



## On course for global growth with a future-proof B2B platform

150,000+

top-level and high-tech professional products

550

million euro annual turnover

4,000+

orders placed via the scanner app in the first few months



### CHALLENGE

- Implementing digital transformation within a still very traditional industry
- Centralizing and processing all customer data in a more efficient way
- Achieving proper customer segmentation in a digital context
- Developing a stable, standardized and sustainable B2B e-commerce solution, built with state-of-the-art technology and designed to be future-proof
- Driving forward the internal digital transformation and ensuring that the sales team perceives this transformation as added value
- Structuring, standardizing, and completing product data from manufacturers

### SOLUTION

- Utilizing Intershop as a core to help centralize and digitize the customer data and allow for a more efficient customer segmentation
- Improving the data structures in PIM and ERP systems
- Developing a scanner app solution to simplify the ordering process and increase the conversion rate
- Centralizing all VBH B2B business model processes in one platform
- Creating a solid base for the digital roll-out of VBH and greenteQ shops
- Enhancing customer experience with faster order processing and more efficient product discovery

## ABOUT VBH

VBH is a German brand that has become a global leader in windows and door fittings. With over 2000 employees worldwide and an annual turnover of over € 550 million, it has a forward-looking, dependable, and diverse philosophy perfectly reflected in its own brand, greenteQ.

[www.vbh.de/en](http://www.vbh.de/en)

## ABOUT EXPERTS IN MOTION

XIM is a leading digitalization partner for medium-sized businesses, providing extensive expertise to help companies achieve greater efficiency and success in e-commerce. They specialize in supporting their customers in their digital transformation, enabling them to develop new online sales channels using cutting-edge technologies.

[www.XIM.ag/en](http://www.XIM.ag/en)

**As a global leader in windows and door fittings, creating a compelling and efficient e-commerce experience was fundamental for VBH, especially considering that B2B e-commerce is substantially more complex than traditional retail.**

On top of that, VBH needed a B2B e-commerce solution that could accurately represent the company's pillars, which are simple yet demanding: to offer a product range that exceeds market quality requirements, provide an extensive range of services, and combine all this with a customer-oriented international sales and support network.

Finally, VBH needed a solution that could allow them to keep growing internationally, expanding their brand, and consolidating new markets further. How did VBH achieve this? The answer lies in a combination of a solid B2B core and the possibility of adding any extra functionality with ease and efficiency.

### The first building block: a solid B2B core

Without a doubt, the main element VBH was searching for was a solid B2B core for their online platform – a solution that could provide VBH with all the basic B2B e-commerce functionalities right out of the box while at the same time allowing room for future improvement.

This was a strategic decision for VBH, as the company knew they needed a future-proof sales channel. So, investing in a solid e-commerce platform to consolidate the individual and partially digital channels that have emerged over the years into one fully digital and efficient channel was the logical thing to do.

Also, this new platform could help do justice to the future organization of work, including the associated processes, given the nationwide and EU-wide reduction in the labor supply – due to the upcoming retirement of the Baby Boomers – and thus allowing VBH to have a solid operational framework in light of the foreseeable future of the labor market.

On top of that, the creation of a solid B2B e-commerce platform was also a way for VBH to address the main challenges they were currently dealing with as a company, mainly the implementation of digital transformation beyond the mere provision of technical possibilities in an industry in which some of the framework conditions and process structures are still quite traditional, their data and process organization and design as well as updating customer segmentation in a digital context.

In fact, one of the main issues VBH faced was that, in Germany, especially small businesses are very traditional. They didn't like buying their B2B products or services via e-commerce, even though nowadays, it is pretty clear that e-commerce is the future.

Finally, digitalization provided another direct benefit for VBH: it allows for industry knowledge to be online and easily accessible to everybody, decreasing the cost and internal training time for new employees.

Pursuing these goals, VBH searched for a stable platform that could be run independently of one or two people inside the company, something standardized that could be taken by anyone with knowledge of the e-commerce solution and be worked on. That's why they chose Intershop.

For VBH, Intershop's scope of configuration options provided both a solid basic platform and an e-commerce platform with a standardized and well-known framework that could allow them to fine-tune it to meet their specific requirements in each region.

