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WORTMANN AND ANWR GROUP ESTABLISH A STRATEGIC ALLIANCE FOR THE DIGITAL FUTURE OF THE SPECIALIST RETAIL SEGMENT

TAMARIS.COM BECOMES A PLATFORM | ANWR GROUP OPENS QUALIBET® FOR NON-MEMBERS

Wortmann KG and the ANWR GROUP are establishing a strategic alliance and are opening the German Tamaris online shop as a sales platform for Tamaris store operators using the infrastructure solution QUALIBET® by the ANWR GROUP. The cooperation will enable all non-members to benefit from the technical functions for the first time. Retailers will therefore be able to integrate their ranges quickly and easily on tamaris.com and use the relevance and reach of the platform for their business.

Detmold, May, 7th 2019 – Jens Beining, CEO of the Wortmann Schuh-Holding, joined with Alexander Hock and Gregor Bernhart from RetailTech (Digital Unit within the ANWR GROUP) to announce a strategic partnership between the big players during the Tamaris System Partner Workshop, which was attended by the operators of over 250 Tamaris stores from all over Europe. According to Jens Beining, the aim is to use tamaris.com as a central platform for the ranges of all system partners, thus creating an e-commerce solution for brick-and-mortar retailers that is both relevant and efficient.

This partnership is built around the cloud-based e-commerce technology QUALIBET®. It provides solutions for the entire e-commerce infrastructure, from data transfer thanks to fully integrated ERP systems and order management, as well as a shipping and returns management. This creates unprecedented efficiency and the best possible transparency in regard to the retailers' inventories and hence ensures maximum sales optimisation. QUALIBET® was developed by the ANWR GROUP for the associated platform schuhe.de, where it is used as the control system for additional online marketplaces. The Tamaris online shop will be connected as another marketplace from July 2019, which will allow specialist retailers to sell their products on this platform. "We need to pool our resources and services within a collaborative framework to reap the rewards of digitisation and create a competitive edge. An essential aspect of this will be closer cooperation between the industry itself and the retailer associations. Our partnership will establish precisely this kind of integrated framework, setting new standards of platform efficiency for all parties involved", says Günter Althaus, CEO of the ANWR GROUP.

Wortmann is acting as a pioneer by opening its branded online shop as a sales platform for Tamaris store operators. For Wortmann and the ANWR GROUP, this collaboration marks the official green light for a digital industry solution aimed at the complete integration of retailer stocks within branded online shops.

"Consumers have reinvented the rules of the game in recent years and are insisting that suppliers and specialist retailers provide joint solutions for the optimised merging of offline and online worlds. Our digital vision is to continue expanding the Tamaris online shop as a platform and in doing so to achieve ideal retailer integration as a means of offering our partners not only a digital shop window, but above all enabling additional distribution channels for their products based on the extended reach of tamaris.com", says Jens Beining.

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With this fully automated integration of retailer inventories, Tamaris is creating the largest range of products and the greatest availability of the brand on its proprietary online shop and is therefore strengthening its sales partners. "As a supplier, it is our duty to provide solutions with which specialist retailers can preserve their independence, while still establishing future-proof structures. I am therefore particularly delighted about this strategic alliance with the ANWR GROUP and the opportunity it provides to welcome non-members as well. These are important milestones for brick-and-mortar retailers and our entire sector", Beining continues. The Detmold-based company consciously decided to approach the ANWR GROUP as a strategic partner, as the associated group is an ideal choice to ensure maximum efficiency and speed of implementation with its e-commerce technology QUALIBET®.

Wortmann and the e-commerce unit within the ANWR GROUP have jointly established an onboarding process that will already launch on 1st July 2019. The pilot phase with the first selected Tamaris stores will begin in the coming weeks. Once that is complete, the platform will be open to all other German stores. Work is already ongoing to internationalise the platform so that non-German partners will be able to benefit in future from the Tamaris online shop as an additional sales channel as well.

Tamaris has pursued a clear strategy of integrating brick-and-mortar retailers since 2017. The company has continuously introduced new omni-channel modules such as Ship From Store, an Availability Check feature, Tamaris Gift Vouchers and the Endless Aisle (deliveries of odd pairs). Expanding tamaris.com to create a platform is the next important step in this strategy.

