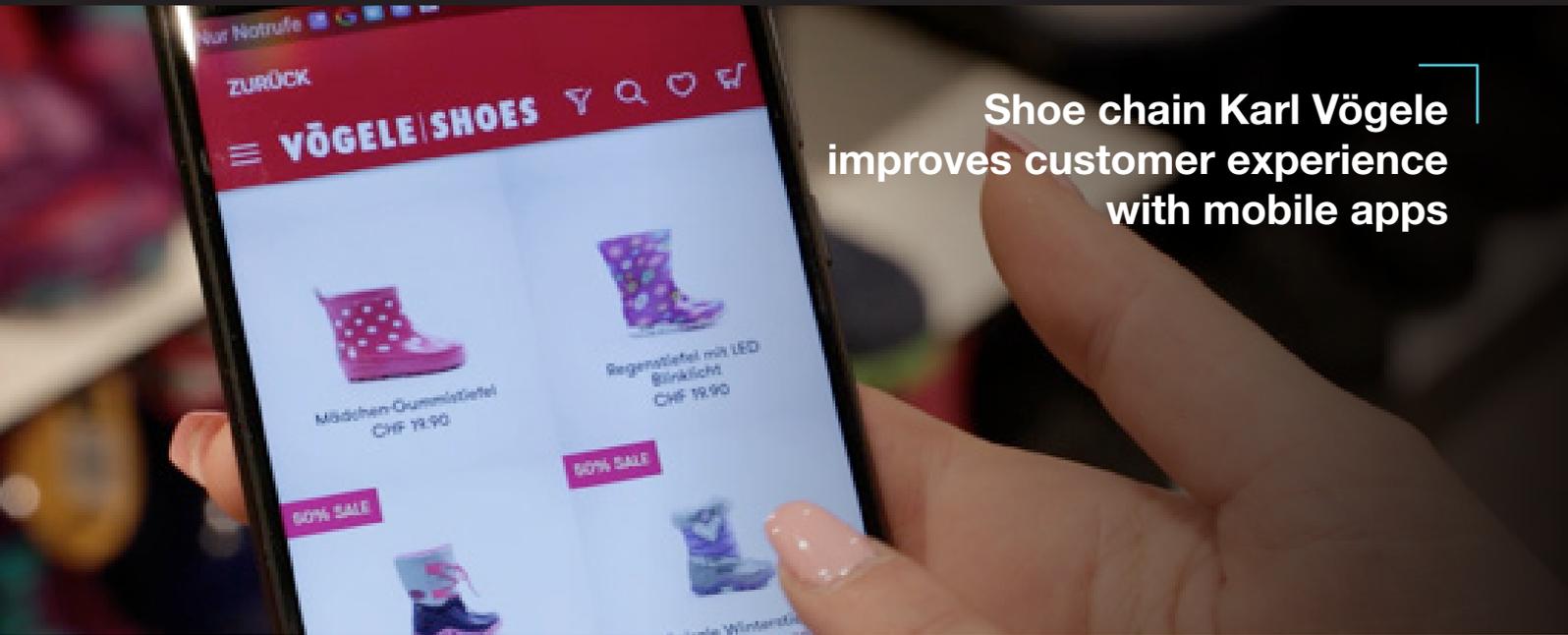


Karl Vögele AG





Shoe chain Karl Vögele improves customer experience with mobile apps

The Swiss shoe chain Karl Vögele is supporting customers and employees in its 200 stores with apps for smartphones developed with the Scandit Barcode Scanner SDK. Prospective buyers scan the barcode to see if certain sizes are available for a desired product. Store employees provide comprehensive shopping advice for customers using an associate app. The most important result is a higher customer satisfaction.

The ShoeClub customer loyalty program was the starting point for shoe chain Karl Vögele's digitalization effort in 2016. Among other things, members receive discounts in brick-and-mortar stores and the online shop. An important element of the customer loyalty program is the ShoeClub app, which is available in stores as an Android or iOS version. Using the app's stock finder, customers scan the barcode of the desired shoe in store and can immediately see if the preferred model is available in the desired size in the current store or in a store nearby. This kind of self-service improves customer satisfaction.

Since the beginning of 2018, there has also been a mobile app for sales consultants at the company's 200 or so Swiss stores. The app is installed on company Android smartphones. The developers at Karl Vögele created both the ShoeClub app and the employee app using the Barcode scanner SDK from the Swiss mobile computer vision, barcode scanning and augmented reality platform provider Scandit. The technology for mobile barcode scanning turns mobile devices into high-performance data capturing tools. From a cost perspective, a smartphone-based solution provides significant advantages. A dedicated, proprietary barcode scanner costs around 1,000 Swiss francs, while the mobile devices used by Karl Vögele cost only around 300 Swiss francs. Furthermore, the total operating costs, which cover hardware, software, maintenance, and operation, are up to five times lower than the costs of traditional barcode scanning solutions.

