

# Otto Group Reduces System Complexity with Splunk Business Flow

## otto group

### Executive summary

Founded in 1949, the Otto Group (Otto) is a worldwide retail and services group composed of over 120 companies in more than 20 countries, with more than 53,000 employees worldwide. OTTO, as part of the Otto Group, is the biggest online retailer for fashion and lifestyle products in Germany and Germany's second-largest web retailer. Otto Group needed a process mining tool to gain end-to-end visibility into business processes.

Since deploying Splunk Business Flow, the company has seen benefits including:

- More in-depth exploration of business processes
- Real-time end-to-end visibility of all systems
- Improved conversion rates of high-volume e-commerce processes

### Why Splunk

Otto Group initially deployed Splunk Enterprise in OTTO's backend IT a decade ago to achieve a consolidated approach to infrastructure monitoring across its critical business systems, including the CRM call center application and central processing system. The central processing system runs on a complex but distributed infrastructure and processes all the customer, product and order information collected from OTTO's 20 German call centers and its web stores.

As their Splunk deployment evolved, Andre Pietsch, a product manager with Otto Group, needed a process mining tool to understand and explore his customers' digital experience without the manual effort of recreating dashboards. Splunk Business Flow offered Pietsch end-to-end visibility of the customer experience because the central processing system automatically correlates data from multiple business systems.

"We were faced with the challenge that all this information is in totally different formats, so we had to introduce several techniques that cost a lot of compute time and resources to make all of this information usable," Pietsch said. "To have the right visualization and the right tool to connect all the dots was something we really struggled with."

As a strategic Splunk customer, Otto Group was an early design partner for Splunk Business Flow, providing active feedback to the development team.

### Industry

- Retail

### Splunk Use Cases

- Process mining
- Business analytics
- IT Operations (management)

### Challenges

- Processes lacked real-time visibility
- Inability to customize insights using interactive visualizations
- Siloed systems made it difficult to correlate technical and commercial data

### Business Impact

- Deep drill-downs to investigate root causes of problems
- End-to-end visibility of business processes
- Interactive visualizations of business flow with customized insights

### Data Sources

- Application logs from relation center
- Application logs from 50 different backend applications
- Application logs from serverless applications in the public cloud
- WAF logs from the web store

### Splunk Products

- Splunk Business Flow
- Splunk Enterprise

## In-depth exploration leads to less complexity

Prior to deploying Splunk Business Flow, Otto Group had no easy way to automatically correlate data from a variety of siloed systems. Pietsch said the IT infrastructure had evolved significantly over past decades, with processes and features being continually added. “The first thing we found was that our internal systems are way more complicated than we ever had imagined,” he said.

Splunk Business Flow enabled Otto Group to use dynamic event stitching to link disparate data sources and gain actionable insights. “With Business Flow,” Pietsch said, “it’s the first time that we can have a look into the living system. It’s like you’re using an X-Ray machine into your software.”

He said that the ability to identify and understand how the processes work together based on actual data meant Pietsch could quickly detect and fix anomalies. “Business Flow can help us find out where we are losing time. And losing time often means losing money.”

The added advantage, according to Pietsch, is an improved customer experience. Simplifying the system reduced the time needed to complete the various processes from initial customer interaction to order fulfillment.

## Insights into greenfield projects, software development

Pietsch said that Splunk Business Flow has reaped additional benefits. Process mining has helped Otto Group monitor the status of new systems

---

**“I was at a conference recently and someone said, ‘The most expensive thing that we have in our company is complexity,’ and with Business Flow, we can see the complexity in our systems and can reduce it.”**

**Andre Pietsch, Product Manager**  
Otto Group

---

**“We got together with the right people at Splunk to achieve things that we haven’t seen before in any of the other tools out there.”**

**Andre Pietsch, Product Manager**  
Otto Group

---

when integrating into established systems, to prevent problems. At the software development stage, Business Flow is critical in ensuring correct implementation within set parameters and specifications, especially when using external developer resources.

Pietsch explained, “The Process Manager creates a process on a board, gives it to the developer, and then they can get together and ask if the process that has been developed matches the thing that has been designed, why it doesn’t match, and where the problems are.”

## Reduced costs, better customer service

In the future, Splunk Business Flow will be used to evaluate flows and identify insights into processes involving the customer relations center. Using the interactive visualization features, Otto Group will be able to carry out an in-depth exploration into reasons for calls to the customer relations center. Otto Group can then measure and mitigate the costs. Faster troubleshooting and problem resolution across the whole process will reduce call center costs and improve customer satisfaction.

---

**“We can follow anything with Business Flow, not only from a technical point of view. For the first time, business people can analyze the business payload in between the technical information.”**

**Andre Pietsch, Product Manager**  
Otto Group

Download Splunk for free or get started with the free cloud trial. Whether cloud, on-premises, or for large or small teams, Splunk has a deployment model that will fit your needs.



Learn more: [www.splunk.com/asksales](http://www.splunk.com/asksales)

[www.splunk.com](http://www.splunk.com)