

CASE STUDY
Aug. Winkhaus GmbH & Co. KG

OPEN FOR E-SERVICES

How Winkhaus supports partners
and processors with digital services
using a B2B/C platform

ABSTRACT

**WINKHAUS IS TACKLING THE CHALLENGES
OF DIGITAL BUSINESS HEAD ON
AND IS IMPLEMENTING**

OPTIMISED PROCESSES. FOR PARTNERS, PROCESSORS AND IN-HOUSE

Winkhaus is a leading, long-established specialist in intelligent window technology, door locking systems and access management. Along with its implementation partner B4B Solutions, the company is realising an innovative concept for digital services. The CX focus lies on retail partners and processors, i.e., door and window manufacturers.

Winkhaus is thus implementing a new openness for e-services und omnichannel communication.

Thanks to its continuous power of innovation, the family-owned Westphalian company, founded in 1854, has become one of the leading and globally successful suppliers of high-quality window and door technology. Winkhaus employs more than 2,100 employees at four locations in Germany and in its international subsidiaries in several countries.

In product development, Winkhaus is always at the cutting edge of technology. Time and time again, the company sets new standards in intelligent window technology, door locking systems and access management. This is particularly valued by retail partners and processors, i.e., the companies in the window and door manufacturing industry. With them in mind, Winkhaus was looking for new e-service solutions that would provide partners and processors with real competitive advantages.

These advantages can be found in more and better structured information and interaction possibilities, including self-service, in order to reduce costs.

Winkhaus itself was looking to optimise costs through streamlined and accelerated internal processes, as well as to tie its partners and processors more closely to the company. This meant that Winkhaus had to build a solution for its e-service that would fit its role as an innovator and pioneer. The goal was to design a customer journey for its partners that would support them from the search for information all the way to their e-commerce activities.

**FAST, SERVICE-ORIENTED AND
CUSTOMISED PROCESSES: PROVEN
VIRTUES MATTER IN THE DIGITAL WORLD**



An essential requirement for this is structured data generation and storage. This also the basis for future solutions at Winkhaus, such as support for building information management systems (BIM). The highly automated generation of print publications will also be facilitated in this way. After all, Winkhaus provides many hundreds of publications for download in 13 languages for the various areas of application. Until now, their creation has required a great deal of manual effort.

The implemented omnichannel platform already meets high demands in terms of customer experience. Key to this is the portal approach implemented together with B4B Solutions.



THE STATUS QUO

PORTAL WITH HIGH-QUALITY PRODUCT DATA ONLY

The retail partners and processors of Winkhaus products require clearly presented information, are dependent on rapid service and value a barrier-free consultation experience. This is why Winkhaus is not satisfied with just setting up a relatively basic B2B online shop. The extensive portfolio with complex products and multi-level sales processes requires a different approach. It is necessary to map complex configuration options and solve interface issues in order to offer precise e-services for partners and processors. This challenging type of customer experience and omnichannel communication perfectly reflects the Winkhaus company identity.

Winkhaus took up this challenge and looked for a solution that would meet the requirements and be open to future forms of implementation.

Before the interface design for retail partners and processors could be addressed, the wide-ranging product portfolio had to be compiled with a suitable data management system. Additionally, a process for continuous product data management had to be established.

"Clean data is the key to successful digital projects", says Winkhaus Head of IT / CIO Dr Dirk Kettrup. "This is a real challenge in the age of mass data." Therefore, the internal data management was reviewed extensively. The underlying processes were upgraded to the latest standards in order to meet the company's high-quality demands.

**OMNICHANNEL COMMUNICATION
RELIES ON THE QUALITY
OF THE DATA BEING PROCESSED**



**TOGETHER WITH B4B SOLUTIONS,
WINKHAUS DEFINED ITS**

ROADMAP WITH A FOCUS ON E-SERVICE



Creating the central database for the cross-channel customer experience.

In order to consistently and reliably provide up-to-date content, marketing and product information needed to be optimally structured for the omnichannel approach.



Providing optimal support for partners and processors throughout the information and purchasing process.

The seamless support for retailers from Winkhaus had to be realised with the help of intelligent services. A partner platform with an extensive range of services had to support partner management.



Connecting partners and processors with each other and with Winkhaus.

Closer integration and interlinking of internal Winkhaus processes with the processes of partners and processors was intended to create synergy effects and reduce costs and efforts for all parties involved.



**IN THE DIGITAL AGE, THE COMPANY
WEBSITE IS MORE THAN JUST A STATIC
BUSINESS CARD. THE WEBSITE IS
INFORMATION CENTRE, SERVICE CONTACT
POINT AND MARKET PLACE AT THE
SAME TIME. IT THRIVES ON UP-TO-DATE,
ACCURATE DATA AND INTERACTIVE
COMMUNICATION OFFERS.
WITH OUR OMNICHANNEL PLATFORM,
OUR PARTNERS AND PROCESSORS ENTER
INTO DIRECT DIALOGUE WITH US. THIS
TAKES COOPERATION TO A NEW LEVEL.**

DR. DIRK KETTRUP, HEAD OF IT / CIO

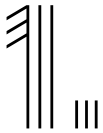


IN

3

STEPS TO
IMPLEMENT AN

**E-SERVICES
PLATFORM**



CREATING A SHARED DATABASE

In order to optimally operate the new e-services platform, Winkhaus decided to introduce a system for managing product and media data. This efficiently supports data management and the output of all relevant information via the corresponding channels. This was the foundation on which successful customer experience processes were built.

