Case Study

BDR THERMEA GROUP

What matters to BDR Thermea is creating more personalized and relevant online experiences

Move to Sitecore XM Cloud drives meaningful interactions with customers

Do what matters

BDR Thermea Group (BDR Thermea) is a global manufacturer and distributor of smart heating and cooling solutions within the sustainable energy space. It operates in 100 countries worldwide, employing around 6,800 people.

With more of its customer base moving online, the company's digital presence has started to grow over the last few years. This led to an increased number of online touchpoints and more than 20 separate website experiences, which were all built slightly different. BDR Thermea had a digital engine that was stretched to its limits and needed a solution that would strike the right balance between global standardization and local configuration to simplify content creation for marketers and deliver new capabilities faster.

Company Name: BDR Thermea Group

Country: Netherlands

Company Size: 6,800

Industry: Manufacturing

Solution: Sitecore XM Cloud

Inspiring change: How can you improve digital functionality for next-level experiences?

It's said that the content experience is the customer experience. With a global and increasingly online audience, the manufacturer needed to deliver stand-out digital experiences that worked for each region. "Digitization supports our business objectives, particularly because our industry is going through a huge transformation," says Matt Allmark, product owner for the development team at BDR Thermea.

"Our XP platform was decentralized and complex to use, with each of our websites built slightly differently. An agile time to market was a real problem. It was costly to upgrade or update any infrastructure, requiring more specialists spending more time managing online content," he continues. "At the time, we were building individual tools in one country that then weren't scalable." It also meant that there was limited ability to control messaging, leading to inconsistencies in brand image.

To bring in the digital capabilities to improve website performance and drive meaningful interactions, the manufacturer needed a platform that delivered a fast and agile time to market for new functionalities. "The digital journey we're on means that online channels will help us reach our important customer segments," Allmark says.

"A well-performing online platform is crucial for us to deliver the right digital experiences to ensure customers can interact with our brand effectively. And ensuring we have an engaged customer base enables us to move more consumers to new, more sustainable energy sources."

To make this happen, BDR Thermea turned to Accenture and Avanade – a joint venture between Accenture and Microsoft.

Driving innovation: Why migrate to composable for better website performance?

Derk Hudepol, Sitecore architect at Avanade, is clear on why the step towards a composable architecture is so important. "With BDR Thermea wanting to raise its customer experience to a new level, we knew we needed to find a solution that increased speed to market, improved website performance and developer agility, as well as simplifying content creation for marketers," Hudepol says.

Sitecore XM Cloud's headless, composable design fit the bill. Composable offers a scalable, fast and user-friendly solution for digital transformation, bringing the benefits of simplified content management, tailored and localized customer experiences and greater brand awareness across markets. Together, BDR Thermea, Accenture Song and Avanade established up front that the project would deliver a centralized CMS platform that's customizable through configurations within the right brand guidelines. It will also provide appropriate governance and ways of working to operate successfully for years to come.

With a need for global consistency and the ability to localize, we created one centralized XM Cloud so BDR Thermea can establish standardization while allowing for local configuration, and prioritized component enhancement rather than needing to create new ones each time.

"I think this approach is brilliant. This is exactly what we need: simple, intuitive and fast."

– Matt Allmark
Product Owner, Development Team, BDR Thermea

To support this journey to an up-to-date customer experience platform, we took a proven, five-step platform migration approach:

1. **Business discovery:** We conducted workshops with BDR Thermea's operating units to define business requirements and ensure full buy-in from stakeholders.

2. **Technical discovery:** Our technical assessment led to the development of a new architecture based on XM Cloud, Vercel and JAMStack.

3. **Proof-of-concept:** We demonstrated the power of XM Cloud by creating a proof-of-concept website in just six weeks.

4. **Functional build:** We used an agile project approach to complete the new centralized website and integrated design system with more than 13 templates and over 40 components. This also included the creation and implementation of a new global governance model, to support the continued development of the centralized platform.

5. **Continuous development:** Understanding the nuanced needs of each market, we're now migrating all client website content to XM Cloud and implementing additional functionalities. The first website, Remeha.co.uk, has successfully gone live.

Achieving what matters: What did we deliver as a partnership?

As the rollout of this project accelerated, it became clear that XM has made a major impact on both the customer and employee experience. "We now have a CMS with improved user experiences, which has led to increased speed to market of new pages and content, more time to focus on conversion optimization and, just as importantly, happier employees," says Allmark.

That's not all the manufacturer has achieved. "We're delivering greater developer agility and quicker website load speeds for visitors on mobile and desktop. All core web vitals have improved, which has had a positive impact on SEO," states Allmark.

"It's also created cost savings for the business, through reusability and reduction in the deployment of new features. So, you only have to do it once," adds Wieger Joosten, client account lead at Accenture. "The new architecture provides faster time to market, as teams can now focus on building new features, rather than maintaining and updating features for each separate operating company. There's no need for development on a local level, it can all be done by UX and content editors."

This adds into BDR Thermea's overall strategy to step up its online presence with installers and homeowners, and drive more meaningful interactions, engagement and, ultimately, sales of sustainable energy.

The manufacturer has achieved:

790% productivity increase for web creators

390% increase in mobile page load speeds

79% increase in desktop page load speeds

Significant expected savings in annual costs

With improved SEO value, faster browsing and more live campaigns, this initiative – and the collaborative approach that made it happen – shows that the smart path to DXP transformation begins with CMS modernization with XM Cloud.

"We're a step ahead of where we want to be on this journey, so it's a really exciting time," Allmark says.

Allmark has also found it easier to sell into the business than a traditional CMS. "I've been using an example that would have taken around a day in our previous XP, which now is taking our team an hour. Plus, the instant ability to see and edit is what you would expect nowadays, so it's incredibly exciting."

About BDR Thermea Group

IBDR Thermea Group is a leading manufacturer of smart indoor climate solutions for domestic and commercial use. The company employs more than 6,800 people and operates in more than 100 countries worldwide. BDR Thermea Group, which realized a turnover of EUR 2.2 billion in 2022, serves customers under renowned market-leading brands including BAXI, De Dietrich, Remeha, Brötje, Chappée and Baymak. Its headquarters are in Apeldoorn, the Netherlands. See also https://www.bdrthermeagroup.com

About Avanade

Avanade is the leading provider of innovative digital and cloud services, business solutions and design-led experiences on the Microsoft ecosystem. With 43,000 professionals in 25 countries, we are the power behind the Accenture Microsoft Business Group, helping companies to engage customers, empower employees, optimize operations and transform products, leveraging the Microsoft platform. Majority owned by Accenture, Avanade was founded in 2000 by Accenture LLP and Microsoft Corporation. **Learn more at www.avanade.com.**

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