



case  
study

# SportScheck

## About SportScheck

SportScheck is Germany's leading multichannel sporting goods retailer: The company sells around 30,000 products with 252,000 variants from more than 500 brands. Besides the four main print catalogues, special catalogues, online and mobile shop, as well as 18 branch stores, the Munich-based company demonstrates its determination to create omnichannel commerce through mobile apps for browsing and shopping.

The philosophy "We do sports" reflects the corporate strategy. Stefan Herzog, spokesperson and member of the Board, responsible for the areas of purchasing, advertising and marketing, explains: "We want to offer our customers professional advice and share our expertise and enthusiasm for sports with them. There must be no difference between visiting a branch store, looking through a catalogue or browsing the online shop. A 'visit' to SportScheck should be fun and create an appetite for more."

17 million visitors in the branch stores as well as 1.1 million customers in the online shop and 52,000 million visits per year confirm the success of this strategy.

**SportScheck**  
Wir machen Sport.

## Requirements

Faster, better, simpler – this is the best way of summing up SportScheck's requirements. True to its motto "We inspire people to do sport.", the innovative Munich-based company has resolved to place customers at the centre of all processes. By connecting all the different sales channels more closely together, the company aims to provide the best shopping experience and create real added value for customers.

- **We are a team.**
- **We love to win.**
- **We inspire people to do sport.**

True to these three mottos, SportScheck places its customers at the centre of all processes and, in doing so, strengthens its position as market leader.

Besides professional advice and fast delivery, customers today expect one thing above all: detailed, complete and consistent information in all sales channels. After all, integrating the channels is part of the everyday shopping experience. TV and print advertisements give customers the incentive to research and order products via the web or mobile app. Customers want to be able to collect online orders at the store or return them there. They want to order goods they have seen in the store online and have them delivered to the homes.

“Sport means emotion. We want to stir this emotion in our customers while they browse and purchase products. A perfect shopping experience with good customer service needs the best product data, perfectly networked channels and efficient processes”, explains Alexander Pischetsrieder, head of the Organisation & InfoManagement department.

Besides implementing a new logistics solution, the main challenge lies in the restructuring of the entire IT landscape. The basic requirements were to offer customers a highly integrated and consistent database, flexibility and efficiency in the provision of product information as well as an IT landscape with future viability. To retain its position as market leader, SportScheck closely observes and creates trends and market developments and considers it important to be able to offer the services of tomorrow using the IT solutions of today. Connecting the sales channels, which affect customer solutions, such as same-day delivery, presented a major challenge.



SportScheck puts its money on omnichannel commerce

“The consistent implementation of an omnichannel strategy will enable us to offer our customers considerable added value”, says Guido Jaenisch, member of the Board, responsible for the areas of finance, controlling, IT, organisation and logistics.

When choosing the project partner, SportScheck was extremely keen to ensure that the project was implemented efficiently and cost-effectively and in the shortest time possible.

## Solution

To meet the market requirements for consistent omnichannel commerce, SportScheck opted to implement an SAP system as a new ERP system in combination with the existing Product Information Management (PIM) system of Heiler/Informatica. The PIM system was also upgraded from version 5 to version 7 to further increase the system stability and speed and to ensure integration with the SAP system using REST-based web services. In doing so, SportScheck optimised its processes considerably and streamlined the system landscape with a high level of standardisation: More than 100 subsystems became redundant. The new IT system allows the retrieval of channel-optimised product information and also provides a general overview for the customer. “With this information,

sales staff can access all real-time customer data at all touch points and purchasing staff can provide consumers with the right products at the right time”, adds Guido Jaenisch.

### Highlights

- Central product information system (PIM)
- Direct connection to SAP
- Data is validated before being transferred
- Product content is stored in a media-neutral format

### Efficient processes require intelligent systems

SportScheck opted for an extremely agile process for the implementation of this large project: The entire process chain was divided into subprocesses according to the structured walkthrough method. In a series of workshops, parsionate experts then analysed the individual subprocesses together with the system users, defined which interfaces were needed and where, and how the PIM system needed to be designed in order to meet the different requirements.

