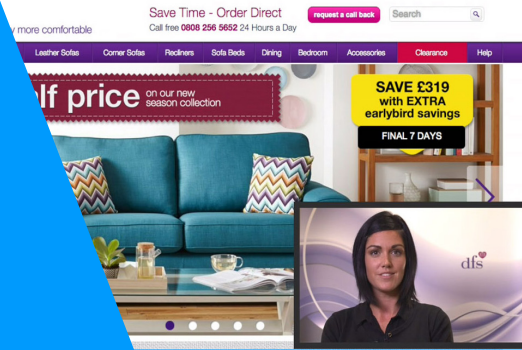


CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

# DFS Brings the In-Person Furniture Buying Experience Online



**Accelerating its digital business while keeping customers and sales agents happy**



**93%**  
Average CSAT Score (Video Chat)

**15%**  
Increase in AOV (Video Chat)

## About DFS

- Largest UK furniture manufacturer and retailer with 124 showrooms
- Passionate about making and selling high-quality sofas since 1969
- Headquartered in Doncaster, England
- [www.dfs.co.uk](http://www.dfs.co.uk)

## Goals

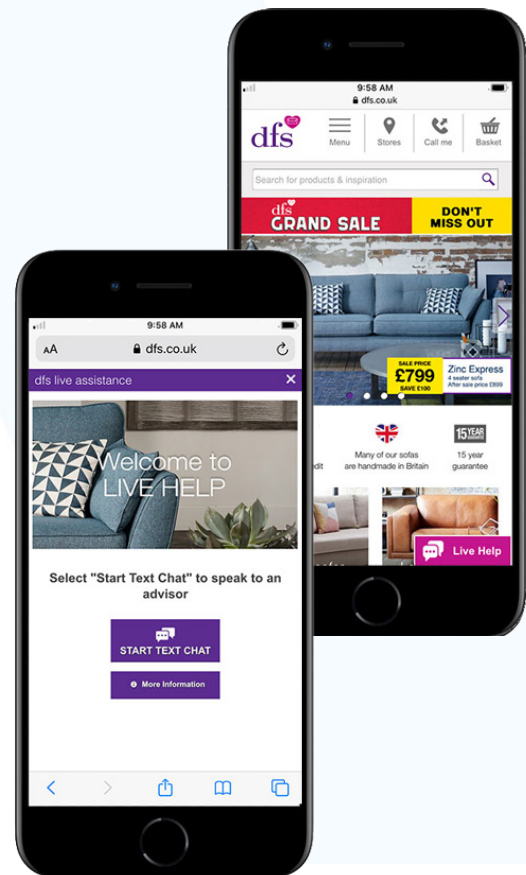
- Deliver the highest level of customer service
- Connect the in-store and online experience
- Provide greater flexibility for employees
- Offer an end-to-end omnichannel journey

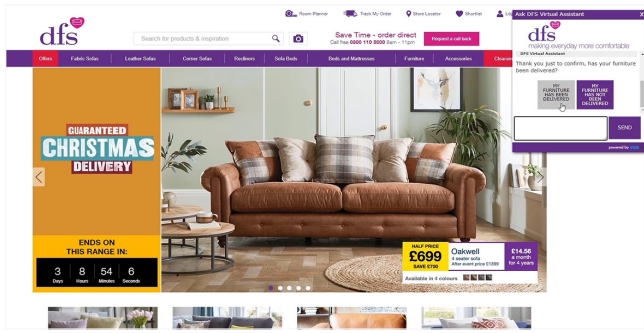


Leading UK furniture retailer DFS has been committed to delivering exceptional online customer service for years. Vee24's digital experience platform has been instrumental in enabling the DFS team to replicate the store experience online using video chat, text chat, and intelligent chatbots.

In 2020 the global pandemic interrupted business as usual. The DFS team faced the unprecedented challenge of operating a retail business with stores closed, staff working from home, and thousands of customers concerned about outstanding orders or wanting to purchase new products.

“We had plans to elevate the virtual buying experience to reflect changes in customer expectations,” explained Jamie Ostle, DFS Online Multi-Channel General Manager. “Covid accelerated this plan and created additional challenges – pivoting the business immediately, facilitating home-based working, and ensuring that customer service excellence remained a priority.”





