



GREEN LOGISTICS AT RHENUS HOME DELIVERY

“WE WANT TO REDUCE OUR CO₂ EMISSIONS BY TWO THIRDS BY 2025”



Ronny Sassen
Managing Director
Rhenus Home Delivery

Sören Lauenstein
Head of Sustainability
Rhenus Home Delivery

Business, society and politics all need to pull in one direction if we are going to be able to meet the global climate goals. Logistics companies are also required to critically scrutinise their processes and organise them in a sustainable way. Sustainability has already been one of the key elements in the mission statement at Rhenus Home Delivery for many years. Ronny Sassen, the Managing Director, and Sören Lauenstein, the Head of Sustainability, provide some insight into the sustainable projects, goals and investments at the company that specialises in last-mile services.

MR SASSEN, MANY COMPANIES HAVE TENDED TO NEGLECT THE ISSUE OF SUSTAINABILITY FOR A LONG TIME. HAS RHENUS HOME DELIVERY UNDERESTIMATED ITS IMPORTANCE TOO?

Ronny Sassen: Nothing could be further from the truth. Green logistics operations have already been part of our corporate identity for many years, because environmentally-friendly client solutions and saving resources are crucial elements in what we believe are successful business operations. They include, for example, preventing empty journeys, operating energy-efficient facilities and establishing an environmentally-friendly fleet of vehicles. We've often demonstrated in practice how important that is for us – and not just in the recent past.

WHICH PROJECTS HAVE BEEN INVOLVED?

Ronny Sassen: We were, for example, already the first company in Germany to test a hybrid truck from the Mercedes-Benz innovation fleet in 2011. We were one of the first clients to put the fully electric eCanter van into service in urban areas to deliver goods to our customers in 2017. Since that time, we've participated in numerous sustainable field experiments with manufacturers, such as Quantron and Orten. Our more recent projects include using electric cargo bikes, which have been in service for some time with our Deliver it brand.

ARE YOU JUST RELYING ON ELECTRIC VEHICLES IN YOUR FLEET?

Sören Lauenstein: Electric drive trains are certainly one major focus area, but we're basically open to a wide variety of technologies. We're not only using electric vans at Rhenus Home Delivery, but also CNG vehicles as a technology to bridge the gap. However, our goal is to significantly reduce the proportion of vehicles powered by fossil fuels. We're also looking forward to receiving our first hydrogen truck in the near future. We've been developing a prototype vehicle with a partner to examine whether using electric vans with solar panels could make sense for our fleet too.



WHAT IS YOUR MOST IMPORTANT SUSTAINABLE GOAL?

Ronny Sassen: Our greatest goal is to drastically reduce our CO₂ emissions. We'd like to reduce our emissions of carbon dioxide by two thirds by 2025.

WHAT MEASURES ARE YOU ADOPTING TO ACHIEVE THIS?

Ronny Sassen: We believe that the shape of our fleet will be one of the main determining factors. We've already successfully introduced savings potential at our business sites through measures such as using LED lighting, purchasing green electricity and reducing our use of paper. About 80 percent of our CO₂ emissions are caused by delivering goods by road using diesel vehicles. We'll therefore be extensively converting our fleet this year.

WHAT WILL YOUR FLEET LOOK LIKE AFTER THE CONVERSION PROCESS?

Ronny Sassen: We're significantly increasing the proportion of electric vehicles in our fleet. To achieve this, we launched the process of purchasing 59 box-body, electrically-powered vans in the summer of 2022. Once we receive them, we'll be able to save more than 2,100 tonnes of CO₂ every year. That's more CO₂ than our business site in Saarbrücken produces every year, for example. However, that's not enough: we're aiming to use 150 electric vehicles by 2023.

TALKING ABOUT CO₂ EMISSIONS: HOW EXACTLY DO YOU MEASURE THE CO₂ EMISSIONS OF A CLIENT AND ITS CUSTOMERS?

Sören Lauenstein: We measure the distances covered by our vehicles and, on this basis, we calculate the CO₂ footprint at a delivery level. The goal is to give our clients the CO₂ figure produced for dispatching their shipments. We're also working very closely with a software provider in order to map the entire CO₂ figures for our company and therefore generate an honest picture. This will enable us to clearly define our optimisation potential. After all, we're aspiring to provide operational excellence here too.



CONVERTING A FLEET IS ENORMOUSLY EXPENSIVE. CAN SUSTAINABLE INVESTMENTS PAY OFF ECONOMICALLY FOR COMPANIES IN THE LONG TERM?

Sören Lauenstein: If you simply look at the purchase price, an electric vehicle is on average twice as expensive to buy as a conventional diesel vehicle. The costs until the end of the average service life of a delivery vehicle cannot be fully written off at the moment. Extensive and long-term subsidies are therefore very important to create some economic incentive to purchase vehicles with alternative drive trains and accelerate the transport revolution in Europe.

HOW IMPORTANT ARE GREEN LOGISTICS OPERATIONS FOR YOUR CLIENTS AND ARE THEY PREPARED TO PAY MORE FOR THEM?

Ronny Sassen: The issue of sustainability is naturally very important and is a major factor for our clients too. Many of them are increasingly committed to having sustainable delivery solutions and are aware that there's a price to pay for them. However, our customers are also concerned about the CO₂ emissions triggered very specifically by their delivery and some of them are prepared to pay more for a climate-neutral delivery. What's clear is that sustainability affects all the stakeholders along the supply chain to some degree – from the manufacturer of a product to the logistics and even the consumer.

CAN THEN CUSTOMERS PROVIDE FINANCIAL COMPENSATION FOR THE CO₂ EMISSIONS CAUSED BY THEIR DELIVERY BY RHENUS HOME DELIVERY AND WHO IS SUPPORTED BY THIS?

Sören Lauenstein: We want to keep up with the times as a logistics specialist and make our contribution to society. Our main endeavour is therefore to decarbonise operations, that is to say, reduce CO₂ emissions until we've eliminated them completely. Until we've reached this goal, we offer customers the opportunity of compensating for the carbon dioxide emissions caused by their delivery through the charitable MyClimate foundation. This compensation is then channelled into various climate protection projects.

Rhenus Home Delivery GmbH

Industriestraße 12-14 | 15366 Hoppegarten
 Germany

You can contact us here directly!

rhenus.group/home-delivery/sustainable-logistics