

Why should e-commerce start to consider sustainability more?

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With the rapid pace of digitization in recent years, the usage patterns in our everyday lives are likewise diversifying regularly. This sudden transformation brought many opportunities and also revealed some concerns for the world. According to a study by MasterCard in 2021, now **58% of consumers are more conscious of their environmental effects, and 85% are ready to take action** to address environmental and sustainability concerns. This ecologically conscious attitude of consumers leads brands to be responsible for the environment and to adopt sustainable policies. Sustainability has come to the fore among this year's trends that lead the e-commerce sphere. So what exactly is sustainability for digital businesses?

Sustainability can be defined as a process of maintaining a certain value or standard for future use. It means **doing business consciously and thoughtfully** on issues such as the environment, society, and economy. The environmental effect of e-commerce activities is rising due to the rapid expansion of the e-commerce industry as a result of increased digitization. As a natural outcome, being sustainable is **high on the list of priorities** for e-commerce companies. The concept of "sustainability" in e-commerce includes all processes from corporate methods to packaging elements. Being sustainable is becoming an important requirement for companies due to changing perspectives around the world and increasing awareness. It becomes more and more critical to **prioritize initiatives that adopt sustainable business practices.**



Why e-commerce businesses should be sustainable?



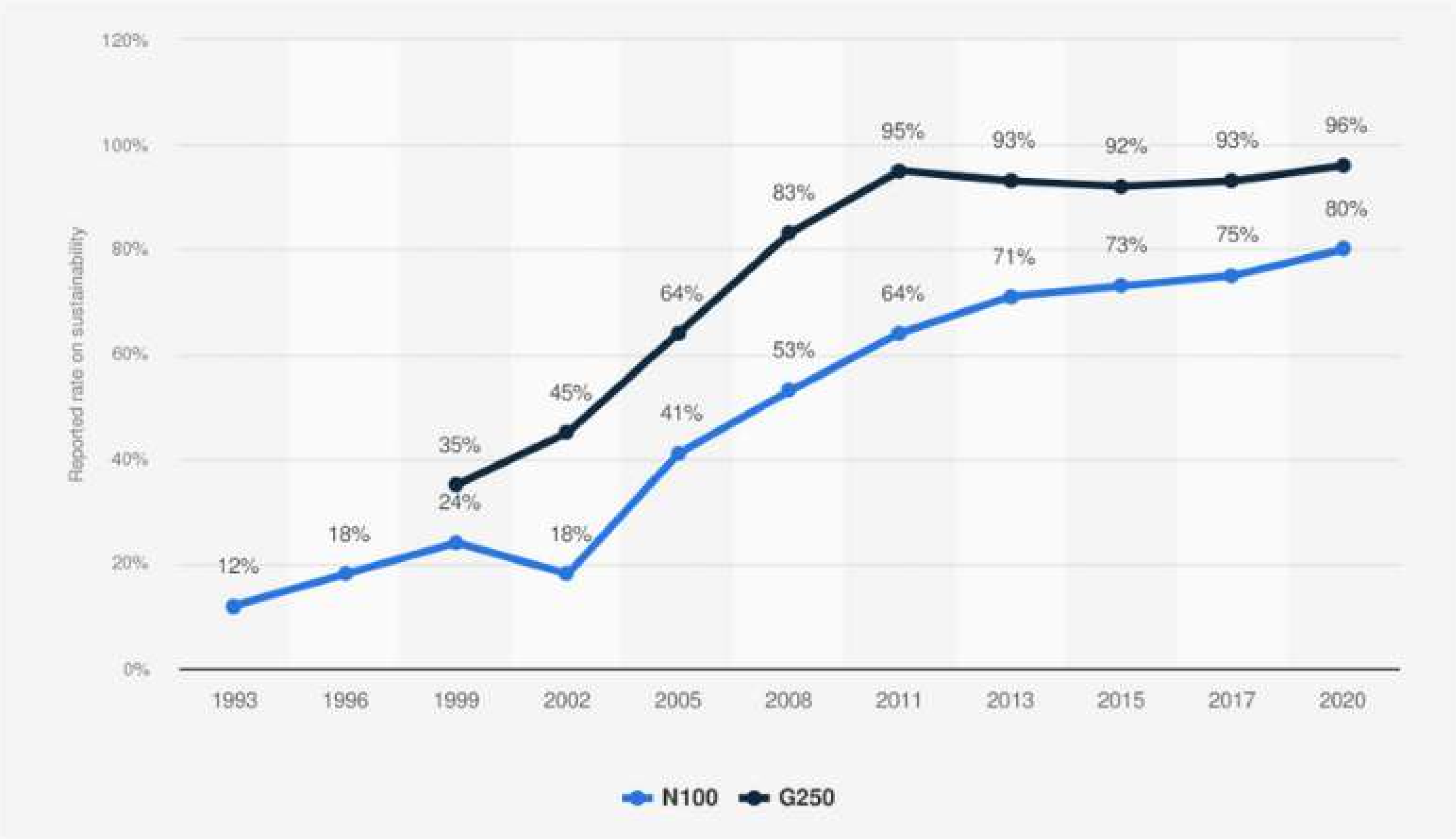
The world is struggling with climate change and its destructive effects, the necessity for sustainable approaches is crucial more than ever. However, sustainability does not only mean caring for the environment. It also refers to a corporate strategy for creating long-term value that encompasses an organization's environmental, social and economic impacts. Events such as large-scale natural disasters and global diseases have radically changed the way consumers view the world. People have developed sensitivity to environmental and social issues, and this has been reflected in their behaviors, including shopping habits.

