

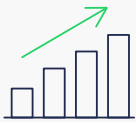


Delivering nutrition for dogs everyday



Butternut Box is a UK-based online retailer offering a subscription meal service for dog owners, delivering fresh, cooked food for dogs made with simple, healthy ingredients.

The brand offers six fresh meal recipes, three baked biscuit recipes, and three air-dried treat recipes, with tailored plans to suit each dog's dietary needs.



Growth

The company has grown substantially in recent years

The company has grown substantially in the last few years, receiving over £40m in venture capital and expanding to 500 staff across the UK, Netherlands, and Ireland. Using the Scurri platform, Butternut Box was able to widen its choice of fulfilment carrier, open up new markets at pace, and focus on delivering a first-rate customer experience. Instead of tying up resources on updating APIs, platform maintenance, and integrating with new carriers, the business can focus on satisfying its customers - and their pets!



£40m

Venture Capital Received

The Butternut Box story

Butternut Box was founded in 2016 by two friends, Kevin Glynn and David Nolan who started the company because they couldn't find fresh food for dogs. The food that did exist didn't look or smell that appetising. The friends came up with the concept and decided to test it out with friends and family who had dogs. The feedback was excellent.

ingredients, healthier choices, and personalised offerings for their dogs.



500 staff

Across UK, Netherlands, and Ireland

Fast forward to today and Butternut Box is well positioned to benefit from strong consumer demand for high quality

The Butternut Box platform uses algorithms to meet the individual needs of each pet by asking owners to complete a 90-second factfind, including details such as their dog's weight, age, breed, activity level, and allergies. The team then works out how many calories a dog needs and tailors a selection of meals, portioned into one pouch per day.



The Butternut Box team uses human-quality meat and vegetables to create simple meals with the right balance of vitamins and minerals for dogs of every age.

Next day delivery incredibly important





Butternut Box customers are looking for high quality food and the convenience of delivery straight

to their door. Customers can order through a website, an app, or through a customer call centre.

The product is unique in that it is cooked fresh and then frozen. Customers get their Butternut Box delivered every two, three, four or six weeks depending on their choice, and the size of their dog. Freezer space is also an important factor in how much is delivered at any one time.

Product delivery is an incredibly important part of the Butternut Box customer experience. As the products must be delivered frozen, there is an absolute need for delivery to be made the next day. This means that the company must work with the correct carrier who can match their customer needs. For the fulfilment team, the 'last mile' is very important and means that the team cannot use Royal Mail in the UK.

Key takeaways

<p>01</p>  <p>Delivery is a vital part of the Butternut Box customer experience.</p>	<p>02</p>  <p>Absolute need for delivery to be made the next day.</p>	<p>03</p>  <p>Last mile is very important and the company needs the right carriers.</p>
<p>04</p>  <p>International expansions meant having multiple carriers in each market.</p>	<p>05</p>  <p>To offer customers choice they needed to onboard far more carrier delivery options.</p>	<p>06</p>  <p>Significant challenges in selecting and integrating with local carriers in new markets.</p>
<p>07</p>  <p>Rolling out into new markets is now far easier by plugging into existing APIs.</p>	<p>08</p>  <p>Finding the right partner to solve these challenges was critical.</p>	<p>09</p>  <p>More choice and a better customer experience.</p>
<p>10</p>  <p>Working directly with multiple carriers and constantly maintaining connectivity was not scalable.</p>	<p>11</p>  <p>Using Scurri they are able to connect to new international and existing carriers easily.</p>	<p>12</p>  <p>Strategic decision to leave the connectivity to the experts and focus on the product offering.</p>



"Butternut Box is a very customer-centered business. Nothing is worse for our customers than not getting the box and food that they need for their dog. So getting that delivery right every single time is critical to our business. Hence why we have partnered with Scurri as we need to ensure that our customers get their dog's food when they need it, on time and in full."

Niall Paterson, Director of Engineering - Butternut Box

Launching in new markets

Focused on the UK market for the first few years of operation, up to 2020 Butternut Box was a single country, single carrier operation using DPD. However, the opening of new markets in Ireland and the Netherlands meant having local fulfilment centres and new carriers. The company faced the challenge of finding and connecting to carriers tailored to their specific business needs.

Niall Paterson, Director of Engineering takes up the story:

"To grow the business, it was natural that we would start looking at markets outside of the UK. There were challenges in terms of both selecting and integrating with local carriers in these new markets. Finding a partner who could solve this challenge was a critical part of our selection process. Working with Scurri meant that we found a provider who knew what would work to grow our business in international markets.

It was clear to us from day one that if we wanted to go down the road of having multiple carriers in each market, it would be easier to start with a better platform.

