



CASE STUDY



Charles & Colvard

“ Just by implementing Flow as a cross-border solution, we saw an increase across the board for our CBT-related KPIs. — Jeff Conklin, Director of E-Commerce ”

As a direct to consumer driven business, Charles & Colvard uses innovative technology and socially responsible practices to lead a revolution in the jewelry industry. The original pioneer of lab-created moissanite, Charles & Colvard provides exceptional product quality that resonates with global consumers. Cross-border quickly became one of the company’s top growth drivers and core to its three-year plan; but, the brand had limited control over their international checkout experience and a lack of visibility into the drivers of conversion.

The Challenges

Before using Flow, Charles & Colvard worked with a legacy cross-border trade solution. While it did allow the company to transact with global consumers, shipping was inefficient. Products had to pass through an intermediary shipping hub before being shipped to the end consumer, which increased costs and created delays in delivery.

Moreover, the legacy solution did not allow the brand to control its own consumer experience. Shoppers were redirected from Charles & Colvard’s site to an external shopping cart, creating an inconsistent and confusing checkout process. While consumers were able to transact, there was no personalization or local currency displayed. The brand was not able to localize anything during the checkout experience which resulted in a disjointed customer journey.



- During the quarter ending December 31, 2018 (holiday season), cross border sales increased by 250% in comparison to the same quarter in the prior year.
- Average Order Value (AOV) increased noticeably after moving to the Flow solution
- Shipping transit time to customers was cut by a third or more in most cases

PROBLEM

- Legacy solution with third-party checkout offered minimal control over the customer experience, an inconsistent customer journey and limited visibility into conversion
- Central hub added cost and time to international shipping
- Inability to keep up with and quickly adapt to fast-moving market needs

SOLUTION

- Granular control over the customer experience at every level, from currency conversion and pricing strategy to tax and duty display
- Flexible, easy-to-use platform facilitating visibility
- Low cost, hubless international shipping in most global markets
- Granular analytics and A/B testing capabilities allows for continuous improvement in conversion as Charles & Colvard optimizes its local experiences



The brand was growing rapidly, driven by an ambitious three-year target. As one of the fastest growing channels, cross-border was key to that plan. With its existing redirect solution, the brand had little insight into analytics, and limited ability to evaluate what worked and what did not. This led to a lack of visibility into its international traffic and conversion numbers. With a lot hinging on the success of cross-border trade, Charles & Colvard knew that it had to take back control of its international customer experience.

“The control Flow offers us is significant. By giving us the ability to configure the entire customer experience and merchandise different products in different geographies, Flow drives higher conversion.”

– Jeff Conklin, Director of E-Commerce

The Solution

Shipping and Customer Service

Flow offered Charles & Colvard attractive global shipping rates. By eliminating the intermediary hub inherent in the prior solution, Flow’s direct shipping model creates a seamless experience and faster delivery for the customer.

Working with Flow puts customer service back into Charles & Colvard’s hands. The company’s legacy provider handled customer service for Charles & Colvard without understanding the nuances of the business. The inconsistency of service led to a poor customer experience for global shoppers. However, using Flow’s platform, Charles & Colvard is able to manage and take control over customer service to serve customers all over the world equally.

Localized Customer Experience

Flow’s technology provides a customer-focused approach to cross-border trade, which allows Charles & Colvard to deliver a global experience that is well-executed and consistent with their domestic US experience. It is important to make consumers feel like they are transacting with a domestic site and have a shopping experience that feels local. Using Flow’s solution, Charles & Colvard is able to introduce local currency, while seamlessly adjusting pricing and margins to account for different global cost structures. Once set, these variables remain consistent throughout the entire site experience.

Furthermore, the flexibility of Flow platform in the display of duties and taxes is critically important to Charles & Colvard in the jewelry category. By leveraging this ability to display duties and taxes in accordance with local conventions, Charles & Colvard can alleviate common consumer pain points such as being surprised with an expensive tax and duty bill when the customer receives their order.

Through the integration with Flow’s technology, Charles & Colvard now offers additional payment methods to facilitate checkout for customers and to boost conversion rates. Using Flow’s solution, Charles & Colvard has added local language support at checkout for 21 languages to remove friction for customers during the purchase process.



Catalog Targeting

With Flow's platform, Charles & Colvard can focus on granular catalog targeting to accommodate local consumer preferences, such as merchandising yellow gold in Europe versus white gold in the US. Further, Flow automatically takes into account product restrictions preventing the brand from making the costly error of merchandising a product that the consumer cannot purchase due to restrictions imposed by the customer's government or regulators. By leveraging these features, Charles & Colvard can now better merchandise products for local audiences, reduce the number of customer service inquiries regarding product availability and thus improve the customer experience.

Global Marketing

Charles & Colvard feels confident in investing marketing budget internationally, particularly in English-speaking markets where the brand has always had a strong presence. The company is able to use Flow's robust knowledge base to guide investment and expansion worldwide.

Transparency and Visibility

Charles & Colvard can leverage Flow's analytics interface to view transaction information across their experiences. Flow provides visibility into submitted order value and number of orders broken out by country so that Charles & Colvard can make decisions to improve their KPIs and ultimately improve the customer's shopping experience.

Innovation

Cross-border is an evolving industry, and Flow embraces that change. Flow's ability to continually innovate and keep up with the fast growing cross-border environment allows Charles & Colvard to dynamically adjust its strategy in response to market needs. Flow is constantly developing new and high-impact features for its platform enabling Charles & Colvard to future-proof its business without investing in costly local websites.

"The cross-border environment is moving quickly and we often need to pivot to address market demands. By leveraging Flow's technology and adopting their innovative model, we are positioned to achieve our cross-border sales goals and expand our global reach."

— Jeff Conklin, Director of E-Commerce

About Flow



Your growth engine for going global.

[CONTACT US](#)

Most e-commerce businesses struggle with the complexities of selling their products internationally. The problem is they don't have the tools nor the flexibility they need to sell cross border, and existing solutions are missing the mark. At Flow, we believe global e-commerce should simply work. Our solution automates and simplifies every aspect of the international e-commerce process for e-commerce merchants by offering multi-currency pricing, cost efficient and rapid shipping, international payment options, well-defined taxes and duties, and simple returns. Now global brands like MVMT Watches, MZ Wallace, Outerknown and others can increase their customer conversion and grow international revenue.