
JD.com opens first physical retail stores in Europe

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JD.com, a supply chain-based technology and service provider, opened two robotic shops by the new brand name “ochama” in the Netherlands, with more locations to follow soon.

The new model of shops introduces an unprecedented shopping format merging online ordering and pick-up shop in which robots prepare the parcels, and home delivery service.

The first two ochama pick-up shops are in Leiden and Rotterdam, with two more to open in Amsterdam (Diemen) and Utrecht.

It is the first time that JD.com has opened a physical retail store in Europe. Ochama, which combines “omni-channel” and “amazing”, also marks the first omni-channel retailer in the Netherlands that offers both food and non-food in one shopping App.

“With rich experience in retail and cutting-edge logistics technologies that the company has accumulated over the years, we aspire to create an unprecedented shopping format for customers in Europe with better price and service,” said Pass Lei, general manager of ochama, JD Worldwide.

The omni-channel model allows shoppers the convenience of ordering products online through ochama’s App, where a full range of A-brand products are offered covering fresh & packaged food, household appliances, beauty, maternal and child products, fashion, home furnishings and more.

The automated warehouse is part of its futurist pick-up shop, where people can witness a fleet of robots including AGV (automated ground vehicles), robotic arms and more that engage in picking, sorting, and transferring the merchandise. By simply scanning the App’s QR code at the check-out, shoppers will watch as their orders are carried to them by the conveyer belt, as part of a cashierless and hassle-free shopping trip.

Ochama’s Chief Operation Officer Mark den Butter noted that by fully tapping the technologies in logistics and supply chain management, the shops can bring down the product price by an extra 10% at the benefit of the chain’s member customers.

In addition, people can visit the pick-up shop's showroom to experience ochama's product assortments, or they can also choose the next-day home delivery service without going to the pick-up shop.

The Netherlands is one of the most urbanized countries in Europe. Data from the World Bank shows that as of 2020, 92% of the population in the Netherlands live in cities with a polycentric urban structure, which has led ochama's decision to open shops across four cities.

"Dutch people are passionate for innovation and a green environment, and ochama's shopping format is designed to contribute to both aspects," said den Butter. "There will be no queue and fewer traffic jams to do the chores as they can go for convenience, benefits and everything in one stop at ochama."

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