## International expansion and the launching of their own brand

By their nature, B2B processes tend to be more complex, recurring, and detailed and require more technical support than traditional B2C or direct-to-consumer sales. This means that all attempts to create B2B e-commerce will require a proficient network of services, technical support, and functionalities beyond the basic systems any online shop needs to sell.

To tackle all this and effectively create a B2B platform capable of successfully operating in multiple markets in different regions, VBH joined forces with XIM – one of Intershop's platinum implementation partners – to develop and roll out multiple regional websites, using Intershop as a B2B solution.

The KPIs of the first monitoring phase were mainly qualitative and included the creation of digital VBH standards. These standards enable many national companies to enter the e-commerce context and to consolidate the existing process structures.

During this first phase, VBH learned that each regional market has a different maturity level and needs. For example, the Spanish market seems to be more comfortable buying online than the German one and the UK has unique product requirements, making it necessary to have a separate website just for that market.

Overall, we can say that VBH's main goal was to achieve process integration, meaning to provide a full integration of all the processes behind its B2B business model, and they have achieved that. For their own brand, greenteQ, VBH wanted a sturdy base to build its digital future, and they also achieved that with Intershop.

## Objective, functionalities, and strategy for VBH

As a general objective for the first go-lives of VBH in Belgium and the Netherlands, the MVP (Minimum Viable Product) set between VBH and XIM was to successfully establish a new online shop for existing customers. Each national company or market started with a homogeneous sub-range and clear standards for processes and services. The product range and service offerings were expanded in subsequent phases, and customer feedback was also incorporated in each case.

Also, for VBH Germany's go-live with a pre-existing online shop, the MVP was used to map its functional catalog and integrate additional functionalities – including guest access and a subscription function – as part of a regular development process. There was and is also a constant exchange with the customers.

More in detail, VBH requested XIM to optimize the shop through adjustments to the existing configurations and revising and improving the data structures in PIM and ERP systems. Conception and implementation of new shop functions, including the scanner app, and rollouts planned for other countries.

For greenteQ, we needed to start from zero. So, it was the conception and design of the new shop, programming with the latest PWA technology, on-line marketing (SEO), content creation (texts, images, graphics), interface connections such as PIMs and ERPs, and the conception of the page structure and information architecture.

And although the process of relaunching and launching the old and new websites required a soft retraining of the sales team, it was more oriented towards providing the sales team with a new strategy, to take full advantage of the fully digital approach.

Of course, this was also a process of re-training their customers to help them realize that the e-commerce option is safe, secure, reliable, and, in many ways, more efficient and faster than normal traditional sales.

Moreover, it is to be noted that a marketing and sales approach within the framework of a touch-point cycle counters the conflict between dividing online and traditional sales strategies. The strengths of the individual touchpoints, such as customer contacts in a digital and offline context, are optimally provided to the customer along the ordering process to ensure long-term customer loyalty.

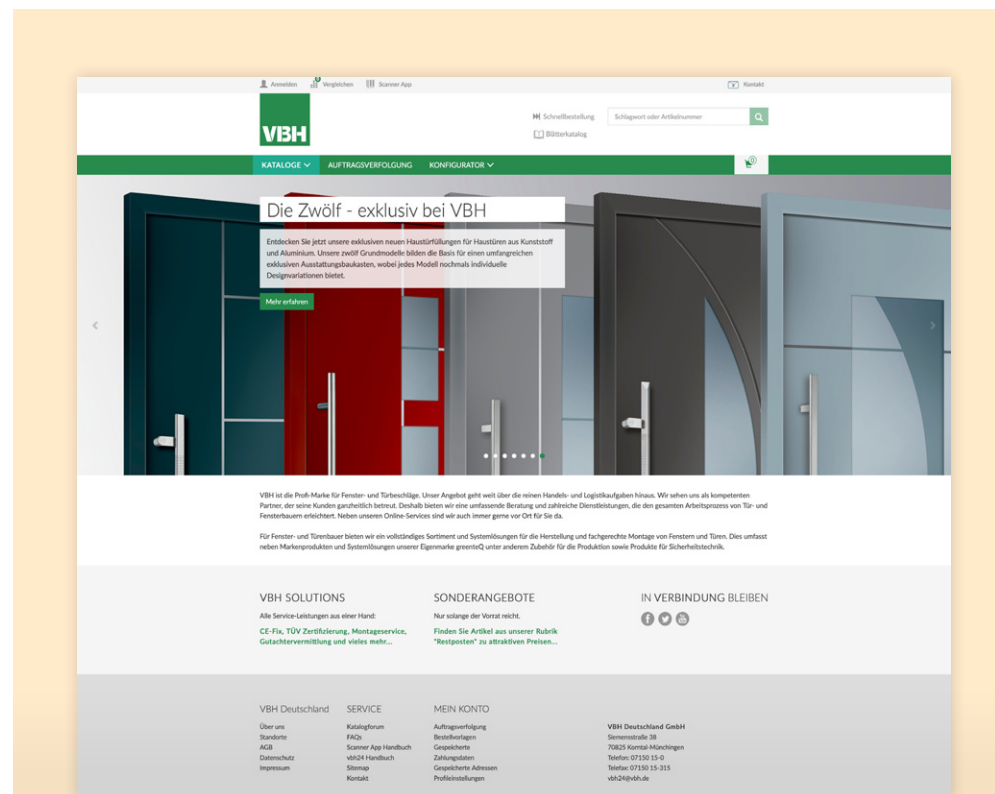
Overall, the new websites allowed VBH to move their salespeople into a new role focused on being the technical expert, explaining why a particular product should be used and how to use it to its full potential.

