



Scaling your Swedish E-Commerce brand across Europe

How Swedish webshops can accelerate their growth in Europe with a central EU-fulfilment model

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Why scale from Sweden to Europe now?

More and more Swedish e-commerce, retail and D2C brands are selling outside Sweden. You may recognise it yourself: your webshop performs well in Sweden, orders from Germany, France and the Benelux are growing fast and Europe feels like the logical next step.

At the same time, the market is more demanding than ever. Customers are used to deliveries within one to two days. They expect clear track & trace, local delivery options and easy returns. A parcel that takes three to five days from Sweden, now quickly feels slow and expensive.

At that point you have to ask yourself a few questions:

- Do we just want to “be present” in Europe, or do we really want to grow there?
- Does our current fulfilment model still match the level of service customers expect?

In this whitepaper we show how, as a Swedish brand, you can accelerate your European growth by working with one central EU-fulfilment centre instead of shipping everything from Sweden. You will get a clear picture of the current situation, the different fulfilment models and a practical roadmap to make the switch step by step. We also share a practical example, a checklist and the most important KPIs for the first 6-12 months.

The current situation for many Swedish brands

For many Swedish brands, the current model looks roughly like this:

- Inventory in one warehouse in Sweden.
- All orders, including those to Germany, France, the Benelux or Southern Europe, are shipped from Sweden.
- One or a few international carriers, often with little local differentiation.

Main pain points

1 Longer Delivery Times

An order to Germany or France often takes 3-5 days, sometimes longer. That is hard to sell when competitors promise 1-2 days.

2 Higher shipping costs

Cross-border shipping from Sweden is more expensive than regional distribution. That hurts:

- Your margin, if you absorb the costs yourself;
- Your conversion, if the customer sees the full shipping costs in the checkout.

3 Complex carrier landscape

For European coverage you need multiple carriers. From a single Swedish warehouse this means:

- More contractmanagement.
- More complexity in prices, labels and servicelevels.
- It is harder to switch quickly when there are delays or issues.

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Limited track & trace experience

Tracking that does not match local expectations makes the experience less smooth. This leads to:

- More customer questions for customer service.
- Less trust on a first order.

Effect on conversion, customer satisfaction and repeat purchases

- Lower conversion
- Higher returns and service costs
- Fewer repeat purchases



What do you need as a Swedish brand to win in Europe?

If you really want to compete with local players in Europe, your fulfilment has to match what your customers are used to. First of all, it is about speed. In countries such as Germany, France, the Netherlands and Belgium, a delivery time of 1-2 working days is the norm. If you can offer that as well, you will see it immediately in your conversion. Your checkout feels “local” right away, even though your brand is based in Sweden.

A recognisable checkout goes with that. German customers expect different delivery options than French or Dutch customers. One customer wants home delivery, another prefers a parcel locker or pick-up point. If you only ship from Sweden with a single international carrier, it is difficult to offer that local experience. Through a European fulfilment network you can offer the right carriers and options per country, without having to negotiate separately with every carrier yourself.

Returns also play a major role. Especially in fashion, lifestyle and consumer goods, returns are simply part of the game. Customers want to know how easily they can return, what it costs and how long it will take to get their money back. Returns to Sweden are expensive and often feel cumbersome for customers. With local return addresses within the EU and a clear return flow you lower the threshold for a first purchase and increase trust at the same time.

Finally, you need good data. You want real-time visibility of your inventory, per SKU and per location. Orders, returns and inventory must stay perfectly in sync with your webshop and marketplaces. That requires smart, tailor-made software with solid integrations, not manual Excel sheets.

