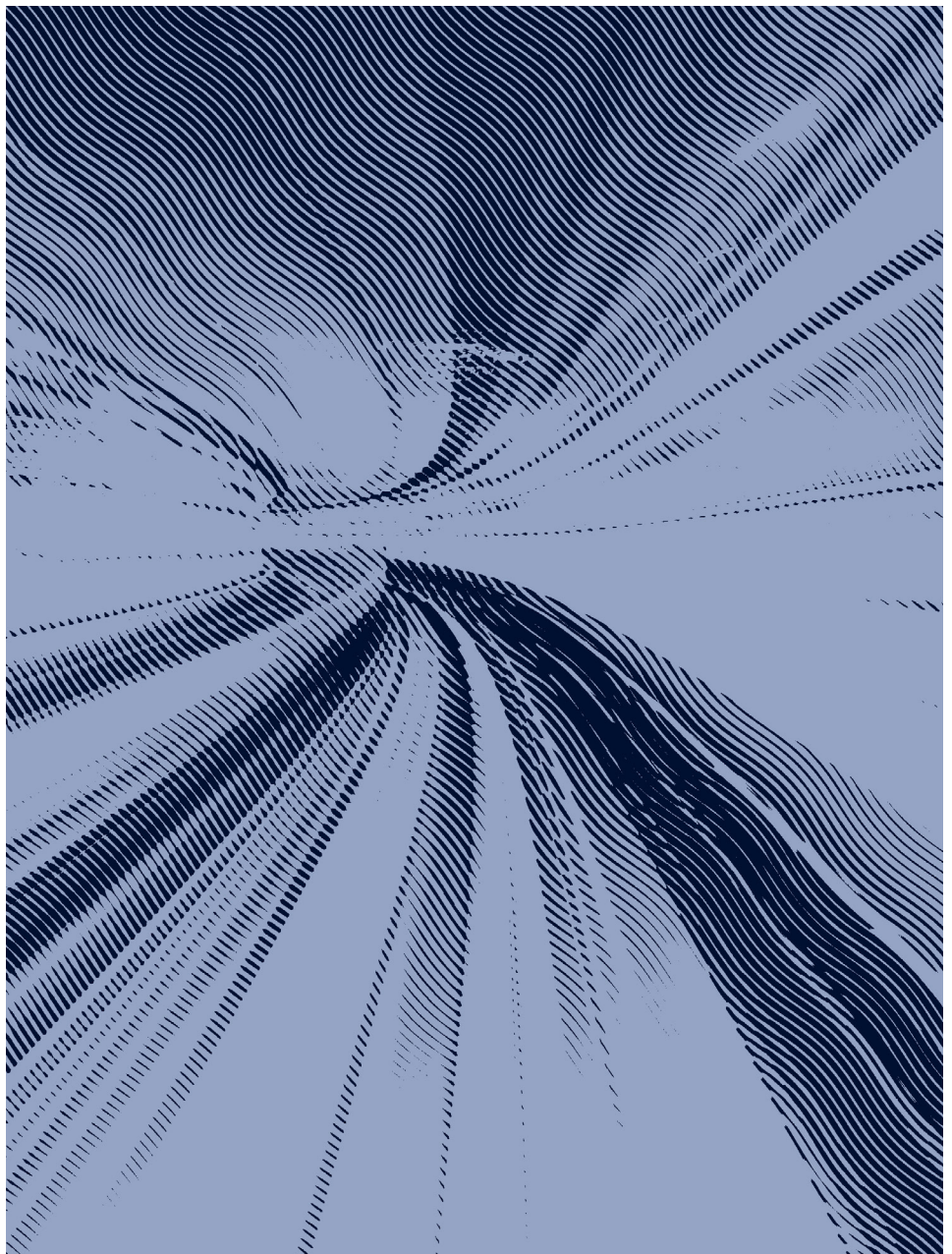


Where engineering and design meets identity: Get to know Squareball Digital, Okta's first dedicated CIAM-partner in the DACH region



Testimonial snapshot

Company

Squareball

Industry

Technology

Company Profile

There's a new currency in town: identity. To build customer experiences that are meaningful, safe, and rooted in people's individual needs, businesses first need to build a unified view of their customers. That's where Customer Identity and Access Management (CIAM) comes in.

Squareball is a team of Berlin-based CIAM specialists who combine their identity credentials with a deep knowledge of product development and implementation. By helping businesses launch apps and products with identity at their core, Squareball stands out by delivering customer experiences that are truly user-focused.

"Our team combines various disciplines and backgrounds, from identity, to product management, to design, engineering, and development," explains Martyn Roberts, Product Manager and IAM Consultant at Squareball. "By bringing all those credentials together in a package that's tailored to each of our clients, we deliver the same depth of commitment to each project as if we were an in-house team."

Testimonial snapshot

Partner Overview

- 1st Okta partner in the DACH region fully focused on CIAM
- 16 engineers, architects and designers, including 5 certified identity specialists
- 1 year from Select to Premier Partner status



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Martyn Roberts

Product Manager and IAM Consultant, Squareball

A shared belief in CIAM's bright future

Pioneering with Okta in a fast-moving industry

Enabling customers from day one

Quick rollouts with detailed identity roadmaps

A fully Okta-certified identity team

Building products with identity at their core

A shared belief in CIAM's bright future

To bridge the gap between identity and the design & engineering space, Squareball has teamed up with a select portfolio of technology partners. To be a good fit, these partners should share Squareball's dedication to user-centric solutions and personalisation, explains Martyn: "For us to live up to our promise of user-centricity, all the tools, platforms, and vendor partnerships need to support that same goal. That's why our identity platform of choice needs to be highly configurable, based on each use case. And that's exactly what Okta offered."

