

# For SikSilk, smooth delivery is a key enabler of growth



**SikSilk is a youth-focused fashion brand that combines sports and streetwear styles. The company was founded in 2012 by three friends from Scarborough, North Yorkshire.**

With growth in each of the last ten years, it has expanded from a 'bedroom' brand to one that currently ships to over 180 countries. Part of this success is attributed to influencer marketing; collaborations with footballers Lionel Messi and Dani Alves, and DJ Steve Aoki, for example.



## Global

Ships to over 180 countries

We spoke to Dean Jackson, Head of Logistics, who joined in 2020 with a mission to improve and expand the company's logistics capability.

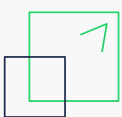


## Integrations

Multiple marketplaces

"We're very entrepreneurial, with quick decision making." Dean says. "So it's very easy to get things done. A really exciting place to work."

With a significant part of its business in Europe, SikSilk decided to locate its non-UK fulfilment operation in Helmond, in the Netherlands. The area, known as the 'blue banana,' is the logistic sweet spot of Europe. The company does all its eCommerce fulfilment for Europe and the rest of the world from there. It's also closer to SikSilk's largest wholesale customer Zalando, based just over the border in Germany. The UK delivery operation is run from Scarborough.



## Expansion

Opened logistics centre in the Netherlands for non-UK fulfilment

The company has numerous localised, country-specific websites, where it gets the bulk of its eCommerce orders. It also has integrations with various marketplaces, such as Amazon and eBay, and distribution through major retailers like JD Sports, House of Fraser, Next, Sports Direct, Asos, and Zalando.

Outside Europe, SikSilk has a dedicated following in Chile, so is looking to start fulfilment operations in South America in the near future. With an increasingly complex logistics process, the company faces a number of ongoing challenges. However, in the last two years it has made considerable progress.



"We used to have people constantly printing labels, and often had a backlog because our order processing speed was the speed we could print labels, not the speed we could pick and dispatch. Scurri removed that bottleneck, because it does the intelligence far quicker than a person can do it."

Dean Jackson, Head of Logistics. SikSilk



"When I joined, we didn't really have an IT team." Dean says. "We had limited warehouse systems. We were solely using Visualsoft, and shipping manually on various carrier systems. It required two or three people to manage that, with a particular skill set and spreadsheet knowledge, and it wasn't without issue." Dean admits.

## Enter Scurri

The decision to engage Scurri was part of a broader systems upgrade that saw SikSilk re-platform its web business, and implement a new warehouse management system. As a scaling business with new demands on the logistics process, there were a number of issues to fix. The tipping point was reached when it became clear that delivery bottlenecks had the potential to impact customer experience.

"The customer would get a text saying 'your order has been shipped' but we often hadn't picked it at the time, we'd printed the label and manually put it with the paper invoice." Dean says.

"Sometimes we wouldn't pick all the order, there could be a shortage, or it wouldn't get shipped on time. So using Scurri fixed that, it removed two full-time equivalents, and fully automated what those people did.

Using Scurri de-skilled something that I found to be a bit of a black art, we had someone sitting there all day manually printing shipping labels. Our orders looked like they'd been shipped the minute the label was printed out of our carrier systems when we did it manually."

This resulted in difficulties tracking the status of orders, and being able to spot next-day delivery requests, or other service requirements.

"So it had a status impact. Using Scurri to ship actually gives you the real-time status of a parcel, so you know if the label has been printed, if the parcel has been dispatched, and if it has been collected and manifested by the final mile carrier." Dean says.



### Ease of use

With no disruption



### Reporting & Intelligence

Helps to make decisions

## Dealing with disruption

As well as improving efficiencies in deliveries, the Scurri solution also provides 'rich eCommerce shipping data.'

As Dean Jackson puts it; "We are now doing all UK shipping through Scurri with little or no issue.

Not only do we use it for the functionality of getting parcels out the door, and getting all the tracking details into our other systems, we do use the reporting and the intelligence for other things in the business, to help us make decisions."



## Pain points and how we solved them



### Manually tracking order status and next-day delivery requests

The Scurri platform provides the label, the real-time status of each order, and last-mile delivery tracking.



