

# Citizen Watch Company, Ltd.

## Citizen Watch Taps Timely Customer Insights to Rapidly Accelerate Ecommerce Growth

### Opportunity

Citizen, a pioneer in watchmaking and innovative technology, was founded in 1918 on the principle of creating watches for all citizens of the world. For over 100 years the company has stayed true to this mission, promoting excellence and creativity with a deep-rooted respect for craftsmanship. Citizen is one of the most vertically integrated manufacturers in the world, making most components in-house in Japan. While the company has a sophisticated mass production manufacturing line, some higher-end models are still assembled by hand by a single watchmaker.

Traditionally a wholesaler, in recent years Citizen has transformed its sales strategy, making its products available direct to the consumer via ecommerce. To support this shift, in 2017 Citizen hired Barbara Garces as Chief Digital Officer, a role created to help take the brand's digital retail efforts to the next level while also minimizing disruption to its traditional retailers.

But then came 2020. When the COVID-19 pandemic took hold, it unexpectedly added momentum to the organization's embrace of direct-to-consumer retailing. What the ecommerce team needed now was reliable customer experience insights. Specifically, Citizen required the ability to aggregate feedback, analyze it, and apply the insights to accelerate its direct-to-consumer business and make improvements for the benefit of all stakeholders.

### Solution

Citizen Watch deployed the Verint® Digital Experience™ solution to capture customer-initiated feedback via web and mobile channels throughout the digital customer journey, empowering the organization to make smarter, faster business decisions. By capturing rich context with each experience submission and combining it with advanced analytics and text mining, the solution helped facilitate timely, targeted, and decisive action.

Using the Verint solution, the small but mighty Citizen Watch team now receives alerts regarding negative feedback or lower scores and a daily digest to monitor for trends and identify opportunities to reduce friction points for their consumers. Plus, on a quarterly basis, the team reviews customer feedback from in-store interactions.

# VERINT®

## Customer Success Story



### Solution

Verint® Digital Experience™



### Industry

Retail



### Region

North America

## Results

- Through a focus on the digital customer experience, Citizen was well positioned to respond to the COVID-19 crisis, realizing a huge lift in ecommerce conversions and an increase in new customers.
- Using customer insights to identify opportunities, the company was able to drive the development of new digital interactive experiences—including the Watch Finder and My Citizen app—to make the Citizen brand more accessible to consumers.

“ We realized the shifts we had made to be more digital and more consumer-focused were working, as our ecommerce channel was the only channel able to grow during the COVID pandemic shut down. ”

– Barbara Garces, Chief Digital Officer, Citizen Watch

## Benefits

The insights have enabled Citizen Watch to gain a greater understanding of the customer experience and make improvements. “With actual feedback from consumers, we saw that many people didn’t understand our terminology—the difference between a sapphire crystal and a mineral crystal, for example,” explains Garces. “We recognized that we needed to address a whole universe of customers—some who are experts and some are first-time buyers. We needed our customer communications to work to make Citizen a more accessible brand.”

Garces continues, “We socialized the information gained across the organization, then enlisted key stakeholders to drive change. We brought Marketing and others together to make sure we were developing the right content and deploying it the right way, including to our retail partners.”

## New Digital Tools for Customers

For both its Citizen and Bulova brands, the company created a digital tool called Watch Finder. Designed to provide an interactive and personalized experience, customers interact with Watch Finder by answering questions about their style, then they receive a curated selection of watches with features and functionality geared to their needs and preferences. This was also rolled out on iPads at physical stores to support Citizen’s wholesale retail partners.

As a result of consumer feedback, Citizen Watch also launched its My Citizen app to alleviate friction points in its watch registration process. Previously, consumers would struggle to view the small numbers on the back of the watch and were unable to complete the product registration process. The app can recognize digits and then automatically register the watch for warranty protection. As a result, Citizen saw a large increase in product registration, which will help the company drive continued customer engagement and future loyalty and advocacy efforts. This also enabled Citizen to ditch its old, clunky product booklets—along with the associated production expenses.

By focusing on the digital customer experience, Citizen was well positioned to not only respond to the COVID-19 crisis, but to find opportunity in the unexpected environment. While it initially saw website traffic decrease, the retailer eventually realized a huge lift in conversions, amounting to consistent triple-digit year-over-year gains in its ecommerce business, as well as an increase in new customers.

“We realized the shifts we had made to be more digital and more consumer-focused were working, as our ecommerce channel was the only channel able to grow during the COVID pandemic shut down,” Garces concludes.



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