IBM

Multimedia Design Company Energizes Web Commerce with Domino.Merchant

Capturing more market attention while conserving capital is an age-old puzzle of commerce, especially for a young and growing business like Rage Systems, Inc. Founded in 1994, Rage Systems develops creative corporate and product identity programs, including graphic designs, interactive videos, and CD-ROMs for promotional events, trade show booths, online commercials, and Web sites.

"We would have had to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to get the same exposure by other means. Domino is really an unbelievable platform — the costs associated with it are insignificant compared with the results that we get."

—*Brad Munroe, President of Rage Systems, Inc.*

The Shopping Rage

Product sales were the impetus behind jumping on the e-business bandwagon. After one of Rage's promotional T-shirts became increasingly popular, more and more company time was spent in fielding calls for the must-have item. Although originally planned to strut the company's design know-how, the custom T-shirts ended up generating a substantial source of income. "Using Domino.Merchant, our Lotus Business Partner, Triumph Technologies, created an immediate online storefront for us that was very affordable," says Brad Munroe, president of the Massachusetts-based multimedia design company. "One day we were a traditional business, and the next we advanced to a Web-savvy company with a state-of-the art e-commerce solution."

Not wanting to hire more people to take T-shirt orders, Munroe saw this situation as an opportunity to switch from the time-consuming 1-800 approach to a Web-based storefront that permitted customers a quick and easy means of ordering custom merchandise.

Munroe explains that without the Domino-powered site, "I'd need at least 10 people just to fill all the orders, to handle all the phone calls, and to do all the processing between the credit card companies. The cost associated with the phone lines themselves and having someone sit and answer phones is well over $2,000 a month."

Within three months of the site launch in January 1997, clothing design revenue quadrupled that of the previous year. More importantly to Munroe, however, was the exposure to potential clients for a fraction of conventional marketing costs. Munroe adds, "We would have had to spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to get the same

Application	Secure online ordering; day-to-day client interaction
Business Value	400% increase in clothing revenue; decreased operating costs
Software	Lotus Domino Lotus Domino.Merchant

Rage Systems' Web-based store front provides customers a quick and easy way to order custom merchandise.

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Domino.Merchant — Trend in the Making

Easy customization was key in deciding to implement Domino.Merchant for the Rage Systems project. "I looked at Netscape and some other products, but my friends who are working that space all told me that Lotus is so far ahead in Web commerce technology and relationships that Domino was the best way for me to go," Munroe says.

End users are able to shop at the Domino.Merchant site using a shopping cart, adding, deleting, reviewing, and modifying potential purchases using any Web browser. They are able to navigate effortlessly through the product catalog pages, review their order status and purchasing history, and access links to related products. In turn, site managers are able to configure Domino.Merchant to allow shoppers to browse anonymously or to require shoppers to identify themselves before access is granted.

Lotus Premium Business Partner Triumph Technologies, having just received a beta copy of the new program, activated an operational site in only three days. Less than two weeks later, Rage had a fully integrated Web site in place, complete with secure credit card transactions for taking product orders. "This was our first experience using Domino.Merchant," explains Peter Hawtrey, director of Triumph Technologies Collaborative Solutions Group. "It was appealing to us because it provides virtually risk-free templates for building a site that can include a catalog with automatic credit card processing."

Domino also eliminates the need for HTML coding. Thus, anyone in the company with authoring privileges can edit content to intranet pages, giving them an immediacy that contributes to dynamic internal communications. "I was so impressed with the ability to just sit down and generate a site without really needing to understand all the technology behind it," Munroe says. "Since we can change our site daily, we are able to keep it more appealing to our customers. Even if I'm out

in Colorado skiing, I can log onto the page over the Web and make changes right away."

A Fashionable Investment

Expanding on the Domino investment, Munroe saw an obvious advantage to using the site for presenting and reviewing new designs. Web-based interaction speeds up the entire production process by allowing instant feedback from designers and clients — anytime, anywhere — not to mention the enormous savings in copying and shipping costs related to the client approval process.

Design companies such as Rage Systems have traditionally relied on professional print shops and courier services to exchange updated copies of the latest projects. The time and financial expenditures of this conventional approach added up quickly. However, after moving much of Rage's day-to-day client interaction onto the Web, the site rapidly demonstrated the company could not only make money, but save money as well.

"If an artist has to go to a copy shop and get a full 4-color output, it's $150 for one output," Munroe explains. "If a job has four or five illustrations, it cost us $1,000 in output and shipping. With Domino, we can share designs instantaneously with no additional cost."

Taking the Net by Storm

Quality control and customer relations at Rage Systems have strengthened as a direct result of the Domino.Merchant solution. Munroe says, "I can control the company's image, and I can control our response back to people. I don't have to worry about how a person answers the phone, if they are describing things correctly, or if they are treating people correctly."

With more uniform servicing capabilities now in place, Rage has definitely won points with its customers. "I'm embracing this technology, so we have a nicer place for clients to visit and an easier way for them to do business," Munroe says. "The customers who've seen it are totally excited because they can easily envision the value Rage Systems can bring to their business."

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