

HÄFELE

Efficient global rollout of 38 B2B online stores

38

subsidiaries

160,000

articles available worldwide

2-3

months project duration
per rollout



CHALLENGE

- Implement a standardized, centrally managed B2B commerce platform to support international growth ambitions
- Localization: markets of different size, each with their own requirements and expectations for the digital shopping experience
- Integrate multiple third-party systems and interfaces of subsidiaries

SOLUTION

- Global rollout of a centrally managed commerce platform based on Inter-shop, with powerful, preconfigured internationalization and localization functionalities
- Personal account for B2B customers, including convenient self-service capabilities
- Fast and seamless integration into existing (central and local) IT system landscapes
- Intelligent search with automatic display of product comparisons and suggestions opens up diverse up- and cross-selling potentials

ABOUT HÄFELE

Häfele is an international group of companies headquartered in Nagold, Germany. The family-owned company was founded in 1923 and today serves the furniture industry, architects, planners, the trades and retailers with fittings for furniture and construction, electronic locking systems and LED lighting in over 150 countries worldwide. Häfele develops and produces in Germany and Hungary. In fiscal year 2020, the Häfele Group generated sales of 1.39 billion Euros with an export share of 79%, 8,000 employees, 38 subsidiaries and numerous other representatives worldwide.

www.hafele.com

From offline-first to online-first

Entering new markets to connect with new customers can be a tough challenge. However, in a world where global trade is becoming the new normal, this step opens up limitless growth potential. The family-owned manufacturer Häfele wanted to do just that: expand internationally. Thomas Riebe, Head of Digital Commerce Solutions at Häfele, recalls: "In order to achieve our ambitious growth targets, a paradigm shift had to take place – from offline-first to online-first."

Early on, the international hardware specialist dedicated itself to digitalization topics, developing apps and smart furniture. Starting in 1997 – earlier than many other manufacturers – Häfele entered the e-commerce business and brought a strong partner on board: Intershop. In the meantime, the group expanded to more than 38 subsidiaries, which are active in various markets. For a long time, the subsidiaries decided about their own web presence, so that the Häfele brand was positioned and perceived very differently from region to region. To ensure greater efficiency and a consistent brand presence, a central e-commerce solution was needed.

3 ingredients for international success

Häfele's goal was to scale quickly and internationally, thereby fostering sustainable company growth. Reason enough to migrate its global B2B commerce solution to the latest version of the Intershop Commerce Platform as part of the "Häfele One Web" initiative.

Thomas Riebe explains: "To be globally successful, you first and foremost need a scalable, reliable platform on which to build. It's also important to have a competent partner with whom you can implement the project, but also discuss it. Last but not least, you need an innovative customer who will go along with you and simply try out new ordering processes."

The choice of the right platform was made quickly: "Our requirements were high. The Intershop Commerce Platform convinced us with a variety of standard functions as well as a high degree of scalability." The platform is flexible so that all of the customers' business processes, as well as the internal organizational structures of the Häfele Group, can be mapped. Thanks to its API-based architecture, it is also easy to integrate multiple touchpoints and third-party systems.

diconium: strong partner for the international rollout

To realize its ambitious internationalization strategy, Häfele relied on the expertise of long-time Inter-shop partner diconium. "You have to be aware that the development of a global e-commerce platform is an ongoing process. That's why a reliable partner is of particular relevance," explains Thomas Riebe. With its in-depth know-how in the areas of strategy consulting, system integration, and customer experience, diconium has been supporting the digital transformation of the Häfele Group since 2013, making a decisive contribution to the successful international rollout of the new commerce platform.

But in which country should the first online store go live? After intensive market analysis and assessment of possible risks, Austria was chosen. Switzerland, Denmark and Spain followed, and numerous other Häfele Group country stores. The agile project approach and the robust architecture of the Inter-shop platform enabled the rollout process to go so quickly and smoothly. "Our B2B commerce platform is the centerpiece of our global digitalization initiative. It scales with our growth ambitions and flexibly adapts to a wide range of market and customer requirements. If further add-ons are integrated for a region, this is accomplished flawlessly. Today, a standardized rollout of a regional store takes only 2-3 months," concludes Riebe.