Young generations born in the digital age are seen as more conscious and responsible about health and environmental issues. According to Deloitte's survey, among the greatest concerns, climate change and environmental protection were ranked 1st for Generation Z and 3rd for Millennials.

When it comes to sustainability, it is not just Gen Z and Millennials that are concerned. Based on a Businesswire study, **85% of individuals** worldwide have changed their purchasing habits to be more environmentally conscious. People are also paying attention to additional benefits such as health or costs and savings. In the light of these findings, to ensure growth, **e-commerce brands should focus on sustainability in the long term.**



Companies who report on sustainability worldwide from 1993 to 2020



Source: Statista

Today, companies engage in corporate social responsibility initiatives to create a positive image for investors and customers and to consolidate their position in the market. Many brands are reshaping their packaging design and materials and distribution systems to be more environmentally friendly. In addition, issues such as gender equality, employee satisfaction, social responsibility & charity projects are emphasized. Many businesses in a wide range of sectors are adopting sustainability reporting regularly.



How can you pursue a more sustainable approach?



It is clear that sustainability is a necessity both for our planet and for a brand's long-term success. However, it must be done wisely. Recently, many brands have started to embrace sustainability and apply it to their business strategies. Although sustainability may seem like an additional investment in the short run, business objectives can also get benefited from its success when applied correctly in business management.

Today, many big organizations adopt a green approach and continue on their way with more confident steps. Here are a few tips you can do to ensure sustainability in an e-commerce business:

>> Sustainability as a company goal

A brand's goals tell its customers who they are and what they value. The environmentally friendly business approach maintained as a brand should be reflected in all channels used by the brand. The ecological understanding to be created in the workplace environment will be useful to raise awareness about sustainability. **Adopting environmentally-friendly policies,** creating environmentally and socially responsible applications, or taking part in existing projects strengthens the brand image both in employees' and customers' minds.





>> Eco-friendly shipping & packaging

Shipping and packing processes indeed have a significant impact on the environment, but many organizations are working to change traditional ways and alter to more conscious versions. Compared to disposable packaging, recyclable materials are much less harmful to the environment. By choosing suppliers that use environmentally friendly materials, you can reduce the environmental impact on your brand and your consumers. You have options to offer such as 100% biodegradable materials and reusable tote bags. Unnecessary packaging is also something that can be avoided to reduce waste.

>> Offering sustainable product options

We mentioned that consumers are now more environmentally conscious, and this has an impact on their product preferences. It may not be applicable to make sudden changes in all your products as a first step, but you can start by adding alternatives to your product range. It is possible to deliver encouraging service to consumers by providing products with natural and clean ingredients, provided from local suppliers, donating to social organizations, and -not necessary to say- not testing on animals.





