

Rob Wierenga (QC Centre) and Jurrie Christians (4Phones)

Contribute to Circulaire IT

QC Centre and 4Phones are located in the same building in Valkenswaard. Rob Wierenga, Business Manager Development, explains the business of QC Centre in this article. Jurrie Christians talks about 4Phones. Circularity is high on the duo's agenda.

By: Rashid Niamat

Parts for smartphones, tablets, laptops, gaming consoles and other IT products mainly come from China, as lots of people know. That is where the production of the original parts, refurbished and replacement parts take place. Overall, the quality of these products varies greatly. "Our business has everything to do with that," Rob explains. "We have an office in China with over 25 employees. They look for the right manufacturer for specific parts. Several tests of the samples precede a final order to be able to guarantee the best quality. Testing doesn't only take place during the production process, but also during the delivery stage. What meets our requirements receives the QC Centre stamp and then goes on the boat or plane to one of the countries where our distributors are active."

But fulfillment goes beyond that. Making sure that the right transport is chosen, is becoming increasingly important. With shipment prices having risen, it pays off to bundle shipments. "With QC we are also behaving more and more like a full-service organization. We have orders from startups in the Netherlands, for example, that have outsourced production to a company in China. We ensure that the products arrive in the Netherlands, although the pandemic has made things more difficult. Our team on location offers a solution here," says Rob.

Ecological footprint

One of the reasons for talking to Rob and Jurrie is circular IT. That's why Rob also gets asked how that defines his business.

Rob: "Looking closely at the ecological footprint plays a big part in what we do with QC Centre. Sustainability requires collaboration up and down the supply chain, from sourcing and production to shipping. QC Centre only works with cooperative suppliers who ensure a social but also ecological supply chain. What I just said about full-service organization is also an example of that. We make sure that containers are filled to the maximum and that often means bundling orders from multiple parties. Of course that saves costs, but it also prevents us from sending half-empty containers across the ocean."

Circularity

The company's core business has a lot to do with circularity. Rob: "With high-quality parts, our distributors and ultimately end-users can extend the life span of devices. When producing these parts we also pay attention to the use of raw materials. In addition, part of our business is aimed at reusing existing parts. China is a market with a large supply of parts like that and we can check them on site. However, we also take screens back from the market ourselves (Buy Back), so that the circular circle is really complete."

4Phones

One of the distributors Rob does business with is 4Phones.co.uk, a company that has been around for almost 15 years and provides the channel with parts and accessories for smartphones, tablets, gaming and IT. Worldwide, the company serves more than 8,000 partners. These range in size from small self-standing repair shops to retail chains with an international footprint."



'Looking closely at the ecological footprint'



Jurrie Christians from 4Phones and Rob Wierenga from QC Centre

Jurrie mentions the link between the two companies first. "4Phones initially also did the sourcing and importing of parts. From there, the step to sourcing and fulfillment was made. That soon became a separate company. 4Phones is just one of Rob's customers. I focus on the European market. We do that with offices in the Netherlands, Germany, Spain, Portugal and Turkey." In all those countries 4Phones has a footprint in the market, but it is not the same everywhere. "The Netherlands is slightly behind the rest. That's because this is a very competitive market and our focus was mainly international. One of the ways we are going to grow is by increasing the portfolio."

Accessories

4Phones increasingly supplies telecom and IT accessories. In this way, the company helps its partners to increase their turnover and margin per customer. This is necessary, because margins on repairs are under pressure, according to Jurrie. "What we are also doing is increasing the scope of our product range, with parts for laptops and e-scooters, for example. This is an ongoing process with which we support our partners." In doing so, 4Phones is contributing to extending the life of more and more devices. "Everything can last longer if you have the right spare parts," says Jurrie.

"I am convinced that the repair market as we know it today is going to change significantly in the coming years. The independent repair shop that replaces a broken screen will remain. But if I look at Spain, I see that there we are supplying a new type of store that focuses on repair and maintenance of anything with a plug that is not a household appliance. That model could gain a foothold here as well. If that supply is there, consumers and businesses can use their electronics much longer."

Healthy business

Naturally, 4Phones wants to supply these parties and get to know them. Scale plays an important role here. The replacement parts needed for this can be commissioned from QC Centre. "Separately, but also together, we make healthy business possible for the channel. Business that also fits in perfectly with policy towards more circularity," Rob concludes.

Want to know more about QC Centre? Contact Rob Wierenga at rob@qc-centre.com or call 0 +316 229 742 48. For more information about 4Phones email Jurrie Christians at jurrie@4phones.eu or call +316 240 959 23.