"We need to move beyond thinking in channels and create a holistic brand experience for our customers across online and offline worlds. They must be presented with uniform customer service across all channels that involves as few breaks in the customer journey as possible, while still encountering the entire range of the branded collection. Our collaboration with the ANWR GROUP will enable us to offer our stationary partners an omni-channel revolution and our customers a uniquely broad range of products in our online shop. The technical functionalities provided by the ANWR GROUP ensure that retailers can receive simple and efficient e-commerce accessibility, allowing them to benefit from greater turnover, increased space productivity and additional sales opportunities", says Nico Gold, Managing Director of Wortmann Fashion Retail and operator of tamaris.com.

Given that the entire Tamaris System Partner Workshop is centred around online and offline connectivity, the development of other important omni-channel modules will also be communicated, in addition to this strategic alliance. The most important modules are the internationalisation of Ship From Store, the geo-integration feature Local Push, the partnership with NEEDLE by ETOS and the relaunch of the Tamaris online shop.

Tamaris Ship From Store International:

The omni-channel solution Tamaris Ship From Store was introduced back in 2017. Ship From Store allows Tamaris store partners to benefit from e-commerce orders on tamaris.com by shipping products purchased by customers on tamaris.com from their Tamaris stores. Once successful roll-out on the German market is complete, Ship From Store will be implemented internationally in the second half of 2019 and will include complete expansion of the platform infrastructures.

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Tamaris Local Push

Local Push creates additional connectivity between the online and offline worlds and sustainably enhances the 'Research Online Purchase Offline-Effect'. Local Push uses an activated GPS signal in the customer's mobile telephone to detect whether an item placed in the shopping basket on tamaris.com is in stock at a Tamaris store located near-by. If so, the customer receives a push notification to indicate that the selected shoe is available in the right size at a Tamaris store just a short walk away.

Relaunch of the Tamaris online shop

The Tamaris online shop will be completely relaunched at the end of the 3rd quarter in 2019 to offer Tamaris customers a holistic brand experience and a modern, digital brand ecosystem. These new features are designed to continue promoting omni-channel shopping. New click paths, smart new functions to connect the online and offline channels and new methods of content integration about the product and the brand will add new sparkle to the Tamaris online shop and ensure even stronger retailer integration.

Tamaris is also piloting the NEEDLE project with ETOS

In addition to rolling out a variety of proprietary omni-channel modules, Tamaris is also starting a collaboration with the ERP system provider ETOS. The two companies are conducting a pilot project with the web app NEEDLE to offer consumers a new, digitally-supported service level in the Tamaris stores. NEEDLE is designed to create a modern, connected shop floor and sets new standards in the areas of product information, shop floor convenience and mobile payment in order to make brick-and-mortar retailers more attractive to customers. Jörg Frommann, Managing Director of ETOS, is delighted that NEEDLE has been selected for use by Tamaris system partners: "Modern consumers demand end-to-end, digital solutions that enable dynamic adaptation of shop area service to suit expectations. Today it is essential that all relevant information and service functions are passed on to the sales assistants in the sales area. We are therefore thrilled to join with Wortmann to provide new impulses for the industry." An initial, thorough test phase that illustrated the practical use of NEEDLE in the shops has already been completed successfully with two Tamaris retailers, delivering valuable insight into the next phases of system expansion.

About Wortmann Group:

The Wortmann Group, Detmold, which is mainly known for its Tamaris brand, is among Europe's largest shoe production and sales companies and is seen as the market leader for fashionable women's footwear. The collections are sold by more than 15,000 shoe shops in 70 countries around the world. Besides the top brand Tamaris, the group also owns the brands Marco Tozzi, Caprice, Jana, Be Natural and s.Oliver shoes. Then there is Novi Footwear Fareast Ltd. in Asia. The group has more than 1,100 employees internationally. Around 30,000 workers around the world are involved in production on behalf of the Detmold-based company.

About the ANWR GROUP:

Headquartered in Mainhausen in the Hesse region, the ANWR GROUP eG is among Europe's most successful and highest-selling retail associations. Organised as a cooperative, the group optimises processes and provides the infrastructure for independent retailers. More than 5,000 retail companies belong to the ANWR GROUP. The group itself has around 1,300 employees.