

BVOH: eCommerce is much more than just Amazon and eBay Over 220 online marketplaces prove the popularity and wide variety within European eCommerce

39 Internet marketplaces in Germany alone, 24 in France or 14 in Italy – in total over 220 online marketplaces throughout the whole of Europe demonstrate the popularity of eCommerce among customers. "Even if many consumers are still not aware of this, eCommerce is so much more than just Amazon and eBay. In addition to these 'top dogs', many other marketplaces have established themselves, and are well able to meet the very specific wishes of the customer", says **Oliver Prothmann**, President of the Federal Association of eCommerce. (BVOH).

Altogether, over 50 companies offer more than 220 marketplaces within Europe. This has now been researched by the BVOH and put together in a large map.

Online marketplaces in Europe – amazing variety

The basic idea of online marketplaces is their possibility to provide one platform for different merchants to offer their goods. In this respect, they do not differ much from the local weekly markets or shopping centres. But a marketplace is not always just a marketplace. "There are very different approaches, which is the attraction of many online marketplaces in Europe," says **Oliver Prothmann**.

Most marketplaces differ significantly from their competitors. The mechanisms used by the providers are highly variable with for instance open and closed markets. In the former the retailer can register themselves, where as with the latter, the operator decides who may or may not be included. Marketplaces differ often also in the types of offer (buy now, auction, classified) and also the possibility of whether the transaction – the change of ownership – takes place directly within the marketplace or only upon delivery of the goods.

A third crucial difference is the mode of operation. Is the marketplace operated by a merchant (Amazon, Otto, Pixmania, Zalando) or by a marketplace operator without its own sale intentions on this marketplace (Allyouneed, eBay, Rakuten)? In this way, online marketplaces provide just the right kind of offer for each customer and is thus becoming a service that is used more and more.

Marketplaces are also significant for sellers from neighbouring countries

The "Top-50 Online Marketplaces" listing, according to the traffic in relation to one other, shows the most significant foreign marketplaces. The Polish marketplace allegro.pl for instance ranks number 7 on the list.

At the eCommerce Day conference on 9 September 2015, merchants in Berlin can see for themselves the strengths of Eastern European marketplaces.

Postal strike in Germany shows popularity of eCommerce

The weeks-long postal strike in Germany made clear the popularity of eCommerce in Europe. Hundreds of thousands of packages ordered online remained undelivered only to be delivered later with huge delays. More than three-quarters of the online retailers were directly affected by the consequences of the strike. "During those long weeks of the strike, it only then became clear to most customers – when the goods ordered were not there the next day – how smoothly and quickly online shopping actually functions in Germany and how sorely this service would be missed", says BVOH President **Oliver Prothmann**.

Online Restrictions – what's it all about?

Internet marketplaces are also being affected by manufacturer restrictions because selling by many online retailers is prohibited by industry. Such unilateral bans on selling by individual manufacturers threaten jobs and the very existence of retailers. These bans cut the distributors off from their often most important sales channel thus denying them the possibility to use inexpensive and popular online platforms in a competitive marketplace, thus benefiting customers. In this way, consumers are denied the advantage of transparent pricing and the additional range of choice offered by eCommerce. BVOH is running the European Initiative Choice in eCommerce.

About the BVOH

The Federal Association of eCommerce (BVOH) has been representing the interests of business owners, as well as consumers within the online business community since 2006. Another important goal of the BVOH is to increase acceptance and security in eCommerce business through the introduction of uniform standards.

The BVOH is the voice of those involved in eCommerce, whether they be consumers, entrepreneurs, suppliers, equippers, platforms or online marketplaces.

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