



International expansion of an online pure player

30%

business growth in 2019

200,000

products in the range

17

European markets



CHALLENGE

- Run almost 40 online shops in 17 countries
- Manage peak loads on Black Fridays and during the holiday season
- Integrate online shop into the existing IT landscape to ensure a perfect customer journey on every device

SOLUTION

- Central administration of almost 40 international online shops using the highly scalable Intershop Commerce Platform
- Mobile-first approach: Progressive web app frontend ensures short loading times and a frictionless user experience on mobile devices
- Seamless integration into the existing IT landscape

ABOUT PIERCE

PIERCE is a Swedish B2C online vendor for motorcycle spare parts, accessories, clothing and streetwear, operating throughout Europe and serving a wide range of markets. Its brands are aimed equally at motocross enthusiasts, friends of cultivated road touring and snowmobile fans. The self-proclaimed “Petrolheads” have been recording high growth figures for years and continue to unwaveringly pursue their international expansion course. This is one of the reasons why PIERCE is one of the most successful Swedish e-commerce companies of all time. But that’s not all: The vision is to become the best retailer in the industry as a digital provider, delivering shopping experiences that set standards in the long term.

www.pierce-ecom.com

Out of the garage – at full speed

The fact that it all began in a garage in 2005 is not really surprising, since the company does the digital start-up as well as motorcycle accessories. The founders of PIERCE – being self-proclaimed “Petrolheads” or just “motorcycle maniacs” – got tired of the tedious search for good dealers and special spare parts. So they decided to take the whole thing into their own hands and offer motorcycle spare parts in an online shop. Their declared goal even back then was to offer customers a fast and reliable service.

After only a few months the company had outgrown the garage and in January 2009 PIERCE AB was founded. The new online shop 24MX sold spare parts and accessories for the motocross scene and the sales figures grew at a speed that even the greatest optimists would not have expected. In 2013 a second online shop followed with XLmoto, offering a wide range of products for riders of road bikes – closely followed by the third shop Sledstore, where especially Northern European snowmobile fans get their money’s worth. With a range of 200,000 products, PIERCE is now Europe’s leading online provider in its segment.



The online pure player expands internationally

“The company has grown organically, we have gradually expanded geographically,” explains Willem Voß, Chief Operations Officer at PIERCE. After establishing themselves in Sweden, the company set its course on Europe. With its brands, PIERCE is now present in 17 European countries, the original team of four has grown to more than 380 people. “As an online pure player, international expansion was easier for us than for traditional retailers. Although we want to be as close to our customers as possible, we use the same processes, systems and tools in all countries, which makes it easier for us to enter new markets,” says Voß.

The company's broad and loyal customer base trusts in a unique product offering, a portfolio of private labels and a constant focus on the customer experience. "Our attractive campaigns and competitive pricing are another driver of our success," says COO Voß. "We also invest a lot of time and energy in adapting our offers to the specific conditions in the individual countries. Not only do we offer local options for payment and delivery, but we also produce content ourselves with our own photo and film team. We translate everything in-house and our customer service team is fluent in the languages of the individual countries". In addition, there are local offline events where you meet face-to-face with customers, sponsorship contracts and of course social media, where PIERCE has 1.5 million loyal followers from the motorcycle scene.

New central warehouse in the center of Europe

PIERCE's headquarters and digital office are still located at two sites in Sweden, but other important areas have now been moved abroad – two offices are located in Spain, another in Poland, where PIERCE's new central warehouse with a total of 37,000 square meters of space was built in 2016. Thanks to Poland's central location in Europe, the most important markets can be reached quickly, and Poland also has a large pool of flexible, well-trained workers. Apparently word got around quickly, because shortly afterwards big players like Amazon and Zalando followed the pioneers from Sweden.

Supplying customers from a single warehouse also presents challenges, however: "We can serve orders throughout Europe with reasonable delivery times, even if we may sometimes be a little slower than some of our local competitors," explains Willem Voß. "The whole thing is a tightrope act, where on the one hand we have to meet the wishes and expectations of our customers, and on the other hand we want to keep costs as low as possible. In order to keep the balance, we have to be able to re-adjust flexibly at all times".

Focus on scalability

Like many fast-growing start-ups, PIERCE's initial focus was on the commercial side of the business. IT systems, structures, standardization and automation were of lesser importance at first. However, in order to continue to grow, the company had to optimize and automate its processes at some point, and structured, high-quality data became increasingly important. "When I started here," Voß recalls, "we still had an e-commerce system designed in-house, but it was at the end of its life cycle. So we looked at our frontend and backend architectures and then decided to do some replatforming to ensure that we could continue to scale."



When looking for a scalable and future-proof e-commerce platform with a wide range of functionality, they came across Intershop. The company was faced with Black Friday peak loads and the fact that the e-commerce solution needed to be able to handle almost 40 online shops in 17 European countries. In addition, 70% of visitors to PIERCE online shops use their mobile devices, and 50% of purchases are made on the move. “We have there-

fore taken a ‘mobile-first approach’ from the very beginning in order to offer our customers the best possible shopping experience,” says Voß. When implementing the Intershop Commerce Platform, the online shops were therefore converted to a Progressive Web App that is optimized for mobile devices, ensuring short loading times and a frictionless user experience.

“Now that our frontend architecture is in place with Intershop and our PIM (Product Information Management) and CRM (Customer Relationship Management) are running, we are working on data exchange between these platforms to deliver an even more compelling, segmented and personalized customer experience. In addition, we are working with Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning not only to optimize the customer experience, but also to make our operational processes even smarter.”

Willem Voss, Chief Operations Officer at PIERCE



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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info@intershop.com