

REPAIRCLINIC.COM

Solution Overview

Industry

Retail
Appliance Repair

Scenario

RepairClinic.com (RCC) needed to expand their business and better serve more customers by selling appliance repair parts and accessories over the Internet.

Company Profile

RCC sells appliance parts and provides free appliance repair advice through the Internet.

Benefits

Microsoft Great Plains eCommerce has taken RCC from being a regional to a National distributor. The seamless integration with eEnterprise allowed RCC to focus on their pertinent business issues. RCC was given the personal service that allowed them to get online most effectively and efficiently.

Software Used

Microsoft Great Plains eEnterprise
Financial Series
Distribution Series
Purchasing series
E-commerce Series
Customization/Integration Tools
FRx Financial Reporting

Microsoft SQL Server 7.0
Microsoft NT Server
Microsoft Site Server Commerce Edition 0

After 10 years of operating his own appliance repair company, Chris Hall knew that growing his business meant he would have to venture out of Ann Arbor, Michigan. He began his quest for dot-com success by navigating on a river channeled to virtually every home computer in America. But he felt he could not weather the voyage alone.

RepairClinic.com (RCC) sells appliance parts and provides free appliance repair advice for washing machines, dryers, refrigerators, stoves, dishwashers, disposals, microwaves, dehumidifiers, freezers, icemakers and more, through the Internet. They carry parts for all major brands of appliances.

RCC's target audience is people who prefer to repair their own appliances, don't have time to leave work to wait for a repairperson to come to their house, or don't want to visit an appliance or parts distributor. RCC not only wants to work with these people, but think there are a lot of people who would like to repair their own appliances if they just had a little extra help.

Their Web site, www.repairclinic.com, provides everything needed to repair an appliance, from beginning to end. Additionally, they provide many accessories that customers may not realize exist. These products range from specialty cleaners to refrigerator condenser brushes to professional repair tools.

Business Issues

In February 1999 Chris Hall and Larry Beach launched RepairClinic.com (RCC). RCC, along with their partner The TM Group and Microsoft Great Plains Business Solutions, mapped out a plan to sell appliance parts and accessories over the Internet to do-it-yourself consumers.

While this industry isn't as large as the multi-billion dollar book or music industries, Chris estimates that about half of the \$400 million in appliance parts sold annually are marketed to the do-it-yourself consumer. RCC plans to continue to grow their market share by offering the most convenient, cost-effective solution for customers who want to fix their own major appliances at home.

Establishing a dot-com business has taken Chris from a regional to a national distributor. Whether customers are across town or scattered around the country, RCC is open 24 hours, seven days a week, with parts and information on-hand.

Solution

Establishing a business of this size requires a tremendous amount of effort from a team of people working together. "We had several dozen people working simultaneously to bring the company into existence, including an accounting department running the eEnterprise application and implementation, developers handling the eCommerce development and implementation and people at a distribution facility managing the delivery system, all in sync with our inventory systems," says Chris.

Implementation of the company took about nine months. "In Internet time, that might seem like a long time, but the complexities of the appliance parts of the business prevented us from building a site any faster. There are more than 150,000 different models of appliances and 500,000 various parts still in

"RepairClinic.com selected Great Plains' products because the eCommerce and eEnterprise software were well integrated, and had proven results with other companies."

Chris Hall,
President
RepairClinic.com

circulation, so to provide the instructional information and parts necessary to repair an appliance quickly took careful planning," Chris explains.

RCC has now has 27 employees who spend virtually all of their time and energy implementing new Web site features and none of it repairing or cleaning up software. They anticipate continued expansion through the use of technology and Microsoft Great Plains' business management solution.

Benefits

- With Microsoft Great Plains' products, RCC provides 15,000 to 20,000 customers simultaneously with actual inventory information—that's not possible with every business management solution. Their customers don't have to search a database or move through a long form to access information. Microsoft Great Plains instantly kicks that information back to RCC's customer.
- It's impossible to put a dollar amount on the value RCC receives from the integration of the eCommerce and eEnterprise package. "Without it, we would have been writing our own code. This enabled us to focus more closely on the pertinent issues of our business," Chris Hall, RCC, says.
- Microsoft Great Plains' software was written perfectly to work in concert with RCC's Windows NT platform, which gives them a lot of flexibility in selecting additional solutions such as CyberCash for other aspects of the company. This allows them to do all of their credit card processing and authorizations.
- It's been very important for RCC to have a relationship with the TM Group who supported them every step of the way, from helping them load the software to setting it up in a way that is most effective for RCC to use. RCC believes it's important to maintain that kind of partnership and to have one-on-one communication with these people on a regular basis.

For more information about Microsoft Great Plains Business Solutions, visit www.greatplains.com

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