

nChannel Case Study

Mike's Archery

Mike's Archery Hits Tough Targets with the nChannel Platform

Overview

Country or Region

USA and worldwide

Industry

Multichannel retailer selling complete range of archery equipment and accessories.

Customer Profile

Mail and phone orders, a website, eBay and a partnered sub-site propelled this six-person company to more than 10 percent annual growth and 25,000 purchases.

Business Situation

Filing and billing up to 400 transactions per day kept staff one hour late for each hour of the business day.

Solution

nChannel's multichannel retailer platform now streamlines the many tasks necessary to standardize orders from every venue, fill them rapidly and invoice efficiently.

Benefits

- Nine hours invoicing on busy days has dropped by two-thirds to three hours.
- Hazardous keystroke errors have been eliminated, resulting in consistent billing, accurate orders and correct addressing.
- Three minutes per invoice now takes 15 to 20 seconds.
- Staff pursue business expansion rather than data entry.

Culture and Retail Philosophy

Mike Dickess founded Mike's Archery Inc. (MAI) in Ironton, Ohio, in 1971 as a hobby business born of his love for archery and bow hunting. In recent years, MAI has consistently achieved double-digit growth, now reaching 25,000 annual transactions, 6,000 SKUs and a footprint of 6,500 square feet in four locations.

Early on as the business grew, family members joined in to help serve thousands of archers. By 1980, MAI had begun selling wholesale. The company specialized in higher-quality products, quick order response time and knowledgeable support. Bundling several products into a discounted package, or kits, was one of many helpful marketing strategies.

Today, Bryan Dickess, Participating Owner and General Manager, runs this lean, multichannel business. Nearly all orders come in by web and phone. About 1,000 SKUs sell online. Sales venues include its online store, eBay and a dedicated, grant-driven sub-site. Walk-ins occasionally knock on the door.

Approximately 85 percent of transactions are retail; the remainder are wholesale to more than 200 retailers and overseas accounts. The highest day's orders hit 400, and days of 300 are common during busy seasons; 100 is average.

One marketing coup was being selected as sole supplier to the National Rifle Association's (NRA) archery-only, passworded web store. NRA provides grants for archery equipment to scouting, 4-H Clubs, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, YMCAs and other youth organizations. Grants include credit redeemable at MAI's private pages on the NRA site.

nChannel Case Study

Mike's Archery

With the help of family members, Bryan manages all this from a single store. Two warehouses and office space tucked into a residence round out MAI's facilities.

Bryan adds, "Now, try hitting these expansion and service targets with a payroll of six and no point-of-sale system!"

To continue beating our goal of 10 percent annual growth—and still have a profit margin—we had to streamline."

- Bryan Dickess
Owner and General Manager, Mike's Archery

Needs, Pains and Aspirations

"Running as lean as we do requires efficiencies that earlier software didn't deliver," Bryan points out. "Every online order had to be manually invoiced into Sage MAS 90. Some days, we'd spend nine hours invoicing.

"Staff always stayed late. I worked all hours. Mom worked nights and weekends. Nine hours open on a busy day took us nine hours of invoicing. All those keystrokes, even with cut and paste, invited errors. Wrong addresses, product shipping accuracy, inventory counts and even pricing were at risk.

"To continue beating our goal of 10 percent annual growth—and still have a profit margin—we had to streamline," he says. "NRA was very bullish on our using nChannel to give the visibility it required.

"NRA had to verify on-hand inventory counts in my system so youth groups wouldn't be disappointed by stockouts. When NRA emails us a PO, we pick and ship fast. But first we had to manually enter the order into invoicing, and then later verify we had actually shipped it by providing tracking numbers.

"Soon we realized the potential growth benefits of having complete cross-platform visibility and connectivity. nChannel truly empowered our 10-percent-plus annual growth goals."

Implementing nChannel

"Our installation went quickly. It didn't take long at all," says Bryan. "nChannel immediately sent our eBay and web store sales directly into MAI's Sage MAS 90, so we no longer have to re-enter every order."

Currently, integration into new Sage 100 ERP software is in progress. Another planned change will be MAI's upgrade to Magento eCommerce, another integration where nChannel solutions shine in many retail niches. nChannel staff will assist in those conversions.

MAI installed nChannel in the standard eCommerce integration, where it helps manage and distribute a myriad of data on orders, tender, customers, items, inventory counts, shipping and tracking.

"Because no one here is technical," explains Bryan, "nChannel did our complete installation with help from Sage. The nChannel staff is technically excellent and dedicated to results. They return after-hours calls and stay up late for us."

nChannel Case Study

Mike's Archery

« **Without nChannel, invoicing took nine hours. With nChannel—three hours or less.** »

- Bryan Dickess
Owner and General Manager, Mike's Archery

Better Income, Savings and Focus

"Without nChannel quietly doing its job, today's 300 orders would never have gotten done," says Bryan. "Everything would have shipped, but we couldn't have invoiced it all. Billing once took three minutes per order. Now it's 15 to 20 seconds. Without nChannel, invoicing took nine hours. With nChannel—three hours or less.

"There's no question. We could not have achieved this growth without our nChannel platform. It paid for itself fast. Now it saves hours and money every day.

"It's made us more efficient with negligible errors, and saves us hours of keystrokes. We didn't reduce staff. Now we assign them to cover all the other bases retailers need to cover. So, we're expanding our volume and our sales niches without adding staff.

"Next year we'll make nChannel work even harder on Amazon and our new eCommerce site.

"I also thank nChannel because Mom doesn't need to work till 10 or 11 at night, or Saturdays, I don't do invoices and we can all have dinners together more often!"

For More Information

For more information about Mike's Archery, Inc., call 888-948-0142 or visit its website at: www.mikesarchery.com. 2630 State Route 141, Ironton, Ohio 45638

For more information about nChannel products and services, call 844-533-1333 or visit its website at: www.nchannel.com. 8760 Orion Place, Suite 210, Columbus, Ohio 43240

« **There's no question. We could not have achieved this growth without our nChannel platform. It paid for itself fast. Now it saves hours and money every day.** »

- Bryan Dickess
Owner and General Manager, Mike's Archery

Connect. Manage. Grow.

www.nChannel.com

