusion in the Amazon Prime programme that results from FBA membership have been instrumental in boosting sales. Rosemann illustrates this claim with a simple example: "A while ago, we started selling knee supports for athletes. We set out with a stock of 240 and placed them with amazon.de. During the four months or so they were handled by and shipped from an external provider, we sold one knee support every two or three days. We then increased our inventory and delegated everything to FBA. Since then, the acceleration of our business with this product has been breathtaking—in the meantime, we turn over six or seven every day without batting an eye."

The highly flexible infrastructure provided by Fulfilment by Amazon has enabled Eye-Alpin to broaden its own commercial base. The company is currently in the process of extending its portfolio substantially—rucksacks, swimwear, swim goggles, and more. "FBA is easily the best thing Amazon has on the market. This is where the future lies, without a doubt. It lets entrepreneurs concentrate on the essentials. The number one argument for us is that it works not just for sports goggles but for absolutely everything connected to sports and leisure," says Eye-Alpin's proprietor, summing up. He is now looking forward to the day when Amazon decides to offer its merchants fulfilment for external sales as well.