## Enabling hybrid working for agents quickly

Once stores closed, DFS needed to get its service agents up and running quickly from home. With Vee24's browser-based platform, customer service agents were able to immediately access their consoles from home. Within hours of moving operations to a home-based model, the team was seamlessly supporting a four-fold increase in customer service calls. The flexible nature of the Vee24 platform ensured that new agents could be added and ready to answer calls in a matter of hours.

To provide greater flexibility to employees and attract new staff from a wider geographic area, DFS had considered hybrid working, splitting time between home and office-based working, before the pandemic. Store closures increased the urgency of this change and Vee24 was there to quickly help implement without missing a beat.

“The pandemic became the catalyst for our move towards hybrid-working – something we had been considering for some time to support the changing needs of our team. Without Vee24, the move to working from

home would have been problematic and time-consuming for our agents and worse a poor experience for thousands of our customers. An added benefit of hybrid working has been a reduction in sick days and lower attrition rates.” —Jamie Ostle

## Seamlessly connecting the virtual and in-store shopping experience

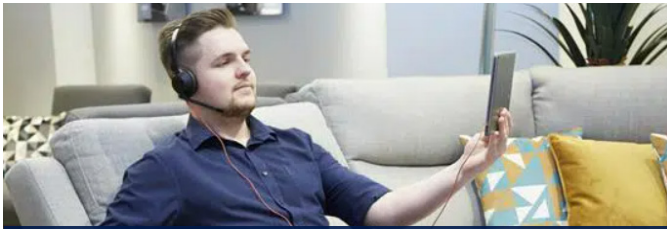
Furniture is a big purchase. Most consumers want to see the product close up and ask questions before buying; a challenge when all stores were closed. And, with the exponential growth in online buying, DFS needed to find a way to offer a person-to-person, visual shopping experience virtually.

Prior to the pandemic, DFS began a trial of its “Virtual Viewing” service. This innovative experience allows customers to find a product online and then be transferred to a sales agent in the store for a deeper, more personal consultation. The agent can show the product close up via video call, showcase complementary products on the showroom floor, and co-browse to more detailed product specs on the website.



“We can't stand still in retail – it's not an option to wait to see where customer trends are heading and then follow them. With the team at Vee24, we're always planning to be a step ahead of the customer, planning for the future and ready to greet them when they arrive”

JAMIE OSTLE, DFS ONLINE MULTI-CHANNEL GENERAL MANAGER



*"When stores were physically closed, customers valued the opportunity to see products on high-definition video, see fabrics close up, and even ask the salesperson to sit on sofas, try out footstools, and lie on beds. This face-to-face online service has translated into happy customers, increased sales, and a growing digital business," explained Jamie Ostle.*

Customer feedback during the pilot was so positive that DFS rolled out the service to more stores. The service allows online customers to connect directly to the in-store sales agent to view products or use Vee24's convenient online appointment scheduling tool to book a convenient time for a call-back and product viewing.

And, the sales agent loved the service too! Using hand-held devices with integrated cameras, sales agents continued to work in closed stores supporting and selling furniture to online shoppers during the pandemic. And, as stores open up, the DFS in-store team continues to support the virtual experience. Store staff sees the viewing request from the customer, immediately greet the customer with face-to-face video, answer questions, and offer a comprehensive, personalized consultation of furniture options. DFS is better at utilizing its in-store staff by allowing the in-store team to pick up product viewing requests on days when footfall in stores is low and convert these into sales.

## Increase in CSAT scores and AOV

Customers are delighted with the new service. CSAT scores following video consultations have been in excess of 90% while scores following text chat are 85% on average. Both these scores far exceed traditional phone service.

And, average order value (AOV) following video support has increased by 15% in relation to sales following text-based support.

## Delivering a seamless digital customer experience across channels

With an effective omnichannel sales and service strategy, DFS is connecting with customers any time, any place, and from any device. Researching furniture can start anywhere – online or in a store and customers often want to view a product more than once. Wherever the research started, the customer can hop on the website, find the product, seamlessly connect to a store video call and ask more questions, see the product up close and move through to a purchase.

DFS had a goal of locating a store within 50 miles of everyone in the country. Now by offering an immersive, convenient digital buying experience, DFS is offering a store in everyone's home.

Building on the success of the virtual showroom appointments, DFS plans to extend Vee24 video licenses to more stores and to extend the range of items that customers can view – another firm step towards becoming the leading sofa retailer for the

**To learn more about live engagement, [Contact Us](#)**

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