>> Minimize returns and decrease carbon footprint

Returns have a significant impact on CO2 emissions, waste, and shipping costs, so as few returns as possible are best for both the brand and the environment. It is important that you ensure consumers have enough information on the products they purchased by providing extensive explanations and visuals (video, gif, etc.) about the goods you sell to reduce return rates. By adding a size calculator to your online store, you can easily prevent consumers from purchasing the wrong size. You can facilitate the pre-purchase communication of consumers with live chat or a virtual shopping assistant. Open and fast communication with the consumer will reduce the return and product exchange rates.

Benefits of a Sustainable Approach



Sustainability is more than just a trend. It is the responsibility of every individual to protect our planet. Each brand has its methods to be more environmentally friendly and sustainable in business life. These efforts are beneficial not only for the environment but also for your business. We can list some of the advantages of implementing a sustainable perspective to your operations as follows:

>> Positive brand image & competitive advantage

According to McKinsey, one in every four customers intends to focus more on environmental concerns and pay more attention to social factors when they are purchasing. Considering changing consumer behavior, having an eco-friendly approach allows you to create a more positive perception in the eyes of consumers and provide an incentive for shopping. Following a sustainable way at every point in your business emphasizes your eco-conscious approach and helps you stay ahead in the market. By adopting a service understanding that is sensitive to social and environmental issues, you provide a reason for users to choose your brand.





>> Reducing costs

It could be claimed that being sustainable costs more. In fact, sustainability focuses on efficient operations that lighten the workforce and conserve resources, increase employee productivity and reduce costs. Acquiring a system that will assist your consumers in the shopping process with a virtual assistant may sound costly at first, but considering the reduction that it will make in return rates, it will be profitable for your business in the long run.

>> Saving the planet

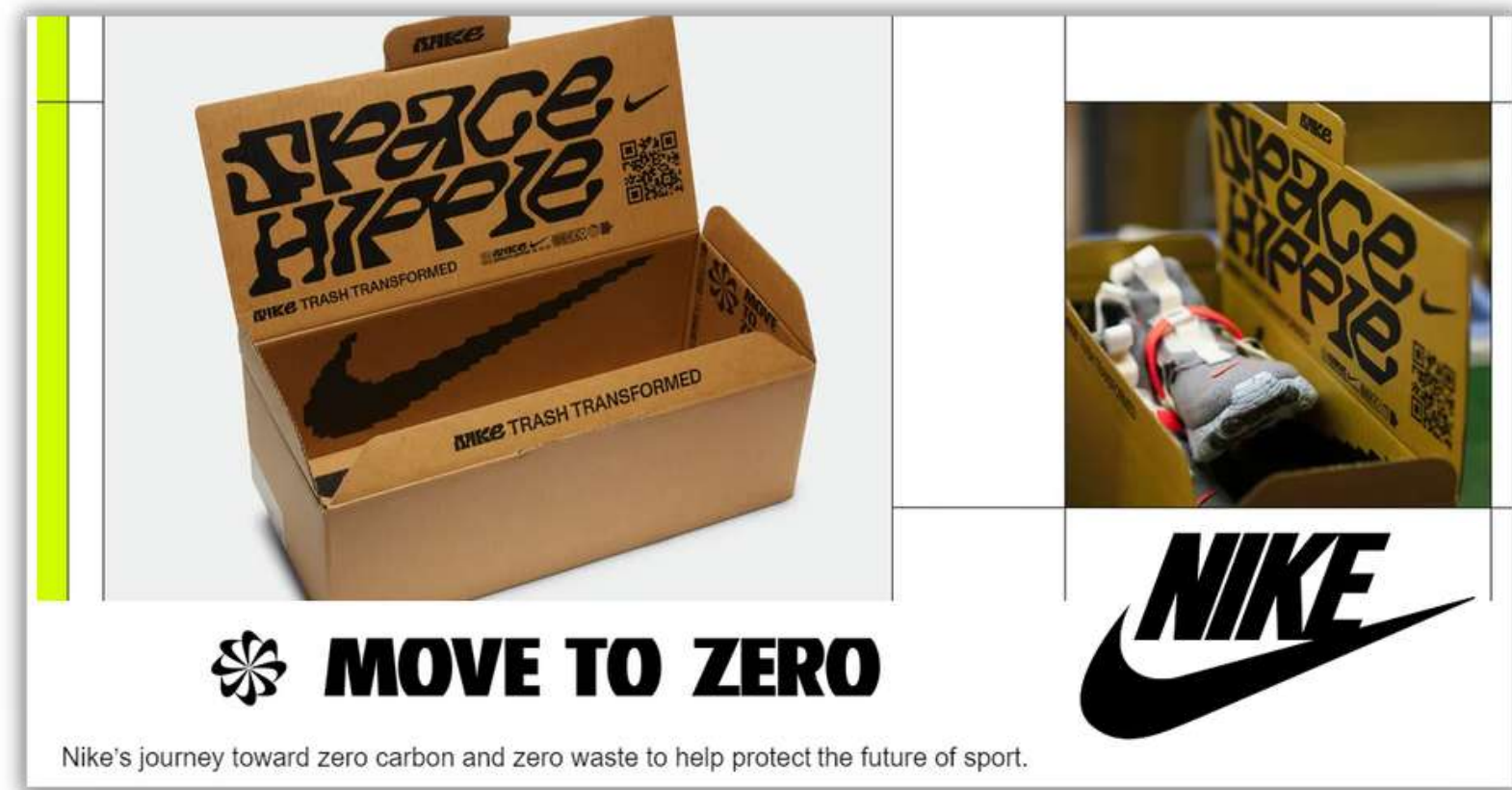
In terms of sustainability, what organizations can do is more effective than the measures taken individually. It will be beneficial to raise awareness of the climate crisis and to reduce the effects on the environment systematically. It is important to focus on sustainable practices and encourage consumers & partners in this regard, both for the consistent growth of brands and their advantageous position in the market and for the future of the planet.



