



IKEA KSA Looks to Link Development to Redefine Digital Standards for Customer Excellence



A digital pioneer, IKEA KSA sought to digitally transform its entire operations in its ambition to provide a new level of omni-channel customer experience to its B2B, B2C and Ikea community customers. Link Development designed an integrated solution and delivered the "Customer Hub". Unlocking the power of Microsoft technologies and Link Developments customization capacities, IKEA KSA's customer-facing business journeys were digitalized creating positive outcomes such as customer excellence, improved sales, stronger customer loyalty and lower operating costs; in addition to setting digital leadership across Inter IKEA.

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| Customer | IKEA KSA |
| Industry | Retail |
| Country | Saudi Arabia |
| Technology | Dynamics 365 - CRMOL, SP Online, BizTalk, Power BI, Social Engagement, AI, Machine Learning |

IKEA Saudi Arabia

First established in 1943 in Sweden, the giant manufacturer and retailer, IKEA, saw 775 million visitors across 389 IKEA stores in 42 different countries during 2017. IKEA's vision is "to create a better everyday life" by "offering a wide range of well-designed, functional home furnishing products at prices so low that as many people as possible will be able to afford them." IKEA Saudi Arabia opened its first showroom in 1983 in Jeddah. Today the company has seven stores operating with more than 1,200 co-workers, serving 12 million physical visitors and 12.5 million online visitors per year.

Priming a Strategic Leap of Digital Transformation

IKEA's mission runs deep. "We want to create a better everyday for all people impacted by our business." Determined to be a leader among Inter IKEA ecosystem worldwide, IKEA KSA decided to go that extra mile and take this mission to a whole new level.

The Saudi Franchise took it upon itself to set in motion an ambitious digital transformation initiative; a stride to boost the digital productivity of the retail chain and set a global example of digital leadership; all geared towards customer excellence.

The company opted to distinguish itself by creating distinctive, omni-channel experiences for its corporate, consumer and IKEA friends customers. Recognizing that great customer experience starts with better employee experience, the company decided to create revolutionary changes in the ways its physical and virtual touchpoints (in-store, website, mobile app, and call center) connect and interact; and most importantly in the way employees service customers.

"IKEA strives to create a better everyday life for the many people and this digital transformation is considered as a dynamic solution and a step we have always sought: upgrade our customer service and optimize our operational performance, in the light of the Kingdom's Vision 2030.

This partnership with Link Development will make the work process easier and lead to higher customer satisfaction.

We strongly believe that the "Customer Hub" project will open up many opportunities for new potential customers and support our omni-channel strategy, all in efforts to win the heart of our customers."

*Saud Al Sulaiman
Chief Executive Officer, IKEA Saudi Arabia*

A Digital Matrix of Separate Islands

Within a myriad of about 11 systems under its belt and multiple stakeholders such as: customer service agents, operations' personnel, sales reps and other employees, the retailer's productivity was challenged by lengthy processes to source right information in the right time. There were different sources of data that are complex to manage, time consuming and prone to errors and miscommunication.

Data was dispersed, insights elusive, and reports difficult to produce. Making the right decisions at the right time was not an easy task. Servicing customers was not up to standards as per today's digital, upbeat and on-the-go pace.

Link Development proposed a holistic solution that would bring all these data points together in a single place and provide seamless real-time integration of the whole digital environment.

The Makeover: Dynamics 365 & BIZTALK

An unprecedented feat in IKEA worldwide, Link Development helped IKEA KSA in integrating about 11 systems into a new 'Customer Hub'. These included ERP, loyalty, call center (ININ) software, a retail app, an SMS/Payment gateway and shipping, marketing, and more.

Using Dynamics CRM Online, Link Development created a single unified interface on the 'Customer Hub'. It provides employees a central location, with attractive and bilingual interface, to easily access and use all systems related to customer operations with the click of a button; removing the old need to access multiple systems, wait for results, or do manual operations.

Customer 360 is Ground Zero

Since serving customers effectively needs to begin with having clear, unified customer data at hand; Link Development ensured that the 'Customer Hub' can seamlessly provide a 360 view of any customer, drawing upon different sources of data across multiple systems, to create a complete picture.

Customer accounts are mapped so that employees can easily identify the same customer and see their interactions, sales history, scheduling activities, loyalty points, services requests and more. What was previously a tedious and confusing task has now been replaced with a pleasant digital experience for employees.

Smoothing Out the Kinks

To drive greater internal operational efficiencies and optimization, Link Development team fully digitalized three internal journeys for IKEA KSA; namely Sales, Customer Care, and Customer Contact/Operations.

The Benefits:

- A new omni-channel experience with all IKEA's KSA touch points
- Laying grounds for customer excellence by identifying customer issues and trends early on and proactively resolving them
- Faster time to market for new services on all channels
- Customer loyalty and retention were enhanced by providing personalized experiences
- With Cloud total cost of ownership is low
- Processing time of internal operations fell drastically
- Customer agents were able to handle more customers a day
- Better strategic planning based on timely and valuable inputs
- Culture of knowledge sharing is instilled amongst members of the organization
- New leads automatically detected from social posts and routed into CRM

Sales automation tackled both B2B and B2C cycles, streamlining lead, opportunity and quotation management as well as order management, pipeline, and product catalog.

