

DIGITALIZATION

Innovation taken a step further

Our STAR experts find the answers to a wide range of current challenges with the aid of sophisticated digitalization approaches, Industry 4.0 and IoT solutions. We don't just implement innovations; we also take them one step further, developing suitable strategies which will allow you to reach your target group in the digital world and impress them in the long term. With our STAR experts, you can master the digital transformation in your business and capture new markets with lasting success.

With test automation, the future will be simple

Automated tests are no longer visions of the future and daydreams. Something that has been established in other industries for a long time now also has access to web and desktop applications as well as mobile apps. What have our IT experts come up with here?

The starting point. There are now practical software solutions for many sectors that simplify complex processes. However, software often needs updates. As a result, updates and new software versions are constantly becoming available. Systematic testing therefore requires new manual front-end tests. With the increasing range of functions and the associated complexity of the software, the work intensity of tests also grows. Regularly required tests are a problem because the test process takes a long time from the start of the test to the result. With this in mind, the experts from the IT division came up with a complete solution.

The goal. Testing updates needs to become less time-consuming in the future so that updates and new versions can be implemented more easily and efficiently. The main objective is to receive test results faster and not only for web and desktop applications, but also for mobile apps.

The solution. Our IT experts first identified frequently occurring test cases and checked whether these test cases could be processed with a well-known tool for GUI-based test automation from Ranorex® Studio. Automation soon proved to be possible, both for web applications and for iOS and Android apps. All encryption requirements were successfully implemented, and the logging of the test execution has also improved. Our IT experts even managed to make the automated tests multilingual, whereby language-relevant information can be cleverly sent to a separate database. All in all, a resounding success as the overall workload for test execution has been massively reduced.

Think Green. Be Green.

At STAR COOPERATION, the topic of environment and sustainability is a top priority. We are particularly passionate about limiting CO₂ emissions and counteracting them. We can achieve this by implementing sustainable technologies. This is why we're sharpening environmental awareness not only among our STAR experts, but also among customers.

The starting point. Albert Kerbl GmbH is a medium-sized wholesaler for agricultural and pet supplies from Upper Bavaria. They recognized the issue of climate protection not only as a future competitive factor, but also as a corporate responsibility. With the support of the CONSULTING division, they would like to make a contribution to climate protection.

The goal. The first step on the path to climate neutrality is the analysis of greenhouse gas emissions along the entire value chain. Based on the acquired knowledge, climate strategies and suitable measures are then defined and implemented to provide the required products in the most environmentally friendly way possible.

The solution. Within a month, the STAR experts were able to analyze the customer's greenhouse gas emissions using what is known as CO₂ screening. They kept a constant flow of communication with the customer. They provided information on energy consumption, the fuels used in the vehicle fleet, purchased goods according to goods and customs tariff groups, etc. The exact calculation of greenhouse gas emissions was performed by the industry calculator of our cooperation partner KlimAktiv. The calculation was not just based on actual values such as the amount of fuel consumed in liters – monetary activity data from the Navision ERP system used by Albert Kerbl GmbH was also taken into account. This consideration enabled a new, innovative and hybrid calculation method to be tested. With the aid of the calculated emission values, numerous helpful measures could be developed to reduce greenhouse gases.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS DIGITALIZATION

Automated media creation provides relief

No one needs print media anymore? On the contrary! Print media such as brochures, fliers and catalogs are very popular. In 2020, our experts from the MEDIA division staged products that inspire. And they did so with just one push of a button.

The starting point. Our customer is a manufacturer of a wide range of products and offers a corresponding catalog. However, its customers are not interested in the complete catalog, but always only in the catalog pages listing certain products. In addition, the catalogs need to be used internationally for various target groups.

The goal. The search for products that interest customers needs to be simplified. In addition, the catalog needs to be published in several languages and several times a year so they can react quickly and easily to changes in the range or in prices. At the same time, the customer wants to speed up the catalog creation process and reduce the number of errors in the publications.