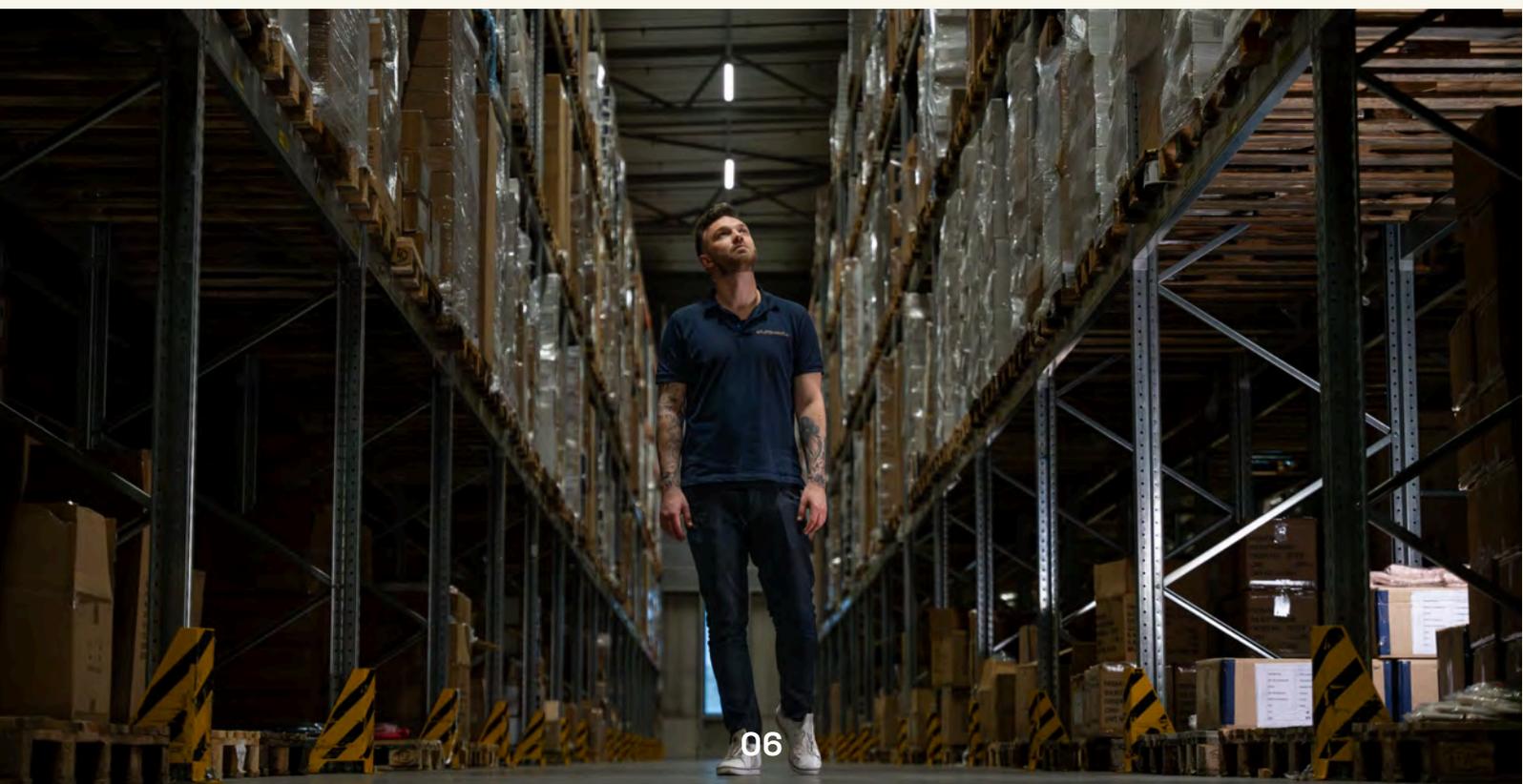
A European fulfilment network helps you improve all these points at once: you bring your inventory closer to the customer, work with local delivery options and still keep central control. That is exactly what you need to scale your growth in Europe with confidence.

