



# Case Study Hotel Chocolat

## Background

Hotel Chocolat are a luxury British chocolatier co-founded by Angus Thirlwell and Peter Harris. They built Hotel Chocolat on three unwavering pillars: authenticity, originality and ethics and are constantly innovating not only in their products but also business practices.

Hotel Chocolat are one of the few chocolate makers to grow their own cacao, on an eco-conscious cacao farm in the grounds of their Saint Lucian boutique hotel Rabot (yes, you can stay there too). At Hotel Chocolat, they connect the world of sustainable cacao agriculture with the hedonism of top-quality chocolate.

## Objective

Prior to 2020, Hotel Chocolat's business had become heavily weighted towards brick-and-mortar stores, with 80% of customer purchases taking place in person and only 20% online. The pandemic caused them, like many companies, to pivot more towards online retail. They subsequently saw an over 400% increase in digital sales.

This naturally led to an increase in customers wishing to contact customer service (CS). Whilst they did already have an overflow CS partner, it was essential that greater flexibility was introduced to support the increasing sales. They were also having to move their CS team to working from home and the demands on technology.

Hotel Chocolat had previously spoken to our CCO, Martin Brown, and FM was at the top of their minds when they were thinking of somebody to partner with to help solve the challenge.

When Hotel Chocolat spoke to our team, their main concern was ensuring that customers were served as effectively as possible, maintaining the highest quality of their customer care and protecting the excellent brand reputation. As a chocolatier, Hotel Chocolat experiences two significant seasonal peaks, one at Easter and the other at Christmas, so it was essential to ensure appropriate cover during these particularly busy periods.



## Client profile

Established: 1993

Industry: Retail

Head Office location:  
Royston, UK

Annual turnover: £164.6m

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## Solution

As a brand, Hotel Chocolat have always found outsourcing essential to their operations as it offers them much-needed flexibility. Plus, they have found that when partnering with FM, the expanded teams feel like just another part of the Hotel Chocolat business. There's no 'us and them', it's all one team under one brand.

When Hotel Chocolat signed up with FM, they started quickly with a team of three that swiftly expanded to a team of six. This swift three-week turnaround from start of training to go live meant that the increased contact volume was immediately handled, doing the important job of keeping customers happy and protecting Hotel Chocolat's brand reputation.



## Testimonial

“ Our partnership with FM Outsource has been strong and successful since day one. We needed an agile outsourcer who could meet our growing customer service needs and FM have more than fit the bill.

They've ensured that our customers have remained happy, review scores have been consistent, and our reputation is protected. We see our relationship with FM continuing and growing as they continue to support us and offer the flexibility and quality that we need. ”

- **Gavin Morden, Head of Customer Service & Experience, Hotel Chocolat**