H&M heads back to pre-pandemic sales level, despite ongoing store restrictions

By Sandra Halliday · 15 December 2021

H&M Group issued its Q4 and full-year sales report on Wednesday and while it was fairly short on detail — as is usual for the firm — it did show that sales are continuing to recover and heading back to pre-pandemic levels.

The world's second-biggest fashion retailer reported Q4 sales from September to November that were in line with analysts’ expectations with a net sales increase of 8% year-on-year at SEK56.8 billion (€5.52bn/£4.49bn/$6.22bn). In local currencies, sales rose 11%.
And importantly, the company that owns H&M, COS, Monki, &OtherStories, Arket and more said that “despite continued restrictions and the negative consequences of the pandemic, the H&M group’s sales in local currencies were back at the same level as in the fourth quarter of 2019”.

Fashion retailers have been working hard just to get back to where they were two years ago and the achievement of that goal is impressive given that ongoing restrictions and consumer caution are still issues they have to deal with globally.

The company said that at the end of the quarter around 115 stores were temporarily closed due to restrictions (mostly in Austria and Slovakia), which was actually more that at the start of the three-month period when ‘only’ 100 stores were closed (mainly in South-East Asia).

It added that for the financial year as a whole, net sales increased by 12% in local currencies. Converted to Swedish crowns, they rose 6% in total to SEK198.967 billion.

The retailer explained that its “strong recovery continues. Customers are showing that they appreciate the collections and being able to shop where, when and how they choose”. 
The company will issue its complete full-year report with profit figures on January 28.

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