

# Aquaja on an upward curve

Created from high-quality materials, Aquaja's pet enclosures are attractive to look at. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that the Dutch shopfitting company is winning a growing number of fans among Europe's pet product retailers.

The list of pet stores boasting pet sales enclosures manufactured by Aquaja is a long one. It includes Das Futterhaus in Hamburg-Stellingen, Berlin-Buckow and Ahrensberg as well as Fress-

napf operates 15 Fressnapf stores in the Ruhr region and Sauerland. One of these, the 1 300 m<sup>2</sup> Fressnapf XXL store in Hagen, was converted last year to the new Fressnapf Future Store concept

standardised modules. Everything was custom-designed to meet the needs of the species kept in the Fressnapf store and to be as low-maintenance as possible. The detailed 3D sketch plans that Aquaja provided to Dietz after measuring up the retail area also impressed the experienced pet store operator: "It was reminiscent of planning a new kitchen. I could envisage very accurately from the sketches how the enclosures would look and look forward to getting them." Following preinstallation of the finished units at Aquaja, construction on site could be carried out quickly and without any complications. One or two details were modified afterwards, and the Fressnapf representative was full of praise for the shopfitter's service here also. "The overall result is impressive," says Dietz emphatically. "The units are wonderful and the collaboration with the entire Aquaja team was really fantastic."



Delighted with the successful conversion of the Fressnapf XXL store in Hagen: Danny Janssen (CEO, Aquaja), René Dietz (authorised signatory, Fressnapf Weber GmbH), Claudia Denzin (authorised signatory, Fressnapf Hagen), Johannes Weber (managing director, Fressnapf Weber GmbH), Tom Bootsma (director, Aquaja) und Vince Dullens (marketing, Aquaja).

napf in Erfurt. Last year, Fressnapf XXL in Hagen joined the circle of satisfied pet retail clients. "Totally uncomplicated, friendly and open," is how Rene Dietz describes his working relationship with the Dutch shopfitter. Dietz is authorised signatory of Fressnapf Weber GmbH, which

and opened in March. The retailer obtained its live pet enclosures for cage birds, small animals and fish from Aquaja.

## Individual facilities

What impressed Dietz above all was that none of the enclosures were off the shelf, consisting of

Nor is the Fressnapf XXL store in Hagen an exception. Outside Germany also, the Dutch shopfitting company and facilities built by it are responsible for some of



Trendy show aquariums add to the attraction of the Fressnapf XXL store in Hagen.



The enclosures for small animals have been designed to be visually appealing as well as suitable for the animals housed in them.

Photos: Aquaja (3)

the most attractive stores with live pets in central Europe. They include some Intratuin branches in the Netherlands, the Pet's Place store in Rotterdam Alexandrium, the Magasin Vert Gerardmer in France and the Tuincentrum Pelckmans in Belgium, to name just a few. For international projects outside the Benelux region, Aquaja works with its agents in France, Germany and England.

### 30-year-plus tradition

The company, which dates back 30 years, was taken over by Danny Janssen from his father in 2015 and has since grown steadily. Once its old site in Born became too small, the shopfitter moved to Echt. It soon outgrew the building there, however, which had to be extended. Aquaja attaches great value to the optimal appearance of its units in store and thus quickly acquired a reputation among

leading pet supplies retailers of being a reliable partner. All the basic materials and accessories used by Aquaja, such as filters and air pumps, originate in Europe. All the shelves are manufactured in their entirety in the company, significantly reducing the installation time in store. Depending on the particular specifications, an overall project may take eight to sixteen weeks to complete. Aquaja cites its strengths as extensive know-how, a good price-performance ratio and great after-sales service.

"In recent years, Aquaja has grown enormously and we have been able to develop our organisation continuously," says Janssen. The company now has 25 full-time employees, three sales representatives and a couple of temporary staff at busy times. On 1 January 2023, long-time staff member Tom Bootsma, who had held the position of general man-

ager since 2018, was appointed director and thus a further board member alongside Janssen. "Since my first work placement in 2011, a lot has happened at Aquaja," says Bootsma. "In the next few years, we will concentrate more on service and maintenance to become a better partner for our customers." A major part in this is likely to be played also by Björn Leurs, who superseded Bootsma in his previous position and will have a key role in developing and professionalising the production processes in the company. Aquaja has already laid the groundwork in terms of staff for expansion within Europe: an experienced sector expert, Julian Hastings, has been appointed new key account manager for France, while René Zimmermann, who has 20 years of experience in pet supplies retailing, is the new sales representative for Scandinavia.