

OPENforVINTAGE

GROWING FROM 2 TO 65 BOUTIQUES GLOBALLY IN JUST ONE YEAR

Open for Vintage, a luxury fashion website, has a mission to become the leading online platform for luxury preowned fashion whilst promoting sustainable fashion practices and independent retailers.



FACT FILE: Open for Vintage (OfV) was founded in 2016 by two Irish entrepreneurs Colin Saunders & James Loftus, and is a high-end marketplace selling preloved vintage designer items from boutiques around the globe to their discerning international customers. Just one year after launching, OfV is now home to 65 boutiques in 12 markets, with an average order value of £700+. The team carefully curate exciting one-off pieces through their passion for everything vintage. They are 'unlocking the worlds boutiques.'

CELEBRITY STATUS



(L-R) James Loftus & Colin Saunders in their Marylebone, London boutique

In just over one year since its launch, Open for Vintage has been recognised on the Startups 100 Index of top new UK based businesses.

OfV has also attracted the attention of some of the most prestigious global fashion publications including Vogue, El Entertainment and The Huffington Post, and international A-list celebrity customers include Kim Kardashian, who purchased a selection of pieces - namely a vintage Escada skirt she wore on Valentine's Day. Also, Hayley Baldwin and Daisy Lowe, as well as Irish VIP's Vogue Williams and Una Foden, who are also fans.

Attracting such high-profile names has opened up the Open for Vintage brand to a global audience.

THE CHALLENGE

- OfV needed an online store with a back office system to enable them to become an online vintage and designer emporium, which would allow customers to shop from a global network of luxury boutiques all on one website.
- They needed a fully integrated platform, which would operate a management system providing logistics and curation processes to many independent boutiques around the world.
- The three-way transaction between the vendor, marketplace and consumer creates financial and operational complexities that need to be managed and automated to ensure the best possible service and value proposition to the customer. Functions such as onboarding of new vendors or taxonomy of individual products and maintaining high quality and consistent imagery can be difficult to manage and maintain consistency.
- Order processing and logistics present a unique set of challenges where the customer and the vendor can be in different regions around the globe. Commission management for sales across multiple currencies, language and identifying logistic partners, are critical considerations to ensure products are delivered on time and within the market commercial expectations.
- Vendor management presents back office complexities and as each boutique is independent, aligning each with the OFV brand and operational template, could create prohibitive administrative burden.



Serium have extensive experience in scalable ecommerce solutions. They demonstrated the ability and route to a minimum viable product within the allocated budget and timescale.

WHY SERIUM?

Serium utilised a series of service orientated architecture to deliver the ecosystem. This enabled OfV a rapid launch and kept costs to a fraction of similar marketplaces.

“ WE HAVE BEEN DEALING WITH SERIUM NOW FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS AS THE MAIN DEVELOPER AND ADMINISTRATOR OF OUR SITE. THEIR LEVEL OF SERVICE IS OUTSTANDING AND THEY TAKE A REAL AND HONEST INTEREST IN UNDERSTANDING OUR BUSINESS SO WE CAN IMPROVE IT. ”

James Loftus | Director, Open for Vintage

“ WE'RE THRILLED TO HAVE BEEN INVOLVED IN BRINGING THE OPEN FOR VINTAGE CONCEPT TO MARKET. WE DESIGNED THE PLATFORM FOR THE SITE TO BE RELIABLE AND SCALABLE, BEING MORE THAN CAPABLE OF SUPPORTING THEIR RAPID GROWTH PLANS OVER THE COMING YEARS. ”

Justin Sherwood | Managing Director, Serium





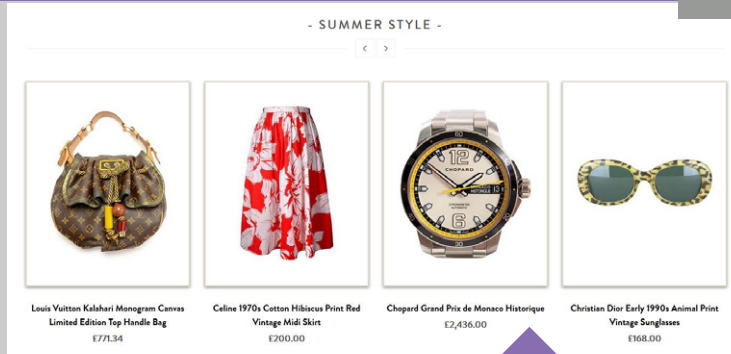
THE WINNING SOLUTION

THE APPROACH

Procuring an enterprise platform was too costly and time consuming. Seriu chose nopCommerce as their ecommerce platform of choice and integrated other services.

