

CASE STUDY



adidas Group

Delivering the Most Compelling Customer Experience with the Most Relevant Content

INDUSTRY

Retail

GOAL

Increase revenue and customer loyalty by delivering a better online customer experience

CHALLENGE

Data required to provide personalized experience is spread across various information silos

SOLUTION

Used Neo4j to integrate master data, content data and product data into a single, searchable graph database which can be used to create a personalized customer experience

FUTURE

- Planning to integrate CRM, social, partners, consumer profiles and analytics into Shared Metadata Service
- Creating a real-time recommendation engine for retail consumers using integrated data

The adidas Group has a multitude of products, markets, media, assets and audiences to track and target on a daily basis. In order to deliver the most compelling customer experience across these various audiences and markets, the adidas Group uses Neo4j to serve up the most relevant content for each precisely targeted audience – and all in real time.

The Company

The adidas Group is a global leader in the sporting goods industry and one of the world's most valuable brands. With annual sales of €14.5 billion, the adidas Group offers a broad portfolio of footwear, apparel and hardware around the core brands of adidas, Reebok and TaylorMade. Headquartered in Germany, the Group employs more than 53,000 people across the globe.

The Challenge

With such a vast global audience, the adidas Group wanted to step up its game by offering a more personalized experience to its online shoppers. Yet, as with many large retailers, the Group was beset by a wide array of information silos, including data about products, markets, social media, master data, digital assets, brand content and other key areas.

"We have many different silos, many different data domains, and in order to make sense out of our data, we needed to bring those together and make them useful for us," said Senior Project Manager Sokratis Kartelias.

On the technical level, data models didn't align between the information silos, and there wasn't a standard, consistent way to communicate between the different data domains.

Without a way to effectively consolidate such data, the Group felt it was missing out on opportunities to provide the most compelling and relevant content to its consumers, as well as offering enhanced product recommendations to drive more revenue.

Unlike other online retailers that merely offered static content to all of their website visitors, the adidas Group wanted to personalize content based on user interests, local languages, regional sporting news and market-specific product offerings.

Additionally, the Group wanted to provide standardized access to this content-sharing system with its internal teams, partners, IT units and others in a way that was fast, reliable and searchable so teams didn't have to recreate existing content.

The Strategy

Rather than trying to consolidate all of the adidas Group's information silos into a single place, Kartelias started a "Shared Metadata Service" which would effectively accomplish the same result with the effort of actually moving the data.

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– Sokratis Kartelias,
Senior Product Manager,
adidas Group

This new service would enable employees across the adidas Group to categorize and search for content across every platform and division of the enterprise. The Shared Metadata Service would also allow the Group to target audiences with content organized by language, country, tone, sport and athlete. In addition, the Service would need to include search engine optimization of content for various local languages.

Furthermore, Kartelias wanted the Shared Metadata Service to govern the roles and ownership of different employees to ensure safe, high-quality data.

The Solution

In order to build the Shared Metadata Service, Kartelias turned to Neo4j. The Neo4j graph database proved to be the ideal technology for creating the Service, offering access and searchability to all data, along with support for new emerging services.

In order to implement the Shared Metadata Service on Neo4j, Kartelias first had to unify the different models between content, product data and master data. With the help of Neo4j consultants, Kartelias’ team was able to define an optimal data model that connected all three domains, relating information as diverse as marketing campaigns, product specifications, contracted athletes and associated teams, sports categories, gender information and more.

With the initial project now complete, Kartelias and his team are continuously integrating the Shared Metadata Service with new sources and clients, enabling the adidas Group to deliver the most compelling customer experience to their online shoppers with the right content at the right time.

The Future

Today, the Neo4j-powered Shared Metadata Service has two million nodes with nearly ten million relationships, but for Kartelias, this is only the first step. His team has plenty more data domains they want to integrate with their graph database.

After completing the first version of the Shared Metadata Service, Kartelias’ team is now building services and extensions around Neo4j to allow more teams and partners to use the integrated power of the graph database.

Kartelias is already working on consumer profiles based on favorite players and sports teams so that targeted content can be offered up to the appropriate fan. Other planned integrations include the adidas Group’s CRM, social media platforms and wholesale and retail partner data.

The ultimate goal is to build a recommendation engine that uses Neo4j to offer up relevant, real-time suggestions to shoppers on adidas.com in addition to social and mobile channels.

At the end of the day, the adidas Group needed to provide a compelling customer experience with timely and relevant content. They wouldn’t have been able to do that without using Neo4j.

About Neo Technology

Neo Technology is the creator of Neo4j, the world's leading graph database, that brings data relationships to the fore. From companies offering personalized product and service recommendations; to websites adding social capabilities; to telcos diagnosing network issues; to enterprises reimagining master data, identity, and access models; organizations adopt graph databases as the best way to model, store and query both data and its relationships. Neo Technology researchers pioneered the modern graph database and have been instrumental in bringing the power of the graph to numerous organizations worldwide. Large enterprises like Walmart, eBay, UBS, Nomura, The InterContinental Exchange, Cisco, CenturyLink, HP, Telenor, TomTom, Lufthansa, and The National Geographic Society, as well as startups like CrunchBase, Medium, Polyvore, Zephyr Health, and Elementum use Neo4j to unlock business value from data relationships.

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