Adopting Sustainability



Organizations spend more and more energy every day to find permanent solutions to prevent the climate crisis. We are witnessing major changes in the way organizations and industries work, and **bold ideas developed from different perspectives put into action**. Today, many clothing brands have collections made of recycled materials. E-commerce brands offer their users more sustainable options such as eco-friendly shipping and packaging for online orders.



For instance, Unilever, as a multinational mega-corporate, shared its Sustainable Living Plan recently. The plan includes actions to **reduce the company's environmental impact by half by 2030** at the latest, as well as improve the health and well-being of more than a billion people, promote opportunities for gender equality, and control waste and water use. These incentives for sustainability by leading brands such as Unilever are promising for the future. Sportswear giant Nike has released sneakers called "space hippies". Created from scraps or space junk, the space hippie represents a fine example of **sustainable practices meeting radical design**. With this business strategy, Nike aims to eliminate all waste and pollution from production. It is also obvious that such a creative idea attracts the attention of young shoppers.

We Can All Do Better

The planet is on the verge of draining its resources. Failure to take action on sustainability will result in larger losses for nature, individuals, and also for companies in the future. Today, it is possible to start replacing the main steps of e-commerce operations with alternatives that are less harmful to the environment.

Economic, social, and environmental sustainability are essential to success in today's e-commerce environment. It also has numerous advantages. Institutions that have a sustainable business plan are **one step ahead of the competition** in terms of brand value, meeting consumer demands, enhancing productivity, employee happiness, and creating new prospects.



Understanding and implementing sustainable strategies requires a **team of experts** in user behavior, purchasing process, and user experience, and a **solid platform** that can implement sustainable practices. Our growth experts in the **GrowthLab team** provide essential assistance for your brand's strategy creation and digital growth based on the unique demands of your business. Moreover, our digital commerce platform, **Inveon inCommerce** can fit the unique objectives of your company in order to implement the specified goals.



Get in touch with us to learn how to contribute to a better future for your business and the planet!