Customer Care automation tackled case tracking, four levels of classification & categorization, case assignment/routing rules, alert & notification, and SLA procedures.

Operational automation encapsulated resource management, scheduling & dispatching, route optimization, field service requests, warranty services, and service history.

Knowledge is Power

IKEA KSA housed a wealth of information ranging from product catalogs and assembly instruction files to historical complaints, training materials and others. While valuable, the information was scattered and hard to access. Using SharePoint Online, Link Development ensured that a digital repository of accumulated knowledge and fresh information was set in a single place: the "Knowledge Hub" where information is easy to search and retrieve

Employees can access the "Knowledge Hub" through the Dynamics 365 – CRM Online solution. Using the hub, agents can look up product information while interacting with customers through the call center or any other online, mobile, offline channel. Customer wait time is drastically decreased thanks to the increased capacity of agents to dig up information and answer any customers questions or complaints in real-time.

Customer Voice; a Catalyst for Change

As members of IKEA KSA community, customers interact with IKEA stores, products and personnel across multiple channels. The Voice of the Customer is integral to extend the relationship after sales and know where next to steer the wheel.

With customer voice survey and analysis, IKEA KSA can provide insights into customers' true level of satisfaction and brand perception. Using Dynamics 365, IKEA KSA can listen everywhere (surveys and complaints /feedback via web forms, live chat, call center, etc., social media, and e-store analytics); so they can analyze sentiment, evaluate share of voice across social channels, pursue key influencers, drive engagement, capture feedback and respond.

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Link Development helped us to navigate a digital route that looked too complex in optimal time; exceeding our expectations.

At IKEA Saudi Arabia we had many disconnected systems constituting the backbone of our operations. The diversity and disparity of residing data was becoming overwhelming. And, our business ambition for increased customer satisfaction was soaring.

We needed to embed customer excellence know-how in every technical decision and digital direction we take.

Link Development digitally transformed our complex environment into an integrated, productive one. Together, we used plenty of Microsoft technologies and capitalized on the cost-efficiency and security of Azure.

IKEA KSA is now a digital leader across the Inter KIEA ecosystem. It doesn't stop here. As digital has no ceiling, so is our determination to work with Link Development in continuing our journey of digital transformation towards our business objectives.

*Anas Shehab
Chief Information Officer
IKEA Saudi Arabia*

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Bettering Social with Artificial Intelligence

Through Dynamics 365 social engagement, IKEA KSA can monitor brand performance across different social media channels.

Social media agents can collaborate by responding to social media posts. They can receive automated assignments to manage a post or manually reassign posts to the proper agents.

Empowered by artificial intelligence and machine learning the solution can intelligently identify potential leads on its own and send them as leads to Dynamics CRM Online for lead qualification and follow-up. The solution can also learn more about customer sentiment by understanding tags and posts.

Armed with insights into social and customer interactions, service requests, and reports, IKEA KSA marketers are better able to segment customers, cross-sell and up-sell. Cross-channel campaign planning and management is straightforward, and response tracking so simple.

Tracking Down Trouble

As customer data is pulled together in comprehensive metrics and put into the Dynamics 365 CRM solution for further assessment and analysis, IKEA KSA decision-makers can use PowerBI to analyze issues and correct them. They can get insights at a glance with rich analytics to make more informed decisions and timely changes.

With intelligent, integrated dashboards, IKEA KSA team have a bird's eye view on the whole ecosystem of operations. The solution provides rich reports and interactive Business Intelligence gadgets that cover aspects such as sales volume, number complaints, customer satisfaction, social influencers, social sentiment and more.

A Digitally Big Smaland

Not overlooking the in-store experience, IKEA KSA wanted to offer something truly different that would also serve to provide better customer proximity and sales.

Link Development digitalized parent-child experience with IKEA's flagship playing area, Smaland with the objective of increasing safety and creating a more conformable interaction.

Children are now electronically registered before entering IKEA's famous playing area. They must be checked in and checked out. Notifications are pushed to parent mobiles to keep them updated on their child's status. The visitor data collected is channeled to the CRM to enrich customer 360 profile and create opportunities for up and cross selling.



KSA's retail landscape is fiercely competitive and with huge growth potentials.

We wanted to revolutionize our B2B and B2C customer relationships with our brand.

Link Development helped us make a difference; a one the future-proofs our quest for customer excellence.

Customers now have an omnichannel experience with our touchpoints across the Kingdom: in-store, website, mobile app, and call center. We can drive business from social and more. Smaland is digitally more unique and safer.

Our day-to-day business has changed. Our employees are more informed. Our process are more productive. Our performance is more accelerated. Our customer-centric solutions are more impactful.

We see a clear vision for customer excellence. Link Development is a digital partner that we can depend on in our aggressive plans of using digital in business growth.



*Asaad Abu Zahra
Country Business Services Manager
IKEA Saudi Arabia*

Technologies

- Dynamics 365
- CRM Online
- SharePoint Online
- BizTalk
- PowerBI
- Dynamics 365 Social Engagement