



THE SPIRIT OF
MOUNTAIN SPORTS



Member of VAUDE Group: **EDELRID** 

Press Release

VAUDE forms alliance with Sympatex Membrane Technology

Strong Brand Alliance for Ecology and High Performance

VAUDE and Sympatex Technologies have formed a strong partnership to advance the development of high-performance ecological textiles. Starting Winter 2011/2012, VAUDE will be using the ecologically compatible and completely recyclable Sympatex membrane in its Mountain Sports and Bike Sports apparel lines as well as in its Shoe Collections. This will take the German Mountain Sports Supplier a step closer to realizing its major goal of environmentally friendly manufacturing throughout its entire range of products.

Ecology has always been a priority at VAUDE. The family-run enterprise views its environmental commitment as a cycle that starts with product development and goes on to include manufacturing and product use. This commitment runs so deep, it also impacts the company's day-to-day operations through the implementation of measures that further company sustainability, such as EMAS certification. On this basis, VAUDE is continually expanding its environmental activities and improving its ecological footprint. A key milestone in this direction has been its membership with bluesign, the most stringent production standard for synthetic textiles in terms of environmental protection, health and safety. As a bluesign partner, VAUDE made a commitment in 2008 to ultimately bring its entire product range into compliance with the demands of this industrial ecological standard. A precondition for this goal is that in the long run, all VAUDE product components meet the stringent bluesign criteria. In order to achieve this, VAUDE has decided to work together with Sympatex in the future and use their bluesign certified membrane.



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Sympatex membrane: environmentally friendly and recyclable

The Sympatex production method uses a material made from polyether and polyester, better known from the production of PET water bottles. The Sympatex membrane is comprised solely of oxygen, carbon and hydrogen and is PTFE-free. Due to its composition, it is fully recyclable and allows for the pure polyether-ester production necessary for a meaningful recycling concept. VAUDE had been involved in synthetic textile recycling long before the outdoor industry took up the issue. VAUDE established the Ecolog Recycling Network in 1995, making it possible for the first time to fully recycle functional high tech apparel made from polyester. At that time VAUDE chose to go with the polyester based Sympatex membrane, which was an important component in the Ecolog concept. Antje von Dewitz, VAUDE CEO, is clear on the direction VAUDE is taking: "Our goal is to become the most eco-friendly outdoor manufacturer in Europe. In order to do so we need partners such as Sympatex who are pulling in the same direction. We are determined to make long-term investments in our common future; this includes coordinating joint development rounds that apply our combined know-how to advance innovations and a comprehensive marketing concept. One can expect quite a bit for the future!"

Ecology and Top Performance in Balance

"With VAUDE we have gained one of the most important outdoor brands on the market as an ideal partner who pursues highly ambitious environmental objectives. For both brands it is naturally clear that we are striving for ecological solutions that in no way reduce or negatively impact top performance for highest demands in sports," Michael Kamm, CEO Sympatex, explains. The durable Sympatex membrane is guaranteed 100 percent windproof and waterproof, withstanding the pressure of a water column of up to 25 meters. The special membrane technology ensures outstanding breathability that, according to the measurements of the Hohenstein Institute, surpasses even the classification of "extremely breathable" by evincing a RET value of under 1.5. The hydrophilic (water-loving) molecules of the membrane absorb body moisture and then use a physiochemical process to quickly expel moisture outward. At this time,



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Sympatex is also the thinnest membrane on the market, only 5 µm thick. Although it is so lightweight, it guarantees full performance and optimal conditions for the development of high performance Ultralight products. The Sympatex membrane has a non-porous structure and therefore – unlike standard micro-porous membranes – has no pores that can be contaminated or blocked by dirt or detergent residues.

Antje von Dewitz, VAUDE CEO, announced: “We will present our first joint collection to the trade public at the ISPO 2011 and then launch it on the market with a bang.” Outdoor and bike retail will receive a comprehensive marketing package to support this step, along with training measures, print campaigns, posters, PoS material and joint events that will hold various surprises in store.

VAUDE:

The German mountain sports supplier VAUDE has its headquarters in Southern Germany, where it develops quality products for Mountain Sports, Bike Sports and the Packs ‘n Bags bag collection. Mountain Sports Expertise, Innovation and a Responsibility towards people and nature make VAUDE one of the most successful family businesses with about 1,300 employees worldwide.

Sympatex Technologies:

As one of the leading suppliers worldwide, Sympatex Technologies has been the byword for decades for high tech performance systems in clothing, shoes and accessories. Sympatex membrane systems are highly breathable, wind and waterproof as well as climate regulating, and contribute to a holistic Comfort Concept in various areas of use. Ecological awareness is a given: all Sympatex membranes are 100% recyclable and Oeko-Tex Standard 100 and bluesign certified. Sympatex Technologies has 14 sales offices and subsidiaries and is a member of the Ploucquet Group of companies.

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