

Accent Group and Virtual Shopping: “Would you like a virtual fit?”

Assisting online shoppers through lockdown and beyond.



Who is Accent Group?

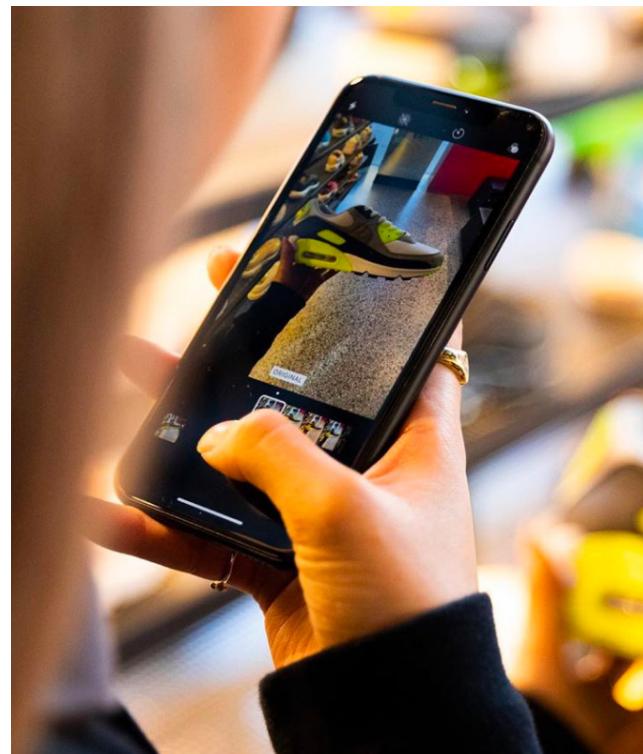
Accent Group is Australia's largest retailer and distributor of performance and lifestyle footwear with over 500+ stores including Skechers, Hype DC, Platypus, and The Athlete's Foot.

The Athlete's Foot alone operates over 130 stores across Australia and New Zealand, while Hype DC carries the exclusive and limited edition footwear sneakerheads line up for every week, whether in-store or online. Other brands operated by Accent Group in the region include Vans, Timberland, Merrell, CAT, Dr. Martens, Sperry, and Saucony, delivering a unique presence across the retail sector and ensuring a diverse range of products for all customers.

Challenge.

At the height of the COVID-19 lockdown in 2020 when all of its locations were closed, Accent Group had to figure out a way to encourage shoppers to keep shopping while also keeping their employees active and on the payroll. In late 2021 and early 2022, Australia saw another peak in COVID-19 cases, meaning solving these problems is still as relevant to Accent Group now as it was then.

To ensure continuity in the availability of service for shoppers, Accent Group ramped up its online operations during the first lockdown, using certain locations as “dark” stores to fulfill online orders for its 18 ecommerce sites. They also implemented Virtual Shopping by Klarna, which enables online shoppers to Message and Video Chat with employees.

