

DIGITALIZATION PATH PROJECT

NEWSLETTER NO.4

July 2021



About Digitalization path project

The project “DIGITALIZATION PATH” is implemented by a consortium comprised of MASIT (North Macedonia) in partnership with STIKK (Kosovo) and ICT Net (Serbia) funded by the USAID Economic Development, Governance and Enterprise Growth Project. The main goal of this project is to:

- Support SMEs from the targeted value chains (fresh and processed fruit and vegetables, apparel and textiles, wood processing and eco/ agro /adventure tourism), understand and get familiar with the benefits of the digital transformation;
- Analyze their current level of digital transformation and create Digital Transformation Strategies identifying and prioritizing needed IT solutions;
- Financially support them in the process of purchasing and implementing IT solutions in order to improve their business activities.

In this issue of the Newsletter, you will find:

- Info from our ONLINE EVENT held on 18.05.2021 titled “Increasing your sales through online and ecommerce solutions”
- **SUCCESS STORIES** from our beneficiaries
 - North Macedonia – ASTIBO FASHION GROUP
 - Serbia – RADANSKA RUŽA
 - Kosovo - ELNOR FURNITURE
- Currently **open calls** for **beneficiaries**

ONLINE EVENT held on 18.05.2021 “Increasing your sales through online and ecommerce solutions”

The event was organized for the companies from North Macedonia, Kosovo and Serbia operating in the sectors of agriculture, textile, tourism and wood processing. During the online event held on we presented several important topics related to increasing sales through online and ecommerce solutions.

More thoroughly:

- Buyers,
- Video materials,
- Discounts
- SEO and CRO
- Key elements for web shop

[LINK TO VIDEO](#)

Why e-commerce fails-the most common reasons

- * Not following the trends and “I am good right here” philosophy.
 - * It is important to be proactive and follow the trends and improve your service, product and sales .
- * Not understanding the importance of existing customers.
- * Bad version of mobile web site or mobile shop.
 - * More than 70% of sales go through mobile devices.
- * Not using techniques to make shopping easier.
 - * 70% buyers leave web shop although they have something in the basket.
- * Insufficient knowledge, experience and failure to follow best practices in web shop management.

Key elements for successful web shop

- * For a successful online store business, you need to have an optimal layout of website elements and functional parts:
 - * Landing page
 - * Call to action (CTA)
 - * Good navigation on key pages on the web site
 - * Search button
 - * Names and description of the products
 - * Prices
 - * Video materials
 - * Live chat option
 - * Basket for online shopping
 - * Clear payment process
 - * Responsive design
 - * Mobile friendly
 - * Customers feedback

SEO and CRO SEO and key words

- * We use SEO -**Search Engine Optimization** to optimize web shop so that web browser could better ranked our page.
- * To succeed in this we use key words that user usually use on internet and when they search certain product or service
- * We can choose these words by some free tools like [Google Keyword Planner](#) or extension for Google Chrome – [Keywords Everywhere](#).
- * More serious and precise tools have certain costs
- * What is our goal with using SEO and key words?
- * To increase number of people that visit our web site or web shop .
- * Beside the number of the people we need to think also about the quality of the content that we use , since that will bring us quality visitors. Smart usage of key words in the content is also recommendation.

Ideas “to go”

- * In order to increase your visibility and sales, make list of everything that you want to implement in your web shop/e-commerce solution
- * Either you make new shop or e-commerce solution or you upgrade already existing one, with good knowledge of your buyers and good planning of marketing and sales you will know which features you need, so you can underline them in the specification
- * E-commerce solutions and web shops are constantly changing: follow the trends and update your solutions accordingly

<https://afgshop.mk/>

SUCCESS STORY - ASTIBO FASHION GROUP - AFG North Macedonia

“March 2021 – is the month that AFG products went digital by the help of EDGE and MASIT. As the whole course of life changed with the pandemic so did our sales in the boutique.

