

## nChannel Case Study

# Homage

Vintage-Inspired Retailer, Homage, Selects nChannel to Improve Reporting and Order Fulfillment Efficiencies Company-Wide

### Overview

#### Country or Region

USA

#### Industry

Homage is a vintage-inspired apparel company with retail locations and online stores.

#### Customer Profile

Homage has created over 5,000 retro-inspired styles that are worn by customers in every state.

#### Business Situation

Homage was experiencing double-digit year over year growth with hefty increases during the holidays. They needed new technology to keep up with customer demands.

#### Solution

nChannel was chosen because they provided a single view of all their sales channels. Timely information allows them to react more readily to the market and provide better customer service.

#### Benefits

- Sync and updates inventory and pricing across their warehouse and stores in real-time to eliminate overselling
- Customized order management and fulfillment workflows based on key actions
- Provides a unified view of all orders and inventory by product, category, sales, etc.
- Timely, accurate data is immediately actionable for store associates

Vintage-inspired apparel company, Homage made a promise to its customers to deliver retro inspired gear that connects people through humor and amazing moments in history. From thrift stores to eBay to screen-printing tees out of his parent's home, Founder Ryan Vesler built a brand that now spans seven retail locations between Ohio, Michigan and Pennsylvania and bolstered by an eCommerce store that serves as a time warp through history. Today, Homage has created over five-thousand styles that are worn by customers in every state and throughout the world.

### The Challenge

Despite Homage's connection to the past, they needed their technology to keep up with the customer demands of the future, and that meant easy, accurate ordering coupled with on-time delivery to their customers. Homage was experiencing double-digit growth year over year with hefty increases over the holiday season. In fact, over 20% of their revenue resulted from the period between Black Friday and Christmas. Their old, manual-laden systems couldn't keep up with the increased customer demand resulting in less than ideal inventory management, increased customer calls, and lost sales. They needed a system upgrade to ensure they could deliver on their brand promise.

Homage's legacy system consisted of Quickbooks for accounting, Shopify for eCommerce, and OpSuite for point-of-sale (POS). However, none of

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these systems talked to each other resulting in a very manual reporting process that centered on a series of Excel spreadsheets to manage their retail operations online and in-store. With so many disparate data sources, information was rarely timely, accurate or immediately actionable for store associates and management teams, making it difficult to perform pertinent tasks like knowing when to move inventory from one location to another, when to reprint or mark down products or how to market in one region versus another.

*“What we needed was a single source of the truth, so we could accurately answer two simple, yet critical questions: How many of these shirts did we sell and how many of each t-shirt do we have? Unfortunately, we didn’t have a trusted repository of this information or the real-time intelligence needed by our teams.” - Steve Werman, VP of Strategy & Finance, Homage*

## The Solution

To better understand the appropriate levers to push and pull to increase sales and customer satisfaction, Homage needed to facilitate quicker decision making. Gaining greater visibility into their purchasing data would shore up their retail operations and empower store associates to quickly search, order, and ship items from another location all while the customer is in-store.

Creating a platform that would deliver a single version of the truth and enable these transactions meant updating their technology stack to perform three key tasks:

1. Centralize information across their multiple systems
2. Provide one point of control for operations
3. Deliver better information down the supply chain

## Building the New Stack

First, Homage selected a new ERP and POS vendor to manage their planning, purchasing, inventory, sales, marketing, and finance functions. They selected cloud-based provider, NetSuite to replace QuickBooks and OpSuite. They decided to forgo NetSuite’s built-in eCommerce solution and stick with Shopify since its robust app store, scalability, and user-friendly interface enabled easy platform expansion. However, to tie Shopify’s ecommerce functionality to NetSuite’s ERP and POS systems, they needed a connector to integrate the two platforms and provide a single interface from which to access and analyze data.

For the Shopify/NetSuite integration, the connector needed to perform the following functions:

1. Sync and update inventory and pricing across their warehouse and stores in real-time to ensure their stock equaled committed inventory.
2. Customize order management and fulfillment workflows based on key actions including matching and updating customer account information, sales order numbers, discounts, shipping cost, tracking and attribution, and order status. It also needed to allow gift card payments within NetSuite.

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3. Deliver a unified view of all orders and inventory by product, category, sales, etc. to map KPIs to actual sales and trigger events like reprints or skip sales from store to store.

### Selecting a Partner

Homage evaluated three integration providers, Celigo, FarApp, and nChannel against their three key requirements. Beyond nChannel's clear technical capabilities, Homage was impressed with nChannel's like-minded leadership and community values. With both nChannel and Homage winning the 2016 Business First Award for one of the Top 50 Fastest Growing Companies in Columbus, Ohio, Homage wanted an A-player with successful roots in Columbus who thrived on providing high-touch customer service similar to that of Homage. Since nChannel already had proof of concept from many high-profile clients and a strong, well-known leadership team that was ready to sit side-by-side with them during implementation, nChannel became their vendor of choice in March 2016.

### The Results

Today Homage processes thousands of weekly orders enabled by nChannel's ability to transfer item, customer, order info, inventory, and shipping information seamlessly and accurately between Shopify and NetSuite. They now have a single view of all their channels across the web and their retail locations - a system that has transformed how the customer service, finance, eCommerce, merchandising, receiving and distribution, operations and marketing teams interact with each other and their customers. With timely

information, they can react more readily to the market, and move, reprint, or markdown inventory based on sales while ensuring their customer service department spends their valuable time on customer satisfaction tasks rather than mundane activities like searching for inventory.

Moreover, Homage store associates gained increased efficiencies from the nChannel integration. With complete visibility into their total inventory, they can process orders directly from their warehouse for delivery if it's not available at their particular location. Additionally, they have greatly reduced the risk of overstocking products or selling out-of-stock inventory which in the past resulted in loss of sales and customer dissatisfaction.

**Real-time reporting is mission critical for Homage. Generating reports no longer takes hours, but minutes. nChannel provides our team with ready access to the data we need to better react to events happening with our customers. This helps us do a much better job of processing information so we can make impactful changes to the business. Most importantly, the increased efficiency that we experience company-wide with nChannel allows us to focus on making products that stay true to our mission to Connect and Inspire." - Steve Werman**