

 MS Schippers

Schippers Digitalizes Livestock Farming

About Schippers

Made famous by the invention of plastic ear tags used to track animals, today the livestock farming company, Schippers boasts 12 sales offices, 10,000 SKUs, is active in 40 countries and employs a staff of 350 worldwide. Based in Bladel in Holland, the Company produces around 300 million ear tags per year but also continues to develop new procedures and products to enable the farmer to do the best work they can.

www.msschippers.co.uk

In most markets, Schippers works 'direct-to-farmer' and without middlemen, which enables it to keep track of the individual challenges of its farmers. It has three sales channels: inbound sales, field sales and e-commerce. In 2003, the inbound sales channel came to life, and today has 55 employees. Schippers also has a print catalog, but it was 2011 when the Company took its first steps towards an e-commerce channel.

In a bid to improve service and offer farmers technological support, Jules van der Werf was hired to guide the company through its transition towards becoming a global e-commerce player. "We wanted to sell online because the customers are increasingly getting used to doing everything online. In their private life, they are accustomed to services as offered by Amazon and Zalando, and therefore begin to wonder why in the B2B environment they should still do everything in an old-fashioned way."

Schippers turned to Intershop for an internationally powerful B2B platform that makes it easy to manage different situations, in different countries; for example, when it comes to pricing, VAT or shipping costs. Having concluded that the risk of taking an open source platform was too vast, the Company opted for a platform that makes opening in new countries fast and easy. The catalog is fully integrated, as is SyncForce and all SAP-held client data and prices.

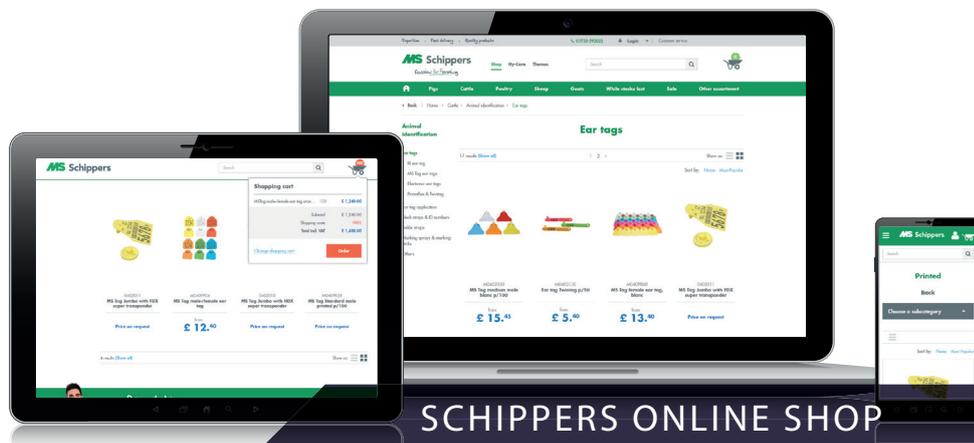
Cutting Edge Farming

The 10 localized websites not only serve the customers buying online, but also support the inbound sales agents when assisting buyers over the phone or to make orders. As the inbound agents make such heavy use of the e-commerce systems and can access them in real-time, their feedback is of great value when improving the processes.

The digitalization of Schippers' processes supports both the continuous improvement of the system, and the optimization of support the Company can offer to its customers. Customers can see their invoice history independent of the sales channel of their previous orders. They can easily place repeat orders or make a list of favourite products. They can also start a return procedure wherever they are.

The benefits don't end there. Schippers is now able to help livestock farmers monitor the growth of their animals online. Technological applications like this not only serve the farmer, but also help the Company to offer its customers new options to optimize their business, such as advanced nutrition fitting their situation. Whereas the salesman used to speak to the farmer out on his land to talk about their needs, now data can be gathered online. Online data has given Schippers an alternative, additional source of information.

All international websites operate in local languages and with local payment methods and Schippers' social media strategy means that it receives questions via Facebook from all over the world. Facebook is regularly used by farmers and the Company quickly accumulated 10,000 likes in about 10 months.



Multi-channel

Despite its rapid digital strategy, offline remains an important marketing and information feature. Schippers likes that customers can easily start exploring with catalogs, and their thickness makes the Company's wide range of choices more obvious than a webshop.

"Another positive is that clients start looking online when they are already in an order process, whereas the catalog is looked at during lunch or coffee, just to have a little browse. This has an inspirational value," adds van der Werf.

Being able to better facilitate our customers by offering a 24/7 service portal is an important consideration for Schippers. The e-commerce operation allows farmers to shop after work hours, empowering them to spend their valuable time on more critical business operations.

Technical details

Software: **Intershop Commerce Suite**

Project implementation: **Fenego NV**

Business Model: **B2B**

Shop URL: **www.msschippers.co.uk**

Personalization

A synaptic integration between the Intershop commerce system and SAP also allows Schippers to show its customers all relevant personal information in a "My Account" section of the webshop.

At 50 years old, Schippers still holds itself true to its own strapline of "passion for farming". The Company is careful to balance technological advances with good old-fashioned business relationships.

Van der Werf concludes, "We carefully weigh with which kind of customer we are interacting with. Smaller clients are often sensitive to promotions and special offers, that we can put online. They constantly weigh us against the competition. Larger companies however have a different relationship with us: we talk about solving problems and we build a different kind of trust and long-term collaboration for which the website becomes an ordering tool."

ABOUT INTERSHOP

Intershop is the leading independent provider of innovative and comprehensive omni-channel commerce solutions.

How do you achieve ambitious goals in times of change? All you need is a partner who can help make complexity simple.

Unlock your potential with the exciting possibilities of Intershop's unrivaled technology and extensive market knowledge.

For more information on our solutions and services, visit **www.intershop.com**.

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