Keeping the product world under control: Efficient product data management

Winkhaus has a wide-ranging and complex product portfolio to manage. In order to operate channels such as the online shop, website or print, it is necessary to have access to thoroughly maintained and precise technical product information in the ERP system. To enhance this with up-to-date image and marketing text material, Winkhaus decided to implement a product information management system (PIM). This created a single point of truth that ensures consistent data.

The central database supports Winkhaus in managing all relevant information for the e-services in a resource-efficient manner. Due to the optimised processes, the company can open up new communication and sales channels more easily.

Thanks to the centralised maintenance and management of all product information, Winkhaus can


- ✚ significantly increase the quality of product data by means of the extensive specification of attributes
- ✚ create the optimal foundation for an innovative omnichannel e-services strategy



ALL DIGITAL ASSETS UNDER CONTROL: INTELLIGENT MEDIA MANAGEMENT

In a second step, Winkhaus expanded its e-service platform with the B4B Media Management Add-on in order to connect marketing and product management more closely. After all, the retail partners and processors of Winkhaus products have high demands on the quality of the digital assets. This also applies to Winkhaus itself.

Due to the wide product range, the number of digital resources is consequently high. Media Management now significantly improves internal processes and simplifies the management of image files, product documents, videos or texts. Now, specialist departments always have an overview of all internal corporate media. This means that it can be efficiently integrated into the previously established product data management and made available to partners and processors. In addition, material-documents can be seamlessly added into the media structure. In this way, the product information is enhanced with important media.



OUR TRADING PARTNERS AND PROCESSORS VALUE PRECISE, FIRST-HAND INFORMATION. THE ONLINE PORTAL HAS OPENED UP A DIRECT COMMUNICATION CHANNEL FOR US, WHICH WE CAN UTILISE ON A DAILY BASIS.

DR. DIRK KETTRUP, HEAD OF IT / CIO

Intelligent media management at a glance

- ✚ Higher data quality thanks to central data management
- ✚ Useful categorisation, classification and keywording of media files
- ✚ (Multilingual) SEO management directly on the media object
- ✚ Up-to-date overview of the output channels used per medium
- ✚ Seamless integration into product information and web content management



IDEAL B2B/B2C EXPERIENCE THROUGH TAILOR-MADE CUSTOMER JOURNEYS

Winkhaus wanted its e-service platform to open the door to a successful customer journey for retail partners and processors. Therefore, the company designed an interactive interface on which partners can obtain comprehensive information about products and configuration options. They have direct access to images and text material from the manufacturers and thus from the experts. They are additionally supported in their research by convenient configurators. With this touchpoint, Winkhaus has implemented a profitable solution for further customer loyalty.

For this seamless customer journey, the next step was to build a bridge from product research to purchasing. **Winkhaus was looking to create a digital service that supports customers in creating the “shopping list” and, depending on business process, either enables a direct purchase or refers the customer to the relevant partner.**

This plan could then be put into effect with the modern commerce solution. The innovative platform enables processors to create a shopping cart with their favourite products and forward it directly to the specialist retailer of their choice, who then creates a specific offer and takes over further customer care.

This enables Winkhaus to create a seamless shopping experience and optimise its processes in a profitable way at the process level. Retailers are provided with the shopping cart of processors via the portal and have access to the latest information on products and price conditions. This is customer experience customised in a multi-level sales process and contributes to a high level of loyalty of retail partners and processors with the manufacturer and with each other.

E-SERVICE WITH ADDED VALUE



WINDOW TECHNOLOGY, DOOR LOCKING SYSTEMS AND ACCESS MANAGEMENT ARE ULTIMATELY PERSONAL MATTERS.

THEY SEPARATE THE PUBLIC FROM THE PRIVATE AND OFFER PROTECTION AGAINST ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES AND UNAUTHORISED ENTRY. THE EXPERTS KNOW THIS BEST, NAMELY THE PROCESSORS OF OUR PRODUCTS WHO ARE IN DIRECT CONTACT WITH CLIENTS, ARCHITECTS, OR CIVIL ENGINEERS. WITH OUR E-SERVICE PROJECT, WE HAVE CREATED AN INTERACTIVE PLATFORM WITH WHICH WE CAN OPTIMALLY SUPPORT THE PROCESSORS OF OUR PRODUCTS AND GET TO KNOW THEM BETTER AND BETTER. THIS HELPS US TO CONTINUOUSLY DEVELOP E-SERVICES AND TO LEAD OUR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE INTO THE FUTURE WITH CUSTOMISED SERVICES.

DR. DIRK KETTRUP, HEAD OF IT / CIO/ CIO




A PLATFORM WITH ADDED VALUE: STRONGER BUSINESS RELATIONS

As a globally active manufacturing company, Winkhaus puts great emphasis on sustainable business relations with its international professional partners. So, it made sense to use the online platform not only for marketing and sales purposes, but to also add partner-specific services. The result is an innovative partner portal.