From Sweden to the EU: choosing the right fulfilment model

Roughly three models are common in practice. If you compare them side by side, the choice mainly comes down to where your brand stands today. If you see international sales as “nice to have”, you can still get away with keeping everything in Sweden. But once Europe becomes a serious growth market, longer delivery times, higher costs and limited delivery options simply get in the way. For most fast-growing Swedish brands, one central EU fulfilment centre is therefore the most logical step.

Keeping everything in Sweden

You leave everything as it is and keep all inventory in Sweden. This is familiar and requires little change. But you also know the downside: longer delivery times, higher international shipping costs and limited local options for the customer. This model works fine as long as international sales are “extra”, but not when Europe becomes a fully fledged growth market.

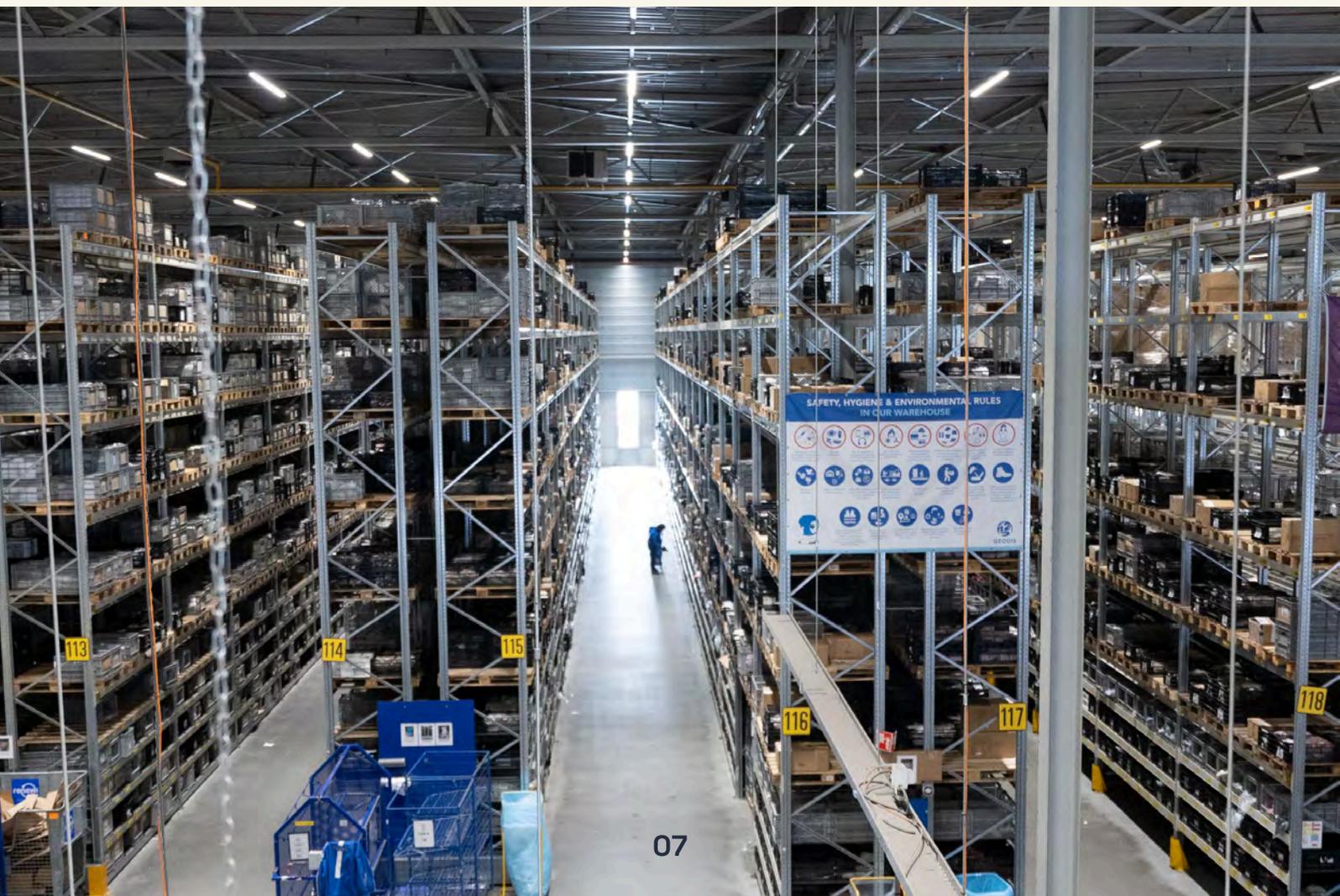


Multiple local 3PL partners per country

You work with several local 3PL partners, for example one per country. In theory this sounds ideal: in each country a partner close to your customer, with local knowledge and fast delivery. In practice the operation quickly becomes complex. You have to manage multiple contracts, integrate different systems, split inventory and piece data together. For a fast-growing brand this costs a lot of time and attention.

One central EU fulfilment centre

The third option is one central EU fulfilment centre. You move your inventory to a single hub within the EU and from there ship your orders to all European countries. From that hub you have access to different local carriers and return solutions. You work with one partner, one integration and one clear dashboard. Adding new countries then becomes mainly a matter of adjusting settings instead of starting a new project.



Step-by-step roadmap to scale faster in Europe

The move to a central EU fulfilment model does not have to be a big, risky project. If you approach it smartly, you can work towards your new setup in a few clear steps. You start by choosing your priority markets and your delivery promise: in which countries do you want to grow seriously over the next 12 to 24 months, what minimum delivery time do you want to promise there and which delivery options and carriers are important in those countries? Together, these choices form your European fulfilment strategy and guide all decisions that follow.

The next step is your own data. By analysing order data from the past 6 to 12 months, you can immediately see where the greatest potential lies. Based on that, you decide which countries you want to route through the EU hub first and which product groups you will move there.

