

bathstore Meets Customers Online with Live Video Chat



Case Study: bathstore

Specialist bathroom retailer, bathstore prides itself on its high levels of customer service and believes that its customers deserve a very personal shopping experience both in store and online

170+
UK Stores 

500+
Employees 

£112m
Turnover 

With many customers now shopping online for bathroom products, bathstore decided that it would like the customer's website experience to closely match the personal service they would receive in a store. The organisation felt that online Live Video Chat would enable them to offer this personal service and they selected Vee24 to provide the platform.

“Having seen the solution and meeting the Vee24 team, we knew immediately that we'd found what we were looking for – a solution that would allow us to meet our customers online, chat with them by video, co-browse the website along with our customers, book call-backs for our in-store design team and replicate the personalised service we offer in store as best we can”, comments Claire Bayliss, CMO, bathstore.

The Business Case for Improved Service

In July 2015, with its first ever multi million pound brand campaign, “Bathrooms Matter” planned for August, bathstore decided to escalate the timescales for Live Chat and required the service to be up and running within a 4 week window. This would coincide with the airing of the first ads in August 2015, following which bathstore anticipated that website traffic would increase.

bathstore Had Three Requirements

1. To get the Live Video Chat technology working successfully on the website within a tight timescale of 4 weeks.
2. To deliver a noticeable improvement in online customer service scores.
3. As a result of the step-change in customer service, to see a return on the project investment and an uplift in sales via the website. The target was set at 5.5% conversion (the percentage of 'chat' customers who would go on to make a purchase).

Moving Ahead with Live Video Chat

Given the complex customer journey involved in purchasing a bathroom, and the need to assist customers across many channels it was decided to offer Live Help across the bathstore website, using a combination of phone, text and video chat. However, with a tight timescale of four weeks, bathstore was concerned that it would not be able to recruit the right calibre of colleagues to use the Vee24 platform, and decided to outsource the online customer service operation to the experts at Vee24.

Key service requirements from bathstore were for the Vee24 team to be a seamless part of the bathstore team - with excellent product knowledge and the ability to offer exceptional customer service levels. Now, when a customer visits the bathstore website, they can request 'Live Help' and request assistance from a live operator. Assistance can be provided by phone, text chat and live video chat, where the customer sees the agent on the screen and can talk to them directly. Approximately 70% of all interactions are made using video chat.

An innovative co-browsing feature allows the agent to follow the website pages being browsed by the customers. And if the customer is struggling to find products, the agent can allow the customer to sit back while the agent controls the navigation of the site.

In terms of technology, a simple line of code added to the bathstore website enables the Live Help service to be offered. Added to which, the operator needs a screen, a microphone/headset, and a small desktop video pedestal to get started.

Training the team is a continuous process, with bathstore providing product training to the Vee24 team and continuing to keep the team fully apprised of any website developments and marketing initiatives that might increase web traffic and new products and features.

Bringing Tangible Benefits to the Business

As with any new technology investment, bathstore expects to see a return on its investment and following the first 6 months of being live with the service, the following results were recorded:

-  **Higher than expected sales conversions** - Online customers are 2.5x more likely to purchase with live online assistance.
-  **Exceeded average order value target** – as a result of the high standard of customer service offered, Vee24 has exceeded the average order value target by 11%.
-  **Continuous feedback drives improved service for customers** – being on the front line of customer calls means that the Vee24 team hears first hand when bathstore customers are struggling with some aspects of the website. These comments are fed back to the bathstore team, who are then responsible for making any change to the website, the result of which is a cycle of continuous customer service improvement for the customer.
-  **3rd party CRM access means timely updates from the agents to the stores** – the agents can update the CRM directly with customer comments and queries, which are then picked up directly by the stores.

A Positive Impact on the Customer Experience

Live Help is bringing a number of customer service benefits to bathstore,

-  **High NPS scores** - bathstore is seeing an average Net Promoter Scores (NPS) of 82 following a video chat call. The industry average for NPS is 28 (out of a possible 100).
-  **You're only a click away from an expert** - 14 hours per day, 7 days per week . The Vee24 team is there to serve bathstore customers at a time and place convenient for the customer and from whichever device the customer is using to browse the site – phone, tablet or PC. Call lengths average 7 minutes – and some calls lengths are in excess of 1 hour, where the customer is looking to spec an entire bathroom.
-  **Two-way video helps offer a very personal service** – the Vee24 technology makes it possible for the customer to turn on his own camera when asking for advice – for example, when requiring a like-for-like product but struggling to describe exactly what he's looking for.
-  **Expert advice** - the Vee24 agents are trained to help with myriad different requests to support customers (and sometimes the stores too) - including design service bookings, brochure requests, product specs and advice, warranty advice, installation bookings and technical questions.
-  **Complaints are more easily diffused** - chatting to a live operator on your screen - can diffuse a situation where the customer has a complaint - being able to see the operator gives the customer the reassurance that bathstore values its customers and, as a result, the customer feels that the complaint will be taken care of by the live agent.

Customers love the service. Here's a sample of some of the comments left by bathstore customers:

"Such a brilliant idea to be able to experience a live chat with a knowledgeable person."

"Thanks bathstore for this wonderful experience."

"Oh my, this is a great service guys and a fantastic bit of service innovation. Very impressive."

Moving Ahead with Customer Service Initiatives

bathstore continues to innovate with its online channel , from its 2D design planning function to bathroom Genie – a tool to help customers build their dream bathroom based on budget, space and style preferences; and a new accessories range to complement the bathroom fittings.

“Continuous improvement and innovation is important to bathstore and we'll be working hard with the team at Vee24 to ensure that all online customers receive as personalised a service as possible,” concludes Claire Bayliss.