METRO Helps to Provide Retailers with New Possibilities

How METRO supports small and independent retailers with a customized online shop

METRO's inhouse tech-unit METRONOM was tasked with digitizing their B2B arm, which was mainly influenced by their existing wholesale retail strategy. Moving forwards into a more omnichannel approach, METRONOM and Spryker launched a sophisticated user-friendly shop experience allowing their business customers to keep operations running without compromising on easy order set-up.

METRO in Numbers

27€bn	150,000+	36	2000
annual revenue	employees	countries	employees

Digital Services for Different Customer Groups

In the HoReCa industry, B2B buyers primarily search online for prices and offers before making a purchase decision. A large majority of them prefer a B2C-style online shopping experience with a user-friendly interface and customer-centricity. METRO AG focuses on the omnichannel approach in order to make customer purchases as fast and efficient as possible. This is where analog shopping merges with digital components, regardless of their preferred touchpoint.

Industry:

Retail Wholesale

Customer:

METRO|NOM

Snapshot

Customer-Centricity for Everyone!

METRO is a leading international specialist in the wholesale and food trading industry – a classic B2B business sector where IT historically served merely as a support function. METRO primarily serves the following three groups of customers: the so-called HoReCa-customers (hotels, restaurants & catering), the SCOs (small companies and offices), and traders (small, independent retailers, mainly based in Eastern Europe for METRO). In order to optimize its customer experience and promote customer loyalty, its digital services needed to be adaptable for each group of customers, their location, and individual needs.

Mass-Personalization

To optimize customer experience and promote customer loyalty, digital services must adapt to each group of customers, their location, and individual needs. For instance, one restaurant might not necessarily pay the same price for flour as another. Depending on factors such as the purchased quantity, customers have an individual price model. However, in order to collect and evaluate such data, it must be possible to map the ongoing personal communication with the customer and a large amount of data in the group's digital tools. That's why METRO was looking for a fully-fledged integrated solution that would benefit from this immense data set, while providing the required customer personalization.

Guiding Customers on Their Journey via API

As METRO is present in numerous countries, many different customer requirements come into play. Consequently, METRO utilizes an API-first approach. This is why METRO and Spryker teamed up to launch a second shop with a different set of functions that is aimed specifically at small retailers, the so-called traders. This concept is based on a standardized back-end. The APIs enable shops to be accessed internationally on a 1:1 ratio and simultaneously allow for adaptations based on local needs. The "Advanced Services" offer a high degree of flexibility. Accordingly, the API-based back-end allows for modifications if a country requires changes or in case they don't comply with the Corporate Standard or Advanced Services.

"We use the Spryker solution as a front-end tool and connect it to our back-end systems via our APIs. The motivation for this cooperation was to amplify our technology, to scale faster and to provide our customers with this diversified range of functions."
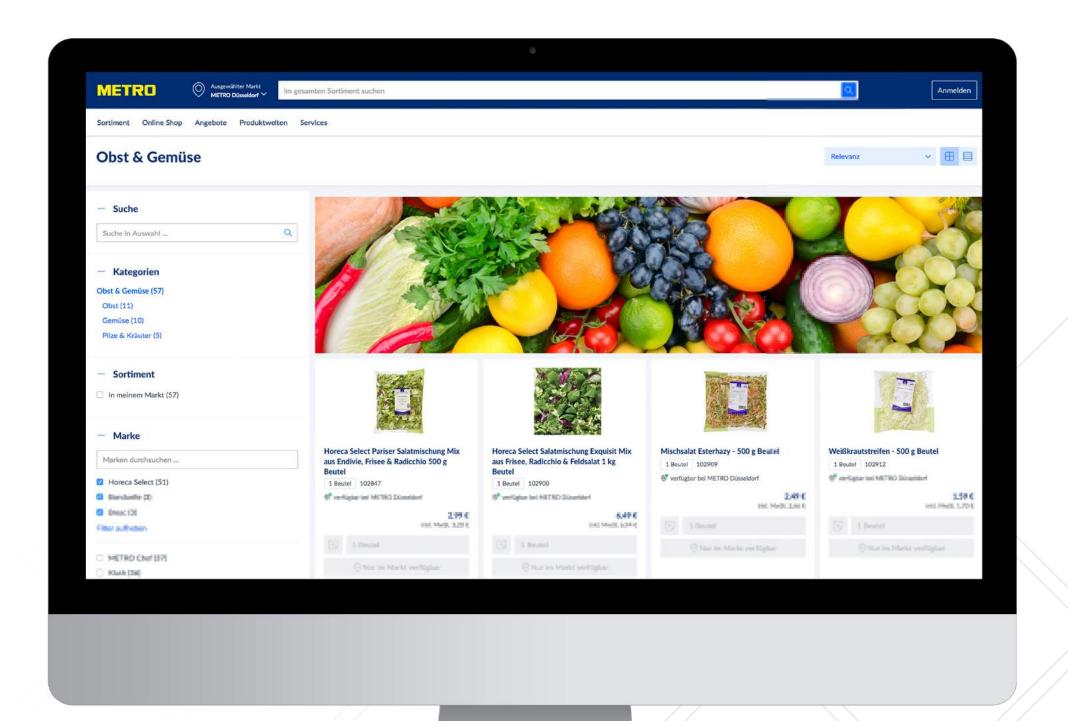 Timo Salzsieder, CIO/CSO at METRO AG and CEO at METRONOM

More Flexibility by Splitting Back-End and Front-End

Topics such as new touchpoints, alternative front-ends, integrations, and open developer programs are essential in the modern commerce space. Spryker offers a REST-API called GLUE API, a separate layer of the Spryker Cloud Commerce OS that enables data exchange of various systems, especially web services. This is also METRO's starting point for the configuration of various touchpoints. It serves as an easily accessible source of information for all international and external stakeholders.