In order to meet the client's expectations, Seriu developed several plugins to integrate with 3rd parties: DHL fulfillment, Pixelz image post-production, Intelligent Reach for product data imports, Affilient for affiliate marketing.

Seriu also set up vendor commission calculation and reporting, auto pricing adjustments for vendors listing in other currencies, place bid/make offer feature, and a separate web portal area for vendors to list product and manage orders and shipments.



An example of the vintage one-off pieces for sale on the OFV marketplace

OFV PRESENTED AN EXCITING AND INNOVATIVE CHALLENGE. GIVEN THE BUDGET CONSTRAINTS, OUR AIM WAS TO DELIVER AS CLOSE TO AN 'OFF THE SHELF SOLUTION AS POSSIBLE' AND A MARKET READY SCALABLE PLATFORM INSIDE OF 6 MONTHS, USING AN AGILE DEVELOPMENT METHOD, SATISFYING INVESTORS AND STAKEHOLDERS. IT HAS AND IS A PLEASURE WORKING WITH A FORWARD-THINKING TEAM AND THE FUTURE HOLDS SOME EXCITING INNOVATIONS.

Ash Grennan | Lead Developer, Seriu

THE DETAIL

- A marketplace plugin was developed to handle different commission charges on vendor product sales and allow each product price to be submitted in the vendor's home currency with the base store currency price re-calculated daily against current exchange rates.
- A plugin was developed to import product feeds in json format from other web sites and keep accurate price and stock levels.
- A new curation queue screen was added to the administrator site to allow quick review and edit of products prior to being published, with reject / re-submit functionality.
- Shipping director plugin was used in combination with a new DHL shipping plugin to calculate shipping totals for multiple international consignments. Ability to create shipping labels and documentation and arrangement of carrier pickup from the vendor store/warehouse.
- The site is deployed on Azure with additional optimisations for storing images in blob and delivering over CDN.

Seriu developed a separate 'area' within nopCommerce to act as a boutique 'portal' for 'vendors'. This mobile responsive area includes a wizard flow to capture the mandatory information for each product type. It also includes an image library and order processing queue.

A plugin was developed to send product photos taken in store to pixelz.com for post-production.

- A plugin was developed to interface with Affilient and attribute sales to referral traffic.
- A plugin was developed to address validation to forms via the pcapredict.com service.



Colin Saunders, CEO of Open for Vintage

THE RESULTS

Not only has OFV grown from 2 to 65 boutiques in just one year, with a global reach across 12 different markets, they have been recognised on the Startups 100 Index of top new UK based businesses and they have successfully raised their second round of investment, currently valuing the company at ~£4m.

Seriu are now starting phase three of development. OFV have a scalable and fully managed and serviced platform upon which to grow a successful international marketplace.

Seriu and OFV's partnership is a success and an integral part of the solution. They look forward to scaling up the platform as OFV continue to grow.

WE ASKED SERIU TO DELIVER OUR MARKETPLACE PLATFORM. FROM THE OUTSET WE REALISED THAT WE HAD ENGAGED A TECHNICAL PARTNER WHO WAS BOTH COMMERCIAL Minded AND CRITICAL THINKING. THEIR APPROACH ENSURED THAT KEY BUSINESS REQUIREMENTS WERE QUICKLY IDENTIFIED AND A STRATEGIC ROADMAP DEVELOPED THAT RESULTED IN THE TIMELY AND COST EFFECTIVE DELIVERY OF OUR MARKETPLACE.

SERIU HAVE PROVEN TO BE A STRATEGIC PARTNER TO OPEN FOR VINTAGE, AND WE WOULD HIGHLY RECOMMEND THEM.

Colin Saunders | CEO, Open for Vintage

