Newsletter Vol. 9 - Introduction

Softengine News is dedicated to keeping you up to date with the latest information regarding SAP Business One systems, Softengine solutions and Best Business Practices.

What's New?

Spotlight on Product – Softengine eCommerce (webStore)

Softengine eCommerce Magento Solution lets companies increase their sales and market reach on the Internet while being connected to their SAP Business One.

Even as companies cut back on expenses there remains the imperative need to increase sales and marketing. Magento is an eCommerce technology platform that let's your company do both. It is high-powered and low-cost. The Magento eCommerce software combines the flexibility of open-source technology with industry-leading features to provide merchants unprecedented control over store operations. Softengine delivers the superior ERP business management system, SAP Business One, combined with a professional Web store that is search engine optimized for a greater retail presence on the Internet.

- Versatility and Freedom; Control every facet of your store, from merchandising to promotions and more. There are no limits to creativity with Magento.
- Attract + Convert = Growth; Magento's SEO features and user experience will attract and convert more qualified customers, leading to business growth.
- Integration with SAP Business One; no need to re-enter customer, inventory, sales order, payment and even current pricing; our Magento Integration will access it in real-time.

Customer Success Story – StyleWest

Whether life's a beach or a puddle, it's all the same to StyleWest. The Oxnard, California, company supplies flip-flops, swimwear, and coordinated rainwear to high-fashion retailers across the United States. But while the company was making a big splash in chic circles, behind the scenes it was mired in an IT swamp. Management solved the problem in characteristic fashion, by raising the umbrella of the SAP® Business One application over the whole company and coordinating operations under it.

As the business grew, however, so did its IT problems. "Our customer service department was the heaviest user of the platform, which was QuickBooks," recalls Dave Sengstaken, president of StyleWest. "And we had really pushed it to the max. We had as many users as it would accommodate, and the files were so big that the system was really getting bogged down. So entering an order, for example, was an excruciatingly slow operation. The system was also prone to crashing, particularly as our file got larger and larger." Because StyleWest was representing different brands, the company needed a separate file for each to see how that particular brand was performing. Merging all that data to provide a consolidated view of the company was another challenge.

Professional Foundation
Faced with inefficiencies, multiple instances of software, and unconsolidated data, StyleWest management decided it was time to take action. They went into the market to look for a more capable replacement for the software they had outgrown.

"We had two goals in mind," says Robert Angstadt, director of operations at StyleWest. "We needed a system that was professional and that had a foundation of generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).Our previous system was well known but not preferred by banks and accountants for the size the company had become."

Consolidated

The other goal Angstadt had in mind was to consolidate the entire company on one platform. "I wanted software that had one database that could support multiple divisions. It had to let us run reports and view each division individually, review its merits, and make decisions accordingly, and then look at the big picture of the company as a whole."

StyleWest reviewed several packages, including the next step up in the QuickBooks line, as well as Sage, MAS 90, and SAP Business One. "StyleWest wanted a system that it could grow with, that would consolidate the companies and take care of all its informational needs into the foreseeable future," says Barry Lederman, vice president of business development, Softengine Inc., an SAP gold partner. "And of course, the company wanted this at the lowest possible cost and the quickest possible delivery."

Adds Angstadt, "Softengine was really willing to work with us to get us up and running quickly and to adapt the way they worked to our needs. Certainly it was the most professional of all the organizations that spoke with us."

High Percentage of Needs Met

"We were able to demonstrate to the people at StyleWest that our system takes care of a very high percentage of their needs right out of the box," says Lederman. "Then, when they finally made their decision, they wanted it implemented right now." Softengine delivered. The company quoted the system on February 26, completed and tested the system on March 22, delivered user training and other requirements, and went live the first week in April. Essentially, it was a one-month timeline to implementation. "Softengine was there to hold our hand and listen to our concerns, both from a budgetary and customization standpoint," says Angstadt. "Softengine staff adapted their schedule to fit with what we were trying to accomplish. They were very flexible and really tried to have our best interests in mind in installing and tailoring the system to our needs."

Shining Success

"All the other competitors were very skeptical that this implementation could be done in such a short period of time," adds Sengstaken. "And that was Softengine's shining success, meeting the time frame that it had committed to."

One Umbrella

Wrapping up, Sengstaken surveys the new environment at StyleWest. "If you look at where we started, the departments were very much like a bunch of silos, a patchwork of different functions and different data – accounting, sales, inventory, financials, marketing and so forth. Everything was pieced together with spreadsheets and databases. SAP Business One really unified StyleWest; it pulled together all our different departments and functions under one umbrella. So now we'll have much improved, up-to-the-minute information at hand to help us make much better business decisions down the road."

Are You a Best-Run Business?

Increasing Profits through eCommerce

But as fear of a recession spurs a renewed interest in value -- and as the strategic mission of IT shifts from saving money on back-office functions to enhancing revenue -- "return on investment" has taken on new meanings and importance. Computerworld

According to the Wal-Mart CEO, it is $225,000 per Customer. eCommerce provides an opportunity to achieve "Customer Lifetime Value" by any "Best-Run Business".

•   Open Your Business 24/7 without additional order desk and customer service staff
•   Involve Your Customers & Sales Staff using self-service to optimize customer relationships
•   Close interaction with your customers via a self-service portal is not only a cost effective and profitable strategy - it is a key part of long-term customer retention. By systematically engaging your customers, you will have "customer satisfaction".

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