

# Power Great Lakes drives engine sales with WebSphere Commerce Suite.

## Overview

■ **Challenge**

Provide outstanding service on routine inquiries and orders while reducing administrative overhead

■ **Solution**

PowerGreatLakes.com, a B2B Web site for selling Perkins engines and parts and answering inquiries

■ **Why IBM?**

Company consulted with other e-commerce site owners, who recommended WebSphere® Commerce Suite for fast ROI and easy integration with legacy AS/400®

■ **Key Business Benefits**

Projected 100% ROI in 1 year; 50% reduction in development time; 31% reduction in telephone activity

■ **Business Partner**

Perficient



Power Great Lakes and IBM Business Partner Perficient created an easy-to-search online store for engines and parts with IBM WebSphere Commerce Suite, Version 5.1.

Whether or not the public power grids have enough electricity to meet demand, there's always power aplenty at Power Great Lakes (PGL), Inc. The Wood Dale, Illinois-based company is the world's largest distributor of Perkins diesel engines and parts as well as a supplier of generators and heavy equipment to OEMs in the construction and agriculture industries.

*“Our WebSphere Commerce Suite solution meets our current and future needs. All the necessary tools are included—we just have to turn them on.”*

*—Russ Nardi, Marketing Manager, Power Great Lakes, Inc.*

## ***e-business—accelerating the pace of business and the pace of change***

---

### **Key Components**

---

#### *Software*

- IBM WebSphere Commerce Suite, Start Edition, V5.1
- IBM WebSphere Application Server, Advanced Edition
- IBM DB2® Universal Database™ for AS/400 and Windows NT®
- IBM VisualAge® for Java™

#### *Servers*

- IBM AS/400
- 

PGL sells to approximately 1,000 OEM dealers within its 13-state territory. In addition, PGL shares its inventory with 10 other competing, authorized Perkins distributors in the U.S. The rationale for cooperating with competitors is easy to understand in light of the longevity of Perkins engines. Of the 15 million Perkins engines built since the company started manufacturing in 1932, one-third are still running. An owner in another territory is more likely to move than buy a replacement Perkins engine, and owners who move into PGL's territory become customers for after-market parts that PGL's dealers can serve.

However, until recently, it was difficult for PGL to keep up with the volume of calls it was receiving from its dealers and other Perkins distributors. PGL had 7 customer service reps taking as many as 400 calls a day. They took orders and answered product availability and order status inquiries. Says Russ Nardi, marketing manager, PGL, "It was very important that we provide outstanding, prompt service to all our callers—but we had to reduce the cost of doing so. In addition, we needed to enable our CSRs to spend more time proactively calling dealers to encourage larger, consolidated orders—and, in the process, generating incremental revenue. The company decided it was time to leverage the power of e-commerce technology to lighten the workload on its staff. Two other divisions at PGL, one focused on distributing General Motors industrial engines and the other a B2C provider of internal engine parts for everything from classic cars to today's high-tech engines, also decided to join in a combined effort to Web-enable the company's businesses with three separate sites.

Wanting to find packaged software for its e-commerce site that would quickly get the venture to market with all the necessary functionality, PGL consulted with other companies in similar lines of business and found that they overwhelmingly recommended IBM WebSphere Commerce Suite, Advanced Edition. PGL did not have the in-house IT skills to implement a robust e-commerce solution based on Java technology, so the company proceeded to review the bids of several e-commerce solution providers. As the company searched for a technology partner, it knew it needed a firm with a proven track record in delivering solutions

*“It was very important that we provide outstanding, prompt service to all our callers—but we had to reduce the cost of doing so. In addition, we needed to enable our CSRs to spend more time proactively ... generating incremental revenue.”*

*—Russ Nardi*

centered around WebSphere Commerce Suite. PGL chose IBM Premier Business Partner Perficient for its ability to quickly, cost-effectively enable WebSphere Commerce Suite sites. Says Nardi, "Perficient was very much in tune with what we wanted to do. They had actually designed another Web site that we liked—for a hardware company—that was very similar to what we had in mind."

The PGL online store for Perkins engines and parts was built in less than three months. It will achieve a 100 percent ROI within 12 months, according to Nardi, and routine inventory inquiries already have been reduced by 31 percent. In addition, comments Nardi, "We were pleasantly surprised to discover that many of the Java objects used for [www.powergreatlakes.com](http://www.powergreatlakes.com) could be reused for the company's other two sites, reducing the development time and costs."

