



From Multi-Channel Provider to Pure Internet Player

Multi-channel sales are an important objective for many online businesses, but plus.de is heading in the opposite direction. Following changes to Group structures, the online discounter is now positioning itself as a pure Internet retailer.

Plus started selling products online in addition to its brick-and-mortar activities back in 2001, becoming the first discounter in Germany to do so. The strategy involved leveraging the logistics and marketing resources of the physical stores and sharing procurement activities and IT infrastructure. These options ceased to be available when the owner, the Tengelmann Group, sold the Plus supermarkets. But with 95% unaided awareness, the company is confident that by focusing on online business plus.de can be a highly effective market player.

A new home for discount prices

Plus.de took control of all processes, setting up its own procurement team, agreeing on new supplier contracts, and benefiting from the ability to set its prices independently. Rapid progress was made with developing and implementing the new concept. Instead of being driven by weekly promotions, plus.de is positioning itself as a full-range retailer, now offering 45,000 products instead of 4,000—a figure that will ultimately rise to around 120,000. Along with the other changes, this far broader range placed new demands on the inventory management and e-commerce systems. It quickly became apparent that not only would the existing Web store require extensive maintenance due to the many adaptations and upgrades, it was also unable to meet the expectations of today's online customers. Plus.de therefore decided to make a fresh start with a new, powerful e-commerce software solution, opting for Intershop's Enfinity Suite 6.4.

Plus points for customers: Established brand, huge range, enjoyable online shopping experience

"With a 40 percent higher conversion rate than the previous solution, we clearly made the right decision," says Christian



Winter, CEO of Plus Online GmbH. "Visitors to our new store can quickly find what they want and are assisted while shopping by intelligent search functionality, product recommendations, and a streamlined order process." The store is notable for a high level of user-friendliness, which is enjoyed by three million visitors every month. Following a complete design revamp, the huge range of products is now clearly organized, aided by an integrated search function that helps customers find content quickly and effectively. Web 2.0 elements are also incorporated. Product reviews by other customers facilitate the buying decision, and, because plus.de is connected to the main social web platforms, customers can access current discussions, recommendations, discount promotions, and competitions in the plus store at any time via Facebook, Twitter, and blogs. Other features include purchase recommendations, such as alternative or additional product suggestions, information on new products, and automatically generated bestseller lists. Under "My Plus," customers can manage their user data and view recent orders and wish lists. The Offer of the Day and special weekly offers have proved particularly popular.

The order process was greatly simplified through integration of Ajax functionalities into the website, which enables customers to complete their order in just two steps.

“We are committed to becoming a leading online retailer, which is why we need an e-commerce solution that can fully support innovative concepts – fast. Enfinity Suite checks all the boxes.”

Christian Winter | CEO of Plus Online GmbH

Plus points for plus.de

The significantly higher conversion rate is just one of the measurable successes achieved by plus.de. The new online store was up and running after an implementation phase of around six months and has added value for plus.de on a number of fronts. With Enfinity Suite already search engine-optimized as standard, customers using Google and other browsers can find products on the plus.de site. Plus.de thus avoids the cost and time involved in bidding for expensive search engine keywords. Maintenance effort is also significantly reduced, thanks to the rich functionality provided by Enfinity Suite 6.4 out of the box – and the fact that the problem-prone software additions developed by various third parties are no longer needed. At the same time, deploying the new e-commerce software enabled automation of numerous processes, thereby restricting the scope for errors and greatly increasing efficiency.



Optimized processes have also improved service levels: customers benefit from a range of payment options, fast logistics, and a dedicated call center. “We now have control over our prices and processes and greater speed,” says Bastian Siebert, a member of the management team at Plus Online GmbH. All of these factors are helping plus.de to achieve its aim of becoming the number one online seller.

E-commerce solution – key facts

Intershop product:

→ Enfinity Suite 6.4

Business model:

→ Business-to-consumer

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