The IKEA catalogue – the world’s largest free publication

With a print run of 131 million copies the IKEA catalogue is the most widely distributed commercial publication in the world. It is a source of inspiration for readers, and it shows the breadth of the IKEA range of functional, well-designed home furnishing products. In August each year millions of people in a total of 31 countries receive their copy of the latest edition in the post.

The IKEA catalogue is an important cornerstone in the IKEA concept. Together with our stores, it has been the most important channel for reaching our customers ever since 1951, when the very first IKEA catalogue was published. Today the 300-page catalogue shows the breadth of the range with solutions for every aspect of home living, but above all it provides home furnishing hints and inspirational ideas for all styles of interior decoration.

The catalogue enjoys a special position as by far the most influential marketing tool that IKEA has. The ambition is for the catalogue to serve both as a work of reference and as a source of inspiration at the same time as it reinforces the IKEA brand and puts IKEA in a class of its own among home furnishing companies.

The world’s biggest commercial publication is produced in tiny Älmhult

The IKEA catalogue is produced by IKEA Catalogue Services AB in the little town of Älmhult, in southern Sweden. This is the site of the biggest photo studio in northern Europe – 8,000 square metres in size – where work takes place simultaneously on up to 96 different room settings. It is here that all the photos are shot and all the text is written for the 45 different editions of the catalogue in 23 different languages.

The IKEA catalogue is the product of months of close collaboration between many highly specialised professionals. Photographers, copywriters, art directors, project leaders, interior decorators, stylists and others work together to produce the catalogue, which is distributed to homes in the vicinity of IKEA stores all over the world at the end of August each year. In Europe alone it reaches 200 million people.

On most markets the main catalogue is complemented by special supplements for kitchens and offices (Work IKEA). The catalogue is printed on recyclable paper that is produced without the use of chemical bleaching agents.

The catalogue brings the store into your home

Looking at the catalogue is the best way to prepare for a visit to IKEA. Reading through the catalogue in the peace and quiet of your own home, measuring up and making a systematic shopping list will help to make your visit to the store much easier. The prices in the catalogue remain fixed for the entire twelve-month period that the catalogue is valid.

With the IKEA catalogue, as with its other market communication, IKEA wants to get “the many people” to visit the stores and to make IKEA the obvious number one choice when furnishing at home.