

For GUESS, Cloudinary Eliminates the Guesswork in Delivering Optimal Shopping Experiences

Contributed to a 40% decrease in page load time

Increased conversions on PLP and PDP

Saving the team hours each week

An antiquated image management system, incompatible with modern browsers, was making it increasingly difficult for **GUESS** to deliver an exceptional user experience to the thousands of shoppers that peruse its website each day. After discovering on WebPageTest.org how Cloudinary optimizes images and minimizes page load time, GUESS made the switch. With greater automation and continued technological innovation, Cloudinary has driven greater efficiency and organization in the workflow for the GUESS creative studio, merchandising team, and developers, while significantly improving performance for even the most image-rich pages.



“Customer experience is a priority for us. We are nothing if we don’t have great visuals. And with Cloudinary we are confident that our customers are always getting the best experience.”

— **Sasha Mattison**, senior front-end developer and UX manager

GUESS

INDUSTRY

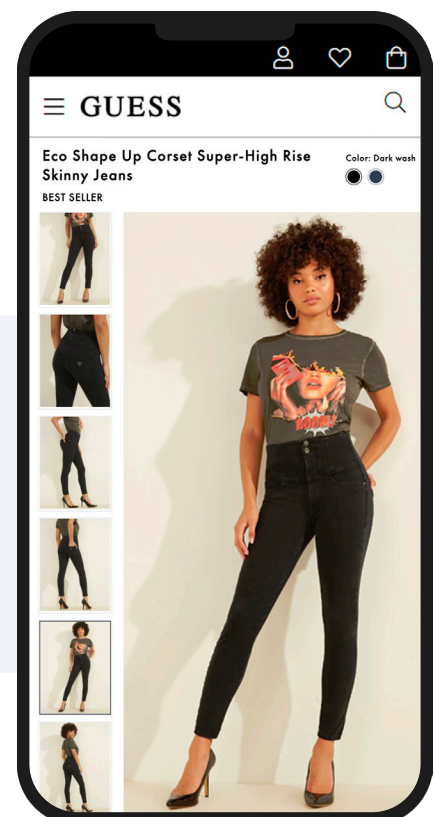
Apparel & Fashion

SIZE

10,001+ employees

HEADQUARTERS

Los Angeles, CA



ABOUT

GUESS

GUESS? Inc. designs, markets, distributes, and licenses a lifestyle collection of contemporary apparel, denim, handbags, watches, eyewear, footwear, and other related consumer products. GUESS products are distributed through branded GUESS Stores, as well as department and specialty stores around the world, and via e-commerce sites available to 55 countries. GUESS websites act as virtual storefronts that both sell their products and promote their brands. These sites showcase GUESS products in an easy-to-navigate experience, allowing customers to see and purchase from its collections of apparel and accessories.

THE CHALLENGE

Modernizing Image Management

For years, GUESS was relying on Adobe Scene7 to manage images for its online store. However, Scene7, a Flash-reliant product, made workflows and modern technology updates more challenging. With modern browsers phasing out Flash, GUESS developers struggled to deliver the high-quality web experience it wanted to offer customers.

But that wasn't the only problem. "Even before browsers stopped supporting Flash, we had many concerns about image optimization, page speed, and overall bloat that the system was adding," said Sasha Mattison, senior front-end developer and UX manager. "Optimized images were often heavier than the originals we uploaded."

The system being used by GUESS was so volatile that it created regular bottlenecks. Image uploads would fail, photo editors would have to crop photos with extra white space to ensure they'd appear appropriately on the site. Sometimes images wouldn't look as crisp and high-fidelity as the original once they rendered on the web.

These challenges weren't just a big deal for the development team. They frustrated potential customers as well. Heavier images meant slower page load times, and unnecessary bandwidth usage by visitors. "Optimizing images is important when people don't have unlimited data," Mattison added, "We didn't want our customers to incur unnecessary data charges or go over their monthly limits."

In assessing its site performance on WebPageTest.org, the GUESS development team discovered Cloudinary and saw firsthand how its image optimization solution could significantly improve page performance. After learning more about the capabilities and potential business value of Cloudinary, the GUESS CTO made the switch.

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"It was exciting to have a new, modern platform, like Cloudinary, which was much more advanced than what we were using. Cloudinary is always innovating with new functionalities and is at the forefront of modern technology. With a company the size of GUESS, that's exactly what we needed."