The Spryker GLUE API simplifies the implementation of various contact points. These touch points are available in alternative front-ends that use Software Development Kits (SDKs) such as Progressive Web Apps. With the Spryker GLUE API, METRO can collect relevant data from individual use cases and optimize business processes accordingly. The key benefit of an API-first approach is that there are no constraints or drawbacks in terms of scalability. Connecting data with a variety of front-ends such as desktop, mobile, app, etc. allows METRO to achieve a greater level of customer personalization and satisfaction.

Metro Sets New Standards In The Food Wholesale Industry

Transforming an analog business model, such as the wholesale industry, into the digital world is no easy task. METRO is combining an optimized customer centricity and a technology-oriented approach in order to support the digitization process. Especially in regard to traders, METRO is boosting internationalization using the right technology and creating new possibilities for retailers in the wholesale food trade. Initially started in Romania, the project has witnessed initial success which is paving the way towards rollout in more markets.

Key Benefits

Sales Assistance

With the Sales Assistant feature, sales or customer service employees can provide customers with optimized support in their purchasing process. In this special screen, the shop is displayed to the employee in the same way as the B2B customer sees it. The agent is shown the relevant products, prices, and discounts for the specific customer and can make purchases in the customer account. All purchases made in the Sales Assistant mode are also marked as such.

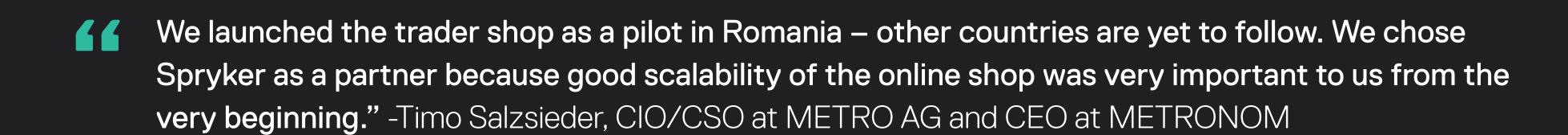### Company Account Management

The customers of the Trader Shop have other requirements than simply B2C end customers. This includes ordering processes, authorizations, and roles. The Spryker Cloud Commerce OS Corporate Account allows METRO to easily reflect hierarchical structures and roles. This allows B2B customers to accurately replicate the organization of their business as well as authorizations and permissions for budgets and purchasing processes.

State Machine Modelling

Spryker State Machines support the METRONOM Trader Shop in the definition, implementation, and visualization of various processes. In these processes, certain activities are executed in a predefined order and automatic ones are triggered. These include, for example, order processes and the automated dispatch of an order after successful payment processing. The Spryker State Machine can be used in many places and can be adapted to individual needs.

Catalog Management

A well-structured individually adapted product catalog enables the customers of the Trader Shops to have a positive and straightforward shopping experience. With the help of Spryker's Catalog Management, a clear product catalog could be created that meets the customer's requirements. Structures such as category trees can be defined and managed without great effort. Elements such as category filters can also be easily integrated with the Spryker Cloud Commerce OS.

> " We launched the trader shop as a pilot in Romania – other countries are yet to follow. We chose Spryker as a partner because good scalability of the online shop was very important to us from the very beginning." -Timo Salzsieder, CIO/CSO at METRO AG and CEO at METRONOM

Implementation Partner: Inviqa

Following strategic workshops and consulting, Inviqa helped B2B retailer METRO to define and prioritize a digital roadmap and implement its new trader shops. With many years of experience implementing B2B platforms, Inviqa worked with the retailer to identify Spryker's flexible Cloud Commerce OS, as the ideal front-end tool for the new trader shops. Spryker enables the team to connect METRO's various legacy systems via APIs, bringing flexibility and scale to the retailer's core systems. As a Platinum Partner, Inviqa has successfully implemented several projects using the Spryker Cloud Commerce OS.
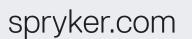
About Spryker

Founded in 2014, Spryker enables companies to build sophisticated transactional business models in unified commerce including B2B, B2C, and Enterprise Marketplaces. It is the most modern platform-as-a-service (PaaS) solution with headless & API-based architecture that is cloud and enterprise-ready and loved by developers and business users worldwide. Spryker customers extend their sales reach and grow revenue with a system that allows them to increase operational efficiency, lower the total cost of ownership, and expand to new markets and business models faster than ever before. Spryker solutions have empowered 150+ companies to manage transactions in more than 200 countries worldwide. Spryker is trusted by brands such as Toyota, Siemens, Hilti, and Ricoh. Spryker was named the most innovative and visionary of all new vendors in the 2020 Gartner Magic Quadrant for Digital Commerce and named a major player in B2B e-Commerce by IDC and is the only commerce platform to provide full B2B, B2C, D2C, and Marketplace capabilities out of one stack. For more information about Spryker please visit Spryker.com.

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