The solution. The existing product information management system (PIM) contains all the data relating to the customer's products. This data is used for database publishing and is imported into the Adobe InDesign program using the EasyCatalog middleware tool. The export of text and images is automated with flexible templates for the product presentations and the page structure. Catalogs, price lists and brochures can therefore be created quickly and easily in several languages. Price conversions and the adaptation of company names for distributors are no longer a challenge.

Traveling without luggage – is that possible?

Traveling can be quite exhausting, particularly if your luggage is a little heavier and overflowing with all sorts of useful things. Our creative and tech-savvy STAR subsidiary Novaigrup from Barcelona has now developed an online platform for its customer Sinmaletas that makes traveling without a suitcase possible!

The starting point. Our experts from the Spanish web engineering agency are passionate about creative and exciting web projects. This time, they developed an individual online platform for their customer that ensures that luggage can be brought to virtually any part of the world when traveling. With the certainty and guarantee, of course, that it will successfully arrive at its destination.

The goal. To be able to offer this service, an online platform is required that enables national and international logistics processes and maps numerous different cases. After all, aspects like baggage types, fragility, weight, dimensions, locations and different tariffs must all be considered from the start. It is also important for users to be able to operate the platform intuitively and get the desired result in just a few steps.

The solution. The bright minds at Novaigrup identified the requirements of their customers through a workshop. They held several of these where they analyzed the purchasing behavior and needs of potential customers and mapped them in numerous user stories to cover all cases to the extent possible. They then conceptually mapped the processes, drove forward the development of the platform and ensured the product provides an excellent user experience. The new portal is an eye-catcher and was launched in early 2021. It has since become very popular and is supported by over 6,000 logistics companies across the world.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS DIGITALIZATION

Attractive advertisements for partners

Advertising is essential for any successful business. A unique opportunity that our customer offers its partners is an exclusive platform for advertising. But what exactly can this platform do and what specifically lies behind the success of this exciting project?

The starting point. Our customer offers its partners the opportunity to generate target group-specific advertising messages with ready-made advertising motifs. These advertisements are created in the desired format and with a personalized distributor imprint so that the partner can then publish these in specialist magazines or in the daily or local weekly newspaper, for example.

The problem. The customer's partners previously had to procure the personalization of an advertising motif in a roundabout way. This extra step required not only a lot of time, but also extensive work and communication. To make this process more efficient, our customer sought a user-friendly and intuitive solution for its partners.

The solution. Together with our colleagues from the subsidiary sense&image and later with the experts from the IT division, we developed a user-friendly and intuitive platform for the customer to create these advertising messages. The customer's partners can register on the platform, choose ready-made ads and personalize them with the company name, address and logo. After completing the order process, our experts at the MEDIA division create the print data within 48 hours and send them back to the customer or, if required, directly to the printer. During the first month after the platform was launched and made available, over 200 partners visited the platform and ordered over 30 advertisements.

Off into the digital future

When it comes to impressing the customers of customers, the experts from the CONSULTING division are the ideal partner. Through the development of an optimal product and marketing strategy for an innovative IoT solution, they were able to make a long-lasting contribution to the customer's success.

The starting point. Our CONSULTING experts got a digital transformation underway within the highly competitive market environment of the cooling lubricant sector. The focus is on expanding a traditional business by adding an innovative digital service. The STAR experts guided the customer Liquidtool Systems AG along the entire customer journey through the process of digital expansion and supported them with sophisticated methods and suitable tools.

The goal. The customer wants to expand the traditional product business by adding a digital solution to secure their competitive capacity in the long term and to tap into new market potentials.

The solution. Promising insights into the optimal design of customer touch points and the new IoT service have emerged through targeted analyses, detailed customer surveys and expert discussions. These findings were used as a decision-making basis for further action. The selected project approach ensured that the new service is optimally tailored to the wishes, situation and willingness to pay of potential customers. With the support of the experts, the new digital service was therefore successfully placed on the market at the end of last year.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS DIGITALIZATION

Fixed or flexible – that is the question.

The coronavirus has forced everyone to rethink everyday life in the office while also opening up new opportunities for further development and improvement. This is precisely the right topic for our experts from the IT division! They have innovative ideas when it comes to arranging fixed and flexible workplaces. Their latest innovation in this area is called Workspace Analytics. But what is it?