— **Sasha Mattison**, senior front-end developer and UX manager

THE CLOUDINARY SOLUTION

Simplified Workflow and Improved Customer Experience

GUESS did a global migration, replacing Adobe Scene7 with Cloudinary within its workflow. “From day one, the support we’ve gotten from Cloudinary has been amazing,” said Lidia Rojas, senior front-end developer for GUESS. “We have had so much guidance and expert advice from the Cloudinary team, making what could be a complicated transition a great, seamless experience.”

Once images are shot in the GUESS photo studio or created in Photoshop, they’re easily uploaded in bulk via FTP directly to G-Image—a custom, homegrown solution that, via APIs, acts as a conduit to Cloudinary. This process allows images to be sorted and labeled properly. “The ability to organize in Cloudinary is so much more robust than our previous solution, which really improves our day-to-day workflows,” she added.

Then using Cloudinary automation to adjust image URLs, GUESS is able to ensure that all images are optimized for size, format, and render properly, regardless of the device or browser. GUESS uploads a single version of each image and uses Cloudinary to automatically scale images based on viewport, browser, and other factors without much manual intervention. This is much easier than the previous solution, which required extra steps from the photo studio, such as custom cropping and padding, to ensure images displayed properly.

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Cloudinary adapts images dynamically to always focus on the main content, does not require manual cropping customizations, and the images look much crisper, like the originals. Having Cloudinary cut out these extra steps has been incredibly helpful.”

— **Sasha Mattison**, senior front-end developer and UX manager

GUESS also improved performance of product detail pages (PDPs) by replacing two solutions—Scene 7 for desktop and Swiper as a mobile touch slider—with Cloudinary’s Product Gallery. “We were frustrated that we needed two different products for what we were trying to accomplish as Scene7 wasn’t touch-friendly. And though Scene7 did move to HTML5, it still fell short because you could see all the pixels building together as the page loaded,” Mattison said.

The vast majority of customers (76%) look at products on smartphones, so when GUESS redesigned its viewer, they wanted to deliver the best mobile experience possible. However, the company also had to take into consideration that many customers completed their purchase on the desktop. Cloudinary’s auto-responsive Product Gallery provided GUESS the flexibility needed to deliver the same, high-quality user experience, regardless of device.

Using the Cloudinary Product Gallery enables GUESS to ensure that image quality looks excellent. “For the image to show up, with speed on mobile and look great, makes our users feel confident in their purchase and drives them to add to the bag,” she said. “With our new PDP viewer developed by Cloudinary, this is evident.”

THE RESULTS

Performance Optimization and Increased Conversions

Image optimization—ensuring the right resolution, format, and quality of image is delivered regardless of the device or bandwidth a customer is using—has resulted in significant performance improvements and a better customer experience. “That’s a priority for us. We are nothing if we don’t have great visuals. And with Cloudinary we are confident that our customers are always getting the best experience,” Mattison shared.

GUESS also has reduced page load time, and realized significant improvements in performance of its product listing and detail pages. As soon as the GUESS site switched over to Cloudinary, the company saw an increase in conversions.

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“The ability to navigate the online store better, on both desktop and mobile, and view the products faster, either on the product listing or product detail pages, was a key component to the conversion improvements. Any improvement on the product detail page leads to a significant increase in conversions.”

— **Sasha Mattison**, senior front-end developer and UX manager

The support from the Cloudinary team also played an essential role in GUESS achieving the results it sought. Cloudinary helped customize the store’s image viewer on product detail pages, working hand-in-hand with the developers to achieve the desired results faster than GUESS initially anticipated.

Agility is vital in other aspects too. GUESS has been able to significantly streamline its internal workflows with Cloudinary’s bulk upload and cache clearing capabilities, and eliminate the need for manual workflows. These features help GUESS launch new products and deploy creative, interactive landing pages. The new workflow increased productivity by saving hours of time throughout the work week.

“Cloudinary specializes in images. Learning from, and working with, a company that is an image expert provided us with knowledge and capabilities that we didn’t have on our own. It would have been expensive and resource-intensive to train developers and accomplish what we’ve done so quickly with Cloudinary.” Lidia Rojas, senior front-end developer said.

About Cloudinary

Cloudinary’s mission is to empower companies to deliver visual experiences that inspire and connect by unleashing the full potential of their media. With more than 40 billion assets under management and 6,500 customers worldwide, Cloudinary is the industry standard for developers, creators and marketers looking to upload, store, transform, manage, and deliver images and videos online. As a result, leading brands like Atlassian, Bleacher Report, Grubhub, Hinge, Lyft, NBC, Mediavine, Peloton, Petco and Under Armour are seeing significant business value in using Cloudinary, including faster time to market, higher user satisfaction and increased engagement and conversions.

For more information, visit www.cloudinary.com or follow on [Twitter](#)