

# Delivering first-class support for European SMBs with Sendcloud



Bas Smeulders got his first taste of entrepreneurship as a teenager packing up and shipping products for his own ecommerce store. It was during this early experience that the budding entrepreneur quickly learned one of the most vexing paradoxes of scaling a business: fast growth can be both a blessing and a bit of a curse.

More customers meant more complex shipping and fulfillment logistics, which left the company scrambling to keep up. It was a definitive “a-ha!” moment for Smeulders, which led him to later co-found Sendcloud, a software-as-a-service company that helps online retailers optimize their shipping processes.

“It literally only took us four weeks to stand up an MVP. We were small, curious, and just decided to go for it. We had no idea it would get so big, so fast,” Smeulders said.

By streamlining the labor-intensive order and delivery processes, Sendcloud allows its customers to focus on growth rather than operations.

“Shipping is a very painful process. It’s costly, it’s time-consuming, and it adds a considerable amount of customer service work,” Smeulders said.

“Sendcloud makes life easier for companies by automating the whole shipping process—from



## AGENT COUNT

21

## CUSTOMER SINCE

2014

## TICKETS SOLVED/MO

18K

## CSAT

92%

## PRODUCTS USED



chat



explore



guide



support



talk



creating shipping labels and offering a dynamic checkout, to taking the friction out of the delivery and return of packages. We do the heavy lifting with shipping so retailers can spend more time on sales, marketing, and delighting their customers.”

Sendcloud makes shipping painless with a powerful selection of more than 25 plug-and-play tools—including integrations and APIs—for e-commerce businesses that can be added in just minutes. Retailers use Sendcloud to connect their online shops to the most popular shipping international carriers and optimize the checkout experience by offering customers multiple delivery options. Sendcloud then helps its customers create workflows for everything from printing picking lists, shipping labels, and barcode support to custom-branded track and trace emails. And in the event that an item needs to be returned, Sendcloud offers retailers a branded portal where customers can create and manage their own return labels for a fast, easy, self-service experience.

## Keeping up with hockey-stick growth

Sendcloud quickly caught on with small-to-mid-size retailers and has rapidly expanded since it was founded in 2012. Today, more than 15,000 online stores in Europe use the service every day. It supports retail customers in seven countries including France, Germany, Spain, and the Netherlands.

Sendcloud grew so quickly in part to its obsession with delivering exceptional service and going the extra mile when it comes to solving customer problems. One of its first decisions to lay this groundwork for high-quality customer support came early on, where it abandoned a shared inbox solution for managing incoming requests and adopted a free three-seat instance of Zendesk Support.

“Zendesk was great for a small business like us, because it let us pay as we grew, so we could grow into the services we needed,” Smeulders said. “You can start free, go to the starter-tier, and then later to the professional tier, and then who knows, maybe one day the full enterprise suite. Over the past five years Zendesk has always been there to adapt and work with our team as our needs changed.”

## Scaling with a coherent, centralized approach

Since getting started, Sendcloud has gone on to add a host of additional service and support tools from Zendesk, including Guide, Chat, Talk, and Explore. It has been able to adopt these solutions to replace legacy systems like Intercom and a local VoIP supplier so it could offer unified, omnichannel support.

This omnichannel approach to customer service has redefined the support team’s role within Sendcloud to

Customer Success, helping it scale by offering customers self-service options while providing proactive and timely support across channels.

“One of the things we’ve learned as we’ve scaled our company, and that we often share with other start-ups, is the importance of providing solutions for smaller customers who require great self-service support,” Smeulders said. “Knowledge bases like Zendesk Guide help us take care of our growing customers without getting lost in the weeds answering the same questions again and again. This focus also allows us to constantly innovate with high-value solutions for bigger problems facing customers of all sizes.”

One of the innovative ways Sendcloud has moved toward increasingly proactive support is by using Zendesk to help its customers connect directly with global shipping services, including UPS, DHL, DPD, and GLS via linked tickets. “We use Zendesk to pass qualified shipment-related questions directly to the right carrier in order to provide our users the fastest reply possible, as often their own customers are also waiting for an answer,” Smeulders said. “This dramatically improves our response time, because we don’t need to act as middlemen in the process. This

means customers get better service at low effort and they get it faster, while our logistic partners only receive well-prepared questions.”

By helping reduce the friction with high-touch customer-facing transactions like tracking packages, Zendesk allows Sendcloud to focus on creating a collaborative environment between internal teams, and building more functionality to better serve customers. The Zendesk app store has been one resource the company has used to fine tune the experience, with integrations for popular apps like JIRA, Trustpilot, and TypeGenie.

“The JIRA app for Zendesk lets us easily report bugs that come up frequently, and quickly escalate them to the right people,” Smeulders said. “We can quickly add people from the product or UX teams to tickets and chat to quickly understand and resolve problems. The internal teams love it. The collaboration between our global offices has gotten better because of the range of information everyone has at their fingertips.”

As a result, customer support is considered a critical part of the broader customer success organization.

“We’re using tools like Zendesk to help transform the entire Sendcloud organization into a commercial





thinking team,” said Jeff Perales, head of customer success at Sendcloud. “As a SaaS company, one of our most important measures is whether our customers are using the service, and the support team is on the front lines of that effort. Zendesk creates an ecosystem where support is talking to sales, who is talking to product, who is talking to UX. We’re all here working together to help our customers succeed.”

This obsession over customers and commitment to constantly improving its service has helped the company grow faster and larger than its founders ever imagined, and it’s currently refining its services for upmarket and enterprise customers. In this case, for Sendcloud, the good news actually is the good news.

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“Zendesk is great for small and growing businesses because you can pay as you grow into their services. It’s always a good value for money and very easy to use. The app store is constantly growing as well, so every few months I can spend a few hours browsing the new additions and finding new ways to make life better for our support agents and customers.”

– Bas Smeulders

Cofounder and COO at Sendcloud