A full-page background image of Dougie Lampkin, a professional motorcycle rider. He is wearing a red and black patterned jersey, a dark cap with the Red Bull logo, and is sitting on a red motorcycle. The background shows a city street with buildings and a yellow bus.

Exceptional control – powered by SAP Business One

Dougie Lampkin (ENG), twelve times FIM Trial World Champion

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Off>Road>Action

Industry

Distribution

Products and Services

Accessories and apparel for trial bikers

Web Sitewww.offroadaction.net**SAP® Solutions**

SAP Business One

PartnerVigor (www.vigor.be)

As a passionate trial rider, Jan Cardinaels found a niche in the market back in 2006: the distribution of accessories and apparel for trial aficionados. The world of trial was clearly waiting for his initiative. Within just a few years, Off>Road>Action became a global market leader. One of the keys to its success? A powerful, easy-to-use web shop that is fully integrated into **SAP Business One**. “If we’d had this platform from the outset, we would have grown faster still,” says Cardinaels.



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From start-up to outright market leader

The story of Off>Road>Action begins in 2006, in a place where many start-up companies take root: a small home office in Belgium. As a passionate trial rider, Jan Cardinaels knows how hard it is for trial lovers to find good accessories and apparel. So he decides to fill this niche. He sets up a business that offers a mix of well-known brands and own products. The initiative is an instant hit. The dealer network expands rapidly, around the globe.

“The big, international competitions is where our business really took off,” Cardinaels explains, “as that is where we meet with the distributors, listen to their needs and get in touch with new people. We sponsor a few riders who test our products during the competitions. Their feedback inspires us and helps us to constantly improve our products. For example, we design our helmets and apparel, together with Dougie Lampkin, the twelve-fold world champion. Our *Jitsie* brand has become synonymous with quality.”

That’s how, in just a few short years, Off>Road>Action became a market leader in accessories and apparel for trial riders. With 95% of the income turned over abroad, that market leadership position goes far beyond local borders: after the Middle East and the United States, Latin America too, has discovered Off>Road>Action. 80% of the company’s turnover is generated from own brands. Quite recently, Off>Road>Action has included trial bike products in its offering as well. That range further boosts growth, at a time when many other businesses are finding it hard to survive.



Dani Comas (ESP), nine times Biketrial World Champion

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Up-to-date overview of stock and trends



Jan Cardinaels in action

The business that Off>Road>Action is now is hardly comparable to that of the maiden years. Today, the company has 2,500 items in stock. The amount of orders catapulted from 250 in earlier years to 4,500 in 2013. In the space of just three years, the warehouse expanded from 300 to 2,000 m².

Cardinaels: “In distribution, it all boils down to: is it immediately available from stock or not? If the economy is slowing down, companies often focus on their hot runners, keeping other items out of stock. Off>Road>Action always has all items in stock, even low-ticket accessories. Customers with an ardent passion, like trial riders, consider this a distinct advantage.”

“Offering that permanent service requires a smooth, well-oiled organization, a reliable overview of trends and an accurate view on your inventory,” Cardinaels continues. The IT package that he had been using since the early days, however, could no longer provide this insight. Just like the custom-built web shop, it had reached its limits in 2011. “IT should never hamper your growth. As you expand and the cash flow increases, you want to add new features and technology to your IT platform.” Off>Road>Action had to search for an alternative to its existing IT systems.



“To be a successful distributor, you need a smooth, well-oiled organization, a reliable overview of trends and an accurate view on your inventory.”



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SAP and Vigor: a valuable tandem

“Our IT system is really vital to our business, so we chose SAP. It provides our company with economic value too,” says Cardinaels. “While selecting the most appropriate solution, we met with different SAP business partners. The reseller Vigor was the only one with a powerful web shop that is fully integrated into SAP. Their approach and drive won us over. Vigor understands our challenges and knows that each second the IT system is unavailable, we’re losing money.”