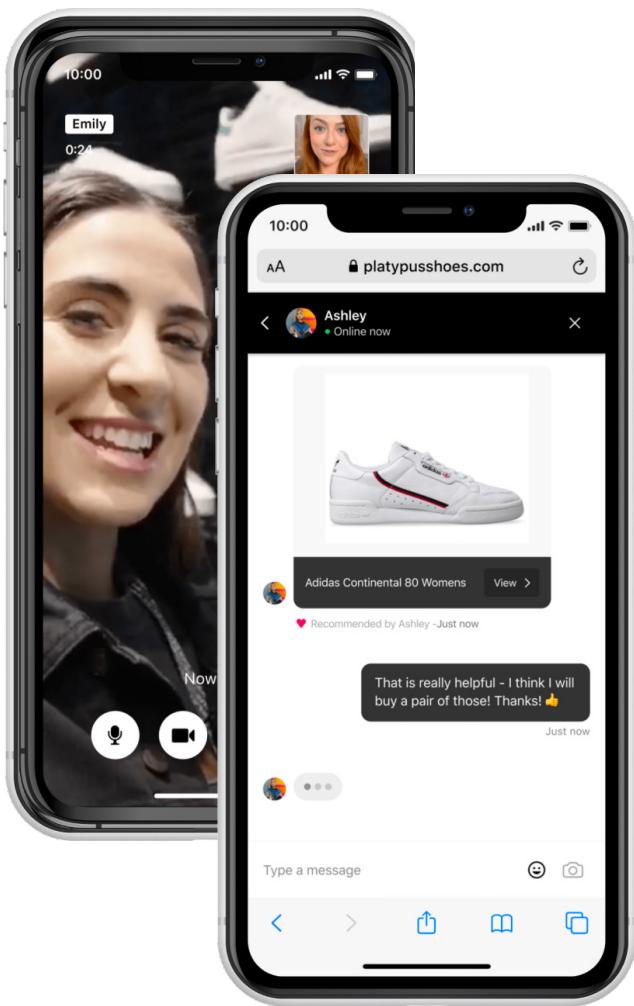


Solution.

Implementing Virtual Shopping also meant Accent Group was able to keep staff on payroll by moving store teams online, extending working hours to coincide with when online customers are most active.

Through Messaging and Video Chat, product experts help customers find the exact silhouette they’re looking for, answering questions about colorway, size, and fit along the way. “We started asking customers, ‘would you like a virtual fit?’ and almost every time the answer was ‘yes,’” says Kasie Heathcote, the General Manager for Digital at Accent Group.

Contacts by Virtual Shopping also enables store associates to add customers to their contacts list, keeping the conversation going via text and email long after the first transaction. Accent Group leverages this feature to update shoppers on new drops, restock information, and answer any future questions.

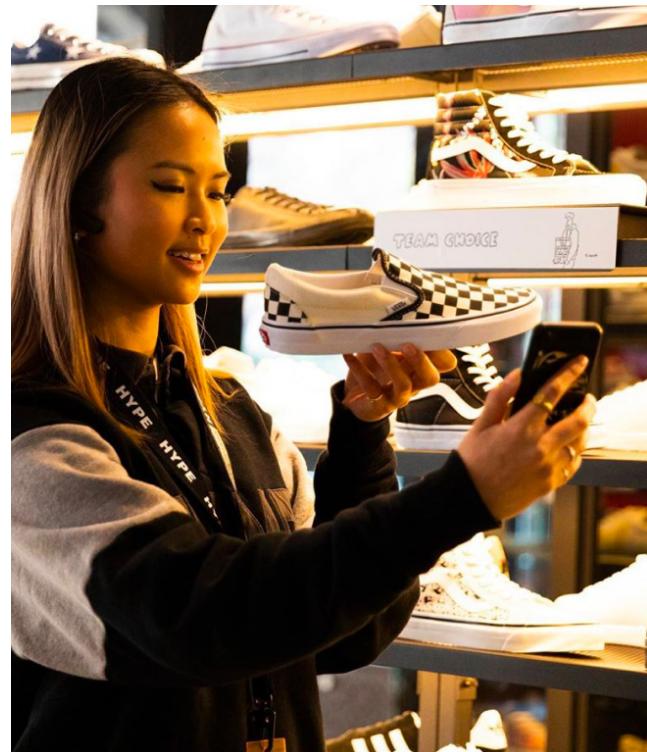


Result.

With Virtual Shopping, store teams across Accent Group's portfolio are bringing this experience and their product expertise from the showroom floor into the homes of online shoppers for the first time.

Taken together, the power of virtual shopping is delivering remarkable results. Online sales through Virtual Shopping have seen 5x the level of conversion compared to online sales without Virtual Shopping, with an average order value increase of 20%.

Expanding digital and making virtual shopping part of its everyday operations, Accent Group's online sales went from \$250k a day in early March 2020 to as much as \$1.1 million a day during the last two weeks of April with a peak of \$2 million during Click Frenzy.



150%

increase in online sales from April to June 2020

20%

increase in AOV

\$1.1M

daily sales

"With Virtual Shopping we were able to keep our team employed and working, while fulfilling online orders."

**Kasie Heathcote, GM Digital,
Accent Group**