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Interviews

## Interview with Nicolas Stehle, Scalefast, on ecommerce solutions, global expansion, and customer retention

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The Paypers interviewed **Nicolas Stehle** to find out more about **Scalefast** and their ecommerce platform created to mitigate the hassles of expanding globally

### Could you share a brief history of Scalefast and the idea behind its creation?

In 2014, we noticed a critical gap in the ecommerce world: brands were struggling to sell directly to consumers due to the time, cost and risk associated with building an in-house ecommerce channel. Unfortunately for these brands, that channel was also becoming increasingly important – to the point where, nowadays, it is vital for brands to go direct-to-consumer (D2C) in order to retain customers and build brand loyalty.

We wanted to empower brands with the same capabilities that Amazon provides to its consumers. Selling through Amazon is simple for brands, so why should it be such a pain for brands to sell globally through their own online store? Scalefast aims at making brands' stores the best place to shop online by cutting out the middle man and creating a lasting relationship between brands and their customers.

My co-founders and I had extensive knowledge in high tech and commerce, so we set out to create an outsourced ecommerce solution to help brands focus on the consumer, while we handled all the complicated operations and back-end logistics.

Part of the complexity of a global ecommerce channel is operating abroad, so we specifically wanted to create a platform to mitigate the hassles and complications of expanding reach to other countries. When a client wants to sell globally, we handle the local regulations and risks associated with doing so. Even our team is global – we have offices in Los Angeles, Paris and Madrid.

### What are Scalefast's main services and business model, and how would you describe your target markets?

We focus on a D2C model, enabling inspirational brands to provide a more personalised shopping experience in real-time. We handle the entire ecommerce platform process domestically and internationally, including store design and localisation, logistics, customer service, payments, tax management and fraud prevention. Our goal is to accelerate brands' online sales while helping them avoid the risks of in-house channel development.

Generally speaking, we work with inspirational brands that understand the importance of delivering a tailored experience directly to customers. We have a strong background of working with high-profile videogame brands, including Sega, Square Enix and Bandai Namco Entertainment, but our target markets cover a range of lifestyle brands in verticals including health, fashion, sports and toys.

### What challenges do game companies face when growing?

Gamers often form incredibly dedicated and reliable fan-bases, and they're drastically different than traditional shoppers as they crave engaging and intuitive online stores to feel connected with their favorite brands. This can be a daunting challenge to growing game companies, but with the right resources and support, videogame shoppers will champion your brand to no end. You essentially need to handle gamers the same way you would the core fans of any other brand – they tend to share similar expectations and behaviors, and are willing to spread your brand's message positively if catered properly.

### What fraud challenges do your customers face and how do you help them solve these?

Selling high value digital products, such as serial keys or downloadable content, can expose our clients to criminal organisations trying to create fraudulent orders at scale. These fraud techniques can be very advanced and often apply various tactics to make an order appear

legitimate – e.g. using databases of local stolen cards, faking local IP addresses and phones, providing personal information that seems real, etc. Scalefast provides its clients with a multi-layered fraud screening process. Our process has drastically reduced the fraud rate on millions of orders for our clients and ensures we stay above the industry acceptance rate.

Other challenges include account takeover, where usernames and passwords are stolen from customers through phishing techniques so perpetrators can make illicit purchases. Using big data and machine learning, our antifraud engine runs hundreds of checks in real-time on a vast amount of data to confirm the information linked to the order, including the customer, card information, type of product, behavior, velocity, and purchase history. Fraudulent patterns are detected and flagged, and third party scoring technologies help identify these red flags. If the order looks suspicious, we step in and make the final call on whether it clears or not.

**Congratulations on the recent funding round! Could you give our readers more insights into further developments following this investment?**

Thank you! We're thrilled to be backed by investors from Silicon Valley and Europe who share our vision of a simplified global D2C channel for brands. We're focusing a lot of our efforts on building platforms fit for the third generation of ecommerce, implementing automation, machine learning and artificial intelligence to address the next trend in ecommerce. These technologies are the key components to ensure we can personalise consumers' online shopping experiences in real-time to encourage better sales and retention.

**About Nicolas Stehle**

Nicolas Stehle is founder and CEO at Scalefast, an award-winning digital commerce solution for inspirational brands. A serial entrepreneur with 15 years of experience in ecommerce, network security, big data and payment, Nicolas has founded and accelerated numerous successful businesses including Like Me I'm Famous, Everbee and Flexycore (sold to Google).



**About Scalefast**

**SCALEFAST** Scalefast's digital commerce solution simplifies and streamlines ecommerce for leading inspirational brands that want to make their store the best place to shop online. Combining artificial intelligence and ecommerce expertise, Scalefast provides the infrastructure and full-service business operations necessary to scale quickly and increase revenue, all under one roof.

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