In early conversations with the Okta team, Squareball quickly recognised a shared belief in CIAM as a growing opportunity in the DACH region, containing Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. "Customer identity has been getting a lot of traction, and our shared passion for that space really was the backbone of our decision to partner with Okta," says Martyn. "Combined with its hugely capable platform, Okta's commitment to the market was a really compelling opportunity for us to join forces." That's why, in 2020, Squareball became an official Okta partner.

Pioneering with Okta in a fast-moving industry

As Okta's first DACH-partner fully focused on the CIAM space, Squareball is leveraging Okta solutions to usher in a new era of secure and user-friendly identity-based customer experiences. For many of Squareball's customers, this evolution goes hand in hand with improvements of B2E identity and access management (IAM) processes. Okta's proficiency across B2E, B2B, and B2C spaces and the synergies between these identity solutions are an attractive mix for Squareball's customers.

"All our customers have very different use cases across workforce, B2B, and B2C projects, so something that resonates a lot with them is our ability to leverage overlaps between these spaces. Okta is versatile enough to provide the overall provisioning effort, enabling us to tackle identity challenges in all these different use cases."

CIAM is a growing, fast-moving industry that's quickly evolving. To stay ahead of the competition, the Squareball pioneers need to keep their fingers on the pulse of innovation. "In our daily talks with Okta's solution engineers, we get invaluable insights into the Okta platform itself, but also industry trends in the CIAM world," says Martyn. "We're right downstream of Okta's innovations, and that's a huge advantage of being an Okta partner."

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When Squareball starts working on a new project, the team begins with a series of discovery workshops aimed at laying out the challenges and aspirations of the customer. In detailed chats with stakeholders, decision makers, and employees, Squareball builds a holistic view of the business, ranging from in-depth tech and licensing requirements to getting to know the team. This commitment to customer-centricity creates an in-house atmosphere, making the Squareball experts a true part of the team.

As an Okta partner, Squareball can bring Okta's expertise into that mix from day one, helping each customer find the right solution, and implement it with maximum speed and efficiency. "When we plan a new Okta rollout, we don't have to start from scratch," says Martyn. "Our close involvement with Okta's engineering team and the world of resources available to us are an immediate benefit. This helps us create a roadmap quickly, achieving a faster ROI for our customers."

Thinking long-term, Martyn sees Squareball's role as an enabler, helping each customer manage their projects with internal resources. "Part of our engagement is to make sure that there's a knowledge transfer over time, that our customers are equipped to manage things autonomously. We're there as long as they need us, but our customers really value being able to handle their projects in-house eventually."

Quick rollouts with detailed identity roadmaps

Squareball, whose notable customers include Yara International, CAD-Ray and Zeotap, doesn't limit itself to a particular industry. Thanks to the team's varied experience across sectors, including banking and government, even highly regulated and high-security industries are Squareball's home turf.

Take the German company Zeotap who offer Customer Data Solutions, for example. Squareball supported its internal team from the discovery stage, through the proof-of-concept and licensing phases, to the rollout, keeping everything on track at a competitive schedule.

"With Okta, we were able to implement CIAM and Single Sign-On across multiple platforms, and achieve federated logins for their B2B business partners with different identity solutions," says Martyn. "Within six weeks, our customer had a build that was ready for release, which had everything to do with our close working relationship with the Okta team and its daily support."

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Within its first year as an Okta partner, Squareball has advanced from Okta Select to Premier status, all due to its dedicated roster of professionals. Seventeen strong in total, Squareball's team is divided into three parts: product engineering, UX, and identity management. The entire identity management team, both on the consultant and developer side, is fully Okta-certified at the highest level, demonstrating Squareball's proficiency with Okta solutions.

"Everything we do is oriented around choosing the right frameworks and technologies, and stitching them together to create the ideal product solution architecture for our customers," says Martyn. "Our Okta certifications are a great way for us to back up our expertise, proving to our customers that we're capable not just with the administration of the platform, but the scoping, architecture, and integration elements of Okta."

Building products with identity at their core

Much like CIAM itself, Squareball is quickly gaining steam, and all indicators are pointing towards growth in the coming years. To bolster this growth, the Berlin-based team is reaching out to other players in the field, building a network of like-minded experts in a niche that's slowly entering the mainstream.

For networking purposes, being an Okta partner really helps, says Martyn: "The partnership and encouragement we get from Okta really helps us drive up our visibility and expand our network. We simply have a lot more contacts, and we're more aware of the trends — not necessarily just in the identity realm, but the entire tech and digital space."

Launching products that excite people remains Squareball's main mission, and there's no shortage of exciting projects on the horizon. Recently, the company was hired as the product team for Clinux, an innovative cloud-based 3D CAD solution for the Dental Industry. "We'll act as the field service team, managing the project from concept through delivery," explains Martyn. "It's a brand-new solution, and getting as many people involved as possible will require a smooth and seamless customer experience — and with Okta as its identity backbone, that's what we can deliver."

A few years in, Squareball's journey is only beginning, as businesses are starting to recognise the benefits of combining product and identity credentials. Good news for Martyn and his team, who are already a few steps ahead: "As a product consultancy with identity focus, we're still a fairly new type of company. But with a proven track record of success, we've gained enough traction to think big. In this exciting and competitive space, our partnership with Okta gives us a great deal of confidence that we're moving into the right direction."