The screenshot displays the Häfele Export Shop website. At the top, there is a search bar and a navigation menu with links: Products, Living ideas, Project, Industry, Service, and About Häfele. A language selector for English is also present. The 'Products' menu is expanded, showing categories like Furniture & Door Handles, Furniture, Kitchen & Living Solutions, Architectural Ironmongery, Sliding, Folding & Tambour Door Fittings, Lighting & Electrical Fittings, and Tools & Consumables. The main banner features a collage of diverse people with the text 'Welcome to the new Export Shop' and 'Benefit from the focus on our international customers.', accompanied by a 'Learn more' button. Below the banner, there are four promotional tiles: 'Häfele Discoveries' (announcing a digital event from May 4th to 7th), 'Digital furniture planning' (highlighting configurators and consulting tools), 'All catalogs & brochures', and 'Current offers' (promoting reduced prices on warehouse stock). Each tile includes a 'Learn more' or 'To the remaining stock' button.

Seamless integration in multiple IT system landscapes

Since some of the subsidiaries had very different CRM, ERP and logistics systems in use, seamless integration into the respective IT system environments had to be guaranteed. Thanks to the API-based platform architecture, Häfele has the necessary flexibility to connect all important systems – including the enterprise resource planning system SAP used throughout the company – quickly and easily. The same applies to regional partners, distributors or payment providers, for example. Häfele thus ensures lean processes and a reduction in workload.

Global growth – effectively and centrally managed

Häfele knew from the beginning that global online sales channels had to be managed centrally but adapted to local needs so that they could be operated equally efficiently and effectively. If the subsidiaries in different countries use different commerce systems – as they did in the past – this results in far greater costs and administrative effort, as well as inconsistent brand experiences.

With the Intershop-based commerce platform, Häfele has invested in the centralized, efficient management of its global digital sales while ensuring maximum flexibility in implementing regional requirements and customer expectations. All country stores follow a uniform structure and draw their

data from an extensive, centrally maintained online catalog with around 160,000 available articles as well as extensive product information (including CAD and CAM data, installation manuals and service documents). It is up to the subsidiaries to decide which articles, content or marketing campaigns are displayed in the individual stores – because there are regional differences in terms of supply and demand. However, particular attention is paid to perfect presentation of the product detail pages, as Häfele's B2B customers depend on the correctness of the information, e.g. on possible combinations of products or scale prices.

On track for further success

Today, Häfele customers from over 38 countries have 24/7 access to around 160,000 articles and extensive product information. They benefit from a personalized shopping experience, efficient ordering processes, and a personal login area with convenient self-service functionality for viewing order status and history, managing account data, and creating wish lists. An intelligent search function with automatic display of product comparisons and suggestions opens up a wide range of up-selling and cross-selling potential. This ensures increasing sales and a boost in customer satisfaction.

But that's not all: Rollouts in new markets are already being planned, because Häfele is continuing to grow. With its Intershop-based commerce platform, the company has a powerful system in place

that scales with future business development and enables flexible integration of IT systems, partners or innovative technologies at any time. Exciting times ahead!

“Our requirements were high. The Intershop Commerce Platform convinced us with a variety of standard functions as well as a high degree of scalability.”

Thomas Riebe, Head of Digital Commerce Solutions at Häfele

ABOUT INTERSHOP

Always nearby



Intershop is the engine that drives digital commerce. Our powerful B2B e-commerce platform enables the world's leading manufacturers and wholesalers to transform their business and increase revenue in a digital-first world.

Our cloud-based solutions give you an essential foundation for digital success, plus the flexibility to deliver

unique experiences and quickly react to changing needs. With a global presence and extensive partner network, we support your success every step of the way—creating opportunities to scale, innovate, and gain a competitive edge.

Intershop is built to boost your business. Discover what we can do at www.intershop.com.



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