



**Taking the path  
of circularity.**



## Online sales pioneer Veepee is taking the path of circularity

With more than 7,000 partner brands, Veepee opens 10 to 15 new sales every day, for 3 to 5 days, allowing its 66 million members to save up to 70% on their favourite brands. As a pioneer and major player in the European e-commerce market, Veepee has a unique business model based on temporary online

sales: fashion, design & decoration, household appliances, high-tech, lifestyle, travel & tickets... Wondering how sustainability fits into that? And is a sustainable online business still viable? We had an enlightening chat with Tobias, Country Manager Veepee Benelux .

## Why is Veepee concerned with the issue of sustainability – to the extent that you participate in this white paper?

Tobias: “Veepee acknowledges the importance of protecting the environment and its business’ impact on it. Our ambition is to reduce that impact as much as possible. Our first challenge is to reduce our carbon footprint by 20% and offer 100% responsible packaging by 2025. More

globally, we believe that circularity will shape the future of e-commerce by supporting brands in their strategy. The prospects offered by AI and data are encouraging new forms of product design, supply chains and stock management.”

## What is Veepee exactly doing in terms of sustainability?

Tobias: “Veepee’s business model is to “re-stage” unsold stock or items that have reached the end of their lifecycle, by giving them a second life and ensuring they are attributed a reasonable economic value while making them desirable to customers.

In 2020, our facilities, data centres and warehouses were upgraded with more efficient equipment and solar panels, reducing our emissions and our overall energy and water consumption. In Belgium, 1404 solar panels installed on the roof of our

warehouse provide almost 50% of the energy required to run the operations on site. We also encourage cleaner modes of transport for our employees, including cycle mileage allowance, reserved parking spaces for bikes, charging sockets for electric cars, video conferences instead of live meetings, electric shuttle busses,... In terms of packaging, we started in 2015 with the implementation of a tailor-made plastic wrapping solution that reduces the weight and volume of textile packaging. Our packages are fully recyclable and made of 80%

recycled materials. We are currently investigating various options for using fully recycled materials. We also worked out a specific strategy for waste and returned goods: we do not destroy anything. After thorough quality control and in agreement with our partner brands, returned items are offered for sale again in the context of Good Deals, sent back to the brand or donated to local associations. Finally, we are in the process of rolling out ambitious projects that contribute to building a more circular economy: RE-TURN and RE-CYCLE”.



## How do those projects work and do they really have an impact?

Tobias: “The RE-TURN project was created directly for our members. This C2C initiative enables, coordinates and secures the resale of items purchased on Veepee through a secured platform: a member who wishes to return an item bought on Veepee can resell and send it directly to another member. In 2020, more than 230k items were uploaded on

this platform and almost 2 million user accounts were created. In 8 months, more than 54,000 products have been resold directly from member to member. This model allows to cut the cost and travel miles a product would cover when first returned to the brand to be resold and resent afterwards. We are quite proud of the concept, especially as RE-TURN was

awarded the Innovation Prize in 2021 at the FEVAD's Favor'i e-commerce event.

RE-CYCLE is a C-to-B initiative for a more sustainable fashion: Veepee offers its members the opportunity to take part in a new project that focuses on product circularity. Each RE-CYCLE event is organised in collaboration with one brand and lasts five days. Members use a prepaid label to send back the items they no longer use. In return, they receive a voucher for that same brand. Returned items are sorted, repaired, upcycled and

resold by the brand or donated to associations. Since the very first RE-CYCLE event that was organised with the brand Aigle, many more brands (such as Fago, Monoprix, Giesswein...) have joined the adventure.

The enthusiasm of our members for those sustainable projects is illustrated by the success of these initiatives. I believe we can really make a difference and work towards a more sustainable, circular economy".

## RE-CYCLE focuses on fashion... How do fashion brands look at that kind of initiatives and sustainability in general?

Tobias: "With Re-cycle, we take up the challenges of our partner brands in the fashion sector whose quality products are designed to last and be passed on, and whose customers aspire to more sustainable consumption. Our partner brands are increasingly attentive to environmental issues and we are in constant discussion with them to define effective, meaningful and sustainable collaborations.

*Sandrine Conseiller, CEO Aigle : "Aigle developed its second-hand site and launched the Re-cycle operation with Veepee to raise awareness of the circular economy to as many people as possible. This doubly virtuous partnership allows us to increase the number of products collected for the circular economy and expand our client base to promote a more committed fashion. I am very happy that Veepee has put its logistics power and expertise behind such an important operation."*

## When looking at Veepee's journey for change into a more sustainable society, you've come a long way but still have big ambitions. How do you tackle the challenge of communication?

Tobias: "We are convinced that a responsible approach can only be realised through strong commitments, concrete, daily and long-term actions, and supported by tangible results. We must pursue these ambitions over the long term.

We named our CSR policy, Veepee Colibri, which echoes the Indian fable of Colibri often told by Pierre Rabhi, where each person is responsible for his or her part, however small it may be".

## What are the very next steps for Veepee in terms of sustainability?

Tobias: "We are preparing to consolidate the RE-TURN and RE-CYCLE projects into international

models and roll out both services in the Benelux in 2022".

