

DOUGLAS Group optimizes performance and protection

Billion-dollar retailer relies on Akamai to ensure delightful online experiences and drive continued ecommerce success



Prepared for big events



Supported 10x traffic



Stopped bots and attacks

A billion-dollar omnichannel retailer

Founded in 1821, the DOUGLAS Group is the leading omnichannel premium beauty destination in Europe. Through more than 1,850 brick-and-mortar stores, many European online shops, and its mobile application, the Group offers more than 100,000 products across four retail brands: DOUGLAS, NOCIBÉ, parfumdreams, and Niche Beauty. Over the years, the ecommerce portion of the business has continually grown, and today it accounts for approximately one-third of the company's 4.1 billion euros in annual revenues. With the company aiming for sustainable further growth, its digital presence must deliver an outstanding shopper experience without fail. As a long-standing Akamai customer, the DOUGLAS Group continues to evolve its use of Akamai solutions to ensure a high-performing, secure online presence.

Driving sustained ecommerce growth

As a licensed retailer for almost every major beauty brand, the DOUGLAS Group stands apart as a premium beauty destination both online and offline. Ingo Mommertz, Vice President of Digital Technology, who is responsible for the Group's online presence, is continually harnessing relevant technologies to ensure high uptime, performance, and security of the company's websites. Mommertz's approach is paying off in helping the company realize sustained ecommerce growth even since the COVID-19 pandemic.

DOUGLAS
GROUP

Location

Düsseldorf, Germany
[douglas.de](https://www.douglas.de)

Industry

Retail, Travel, and Hospitality

Key Solutions

- Account Protector
- App & API Protector
- Bot Manager
- Enterprise Application Access
- Image & Video Manager



Starting in 2015, the technologies Mommertz has called upon include an array of Akamai solutions that help deliver the online experience expected of a market leader. Since first taking advantage of a [web application firewall \(WAF\)](#) solution from Akamai, the DOUGLAS Group has used a growing number of solutions designed to do everything from fend off [distributed denial-of-service \(DDoS\) attacks](#) and bots to prioritize site visitors and optimize web performance. “Whenever we have a new need, Akamai has a solution available or on the roadmap,” explained Mommertz.

Ensuring success on the biggest revenue days

For nearly a decade, Akamai has enabled the DOUGLAS Group to fully capitalize on Black Friday – one of the most important days of the year for the company. At one point, many years ago, Black Friday’s traffic surge overwhelmed the company’s servers, causing them to crash. “Our site was generating too many server calls and we couldn’t offload our back-end servers. We found our solution with the Akamai Visitor Prioritization Cloudlet,” Mommertz said.

On Black Friday 2023, the DOUGLAS Group’s online shops processed more than 20,000 orders per hour – even as traffic peaked at 10 times above average. According to Mommertz, the Group would not have succeeded on Black Friday without Akamai.

Mommertz said his team could build and run its own CDN, but would need to put in place 10 times more capacity. “Plus, it’s not just about performance – we would need major firewall appliances to thwart DDoS attacks. And I’d need to hire two dedicated cybersecurity experts. Akamai ensures both optimal performance and protection for us, while we focus on what we do best.”

In addition, Akamai helps the Group prepare for its biggest revenue-generating days. “Akamai supports us in our check-ups leading up to our prime selling days, giving us peace of mind while helping us continuously improve our configurations,” Mommertz continued.



Because of our long-standing relationship, Akamai knows what’s important to our business and always recommends fitting solutions to address our performance and security needs.

– Ingo Mommertz
Vice President,
Digital Technology,
DOUGLAS Group



Optimizing performance and protection

One solution that the DOUGLAS Group uses to optimize performance is Akamai Ion, a suite of delivery, acceleration, and optimization technologies with the intelligence to make real-time performance decisions. “Ion helps us ensure shoppers have the best experience every time,” Mommertz explained.

When his company needed to handle thousands of redirects, he called upon Edge Redirector. “This solution works magic on the edge, offloading the processing from our servers,” he continued.

The DOUGLAS Group has also saved money by using [Bot Manager](#), which detects bot traffic and mitigates malicious bots at the edge. “Bot Manager helped when we moved our Google Maps account to a new subscription. Suddenly, we were being charged over 16 times more than we had been paying. With Bot Manager, we mitigated the bot traffic causing the price surge,” said Mommertz.

More recently, the DOUGLAS Group used Akamai Account Protector as part of a proof of concept to prevent shopper account abuse. As Mommertz said, “This solution allowed us to protect our customers while impacting our website as little as possible by offloading security to the edge.”

Catalyzing commerce inspiration

Mommertz also proposed and helped found the Akamai EMEA Commerce Board. In this intimate forum that convenes twice per year, Akamai customers from a range of industries gather to discuss issues and share best practices. The DOUGLAS Group sends 2 or 3 of its employees to each meeting.

“It’s a unique opportunity to find out how others are solving high-traffic and cybersecurity problems, what Akamai configurations are working best for them, and to get inspired by new ideas,” said Mommertz.



Valuing a true partnership

When asked why he continues working with Akamai, Mommertz underscored the strong relationship. “Akamai isn’t just a vendor trying to sell us products. It is a true partner that recommends fitting solutions for our business and strategy.”

“Our ecommerce business nearly tripled in the last three years so we need bulletproof solutions. Akamai provides those, ensuring our online business keeps delivering,” he concluded.



DOUGLAS
GROUP

About the DOUGLAS Group

The DOUGLAS Group, with its commercial brands DOUGLAS, NOCIBÉ, parfumdreams, and Niche Beauty, is the number one omnichannel premium beauty destination in Europe. The DOUGLAS Group is inspiring customers to live their own kind of beauty by offering a unique assortment online and in approximately 1,870 stores. With unparalleled size and access to customers, the DOUGLAS Group is the partner of choice for brands and offers a premium range of selective and exclusive brands, as well as its own corporate brands. The assortment includes fragrances, color cosmetics, skin care, hair care, accessories, and beauty services. Strengthening its successful omnichannel positioning while consistently developing superior customer experience is at the heart of the DOUGLAS Group strategy “Let it Bloom – DOUGLAS 2026.” The winning business model is underpinned by the Group’s omnichannel proposition, leading brands, and data capabilities. In the financial year 2022/23, the DOUGLAS Group generated sales (net) of 4.1 billion euros and employed approximately 18,000 people across Europe. The DOUGLAS Group (Douglas AG) is listed at the Frankfurt Stock Exchange.