Once that choice has been made, the technical side follows. You connect your webshop or ERP to the fulfilment software, your products are imported and your order flows are set up. You test the entire process, from order in the webshop to sending the track & trace email, so you know everything works before you go live. Together with Efulfilment you then configure the right carrier mix per country. You decide which carriers you use, which delivery options you offer and which cut-off times you can communicate. You also set up communication towards your customer, such as track & trace in the right language with a clear shipment status.

Then it is time to go live with a first set of countries and products. Choose a clear scope, for example Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium with your main SKUs. In the first weeks you closely monitor the key figures and, based on those insights, you can quickly adjust and add more countries or product groups, so you scale up step by step without losing control of your operation.

Checklist & KPIs for scaling across Europe

At some point the question arises: are we ready to make our fulfilment truly European? A short checklist helps you answer that.

- ✓ You have defined your priority markets for the next 12-24 months.
- ✓ You know your current delivery times and shipping costs per country.
- ✓ You have insight into order and return data per market.
- ✓ You have at least a rough inventory strategy for an EU hub.
- ✓ You have internal buy-in to place inventory outside Sweden.
- ✓ You have identified a fulfilment partner.

For the first six to twelve months it is wise to focus on a limited set of KPIs. By measuring and discussing these KPIs from the start, you turn your new fulfilment model into an active steering tool. You can spot where adjustments are needed early and back up successes with data towards internal stakeholders.

From Scandinavian success to European player

As a Swedish brand you are at an interesting crossroads. On the one hand, there are huge growth opportunities in Europe; on the other hand, the bar for logistics and service is being raised all the time. The question is no longer whether you should adapt your fulfilment model, but when and how you will do that in the best way.

The step from a strong Scandinavian brand to a true European e-commerce player starts with the question: where will your inventory be tomorrow, and how fast can you serve your customer?

Let Efulfilment help you with this.

Get in touch and turn your fulfilment from a brake into an accelerator for your growth in Europe.

Why efulfilment.eu?

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