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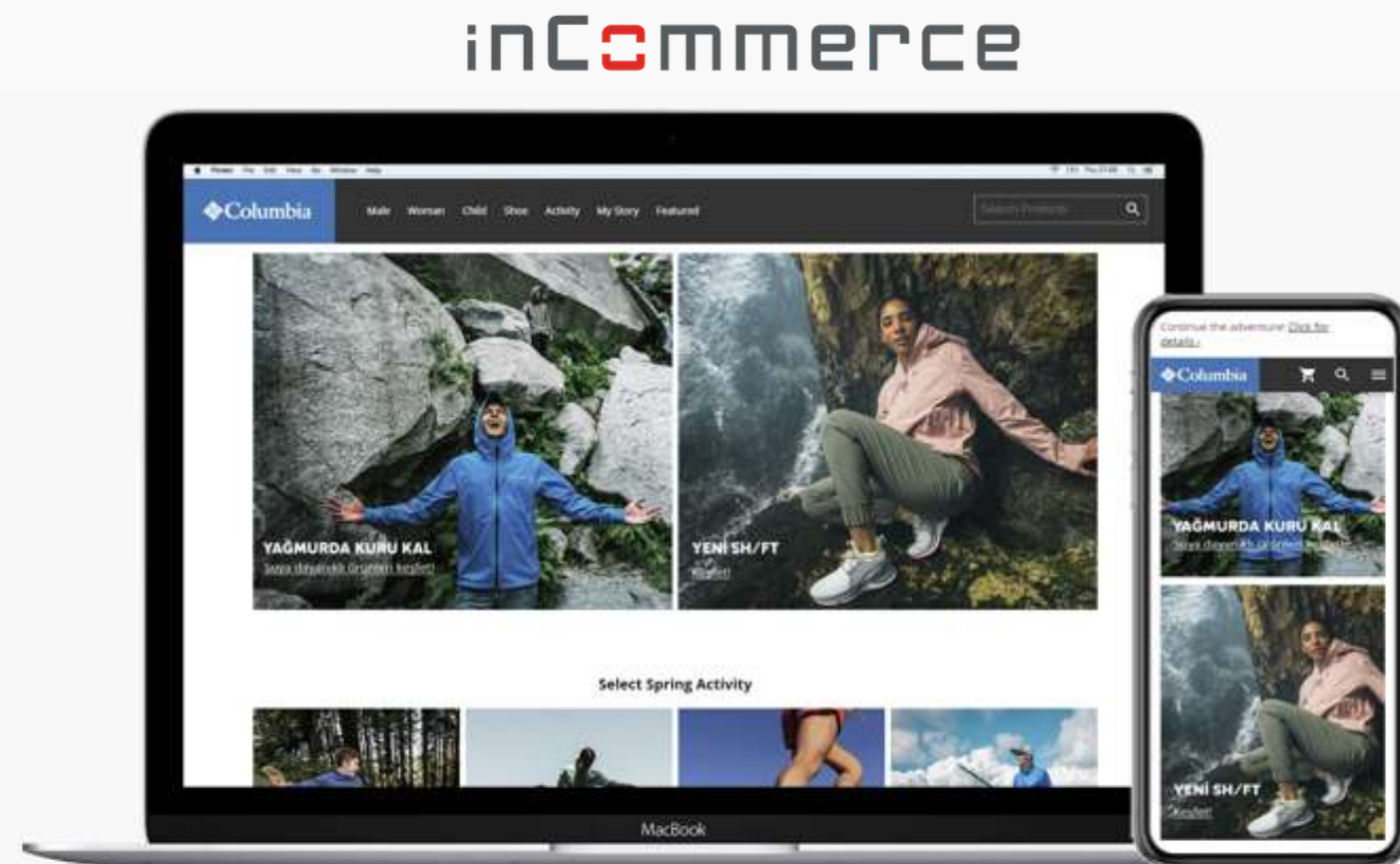
Inveon helps you develop and implement sustainable business strategies.

Schedule a call with one of our e-commerce experts today.

Get in touch!

A fulfilling digital commerce platform to deliver an exceptional customer experience

Inveon inCommerce is the agile way to build, launch and expand your e-commerce business across channels, marketplaces and partners.



Let's take your business to the next level!