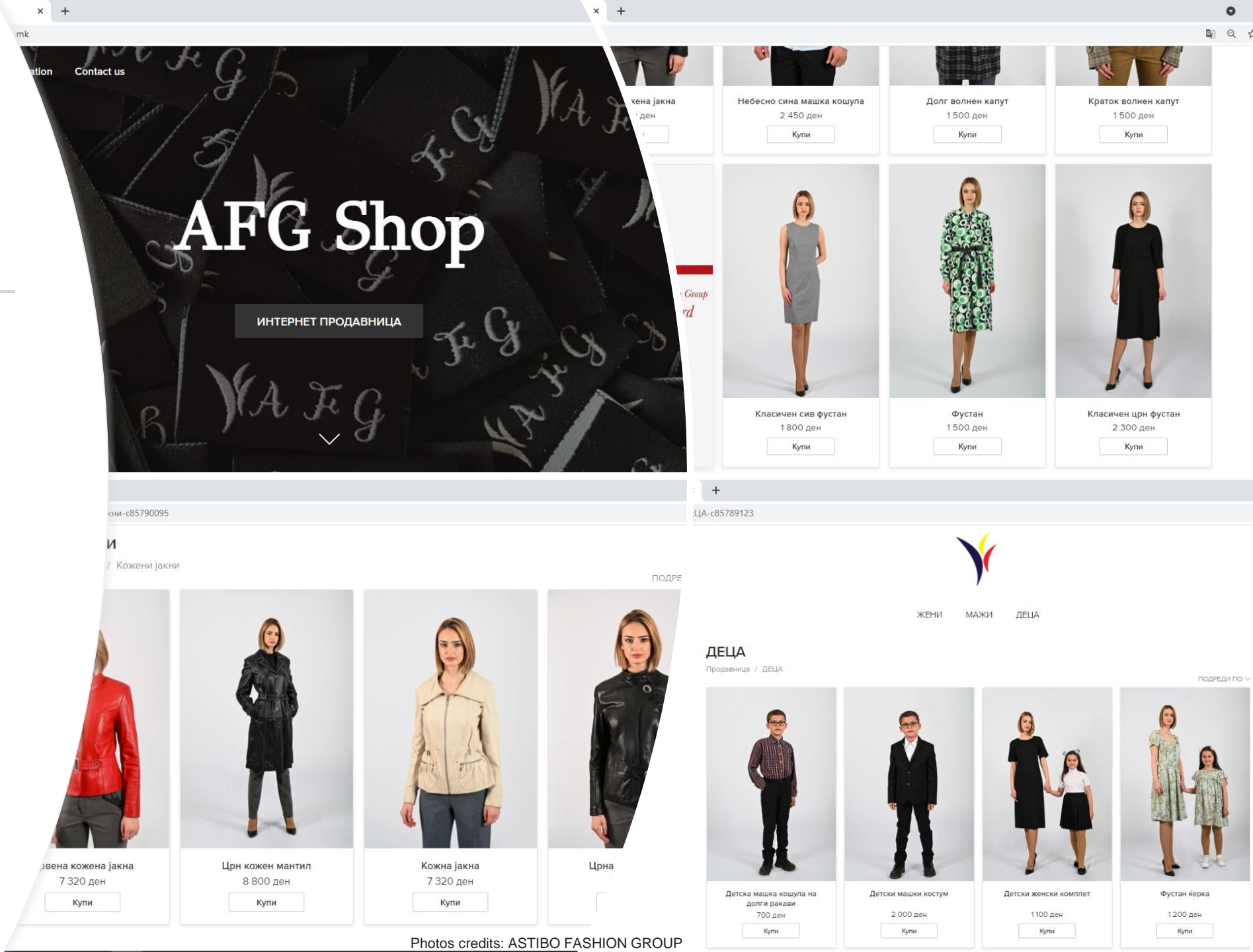
Before the e-shop, our products were only available if you visit our boutique in Stip. Since the beginning we knew that the project EDGE and MASIT is perfect for us. Our sales continued to grow. Also, having an e-shop make things for everyone easier and safer in these hard times of COVID pandemic. Just by their click we have a sale. Customers can see the whole palette of products we have and by one click they and order them.

Most of all, to have a really successful story is not only to have all the resources. The marketing is the most important thing.

The most successful of all this is the client's satisfaction. When they write you feedback for the product. That is really heartwarming thing for all of in the AFG team.”

Ms. Natasa Tuseva, Human resources Department

AFG was supported by Digitalization path project with support for creating Personal Digital Transformation Strategy as well as financial support for implementation of e-commerce solution.



