



Collaborative eCommerce Pioneers

Business Challenge

- > To increase its market share for accessories, clothing, and gear, and streamline vehicle ordering for dealers, Kawasaki decided to develop a collaborative commerce solution that would offer its customers the convenience of online shopping, and remain consistent with the company's dealer-based structure.

Solution

- > Requisite Software developed a comprehensive business-to-business-to-consumer solution that allows Kawasaki's dealers and end customers to access all the information, services, and products they need at the touch of a button.

"At Kawasaki, we see collaborative commerce as an integral part of our business," says Bob Shepard, executive vice president of Kawasaki Motors Corp., USA (KMC). "We've been collaborating with our dealers and communicating directly to consumers for more than three years now." With an eCommerce platform for both its dealers and consumers in place, Kawasaki Motors Corp., USA offered one of the first online powersports websites. The launch was such a significant success – dealer visits to the site jumped from 4,400 per month to 16,000 – that KMC wanted to provide more functionality to dealers, while keeping the foundation in place for direct-to-consumer selling.

Finding the Right Solution

According to Shepard, "Our challenge was to identify a collaborative commerce solution that would work with our existing business model. We're a dealer-based business. We also wanted to build our brand and improve customer satisfaction." To find the ideal solution, the company created a six-person committee that included representatives from the major departments involved: Marketing, Sales, Operations, Technical Services, Information Systems, and Accessories.

At the project's inception, representatives from Requisite Software showed the committee what they had accomplished for other corporations with their advanced channel management suite. Impressed by the results, Kawasaki hired Requisite Software to perform a needs analysis. Together, the companies went on the road to visit Kawasaki dealers, explained what they wanted to do, and showed a prototype of the ideas. "Once the analysis was complete," says Shepard, "we decided the project was viable."

Working with Requisite Software, Kawasaki has launched two Internet sites – a business-to-business (B2B) site exclusively for dealers and an eCommerce B2B2C site that offers consumers the opportunity to explore and purchase Kawasaki's products and services. "(Our Internet presence) is as much a branding tool as it is a way to build vehicle and accessory sales," says Shepard.

Increasing Dealer Profits, Not Their Labor

KMC and Requisite Software created KMC's dealer site to reach a specific goal: make KMC the easiest manufacturer with which to conduct business. In addition to providing an online ordering system for parts and accessories, KMC now offers dealers new vehicle online ordering capabilities. Kawasaki manufactures several types of powersports vehicles including motorcycles, all-terrain vehicles, personal watercraft, and utility vehicles. To keep track of what vehicles were ordered, in what color, in a certain timeframe, for a certain price, dealers access Kawasaki's "k-dealer.com" extranet. Here, a dealer can instantly see the status of any order, view all completed orders, and see what the dealer has on flooring. This increased visibility provides dealers greater control over inventory, leading to increased sales and profits. This new addition joins a suite of products which allows the dealer visibility into the status of their varied transactions with Kawasaki, such as parts and accessory ordering, returns, backorders, consumer web accessory orders, and financial.

The site itself provides detailed warranty, repair, claim, and service information, plus all the latest technical bulletins. Dealers can also list their locations, hours of operation, managers' names, product lines, special services offered and other information about their business in the interactive dealer website template. Linked to the consumer site, this feature allows customers to quickly find KMC partners that sell and service particular lines by entering only a zip code or simply selecting and saving a preferred dealer.

Case Study

Results

- > Increases dealer visibility to vehicles
- > Increases sales of accessories, clothing, and gear through the website
- > Extends KMC's marketing reach with tens of thousands of registered consumers
- > Allows dealers to form new and closer relationships with consumers, both locally and nationwide
- > Provides dealers with increased income without the responsibilities of fulfillment
- > Increases satisfaction by allowing products to be purchased online, 24 hours a day
- > Offers new ways to build and extend the Kawasaki brand

Making It Easy for Customers to Order

The consumer site provides customers with valuable information as well as the ability to shop online. Customers can look through the accessory catalog, place orders, and learn more about their local dealers, all at the touch of a button. If a customer already owns a Kawasaki product, the VIN/HIN number for that product can be entered online and the site will automatically usher the customer to the catalog area, where items that complement that particular product are showcased. All on line orders are supported by individual dealers and KMC to assure high levels of customer satisfaction.

Using the Electronics Parts Catalog

Customers who do their own repairs can go to the electronic parts catalog for valuable do-it-yourself information. After identifying the parts they need through several easy-to-use search options, consumers can print out an illustration with part numbers to take to their local dealer. The site's national dealer locator allows the customer to review all relevant information about local dealerships— including business hours and the services they provide— before scheduling a convenient time to visit that dealership for the parts they need.

Launching the Sites

Kawasaki recognized the importance of formally introducing the solution to its dealer network before officially launching the new site. This process began with the education of its sales representatives, who visited the dealers and explained the benefits of eCommerce. Dealers were then given the option of participating in the program. KMC offered significant financial incentives to participating dealers, while the dealers themselves incurred no costs except those required for local Internet service and e-mail.

Coming Soon: Even Better Sites

What does the future hold for Kawasaki? "I look at the Internet project as a work in progress," says Shepard. "We know that we will be able to grow it, enhance it—make it even better as time goes on. And we know that Requisite Software will be a valuable part of that."

About Requisite Software

Requisite Software, Inc. is a provider of industry-leading Channel Management and eCommerce solutions that enable companies to effectively market, sell and service their products to end customers via their channel partners. Requisite Software enables industry-defining enterprises such as Kawasaki, Lexmark, Motorola and Nortel Networks to drive revenue throughout their entire channel. More information can be found at www.requisite.com.

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