### International deliveries impacted by Brexit causing disruption to carriers

With Scurri, SikSilk could react quickly by having the flexibility to easily switch carriers through a single platform.



### Integrating the delivery process and accessing data and intelligence

Quality and accuracy of shipping has improved with advanced reporting and a fully scalable process.

Brexit brought added complexity for retailers who ship into Europe. Like SikSilk, many had substantial issues in the aftermath of the UK's decision to leave the EU.

"When we were going through a bit of turmoil just after Brexit, we had certain carrier issues, DPD stopped road services into Europe, we could react really quickly with Scurri. It was a real enabler, and we could work around those issues." Dean adds.

"When dealing with disruption to a delivery service, having the flexibility to switch carriers with minimum fuss is essential. It's one of the big advantages of integrating with, and managing all carriers through a single platform.

We have quite complex Scurri rules set up," Dean says. "One of the major benefits of Scurri is the bespoke nature of what you can do on an order-by-order basis, and how quickly you can change something if you've got a particular issue."

"If you've got an issue with a carrier, you can make the switch quickly, you can have rule sets in readiness that you just turn on and off." he adds.

Brexit continues to be a challenge for SikSilk, in particular around harmonisation codes and the different customs requirements that its destination countries have. However, keeping on top of issues and identifying potential errors has become easier with the monitoring and exception reporting tools at its disposal.

"Scurri is like a safety net, it makes sure that what you're shipping complies to the prerequisites of the carriers. These are sometimes individually difficult to keep on top of, so Scurri lets us know if our parcels are going to get past first base with DPD, because they are not missing something important.

You don't have to employ someone to know those idiosyncrasies because Scurri does that, it de-skills the process, not just from the shipping perspective but from a regulatory point of view. It's built into the product, and sometimes it tells us things before we even realise they are issues." Dean continues.

### Reacting quicker

Delivery is a critical component of the online retail experience. SikSilk recognised that bringing its logistics operation up to date was non-negotiable. To do this, the company needed to remove manual effort, and create a stable and repeatable process that limited errors, bottlenecks, and delivery blind spots.

"There was a skill shift in terms of learning about the rules for managing carriers, Dean explains." The Scurri system is very trainable because it's



"I used to see two people sitting in front of a screen printing labels all day. They are not there anymore. In terms of the accuracy, the rate of sending the wrong things to the wrong carrier, and all that kind of stuff, it's just not a feature anymore."

Dean Jackson, Head of Logistics. SikSilk

intuitive, whereas managing shipping in our old systems definitely wasn't.

The guy who was doing it before was a one man band, he's been here for seven years and essentially no-one else knew how to do it.

Using Scurri removed that issue, now we've got three or four people who know how to use the Scurri rule sets. It is much easier for us to prioritise carriers, now when one stops another one starts, and we can react much quicker, which is not what we experienced before." he adds.

### Quality and accuracy

For SikSilk to achieve its aggressive growth targets, connecting and optimising the ordering, shipping and delivery process was a top priority. It needed a solution that would let orders flow seamlessly from its eCommerce stores, to the warehouse, and into the hands of customers.

Since engaging Scurri, the company has been able to make improvements that will positively impact the business for years to come. For Head of Logistics,

Dean Jackson, the critical factor is the removal of human error, and over reliance on manual systems.

"With Scurri everything is far easier to interrogate." Dean Says. "Our shipping process can be monitored and constantly improved because it's not people dependent, it's system dependent, and the system uptime is really good.

Operating from VisualSoft, with manual creation of shipping, we'd die on service, we'd die on bottlenecks, and we'd die on backlog.

Having Scurri sit in the middle of our warehouse management system and our final mile carriers is really scalable. We just couldn't do the volumes we are doing now without it.

In terms of quality and accuracy, that's massive, it's an intangible cost which is hard to measure, but in terms of the opportunity for scalability, Scurri is a huge enabler." he concludes.

"Scurri are really lovely people, really helpful. I deal with other companies through their help desk, and there always seems to be a cost attached to every ticket you put on a helpdesk. With Scurri you get that vibe that when they help a customer, it actually makes the product better."

Dean Jackson, Head of Logistics - SikSilk

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

