

## Interview with Nicolaus Gedat about nmedia.hub and the future of digital commerce

**Frankfurt am Main, December 2022. The order and content platform nmedia.hub has played a significant role in shaping digital retail since 2019. Through a close exchange with brands and retailers, Nicolaus Gedat's team has developed target-group-specific tools that position retail for the future. We spoke with the nmedia founder and captured his view of the future.**



Nicolaus Gedat Managing Director nmedia GmbH.

*1. Mr Gedat, you founded nmedia GmbH more than 20 years ago. What were your goals back then?*

I founded nmedia between 1998 and 2000, when the internet was just emerging and I was working in London for a large trade fair organiser. My goal then, as now, was to simplify communication and processes between suppliers and traders through new media and the use of all new technologies.

*2. In 2019, the nmedia concept was expanded to include the order and content platform Nextrade, now nmedia.hub. Together with Messe Frankfurt and the EKservicegroup, you have thus broken new ground in the direction of digitalisation in retail. What was the response from brands and retailers?*

I saw the further development of the nmedia EDI Clearing Center as a logical step and the market proved me right. Within a very short time, we had more than 400 brands and over 15,000 traders from all over the world in the platform. The partners who actively use our platform and really want to change their processes are very successful with it. However, we have also found that new digital processes are not adopted 'overnight' by all brands

and retailers in the home and living industry. However, we have seen that since the middle of this year, the willingness for new digital processes has increased significantly. Especially on the topic of e-commerce content.

*3. Today, nmedia.hub has a customer base of 400 brands and 15,000 retailers. Is there still room for improvement?*

Our goal is to further sharpen our profile as a brand and service provider and to differentiate ourselves from the competition. Of the relevant top 500 brands in the industry, we are still missing one or two, so yes, we still have room for improvement. However, our retailers will already be able to use some new brands at Ambiente from 3 to 7 February 2023 in Frankfurt am Main. For example, Alfi, Dibbern and Rosenthal. And we are currently working very closely with top retailers in the sector, such as Kustermann and Schäffer, and are jointly improving our services and their application. And new brand projects result from this cooperation. In my opinion, that's exactly how it should be. We at nmedia develop our business and the industry together with retailers and brands.

*4. And what about internationality? How international is the order and content platform and what development opportunities does nmedia see here?*

The number of international brands and retailers continues to grow. We see this especially with our dropshipping brands. Here, it's mostly merchants from Europe who, due to their business model, no longer think in terms of countries, but in terms of customer services. With our platform languages German, English and French, we can already reach many partners. The content is already available in many other languages. Other platform languages will certainly follow in 2023. Thus, we have no country and language boundaries in our concept and can continue to grow here.

*5. Recently, digital wholesalers like Orderchamp and Faire have made quite a splash in the market - what can nmedia.hub do better and why should retailers in particular take the time to use nmedia services?*

First of all, it must be made clear: We are not a wholesaler and clearly distinguish ourselves with our business model and our brand partners from the Home & Living sector. The TOP brands such as WMF, Zwilling, Leonardo, Zwiesel Glas and many other brands can only be found with us.

In addition to the possibility of digital orders in the supplier shops, nmedia offers many other services that make selling and buying the assortments much easier. This simplification of processes will become increasingly important in the future. These include, for example, our standardised content data and the digital exchange of documents in dropshipping. For our retailers, a strong online business is very important. But an online shop does not automatically mean a successful business and sufficient visibility. It becomes important to participate in places where many people shop online. These are the well-known B2C marketplaces with Amazon and Otto Markets at the top, for which we provide our own interfaces.

What sets us apart in our daily cooperation is that at nmedia the often complicated technical connection is simply made via known interfaces. If individual adjustments are necessary, our experts can help quickly. Other providers do not offer this special

implementation and project support. Moreover, the project does not end with the 'go live' and a close partnership is very important for any problems that arise.

We see ourselves as a comprehensive partner to our brands and retailers for their digital business processes, whether it's orders, content data, dropshipping or the digitalisation of a showroom. And if new requirements arise, we will look for a simple solution as quickly as possible.

*6. Are trade fairs still in keeping with the times when retailers and brands can be in touch 365 days a year via nmedia.hub? With your showrooms and brand shops you also create a digital shopping experience.*

Trade fairs are and remain the place for personal conversations, direct experience of brands and products. With nmedia, we extend the trade fair experience. Many brands do not have a separate showroom. The trade fair stand takes over this task. With our digital showroom, which we create at the trade fair stand, it can be used as a showroom 365 days a year. This makes it easier for our brands to participate in the trade fair, as investments once made can be used for longer.

*7. They say trade fairs are still very important for the industry. According to Messe Frankfurt, the most important consumer goods event of the year will take place in Frankfurt at the beginning of February - Ambiente, Christmasworld and Creativeworld will be held on one date and at one venue. How should retailers prepare for this event? And how can nmedia.hub support exhibitors and visitors before and after the event?*

Dealers have a limited time at the fair. In addition to getting to know new products and brands, they also order heavily. My recommendation to retailers is therefore: simplify your processes. Retailers should already set up their content reference for all the brands that are important to them in the nmedia.hub before the fair. Reorders for the top brands can also be prepared in advance via the EDI order interface. At the trade fair, brands that are still missing from the nmedia.hub can be addressed directly. In these talks, the brand can be asked, for example, to implement dropshipping ordering options for the online shop. In this way, we drive digital trade forward together. And should retailers not be able to place some orders at the trade fair, they can be placed afterwards without any problems via nmedia.hub. If contacts have been made with new brands, these business relationships should be established directly via nmedia.hub. We will be represented at Ambiente with two stands of our own in Hall 3.1 and Galleria 1. Interested brands and retailers can contact us there at any time and ask for advice.

*8. A lot has happened at nmedia and Nextrade this year. The relaunch in June and the new name in September. What's next for nmedia.hub 2023. What are you planning for the platform?*

In the future, we will align our services even better with the possibilities and requirements, especially of retailers, with many new additional services. Here we see, for example, a Shopify plug-in. In addition, we want to transfer more and more of our services from classic electronic data interchange (EDI) to the nmedia.hub. We will start with article data in the first quarter of 2023.

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**Background information on Messe Frankfurt**

The Messe Frankfurt Group is one of the world's leading trade fair, congress and event organisers with their own exhibition grounds. With a workforce of 2,200 people at its headquarters in Frankfurt am Main and in 28 subsidiaries, it organises events around the world. As in the previous year, annual sales for 2021 were significantly lower owing to the COVID-19 pandemic: approximately €154 million compared with Group sales as high as €736 million in pre-pandemic 2019. We serve our customers' business interests efficiently within the framework of our Fairs & Events, Locations and Services business fields. Sustainable business practices are a central pillar in our corporate strategy and strike a healthy balance between ecological and economic interests, social responsibility and diversity. Another of Messe Frankfurt's strengths is its powerful and closely knit global sales network, which covers around 180 countries in all regions of the world. Our comprehensive range of services – both onsite and online – ensures that customers worldwide enjoy consistently high quality and flexibility when planning, organising and running their events. We are using our digital expertise to develop new business models. The wide range of services includes renting exhibition grounds, trade fair construction and marketing, personnel and food services.

With its headquarters in Frankfurt am Main, the company is owned by the City of Frankfurt (60 percent) and the State of Hesse (40 percent).

For more information, please visit our website at: [www.messefrankfurt.com](http://www.messefrankfurt.com)