The starting point. With the current situation in mind, our experts from the IT division asked themselves questions about the number of fixed office workplaces and meeting rooms required. They quickly realized that flexible workplaces can offer an enormous savings potential, particularly when a company is facing a challenging financial situation. They therefore developed Workspace Analytics, a data-based decision-making foundation using sensors.

The goal. Reliable information about office occupancy is required, particularly with regard to high-quality equipped workplaces. The aim is for this information to be obtained through sensors. More specifically, sensors need to provide information about how long a workplace is required, on which days of the week and at what time.

The solution. The latest creation from the IT division can be used as a basis for decision-making. With the aid of the information provided, decisions can be made promptly about which fixed workplaces must remain because they are frequently occupied, and which can be designed flexibly since the need there is not particularly high. This innovation not only saves existing resources, but also opens new doors for future innovative work environment design.

The age of digital events is dawning

A year ago, nobody could have imagined that digital events could replace live ones. The new event format offers more than just an answer to the coronavirus crisis, however. In 2020, our STAR experts made it their task to establish virtual events for our customers on a long-term basis. But did they achieve their goal?

The starting point. Bosch Thermotechnology invites its customers to a variety of events to present new products and services, to cultivate relationships and to offer customers a platform for exchange. To date, sales representatives had to organize such events themselves – now also virtually. In addition to daily business, there was little time for this, which meant that fewer and fewer events could be held and offered.

The goal. The workload of Bosch TT sales representatives needs to be lightened through support, professional organization and the execution of the various series of events by our experts from the MEDIA division. This should also enable more events to be offered again.

The solution. Our experts have expanded existing event formats and established new formats such as a virtual wine tasting. They managed the dispatch of the wine packages via an external service provider and took over the entire invitation management including participant administration. This also included the design of the fliers and mail, as well as the provision of a virtual platform for the wine tasting and the associated technical support. In addition, our experts are currently creating a booklet with possible event formats and ideas as an aid and inspiration for the Bosch TT sales representatives. The booklet is supplemented with a digital checklist. Sales representatives can thus freely provide details and establish a suitable, individual offer. We look forward to many more exciting (virtual) events!

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS DIGITALIZATION

STARS awaken desire

A key visual for all advertising measures and campaign communications is the key to success. An impressive central idea strengthens the customer's brand recognition and awakens desire. As an implementation agency, can our STARS meet the customer's requirements?

The starting point. The campaign "Simply Bosch. Right from the start." for Bosch Thermotechnology requires a key visual. It will be used for a wide variety of media such as fliers, POS articles, advertisements and image films.

The goal. The key visual needs to be implemented by our STARS according to the requirements and specifications of Bosch Thermotechnology. In addition, all advertising measures are to be bundled and focused into one medium to maintain an overview.

The solution. The experts created the desired key visual according to the customer's requirements and specifications and incorporated it into all campaign material. In addition, our colleagues from the subsidiary sense&image produced a customizable radio spot together with the customer. Bosch TT partners and customers were given the opportunity to personalize the spot and co-brand with the strong Bosch Thermotechnology brand.

Cutting-edge technology meets a future-oriented dealership

The secret recipe to success is combining innovative technologies with fertile ground. We had both! Together with the dealership Robert Kunzmann GmbH & Co. KG, our CONSULTING and IT experts automated the manual process for appointment pre-qualification in the dealership.

The starting point. The STAR experts are the perfect partner when you're seeking efficiency and change, as they apply digital transformations and the latest technologies to make processes in different divisions run quickly and efficiently – including the appointment pre-qualification process. With the aid of robotic process automation (RPA), software robots were developed and directly implemented to this end. This provided employees with immediate relief from repetitive transfer tasks.

The goal. Appointment pre-qualification needs to be automated. To this end, data from the workshop planning tool is to be transferred directly into the OEM system without additional manual work.

The solution. The experts from the CONSULTING and IT divisions pooled their expertise and got to work. Using RPA, they developed a form of automation that freed dealership employees from time-consuming, tedious and repetitive tasks such as the transfer of customer data into various systems. The solution creates interfaces where previously none were possible and transfers the desired data quickly, reliably and without errors. The appointment pre-qualification process at Kunzmann was thus automated in just three months and the customer service team was evidently relieved at nine sites. A real achievement!