#### **Out-of-the-box functionality for present and future needs**

Taking advantage of WebSphere Commerce Suite's built-in security features allows PGL dealers and distributors to securely log on to the Web site and check the availability of parts, place orders and pay for them. WebSphere Commerce Suite, Start Edition, Version 5.1, running on a Windows NT server, provides all the e-commerce functions—inventory lookup, ordering and payment, order-status checking and e-mail order verification. IBM DB2 Universal Database, running on the same server, contains descriptions, prices and in-stock quantities for approximately 40,000 SKUs. Perficient used much of the out-of-the box functionality of WebSphere Commerce Suite—minimizing custom development and keeping costs affordable for PGL.

To make sure inventory information is up-to-date and accurate, PGL uses a batch process to update the e-commerce database with the latest information from DB2 Universal Database on PGL's backend AS/400 server. PGL plans to update its AS/400 server to an IBM **@server** iSeries™ and deliver realtime inventory information to the Web site using connectors provided with WebSphere Commerce Suite. When that happens, order information will flow automatically from the Web site to the ERP system, to PGL's Vantage logistics system, which resides on a separate Windows NT server.

*"We were looking for a way to start small and then get bigger over time, and IBM was the only company with a roadmap for doing just that. We're going to be drawing on the rich array of tools provided with WebSphere Commerce Suite to enhance our e-commerce solution for a long time to come."*

*—Russ Nardi*



*Distributors of Perkins engines anywhere in the U.S. can query the Power Great Lakes Web site for product availability.*

Comments Nardi, "We decided to start with the basic functionality that would make it easier to serve our customers. In future stages, we can integrate the pieces more tightly. WebSphere Commerce Suite meets our current and future needs. All the necessary tools are included—we just have to turn them on."

### **All-Java technology saves time**

With the prebuilt Java 2 Platform, Enterprise Edition (J2EE) transaction components of WebSphere Commerce Suite, Perficient created a standards-based architecture for business transactions and presentation logic. By clicking on the Web site options, users invoke a servlet that calls an Enterprise JavaBean (EJB) which retrieves XML data from the database. IBM WebSphere Application Server parses the data into JavaServer Pages (JSP) for presentation to the Web browser as HTML pages.

Perficient used WebSphere Application Server as a Java runtime environment for Java objects. To test its JSP and EJB components, Perficient relied heavily on IBM VisualAge for Java.

Says Dan Cahill, senior account manager for Perficient, "By re-using the Java objects, we've been able to save at least 50 percent on the development cycle, a figure which keeps improving. Each new site that we implement for PGL's other divisions is taking us half the time of the previous site, and developing and deploying new applications for PGL's existing sites is faster and simpler using this standards-based approach."

### **Glowing references for WebSphere Commerce Suite**

The Web site owners contacted by PGL during its evaluation period consistently favored WebSphere Commerce Suite. Their consensus was that IBM WebSphere Commerce Suite provided the most robust e-commerce functionality for the least investment and was the easiest to integrate with PGL's AS/400 applications. "We were looking for a way to start small and then get bigger over time, and IBM was the only company with a roadmap for doing just that," comments Nardi. "We're going to be drawing on the rich array of tools provided with WebSphere Commerce Suite to enhance our e-commerce solution for a long time to come."

### **For more information**

Please contact your IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner.

Visit us at: [ibm.com/e-business](http://ibm.com/e-business)

For more information about Power Great Lakes and Perficient, visit:  
[www.powergreatlakes.com](http://www.powergreatlakes.com)  
[www.perficient.com](http://www.perficient.com)



© Copyright IBM Corporation 2001

IBM Corporation  
Software Group  
Route 100  
Somers, New York 10589  
U.S.A.

Printed in the United States of America  
12-01  
All Rights Reserved

AS/400, DB2, DB2 Universal Database, the e-business logo, IBM, the IBM logo, iSeries, VisualAge and WebSphere are trademarks or registered trademarks of International Business Machines Corporation in the United States, other countries or both.

Windows NT is a registered trademark of Microsoft Corporation in the United States, other countries or both.

Java and all Java-based trademarks are trademarks of Sun Microsystems, Inc. in the United States, other countries or both.

Other company, product or service names may be trademarks or service marks of others.

This case study illustrates how one IBM customer uses IBM products. Many factors have contributed to the result and benefits described. IBM does not guarantee comparable results. All information contained herein was provided by the featured IBM customer. IBM does not attest to its accuracy.

References in this publication to IBM products or services do not imply that IBM intends to make them available in all countries in which IBM operates.



Printed in the United States on recycled paper containing 10% recovered post-consumer fiber.



G325-1907-00