Photos credits: ASTIBO FASHION GROUP

<https://www.radanskaruza.rs/>

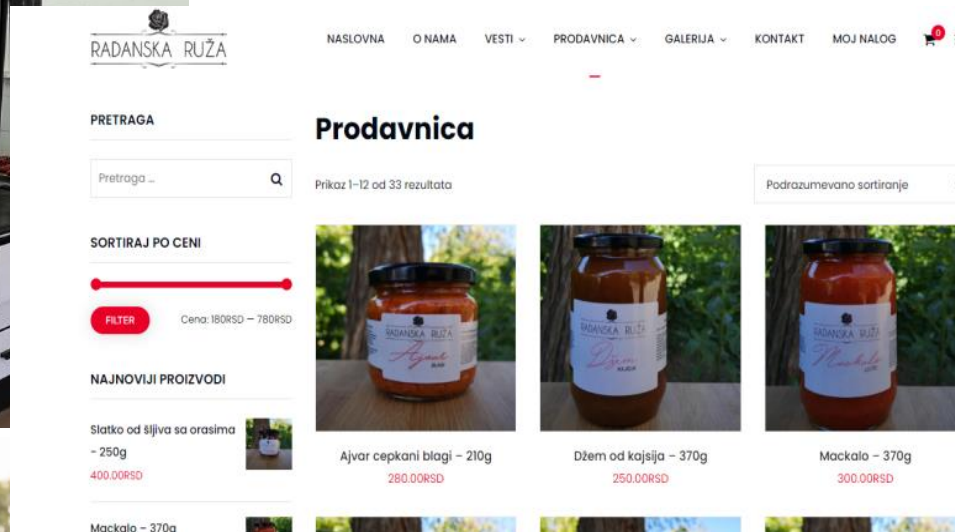
SUCCESS STORY - RADANSKA RUŽA Serbia

Tradition and social entrepreneurship, perfect match for successful business

“Through this project we get new look and functionalities for our web site. That helps us to make our products more visible and available for new customers. Though the project, one of our team members also get training for managing web site, updates and content. In future, we plan to improve our production by expanding the range of organic products to domestic markets, and the web presentation will be extremely important in the promotion and sale of these products. Namely, a new web site will enable us to show future customers the complete production from working in the fields to the production process itself. The result of these actions will be new employment of women from marginalized groups.”

Predrag Stosic, director of Radanska ruža

Radanska Ruza was supported by Digitalization path project with support for creating Personal Digital Transformation Strategy as well as financial support for implementation of e-commerce solution.



SUCCESS STORY – ELNOR FURNITURE Kosovo

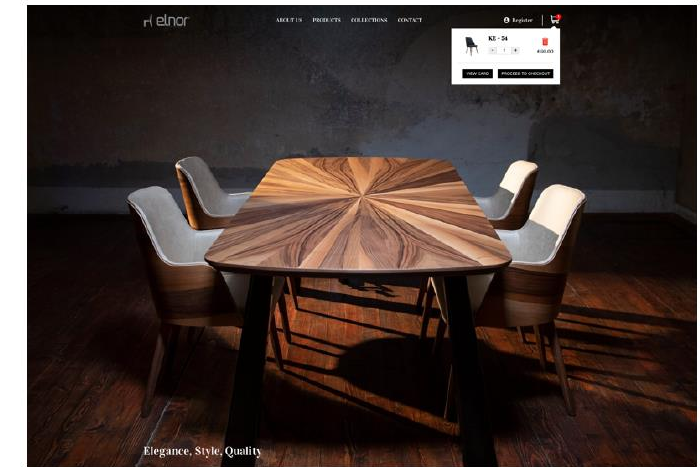
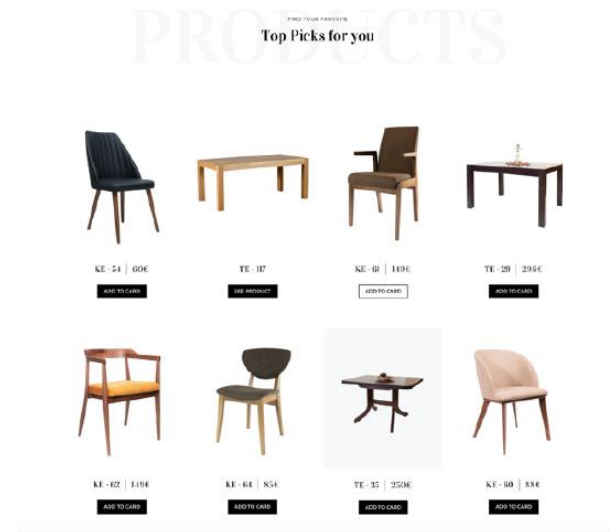
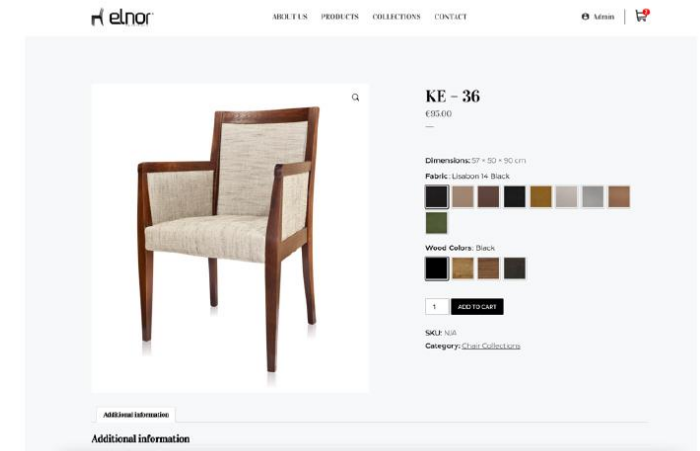
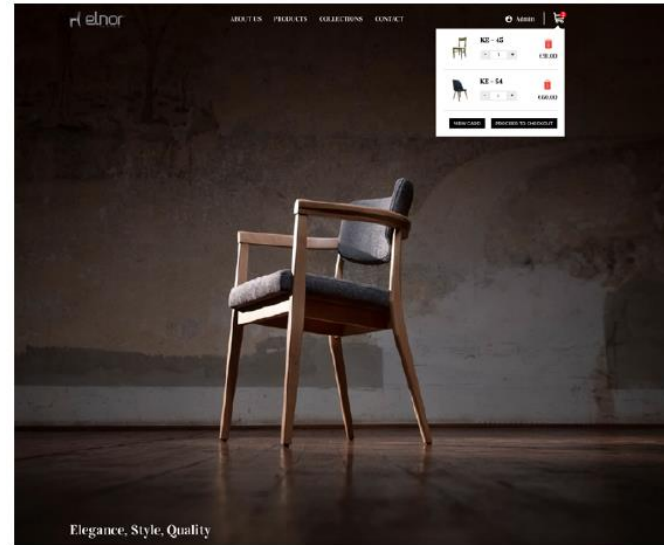
“We, ELNOR, through this project supported by USAID have been able to develop an online sales platform for chair and table products. We have managed to train a part of the sales staff regarding the process of online sales and monitoring so that the product arrives on time and in good condition to our customer. Through the use and implementation of e-commerce in our company we benefited by:

