

Press Release

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Otto Group receives FSC Award as most sustainable furniture retailer in Europe

In Milan last Friday, the Forest Stewardship Council® (FSC®) announced the winners of its fourth FSC Furniture Awards, with the Otto Group being awarded the coveted “FSC Retailer of the Year” accolade as Europe’s most sustainable furniture retailer. In line with its motto “Better living, healthy forests”, the non-profit organization, with its focus on responsible forest management, applauded companies in the European furniture industry for their commitment to sustainability.

The “Retailer of the Year” title recognizes the Otto Group's long-standing commitment to sustainable and responsible forestry. Jury members paid tribute to the international retailing and services group's role as an FSC pioneer and one of the most important multipliers in the furniture sector.

“This award recognizes the path we took decades ago in only offering furniture made from sustainably certified wood,” says a delighted Miriam Arndt, CR Manager Materials & Circularity from the Otto Group's sustainability division. More than ten years ago, the Group set itself the ambitious strategic target of offering only FSC-certified products for both its own and licensed brands by 2025. Currently, 78 percent of the wooden furniture on offer is already certified. Nevertheless, Miriam Arndt urges caution: “We are currently experiencing bottlenecks in the availability of FSC-certified wood. In Germany in particular, there are just not enough certified forest areas. This means, of course, that materials have to be procured using longer transport routes all of which negatively impacts the carbon footprint.” This is why, she adds, the Otto Group is exploring how it can actively become involved in increasing FSC-certified forest area in Germany and is looking at what feasible alternative materials are available to support its responsible procurement strategy while focussing on regional value creation. This is key to fully hitting its targets.

OTTO excels in FSC furniture

Within the Group, OTTO is by far the largest retailer of FSC-certified wooden furniture. “As Germany's largest online furniture retailer, OTTO bears special responsibility when it comes to wood from responsible forestry,” explains Tobias Gruber, Head of Sustainability at OTTO, “and sustainable materials and products are, therefore, central to our new sustainability strategy. We have set ourselves ambitious sustainability targets for the years ahead, particularly for our own and licensed brands, including furniture. And so, it makes perfect sense to work closely together with the FSC,” he continues.

Paper and packaging targets

The Otto Group has not only set itself ambitious sustainability goals when it comes to furniture: FSC certification is also a significant factor when it comes to paper and packaging. In Europe, almost 97 percent of all Otto Group shipping packaging carries the FSC logo. Moreover, 67 percent of the paper used by the Group for catalogues and advertising material is FSC-certified.

The Otto Group has been a member of FSC Germany since 2006, a manifest commitment to supporting responsible forest management. This was followed in 2010 by the acquisition of an advertising license (FSC® N001642), which allows the FSC trademark to be used in a variety of ways – from product advertising to statements referencing the Otto Group’s commitment to sustainability. By promoting its FSC certification and investing in forest certification, the Otto Group is championing sustainable forest management.

About the FSC Furniture Awards

For the last four years, the FSC awards have been singling out companies that are playing a leading role in Europe through their exceptional commitment. In particular, the aim is to raise customer awareness of sustainable raw materials and products from responsible forestry.

Otto Group

Founded in 1949 in Germany, the Otto Group is today a globally operating e-commerce and service Group with around 43,000 employees in 30 significant corporate groups, primarily present in the three economic areas of Germany, the rest of Europe, and the USA. Its business activities extend to the Platforms, Brand Concepts, Retailers, Services, and Financial Services segments. In the 2021/22 financial year (28 February), the Otto Group generated revenue of EUR 16.1 billion. With online sales of around EUR 12.1 billion, the Otto Group is among the world's largest online retailers. The Group's main strength is its broad-based presence with various ranges of products for diverse target groups in important regions around the world. A number of strategic partnerships and joint ventures offer the Otto Group outstanding conditions for the transfer of know-how and the use of synergy potential. A high degree of entrepreneurial responsibility and the Group companies' will to collaborate guarantee both flexibility and customer proximity along with optimal appeal to target groups in each country.

For further information on the Otto Group, visit www.ottogroup.com

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