

Dr. Kerstin Kellermann, registered merchant – Interview with the proprietress



Press information

Dr. Kellermann, you are a doctor of economics and speak five languages. What induced you to venture on the path of self-employment in 2005?

“After completing my doctorate I felt like clearing everything out. I discovered eBay and was inspired by the possibilities offered by eCommerce. I made around 10,000 Euros from old books, sports equipment and clothes I no longer wore by providing precise product descriptions and good product photos. This is where I got the idea of founding my own company in the field of eCommerce.”

You could have continued your eBay activities as a side-line. Why did you go self-employed right away? Did you get any funding from the state?

“No, but I did have the 10,000 Euros I had made myself as starting capital. Entrepreneurship is a tradition in my family. I was not afraid of taking entrepreneurial risks but I did need an idea for an innovative product.”

Were you already a golfer at the time?

“Yes, of course and at the time I had a special fondness for out of the ordinary golf bags. The idea for my own golf bag collection came quickly. The brand ‘Kellermann Golf’ practically came to life overnight.”

Were the Tour Bag Montecastillo and the Stand Bag Alcanada already individually embroidered?

“No, the first golf bags from Kellermann Golf differed from each other solely due to their design and innovative features. The model Montecastillo was particularly very well received by the online clientele in Spain and Italy. After the first tour players wanted to use the bag, there was a great demand for individually embroidered bags overnight.”

And how did you react to the market?

“I developed a tour bag that was taken apart, embroidered and then finished off with the help of a shoemaker. The shoemaker produced fantastic craftsmanship but the embroidery company couldn’t cope with the positioning of the embroidery motifs and with the urgency of the assignments. That is why I quickly bought my first own embroidery machine and learnt how to embroider and embroidery programming in particular from scratch.”

In 2008 you supplied your first completely individualised tour bag to the USA? Was the bag also finished off by the master shoemaker?

“Yes, but I soon discovered other production techniques. The

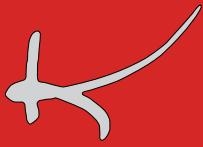
2014
Interview

DR. KERSTIN KELLERMANN, REGISTERED MERCHANT
Pfarrer-H.-Kugelmeier-Str. 1
D-51491 Overath, Germany

TELEPHONE
+49 (0)2204-97 99950

WEB
www.kellermanngolf.com

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initial impulses came from upholstery craftsmanship; this was to be followed at a later stage by innovative sewing techniques from aesthetic surgery. It was very difficult to train suitable skilled workers since the sewing by hand was very laborious and strenuous.”

Do you still sew your golf bags today by hand?

“No, only the models Masters and St. Anne, which we will be removing from the programme in the long term. But we will continue to sew the parts such as shoulder belts and the bottom edges of all the bags by hand.”

You mentioned that you had reorganised your production concept in 2011. May I ask why?

“Sewing by hand proved to be very time-consuming and demanding for our skilled workers. The production periods needed to become shorter. Since the sponsor contracts of tour players changed at a rapid speed. The situation is pretty similar on the amateur market. Gifts for jubilees, farewells or other scheduled events are frequently only ordered at the last minute.”

What have you changed exactly?

“I have developed a production system that is based on modules, similar to the automobile industry. The collection is significantly leaner today, the customer can only choose between certain basic colours and models. However, in return the production time is shorter and the price-performance ratio is better. My doctoral studies in logistics gave me a good background to implement this logistical change in production.”

How do you view your position in the industry?

“The segment of Custom Golf Bags is a relatively protected niche in the highly competitive golf market. Golf as a sport is booming. Individualised products are very much the trend in all sectors. My company is growing constantly, however in my opinion it will stay “small but mighty” in order to meet the special requirements of the clientele.”

And one last question: you seem to be working to full capacity in your company – is there any room for a private life?

“Of course there is! I have enough time to work on my own handicap. But even if the balls are not quite doing what I want them to do, getting out in the fresh air helps me find the perfect balance.”

Many thanks for his interview.

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