Century Novelty

Century Novelty Uses Integration as Key Differentiation Tool To Compete with Major Retailers

Overview

Country or Region
USA

Industry
Century Novelty is the largest online Halloween retailer and bingo supplier.

Customer Profile
With 6,500 products, Century Novelty sells exclusively online.

Business Situation
To grow their online presence, Century Novelty wanted to focus on their branded website to increase their magins and define their niche in their market by testing new strategies and tools through eCommerce integration.

Solution
nChannel integrated Shopify Plus and OrderMotion for Century Novelty to ensure greater accuracy between online sales channels.

Benefits
- Migrated from in-house eCommerce platform to Shopify Plus
- Eliminate manual tracking and free up more budget for marketing optimization
- Offer bulk discounts to customers and handle bulk orders with accuracy
- Respond on demand and provide same day shipping to select locations

Overview

Century Novelty first opened their doors in 1951 supplying traveling carnivals with redemption prizes in Southeast Michigan. It soon became the largest Halloween retailer and bingo supplier dominating the market during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s. In 1999, Century Novelty took a bold step and launched its first website thereby expanding Century's Novelty's reach and profits. In 2006, Century Novelty closed its showroom doors and moved the store fully online. Just three years later, they were selected as an Internet Retailer Hot 100 for innovation in eCommerce and earned Multichannel Merchant Magazine's Silver Web Channel Award for website excellence two years in a row. They also placed on the INC 500 in 2009 and 2010 and were named the 39th fastest growing retailer in the country.

Challenge

Innovators in their own right, Century Novelty was also an early adopter of marketplace selling and credits that channel, in part, for their tremendous growth. Now that the field is crowded, Century Novelty decided to focus more of its efforts

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on www.centurynovelty.com to increase their margins and better define their niche in their market. To do so, Century Novelty needed a nimble eCommerce platform that could scale as they expanded their offerings and support flexible integrations as they tested new strategies and tools to grow their online presence.

Solution

Century Novelty's eCommerce legacy website was built on a closed platform, so their transition required a heavy lift. They have a catalog of over 6,500 products and hold large stocks of inventory on the floor of their Michigan warehouse. Their unique advantage is their ability to offer bulk discounts and respond on demand including providing same day shipping to select locations. To highlight their key attributes, they needed to develop a system that could handle large-scale inventory management, bulk orders and extensive catalog offerings.

"Competition is stiff with Amazon and Walmart leading the way, and now rankings are even more expensive. But we can do what the big guys can't. We offer a better selection, larger quantities, a more personalized experience and same day shipping. We needed to upgrade our technology to take advantage of the apps and tools that would help us more affordably and effectively differentiate our offerings so we could focus on our strengths." - Kyle Madigan, Vice President of Century Novelty

Century Novelty reviewed fifteen eCommerce vendors that supported open connectivity to the key apps they planned to integrate. They wanted to continue using OrderMotion as their ERP as

it had successfully served as the backbone of their operations for many years. However, after selecting Shopify Plus as their new platform, they needed a way to connect the data between the two systems. They were referred to nChannel by their web developer. After an exploratory call, Century Novelty decided that nChannel would serve as the conduit for syncing orders, items, customer data, sales history and vendor data between Shopify Plus and OrderMotion.

Results

Century Novelty's strategy to move to more open technology that would exploit their inherent advantages proved to be the right move. Century Novelty was able to:

- Successfully migrate from a proprietary, in-house ecommerce platform that offered limited flexibility and interconnectivity to a scalable, hassle-free solution with Shopify Plus.

- Create a completely integrated multichannel environment using nChannel to automatically sync and manage items, orders, and inventory in real-time between Shopify Plus and OrderMotion. This ensures greater accuracy between their online sales channels and eliminates manual tracking.

- Launch a fully connected and responsive eCommerce site that today processes over 1,000 orders per month and reaches up to 2,500 unique visitors per day.

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- Free up more of their monthly budget for marketing optimization including search, retargeting, and product reviews that are critical in differentiating the Century Novelty experience from Amazon, Walmart, Jet and Google.

- Launch a more robust, personalized social experience that capitalizes on the seasonality of their business while generating brand enthusiasts who power positive reviews and rankings.

Today, Century Novelty has even more room to grow their online business despite the competition. As a third-generation family-owned business, Century Novelty has a long history of building community and creating brand advocates for over 67 years around its brand. Known for their expansive and unique catalog of party favors, supplies and decorations, Century Novelty's focus on fun will fuel the next phase of their retail operations, including a planned website redesign in the next two years. By transforming their backend operations and integrating their systems, Century Novelty is able to iterate based on their learnings in furtherance of their brand's mission - to help people all over the world make memorable moments.

"Uptime, site speed and load time are all better which makes for a more streamlined customer experience. On the backend, everything surrounding orders and products, customers and website activity is now captured and working together seamlessly with the help of the nChannel connector. We don't have to talk to nChannel often so that means it's working as it should be. They are essentially our silent partner." Thank you to the nChannel support team for their tactical execution and for working so closely with us throughout our engagement. "

- Kyle Madigan, Vice President of Century Novelty