Specialist retailers can access the latest product developments and benefit from the high information value of the platform. This comprehensive knowledge supports the identification and further exploration of possible upselling opportunities. Furthermore, the portal offers up-to-date information on deliveries, invoicing and numerous self-service offers. Winkhaus has thus created an attractive and above all sales-promoting package for its trade partners.

With the portal, Winkhaus was also able to implement another profitable measure with added service value. **The integrated stock optimisation actively supports processors in keeping their own stocks up to date.** It gives recommendations to the processors about products they should reorder. This customised e-service also helps to further strengthen business relations in this B2B sector.

WINKHAUS IS KNOWN FOR ITS EXCELLENT SERVICE. THEREFORE, IT WAS OBVIOUS TO US THAT WE WANT TO MEET THE HIGHEST STANDARDS IN E-SERVICE AS WELL.



DR. DIRK KETTRUP, HEAD OF IT / CIO

THE ADDED VALUE OF THE ONLINE PORTAL FOR WINKHAUS AT A GLANCE.

✚ PARTNERS OBTAIN INFORMATION DIRECTLY FROM THE MANUFACTURER

The portal offers a complete and user-friendly overview of the entire product range. Configurators additionally offer quick and easy help in the research process.

✚ PARTNERS BENEFIT FROM THE WIDE-RANGING SELF-SERVICE AREA

In the self-service area for retail partners, offers to processors can be configured in a convenient manner and upselling opportunities can be easily identified and utilised.

✚ OPTIMAL SUPPORT OF THE PURCHASING PROCESS OF PROCESSORS

Processors can arrange their shopping cart with just a few clicks and then send it to the retailer of their choice.

✚ THE COMPANY'S OWN SALES DEPARTMENT ALSO BENEFITS FROM THE PORTAL

Winkhaus sales staff can also use the self-service portal to create offers and send them to their customers. This speeds up and refines the internal processes.

✚ CREATING OFFERS IS NOTICEABLY FASTER

The simplified shopping cart design for the processors and direct transmission to the selected Winkhaus retail partners support the sales processes, both for the partners and for Winkhaus itself.

CONCLUSION

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE IN THE MULTI-LEVEL SALES PROCESS: SIMPLY SUCCESSFUL

With the introduction of tools for product data and media management, Winkhaus has created the basis for an innovative e-services platform. It offers precise and up-to-date information for all parties involved in the multi-level and international sales process.

The platform covers all important online channels and supports retail partners in their e-commerce efforts. By offering self-service for retail partners, functional shopping cart solutions for processors and integrated quotation creation processes for trade partners, Winkhaus hits all the right buttons for a top-class customer experience.

Furthermore, the structured, systematically stored and consistently available data and product information are the ideal starting point for further innovation. These include, for example, integration into building information management systems or support for the highly automated creation of product publications.

THE PLATFORM FOR SUCCESSFUL E-COMMERCE

Together with B4B Solutions, Winkhaus has developed an innovative online portal that perfectly prepares the company for the coming challenges on the market. For this purpose, the company has decided to implement SAP Commerce and to use the Media Management Add-On developed by B4B Solutions for the management of digital media data.

Connecting the departments through newly implemented digital data management tools has considerably streamlined the internal processes in marketing and product management and has led to noticeable time savings within a very short period. In conjunction with the service-oriented partner portal, Winkhaus and B4B Solutions have thus implemented an innovative e-commerce concept that further strengthens the competitiveness of the highly successful company.

**WITH SAP COMMERCE, WINKHAUS HAS
CREATED AN ONLINE PORTAL THAT OPTIMALLY
COMBINES THE WORLDS OF B2B AND B2C
AND ENABLES RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT
WITH ADDED VALUE**

HOW WINKHAUS IMPLEMENTED AN INNOVATIVE E-COMMERCE PLATFORM IN THREE STEPS

1

A SHARED DATABASE

The implementation of an efficient product data and media management system enables the optimal realisation of the omnichannel strategy. Customers and retailers receive up-to-date information on all channels and valuable knowledge can be processed and made available in a straightforward manner.

2

SEAMLESS CUSTOMER JOURNEY

The seamless support for retailers from Winkhaus had to be realised with the help of intelligent services. A partner platform with an extensive range of services had to support partner management.

3

COMPREHENSIVE PARTNER PORTAL

The achieved process optimisations in sales contribute to a noticeable increase in turnover. Complemented by easily accessible information and service offers, Winkhaus is able to profitably strengthen its relations with retail partners and processors, thus ensuring a competitive advantage in the digital market economy.



LET'S TAKE YOUR BUSINESS TO THE NEXT LEVEL

B4B Solutions is an innovative IT service company within the All for One Group. Its mission is to make companies **more successful, faster,** and **more digital** based on state-of-the-art cloud software solutions.

As an expert for Customer Experience and SAP Platinum Partner, we provide our customers with innovative solutions from the cloud helping them to build sustainable, strong, and trusted customer relationships.

[CONTACT](#)



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