

Print Blocks doubles up with Greentree's web support

The major Aussie scrapbooking distributor was an online-only business that wanted to grow. Greentree has made both inventory management and web sales more efficient, enabling the company to double its stock in a year...

Print Blocks Pty Ltd is Australia's largest one-stop online shop for scrapbooking materials. It also stocks related arts and crafts items, such as buttons, ribbons, designer papers etc, both directly to retailers and online.

Now over 20 years old, the company began life back in 1988 as a supplier to the stamping craft industry. This naturally progressed in to papercraft and scrapbooking. So much so that organic growth of Print Blocks has seen it move into a new, purpose-build facility in Wacol, Brisbane, to store the huge range of products it supplies to retailers. It now stocks around 50,000 stock lines from specialist international suppliers around the world.

Future growth

The company's owner, Andrew Wightman, says the need to support future growth was the driver behind the

decision to implement Greentree. The suite has allowed the distribution company to achieve the level of efficiency it needed to enable it to grow quickly. This, in turn, has ensured the company can maintain its competitive position as the largest supplier of scrapbooking-related products in its market.

To achieve this, the company needed the flexibility to grow its inventory from its 12-month-ago level of around 25,000 to the present 50,000 stock items it now holds. An entirely online business, Print Blocks has no retail outlets, sales reps or on-account sales, and only one staff member responsible for inventory management. This meant it needed the highest level of visibility, integration, accuracy and reporting possible.

Wightman says that, compared with SAP Business One, Greentree is both more flexible and scalable, as well as being easy to maintain. "It represented value for money, without any compromise on functionality," he says.

Working with the local Greentree business partner has been incredibly easy, since they bring a collaborative approach to the business partnership.

*Andrew Wightman,
company owner*

Live Webstore

Wightman says that with such a large volume of stock items and the very thin margins there are on them, employing and managing lots of sales reps was never an option. This, in turn, meant the company needed to place great emphasis on having automated, highly available and integrated back-office and web sales' processing systems.

Greentree's Webstore has helped make Print Blocks' hugely efficient online operation possible. It has done so by presenting a live up-to-the-second view of the distribution company's products to retailer customers. The Webstore system also allows for instant visibility of new items.

With hundreds of thousands of dollars worth of credit card sales being processed each month and no on-account sales or bad debts to chase, Print Blocks has achieved the kind of cost and cashflow efficiencies that many companies can only dream about. However, smooth back-office and web sales' functionality is necessary to support this.


Errors heading for zero

Print Blocks expects to realise even greater online efficiency in the next phase of its development. It plans to streamline its end-to-end online business processes, with the aid of wrist-mounted barcode scanning devices that will connect to Greentree's Autoscan module.

This will allow order-pickers to view up-to-the-second inventory stock levels, as well as product-bin locations. The result will be a considerable increase in the speed of the order-picking and packing. Wightman expects a drastic reduction in the current order error-rate, from the present seven to eight percent to less than one percent.

Online efficiencies will enable staff engaged in these processes to drop from 35 to 20 over the next four-to-six months. Currently, Print Blocks has several staff members involved in checking and fixing purchase-order errors, and a number of warehouse staff picking and packing orders.

Wightman is confident that, with the business process integration and scalability provided by Greentree, Print Blocks is evolving into the leanest and most efficient online business possible. This is an enviable position and ensures the company is well-placed for future growth.

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CASE STUDY

> Print Blocks Pty Ltd



AT A GLANCE

Industry

> eDistribution

Business Objective

> To streamline the online business' back-office and web sales' processes to support growth and cut error-rates.

Solution

> Greentree business suite, including Inventory Management, Webstore and Autoscan barcode modules.

Business Benefits

> Webstore presents product changes live on website. Efficient product updates, with instant visibility to the company's retailer customers.

> Inventory Management capacity to scale from 25,000 to 50,000 items.

> All sales are via Webstore and credit card payment – no sales reps, no bad debts, fewer exceptions.

> Autoscan module connects wrist-mounted devices directly to inventory and product-bin locations. Faster picking and packing, error rate down from 7-8% to <1% as a result.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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