As a result, the new PIM system can now also handle the requirements of the print production system and external sales platforms in addition to its own sales channels, such as branch stores, its online shop and mobile app. A clear separation of the systems from the content is key to achieving this: All product data is maintained centrally and then transferred automatically to specific channels.

According to Pischetsrieder, „Maintaining the product data centrally allows us to react much more quickly to changes“.

Alexander Pischetsrieder  
Head of the Organisation &  
InfoManagement department



Informatica’s PIM system was not completely new to SportScheck. Nevertheless, the system needed to be completely restructured in order to achieve a consistent database. Thus, for example, to ensure optimal integration of the SAP system, the number of product levels was reduced from three to two.

“One particular challenge was the complex data migration, which resulted from the change in data ownership of the leading systems. Our joint goal with the SAP consultants was to integrate the processes and data extremely consistently and logically in this case”, reports Michael Mezger.



Michael Mezger  
Project manager at parsionate

parsionate also developed a solution for SportScheck for integrating the PIM system with SAP using REST API. Product information is now exchanged directly between the systems. “The direct transfer from SAP to the PIM system is much faster. We no longer need to wait until the next morning for data to be created or master data updated,” explains Alexander Pischetsrieder. “We can always see the current status of all items and can therefore react quickly and appropriately. The integration using the standard options in our SAP system provides considerable added value, as it allows us to monitor the entire integration there in the SAP/PI/NetWeaver module.”

incentive to buy, but the rate of returns is also much lower if products are well-presented.” SportScheck therefore also relies on the expertise of external agents and service providers for the creation of its product data. Extensive automation of these processes also helps them to run quickly and smoothly.

To deliver the images to the various channels, SportScheck opted for Adobe’s Scene7 solution, which allows automatic image rendering. The images are assigned to the product data in PIM completely automatically. The new solution has the added advantage that the new process allows release-independent new image formats to be provided to the sales channels “on-the-fly”. parsionate also supported SportScheck with this entire process: from process consulting, system design and sizing, through to customizing and integration.



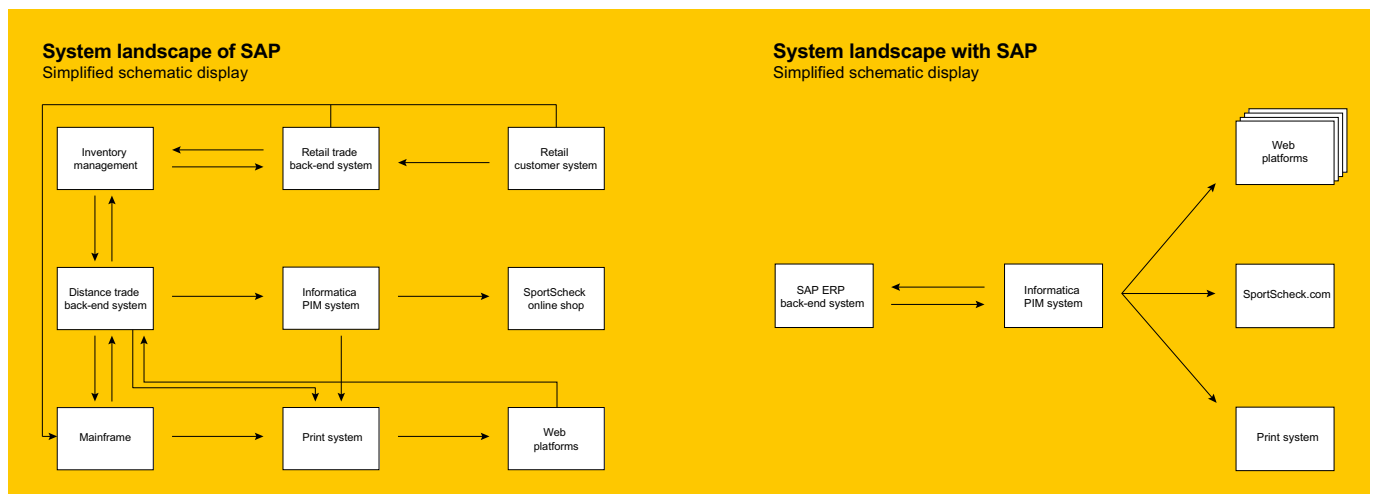
Perfect advice through the linking of channels