This means that we want e-commerce to handle all the tiresome, bureaucratic processes of placing orders and allow the customer to skip all the hassle that existed before by going online and placing the

orders for the products he needs most efficiently. The scanner app, for example, is an excellent example of this approach and the new sales benefits that e-commerce provides.

## Digitalization in traditional industries and future plans

VBH faced the challenging task of digitizing its business. This task required tackling multiple obstacles simultaneously: a technical conundrum of



combining all services under the exact e-commerce solutions and a logistic challenge of opening new processes and operations in an industry that's not fully digitalized and has a strong tradition of physical sales processes. To successfully tackle these challenges, VBH decided to do two intelligent things: first, it went for a solid e-commerce solution for B2B, and that's Intershop.

Secondly, VBH was smart enough to realize that an implementation partner is critical for any e-commerce development and decided to bet on XIM, who have already successfully implemented many national and international projects for reputable customers.

For VBH, choosing XIM as an implementation partner provided them with professional technical support, consultancy and advisory that helped them build the perfect e-commerce solution. XIM also provided support in the marketing and SEO fields, thus helping to develop the entire transformation strategy.

Benjamin Rost, CEO of XIM: "We are proud to support VBH in its digital transformation and to drive sustainable growth. Together, we are also venturing into new territories, especially with future technologies like AI, to unlock innovative potential and implement forward-thinking solutions."

Another key element of VBH's new e-commerce solution is the scanner app. XIM implemented this

functionality and fully integrated it with the Intershop core in each of VBH's websites.

The app can be installed on any smartphone. It works by scanning the code of any of the VBH product boxes using the phone camera. This allows the customer to order the same product immediately. In the first few months, over 4,000 orders have already been placed via the app. This is an efficient solution that saves time and hassle for the customers.

For the future, VBH is aiming at achieving: integration of upstream online marketing, further rollouts, expansion of B2B functionalities, expansion of the digital customer portal, and other media measures to integrate new industry-related or related customer segments.

"We opted for the Intershop solution because we wanted to consolidate the different requirements and framework conditions of the individual VBH national subsidiaries in one central platform. The scope and configuration options convinced us and are valuable parameters for our international orientation."

**Oliver Maisch, CIO at VBH Holding GmbH**

### greenteQ

greenteQ is VBH's own brand, a curated selection of top-level and high-tech professional products. The greenteQ range provides VBH with the flexibility to react to customer demand and market trends quickly. All greenteQ products are designed to offer benefits to everyone in the supply chain from the specifier, through to fabricator, installer and, ultimately, the end-user.

### AI in scanner app (POC)

The AI Scanner app was developed by XIM and allows VBH customers to use a scanning app via smartphones and other mobile devices to scan the barcode of products and easily access all the information regarding that product. The customers can also place orders, restock inventory, and buy related products and items. This functionality has been fully integrated with VBH core Intershop B2B e-commerce.

## 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](https://www.intershop.com).



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