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Mr Eierhoff says that by tapping Bertelsmann's other divisions, its offerings would beat those of Amazon.com.

Direct Group Bertelsmann has around 55 million customers in 22 countries, and also includes the the company's music division BMG. Bol.com operates in 16 countries, including China and Japan, Japan, and offers titles in 12 languages.

Bertelsmann's other holdings include the book publisher Random House, CDNow and 40% of barnesandnoble.com.

Spokesman Rocco Thiede says the reorganisation will trim costs by slashing overlapping administrative and marketing operations. He says bol.com will also save money by closing its Danish and Norwegian operations.

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