- increase the operating market
- offering an easier experience of shopping
- expanding our range of production
- saving time for our customers

The introduction of this platform as part of sales has a successful direct impact in planning within the company, to develop a special department which will deal with the management, control and monitoring of the e-commerce process until the moment the product reaches the customer.”

Ms. Vjosa Ukaj, Marketing Director at Elnor Furniture

Elnor Furniture was supported by Digitalization path project with support for creating Personal Digital Transformation Strategy as well as financial support for implementation of e-commerce solution.



Open calls and available publications

Open call for support for Personal Digital Transformation Strategies ([More info](#))

- The Project will provide expert help from experienced consultants, who will support companies to effectively identify and prioritize IT solutions that would potentially have the highest return on improving the business operations of each SME.
- This personalized Strategy will have the goal to analyze the current business processes and understand the company's needs, problems and challenges, based on which detailed recommendations for implementation of IT solutions will be elaborated and recommended in order to improve their business operations and sophistication.

Open call for expressing interest for application for financial support for purchasing and implementing ICT solutions ([more info](#))

What can you expect?

- Financial contribution of up to 50% or up to 3,000 USD per company, from the project
- At least 30% must be contributed by you
- Support in acquiring offers from ICT companies and a contribution of 20% from the IT company provider in form of: calculated discounts, additional functionalities/ services or training related to usage of IT solution, etc..

The interested companies should contact the contacts from the following e-mail addresses according to the country they operate in:

- North Macedonia – Elena Petrushevska, Project coordinator, elena.petrushevska@masit.org.mk,
- Serbia – Marina Blagojevic, Project coordinator, marina.blagojevic@ict-net.com
- Kosovo – Art Navakazi, Project coordinator, art.navakazi@stikk.org

Brochure - HOW TO DIGITALLY TRANSFORM

The Brochure How to digitally transform was prepared with the goal to serve as a Guide for Digital Transformation for beginners and for all companies that want to stimulate thinking about digital transformation. The brochure answers questions such as: how to approach Digital Transformation, what steps to take, what tools are available, what are the benefits and what kind of investments we are talking about, in an easy and comprehensive format.

A [promotional video for the Brochure](#) was created which is available on the following [LINK](#).

The Brochure can be downloaded on the following [LINK](#).