Instead of working directly with multiple carriers and having to constantly maintain or rebuild connectivity, we realised that this was not scalable. Indeed, we had been fortunate enough to have seen other companies attempt to launch in other markets and fail, so we learnt to do it right from day one." Paterson adds.

Going the extra mile

Many successful eCommerce businesses eventually reach a plateau of growth and competency. To offer a choice to their customers, they need to onboard a lot more carrier delivery options and ensure that the 'last mile' works. However, as Paterson points out, this means that the eCommerce brand must make a strategic choice: "Build and maintain connection with a series of carriers and use engineering team expertise to spend time managing this connectivity, or choose to leave the connectivity to the experts and focus on advancing the product offering."

With this frame of reference in mind, Paterson explains the selection of the Scurri platform:

"With our international expansion, Butternut Box needed to integrate into different carriers. This would have meant tying up lots of resource requirements in terms of both people and time to connect to new carriers.

First, there is the initial integration effort, the time to spin up each new carrier is significant, up to three months. Secondly, there are always nuances in each integration; the integration depends on the carrier themselves. Finally, there is the quality of their API and the ongoing maintenance in case of changes in specifications."

Butternut Box has 35 engineers working on the core tech and logistic stack and the work allocated to each of them is critical in terms of managing resources. The benefits of dealing with Scurri in the context of scarce and expensive



Top pain points and how we solved them



Managing labels for each carrier in separate portals

Scurri offers a single portal to use and apply labels for every carrier



Selecting and integrating with local carriers in new markets

Scurri offers fast and flexible connection to a network of global and local carriers



WISMO queries a big issue

Scurri reduce WISMO queries with order tracking through the full journey



Ensuring that customer support in last mile works

Scurri connects carrier and customer systems to ensure they work together



Constantly maintaining or rebuilding carrier connectivity

Scurri offers the ability to plug into existing APIs, maintaining all carrier integrations seamlessly.



Needed next day delivery at scale

Scurri's rules-based engine optimises carrier selection for each order

"We've got about 35 engineers, with about four or five working on the core logistics operation side. These are the engineers who own the Scurri integration. The Butternut Box engineers really enjoy working with the Scurri API and have found it super reliable and it's been a bedrock for us on the operations and software engineering side."

Niall Paterson, Director of Engineering - Butternut Box

resources is easily explained by Paterson:

"Rolling out into new markets from the operational side has been easier because we've been able to plug into existing APIs. We can roll out to more carriers quickly as we don't have to think about maintenance of APIs or anything like that. Using Scurri has allowed our engineers to focus on the more value-add side of the business. We simply could not do as good a job ourselves."

Operational ease

Scurri offers a single portal for the customer service team to use and apply

labels without having separate portals for every carrier such as DPD in the UK, PostNL in Holland, or An Post in Ireland. In terms of onboarding, Paterson explains that:

Everything was pretty smooth in terms of the onboarding - there was no real need to be too involved - it just worked.

Instead of constantly iterating on the kind of carriers Butternut Box would like to use, working with Scurri makes it easier for them to try something out



"The flexibility of being able to spin up carrier selection and operations using Scurri during our expansion to the Netherlands and Ireland relatively quickly was a huge bonus. It saved us lots of time, energy and headaches."

Niall Paterson, Director of Engineering - Butternut Box

quickly, see if it works, and then ramp up or roll it back. As Paterson describes it:

"Even the ability to choose to operate a new carrier next week in an existing market is very powerful. Using Scurri, we are able to connect to new international carriers easily, but it's just as quick to do it in an existing market. This makes it easier in terms of giving customers more options, more choice and a better customer experience without having to spend three months working through a new API."

Future plans

The future focus of Butternut Box will still be customer-centricity, "we will continue to push more convenience and choice for our customers. Recently, we

launched an on-demand extras box in case customers need to get more extras between their standard box delivery or just get treat products on their own." Paterson says.

The company has just launched an app to make it easier for customers to manage their account, make changes when needed, and make sure they're getting what they actually want.

Regardless of what the new customer propositions are, Butternut Box will still be using the same Scurri API integration with the likes of DPD, Yodel, PostNL and An Post. As Paterson says, "there is nothing worse for our customers than not getting the food that they need for their dog. So, getting that delivery right every single time is critical to our business. Scurri plays a large part in getting the customer delivery right first time and in full. We believe it is better to leave it to the experts."

"With Scurri, the absolute bonus for us was that it was so easy and smooth.

As Director of Engineering, my view would be that the engineering team would have to be bigger if we were integrating multiple carriers each time. As an added bonus, the Scurri support is helpful, timely, and always gets us sorted in terms of what we need."

Niall Paterson, Director of Engineering - Butternut Box

Talk to us today to learn how we can solve your business challenges.