While Vigor took excellent care of the transition to the new ERP system, the project did require some major efforts from Off>Road>Action too. The company had to, for example, ensure a clean, consistent set of master data - an exercise that postponed the implementation by four to five months. “The quality of the output is directly proportional to that of the input,” Cardinaels points out. “Of course, it is no fun checking 120,000 fields in Excel, but it was a must.” Once all the master data was managed, things went fast. After a thorough two-month testing period, SAP and the web shop both went live on 1 July 2012.

“Whatever we or our customers ask, Vigor responds and solves the issue. We no longer have to bother them, though, with every single question. In the meantime, we’ve easily found our way in SAP. We have become big fans of Richard Duffy; if you’re stuck in a process, his educational YouTube movies will help you out.”



“The quality of the output is directly proportional to that of the input. Of course, it is no fun checking 120,000 fields in Excel, but it was a must.”



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Web shop fires export sales

Off>Road>Action customers are dealers from around the globe. According to Jan Cardinaels, the worldwide success is largely attributable to the new web shop. Over 85% of the orders come via Vigor's SafeOnline platform. In the longer term, that amount should rise to a full 100%. The web shop is simply vital to continued growth.

"The investment in SafeOnline pays for itself, as the web shop largely takes over the work of a sales rep. All dealers find product manuals and videos on our web site. They can order quickly and easily and, thanks to the integration with SAP, the inventory status is always up to date. I'm confident that the ease-of-use of the shop has spurred the number of transactions and the quantities ordered. SAP Business One keeps pace with the growth and ensures correct logistic handling."



"With just three clicks you get a view on sales results, trends, margins, key customers, open orders, issues or business opportunities. We can, therefore, quickly take well-informed decisions."

"The possibilities of SAP Business One are numerous. When a sales rep visits a customer, he can easily check if an item is in stock or what the order status is, on his iPad or iPhone. In the near future, we will also incorporate a barcode system in the warehouse for automatic data entry in SAP. The system is a smart investment now that the amount of stock movements has exploded. With our previous SME-sized package, it would never have been possible - or very risky - to add such new features," says Cardinaels.

SAP also helps Off>Road>Action cut knots: "SAP Business One gives a clear, real-time overview of what is happening in the company. With just three clicks you get a view on sales results, trends, margins, key customers, open orders, issues or business opportunities. We can, therefore, quickly take well-informed decisions."



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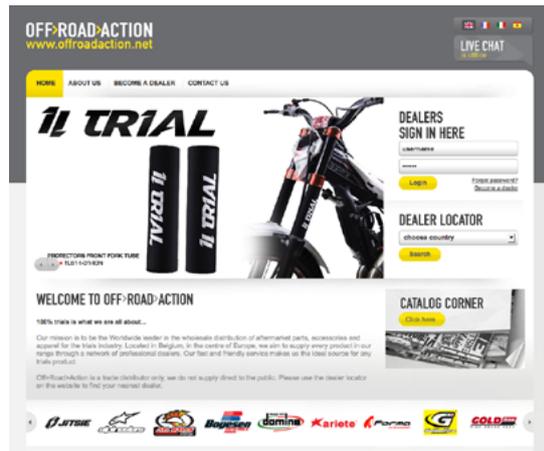
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Correct orders, prompt payments



Before the SAP project kicked off, the Off>Road>Action team was fairly skeptical. Their resistance soon crumbled. SAP Business One has not been down for even half an hour since its go-live. The percentage of correctly delivered orders has risen and customers keep paying more quickly. Cardinaels: “If I’d known in 2006 what I know now, we would have purchased the integrated platform right from the outset. It would have helped us grow even faster.”

“To an outsider, trial riding seems like a high-risk adventure,” he concludes. “But it isn’t. An experienced trial rider knows his machine, has carefully studied his route and always pushes back borders with a minimum of risk. The same goes for Off>Road>Action: with Business One and SafeOnline under the bonnet we are making the most of ourselves, in a controlled way.”



“The percentage of correctly delivered orders has risen and customers keep paying more quickly.”