Microservice Architecture

Enjoy highly performed operations, ease of integrations and maximum speed through microservice architecture

Omnichannel Promotion Management

Take a deep-dive into the world of promotion and discount management with an advanced promotion management module

Headless Structure, Supreme Flexibility

Through inCommerce's headless structure, easily customize your platform and provide a seamless experience to your customers

Advanced OMS

Effectively manage your omnichannel operations and eliminate operational complexity with inCommerce's strong order fulfillment algorithms

Real-time Tracking & Insights

Master your data by tracking brand-specific consumer journeys and detailed data dashboards of the reporting module

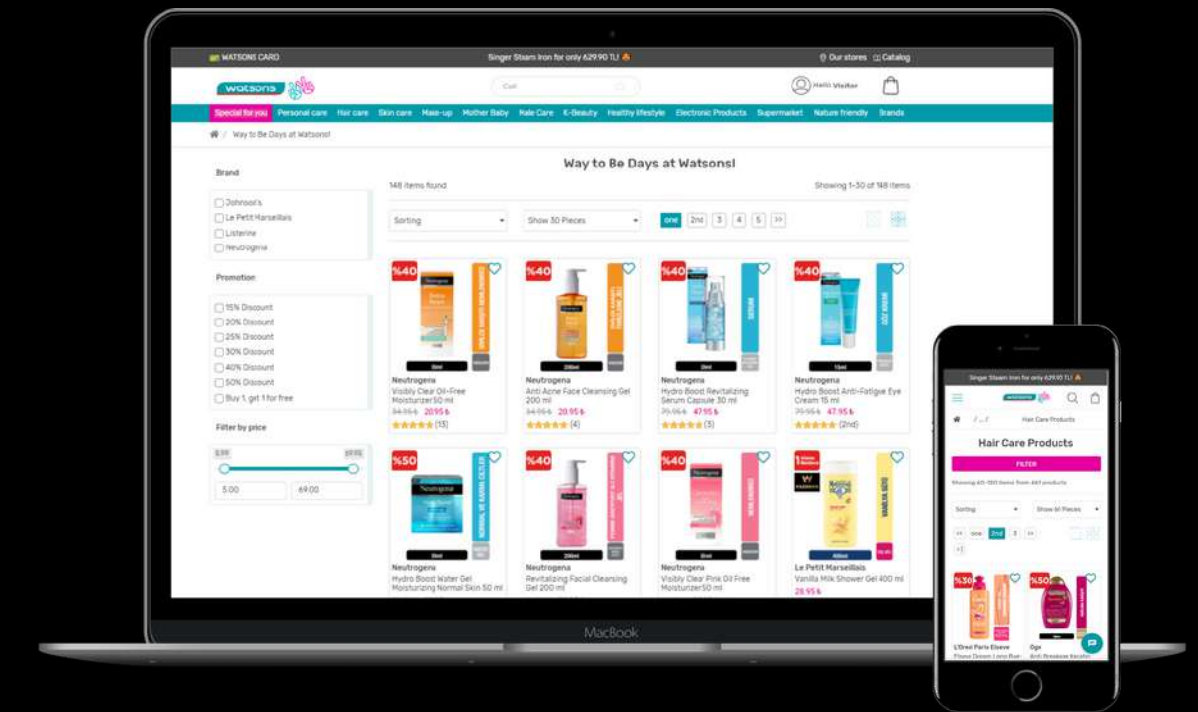
Mobile-first Operational Management

Utilize a comprehensive range of tools to excellently control your operations wherever you are with inCommerce's fully responsive and mobile-compatible admin panel

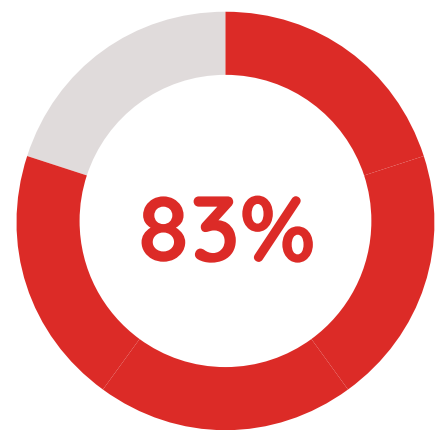


Unlock growth potential & empower your brand: GrowthLab

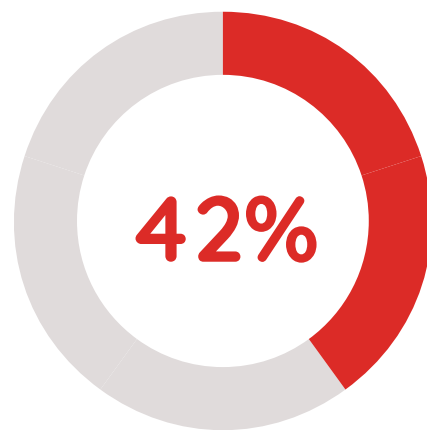
- Keep the pulse on your store with inCommerce's real-time data stream
- Uncover growth opportunities using behavioral segments
- Take the guesswork out of growth with our proprietary next-best-action methodology