"The decision to create the app for the sales team using SDK by Scandit was an easy one for us. We were able to build on our very good experiences with the ShoeClub app. We were able to integrate the employee app into our IT infrastructure smoothly and cost-efficiently, and our employees appreciate the support that they receive in customer consultation through the smartphone app," says Daniele Sbaiz, head of IT at Karl Vögele in Uznach, St. Gallen. "With both apps, the company has achieved an important milestone in the direction of integration stationary and online business. We don't lose prospective customers - regardless of how they find us."



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Fast and precise capturing of the barcode

Barcodes are one of the most important sources of product information in retail. With smartphones that are available everywhere and easy to use, along with cost-effective software, retailers can make barcodes the cornerstone of an impressive customer experience, at a reasonable cost. By scanning the barcode, sales consultants receive quick and easy access to detailed product information, with which they can quickly and efficiently answer all service requests from prospective buyers in stores without having to leave the customers. This creates a good basis for improving customer experience and strengthening customer loyalty in retail.

One of the greatest advantages of Scandit's mobile computer vision software is its scanning accuracy and speed. Using the cameras of the implemented smartphones, the sales consultants at Karl Vögele can quickly and precisely capture all barcodes - even under unfavorable conditions such as weak or bright lighting. "These kinds of details play a decisive role in providing excellent customer service," says Sbaiz.

The sales team works significantly more efficiently with the barcode scanning app. Because they always have the smartphone with them as their mobile workplace, they can retrieve information about products at any time and give prospective buyers immediate and accurate information about available models and sizes - if there are further questions, they can use the smartphone to make a phone call. While an employee used to have manually check the availability of a product in the storeroom, there is no longer a long waiting time for customers, and employees can use the saved time to better advise customers and obtain better sales numbers. Karl Vögele thus provides a high-quality customer experience and increases its sales volume. If a shoe is not available at the store in the desired size, the sales consultant can order it directly from the central storeroom on the basis of the integration of offline and online business.

By using the barcode scanning solution from Scandit, Karl Vögele can optimize its central business processes. Among other things, this applies to the coordination of the online shop, individual stores, and Customer Journey Management. Karl Vögele is thus able to smoothly implement Click-and-Collect, where customers order shoes and accessories online and pick them up in store.

In order to ensure quick access to the product information needed for a customer consultation, the sales consultant uses the in-store WiFi. From the store, they access the data that is saved in the data processing center and made available to the stores. Through this central organization, the IT department can quickly and reliably perform updates to all data for all users, such as in the case of sale events or newly available products.

Outlook: barcode scanning in logistics too

The IT department is evaluating several possibilities for expanding the app. For example, they are looking into equipping product logistics

employees with smartphones and a mobile app in order to track product intake and output as well as internal product movements and make these processes more efficient. With Scandit's MatrixScan multiscanning feature, users can enter several barcodes from a series of packages in a single sequence. For example, they can capture all codes on one shipping label or log an entire pallet with a single scan. An augmented reality function enables the enhancement of physical products with additional information such as product images. This integration with logistics is just one of the application scenarios that the IT department is exploring. Another scenario is integration into the checkout procedure in order to simplify the entire process for customers and the company.

"Mobile apps for smartphones offer basic building blocks for more efficiency value chains in retail, especially when they can be seamlessly integrated into the company's critical existing applications," Sbaiz adds. "With a complete digitalization of the supply and value chain, Karl Vögele can reduce operating costs, increase productivity, and improve competitiveness in a greatly competitive environment."



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Head of IT & Projects, Karl Vögele AG



The company

Karl Vögele AG is a Swiss family company with its headquarters in Uznach in the canton of St. Gallen. With its brands Vögele Shoes, Bingo Shoe Discount, and Max Shoes, the company offers an attractive array of ladies', men's, children's, and sports shoes in complementary lines. In over 200 stores as well as at its headquarters in Uznach, St. Gallen, the group has around 1,200 employees and runs a successful and fast growing online store. The group is thus one of the most important providers on the Swiss shoe market. For further information, visit: www.voegele-shoes.com

About Scandit

At Scandit, we are helping business users and consumers to augment the physical world with relevant digital information in real time through barcodes, images and other visual identifiers captured with smart devices such as smartphones, wearables, drones, and robots.

With our next-generation mobile data capture platform built on proprietary computer vision, machine learning and augmented reality, we enable businesses to unlock previously unavailable levels of insights into enterprise processes and workflows, resulting in more efficient decisions, more effective employees, lower cost and more satisfied customers and clients.

Don't just take our word for it. Many of the world's most innovative and successful companies are already reaping the benefits of Scandit's next-generation mobile data capture platform. Our clients include Ahold, dm, Coop, Macys, Louis Vuitton, DHL, Cardinal Health, NASA and Verizon Wireless.

Want to learn more about how Scandit can help streamline your order entry processes?

Contact one of our team members:

www.scandit.com/contact

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SCANDIT

Scandit AG

Förrlibuckstrasse 181, 8005 Zurich, Switzerland

Scandit, Inc.

535 Mission Street, Floor 15, San Francisco, CA 94105

www.scandit.com

