Amazon expands 'Try Before You Buy' service to France, Italy and Spain

By Matthieu Guinebault - October 14, 2021

American online sales giant Amazon launched its 'Try Before You Buy' service in its French, Italian and Spanish markets on October 14. The new service is reserved for Amazon Prime subscribers, and was previously deployed in the American, British, Japanese and German markets.

The service allows customer to have a selection of products from the platform delivered free of charge to be easily returned via a prepaid label later — only the products kept will then be debited. Amazon Fashion had initially unveiled the service as 'Prime Wardrobe' in 2017. After a test phase, the Try Before You Buy service gradually begun to roll out the following year. Since then, the number of available products has doubled, with Amazon now sharing some 10 million eligible products.

"We are delighted to offer this service to Amazon Prime members in France, Italy and Spain; we are always on the lookout for new ways to make fashion shopping more convenient than ever" said Ruth Diaz, vice president, Amazon Fashion Europe. “We’ve almost doubled the number of members we serve through Prime Try Before You Buy worldwide since last year, and we are delighted to offer this fashion shopping experience to more customers in more countries.”

In fact, Prime subscribers already benefit from free shipping and returns. The evolution will provide an easy way to return without the step of a refund. The try now pay later service will make a difference to online fashion buyers in search of ease and follows in the footsteps of Zalando, which launched its Pay Later offer in France in 2017.

Zalando took advantage of Amazon Fashion’s decline in market share in France to outperform it: leading with 7.6% market share in June 2021, while Amazon dominated at 8.1% in June 2019, according to the Kantar institute.

Despite the assessment, it is known that Amazon does not publish the details of its numbers by category, or that its general portal remained by far the leading online sales provider in France (5.6 billion euros in sales), Italy (3.5 billion) or Spain (3.8 billion) in 2020, according to Statista.
To generate more Prime subscriptions, means to strengthen its fashion position... The launch of Try Before You Buy is therefore doubly strategic, for Amazon, which offer includes partner brands such as Calvin Klein, Tommy Hilfiger, Levi’s, Scotch & Soda, Pinko, Lacoste, Love Moschino, Hugo Boss, New Balance and Puma. It also highlights the presence of "small businesses" and "emerging creators" as the American group protects its local footprint by supporting the accelerated digitization of businesses and artisans, weakened by the crisis.

12,000 items from fashion-owned brands

The service of course includes Amazon’s own fashion brands. Its offering includes labels Meraki (basic), Find (streetstyle), Simple Joys and Spotted Zebra (child), Truth & Fable (evening), Iris&Lilly (lingerie), Lolias (jewelry), Core 10 (sportswear), and the basics Amazon Essentials and collaborations via The Drop.

To date, shoppers can find more than 12,000 fashion items on 252 pages of Amazon.fr. The items available in some European countries are part of a much larger Amazon Fashion strategy, whose in-depth data on consumers allow it to target precisely the types of products sought, and the price levels most accepted by its users.
As reported by FashionNetwork.com, at the end of 2019, the group had around a hundred own clothing brands, or 'private labels' and another hundred brands under 'Amazon Exclusive' were added to be sold only on the American marketplace. Two categories that made up 48% of the site's fashion offer before the crisis, according to a Gartner study, which noted that these brands were almost systematically positioned in the 'white zone' pricing available on the platform between entry-level mode and mid-range products. While Amazon can boast being a business provider for fashion brands of all sizes, it is also a discreet but massive alternative to the latter.

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