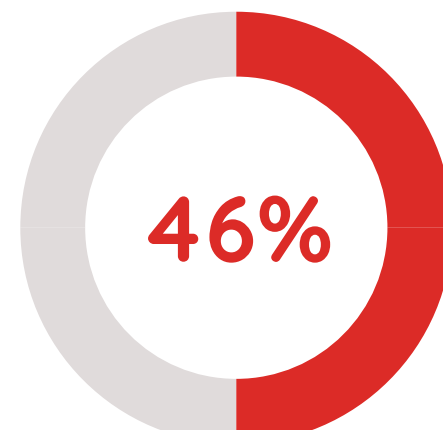
After 12 months of working with Inveon, our clients achieved:



An average increase
in revenue



An average increase
in traffic



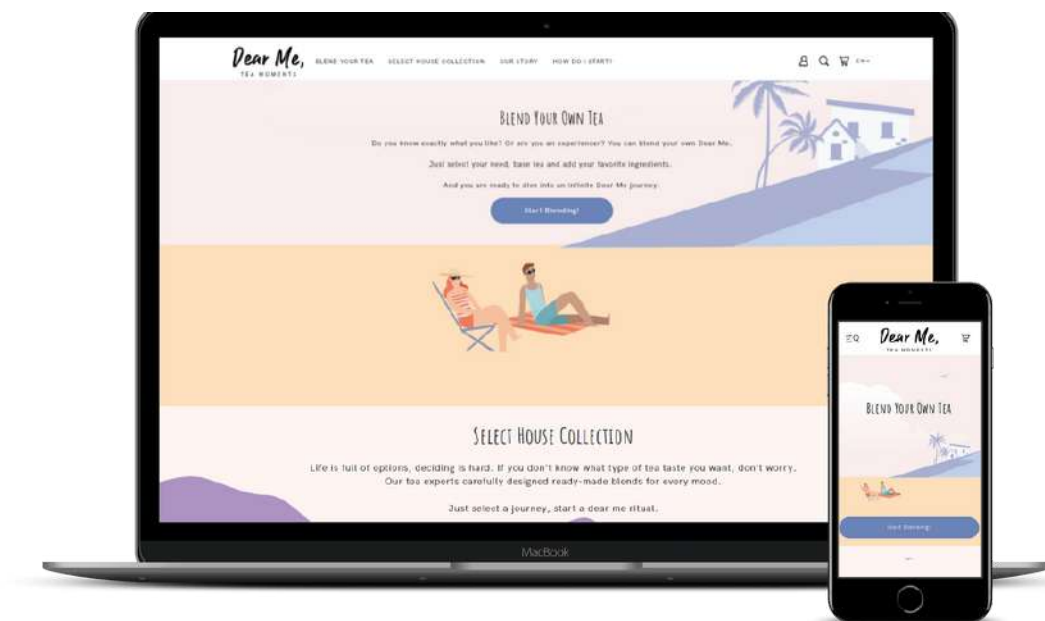
An average increase
in conversion rates



Highlights from our clients

- Offering products in 90 countries under a single platform and increasing global revenue by 400%.
- 5x increase in the number of visitors during the Singles Day Campaign. (Gold Stevie Winner for Online Marketing Campaign of the Year)
- Omnichannel revenue reached 1.5 times higher than e-commerce site revenue within 6 months.

About Inveon



Inveon provides enterprise companies a unified & scalable digital commerce platform that enables sustainable growth.



Our Offices

- Istanbul, Turkey
- London , UK
- Geneva, Switzerland
- Dubai, UAE



\$1B

annual e-commerce volume



60+

global customers



70M

online shoppers



15+

countries

For more information, get in touch with us

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