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS DIGITALIZATION

STAR improves business with Smartsheet

Improving business and increasing efficiency is the motto of our MEDIA experts. And which tool is best suited for this? Correct! Smartsheet. With Smartsheet, we create an innovative workflow and thereby help our customers to succeed.

The starting point. Our customer Bosch Thermotechnology creates marketing materials in digital and print formats for various target groups such as end customers, installers and wholesalers. However, Bosch Thermotechnology lacks an individual overview of the processes and projects. As a result, a lot of internal work is regularly required for project reporting and resource planning.

The goal. Structured project organization, clear mapping of processes and automated workflows are needed to reduce coordination workloads and increase efficiency. Smartsheet is to be fully integrated into the main system landscape.

The solution. Our experts from the MEDIA division implemented an optimized internal workflow with Smartsheet for Bosch Thermotechnology. The smart solution was adapted to the individual requirements of the customer. With ready-made project templates, our experts can manage Bosch Thermotechnology's media projects quickly, reliably and efficiently. The status overview of the tasks can now always be seen in a report. In addition, it is possible to plan internal employee capacity and distribute tasks sensibly via the resource view.

Intelligent networks for holistic media logistics

Our customer delights its target group with impressive media products that are precisely coordinated with one another. The MEDIA and LOGISTICS divisions were called upon to combine their expertise to ensure an intelligent network for holistic media logistics. Were our STAR experts able to ensure that these media products arrive in the right quality, at the right time and in the right place?

The starting point. Our customer Bosch wanted to make its operational purchasing more efficient. The company wants to reduce its number of suppliers and thus the number of orders. This would create more time for other matters in purchasing. In addition, synergy effects within the Bosch Group would increase, as the same inquiries would always be resolved similarly by only one partner.

The goal. We believe that, with our broad network of suppliers and our expertise in media project management, we are a reliable partner for Bosch. Our STAR experts took over the procurement of services and materials in the areas of print, giveaways and point of sale from suppliers as of January 1, 2021. This will provide relief for the Bosch Group's operational purchasing team, reduce the number of complaints and consolidate purchasing volumes.

The solution. The cloud- and browser-based tool Smartsheet is used to achieve this. The project management software enables automation in various areas – from the supplier database to inquiry and project management as well as real-time evaluations. Our experts can thus ensure that supply to Bosch is flexible and that delivery bottlenecks are avoided.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS DIGITALIZATION

How digital events turn the crisis into an opportunity

A lot has changed for us given the current situation. No events, conferences, trade fairs or conventions. However, the experts at our subsidiary sense&image had suitable solutions on hand to meet this challenge. The creative minds of the customer experience agency quickly established live streaming as an integral part of the service portfolio. It's become obvious: live streaming is more than just a trend brought about by the coronavirus.

The starting point. Compart AG organizes the Compacting conference every year. The international specialist convention is known for its pioneering solutions in omni-channel customer communication. Current topics in technology are discussed, expert knowledge is shared and product demos and specific application scenarios are presented. In view of the current circumstances, Compacting was to be hosted digitally for the first time in 2020.

The goal. The customer's wish and requirement is to not only convey content virtually, but to translate the feel of an on-site event to the online counterpart. The experts at sense&image therefore made it their goal to create a comprehensive event experience in a digital space.

The solution. A landing page served as a digital event location, which was the focus of the event. Here, participants could decide which presentation they would like to hear and join a stream of their choice. In some cases, up to three different presentations were broadcast live at the same time. In addition, users were able to take part in live surveys and Q&As on the event page, as well as receive information about the presentations and speakers. A special highlight of the conference was the integrated networking platform developed in-house by sense&image. It offered the desired on-site feel and conveyed the sense of a live event. Here, users were able to store individual profiles, interests and other data and network with other participants via a chat function or (video) call. However, the Compacting participants don't just come from German-speaking countries. Participants from the US, France and other European countries, broadly defined, were also welcomed. A total of four one-day events were thus held, naturally taking into account the various different languages and time zones.