### Perfect product data as the reason for buying

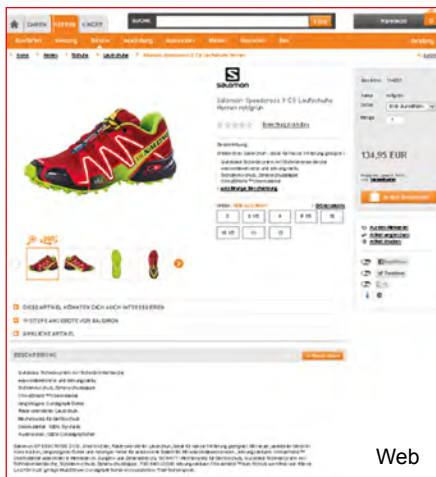
The Munich-based company has particularly high standards when it comes to creating its product data. Stefan Herzog is convinced that “A perfectly presented item with high-quality, emotional images and extensive, channel-specific and customer-specific product information portrays a professional image to the customer. Not only does the customer have a stronger

#### Fast Facts

- Informatica PIM 7
- Integration between PIM and SAP Retail using PIM REST API and SAP PI/SAP NetWeaver
- 75,000 products, approx. 500,000 item variants
- Approx. 1 terabyte of image data
- 35 PIM users in the various departments
- Project duration: 10/2012-05/2014
- Online shop in three countries: D, CH, AT







### Faster to market

How do you keep product data permanently up-to-date in the sales channels while keeping effort and transfer times to a minimum? The magic word is “quality rules”. Together with parsonate, SportScheck defined clear requirements stipulating which product information needs to be available and what changes or extent of changes are actually relevant. The product data is validated in the PIM system according to these quality rules before an item is allowed to be exported to the sales channel. The data is only diverted to the online shop and other sales channels if it meets these requirements. This not only significantly reduces the volume of data to be transferred, but also provides employees with a better overview of the data quality, allowing them to counteract any deficiencies earlier. “Using the quality rules, SportScheck not only managed to shorten throughput times, but can now maintain data and provide information to the individual channels much more efficiently”, reports Michael Mezger. Nevertheless, the best software can only produce the best results when used with the right hardware. So how big do the servers need to be? What equipment is necessary? The experienced parsonate team created a hardware recommendation for SportScheck well in advance, implemented the PIM system on the servers, carried out the performance testing and developed solutions for further system optimisation. For parsonate, this also includes the handover to the operations team, with recommendations for system monitoring and preventive maintenance measures.

### Smooth rollout

The desire for a central product database for the entire SportScheck world required the use of the system in all countries in which SportScheck operates (namely Germany, Austria and Switzerland). To tackle this additional complexity, the rollout took place in three stages: In Austria, the system went live at the beginning of May 2014. Once this general test was successful, the system was rolled out in Switzerland on 26th May and in Germany, the region with the highest

revenue, on 1st June. “The fact that the entire PIM rollout ran smoothly confirms our approach for projects of this nature,” says a delighted Michael Mezger. “We’re truly impressed by the experience and approach of the parsonate consultants. They consistently addressed even the critical issues and proactively developed potential solutions with us. The collaboration between the parsonate team and SportScheck as partners has played a major part in the success of the project”, reflects Alexander Pischetsrieder.

#### Successes

- Simpler data maintenance by changing the data model (adapted to the leading SAP model)
- Shorter process runtimes thanks to optimised processes
- Efficient data supply through automated data quality check
- ERP now supplied automatically through SAP (REST) instead of in batch mode

**Would you like to find out more about the project?  
Contact us:**

Miriam Ambrosinow  
Tel.: +49 711/75886-636  
info@rsmg.de

