

Grapevinehill: Doubles Sales Volume By Going Multichannel

COMPANY OVERVIEW

A Titanium PowerSeller, Grapevinehill is an online retailer of discounted name-brand footwear. Grapevinehill purchases footwear and apparel - mostly closeouts - from major name-brand manufacturers and offers it to its customers at great low prices. Deals are usually one of a kind. The company often will have more than one of the same item, but when it's gone, it's usually gone forever.

SITUATION

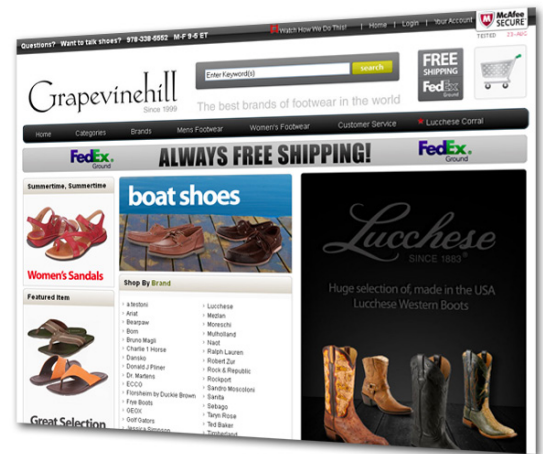
To offer customers the best product, best price and best service, Grapevinehill needed to operate on the slimmest of margins with a value proposition that hinged on efficiency. That left very little cushion for error. “We buy discontinued styles directly from manufacturers at bulk rates,” said Jonathan Kuhlmann, Grapevinehill president. “Then we price aggressively (30-60 percent off regular retail rates) because we want to offer customers the very best value. As a result, our margins are slim.”

Grapevinehill knew from the start that it wanted to be a multichannel retailer. Kuhlmann was faced with a dilemma: push the limits of his personal knowledge and build his own system or find the technology and the expertise he could depend on to help his business grow. He started looking for a platform that would help Grapevinehill accomplish feats that demanded a lot of extra work and expertise from most systems. He found the answer in ChannelAdvisor.

“Choosing ChannelAdvisor represented a best-in-class solution – we wanted to put that piece of the business in the hands of somebody who would focus on that 100 percent and let us focus on selling shoes,” Kuhlmann added.

SOLUTION

Grapevinehill uses ChannelAdvisor’s Marketplaces solution to list about 12,000 products on eBay and Amazon - with most offered through its ChannelAdvisor Webstore. Harder-to-move inventory goes to eBay. “Nine out of 10 people come to our site through eBay,” said Kuhlmann. “The cross promotion has been phenomenal.”



Location: Danvers, MA
 URL: www.grapevinehill.com
 Industry: Footwear & Apparel

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- Jonathan Kuhlmann
 President
 Grapevinehill

Because the interface on both eBay and its ChannelAdvisor Webstore is the same, Grapevinehill customers have the same experience no matter how they shop.

“Customers find that consistency to be comforting, and one of our main goals has always been to build customer confidence,” said Kuhlmann. “Also, it’s the little things within the Marketplaces solution, such as the automated customer service emails, that add to that solid customer experience.”

In addition, Grapevinehill leverages ChannelAdvisor’s Comparison Shopping solution to manage comparison shopping sites including NexTag, Google Product Search, PriceGrabber.com, Shopping.com and Shopzilla and gain the efficiencies of a completely integrated back end. “ChannelAdvisor helps us keep a handle on our inventory on all the marketplaces and get immediate feedback on how we’re doing. We know our margins, our close rates and our sell-through rates on every marketplace. In addition, the dashboard gives us the ability to export reports instantly with real-time results to keep us really nimble,” said Kuhlmann. “It’s easy to manage and we have grown rapidly as a result.”

Kuhlmann’s proven history with ChannelAdvisor brightens his outlook on the future. One of the opportunities Grapevinehill is contemplating is building social networking into its marketing campaigns to reach a broader audience. “We like how ChannelAdvisor stays on the cutting edge of the e-commerce industry. Everything we’ve done with ChannelAdvisor has been wildly successful,” he said. “They often bring us lucrative new opportunities, and each time, the results have gone well above and beyond our expectations.”

RESULTS

Within just six months of launching with ChannelAdvisor, Grapevinehill tripled its volume. Three years later, Grapevinehill revenues have doubled once again. Not only has Grapevinehill gained the efficiencies of having all its sales channels managed by the same solution, but Marketplaces’ accurate inventory, well-structured customer care and additional features have enabled Grapevinehill to maintain a phenomenal 99.9% positive feedback – even while the company experiences rapid growth.

“The benefits of using ChannelAdvisor are very quantifiable. Without them, we wouldn’t be able to continue to grow our business and be smart about what we do. By integrating Marketplaces into our daily workflow, we’ve been able to eliminate manually intensive parts of the process and streamline our overhead,” said Kuhlmann. “Having a partner to identify upcoming e-commerce trends and work on the challenges together is really huge.”

ChannelAdvisor Solutions

Marketplaces

With ChannelAdvisor’s Marketplaces solution, retailers have an incredibly effective tool for harnessing the clout of sites like Amazon, Buy.com and eBay – one that covers everything from the automated delivery of accurate product data to each marketplace, to best practices for helping products stand out in a crowd, to the trouble-free management of online sales.

Comparison Shopping

Comparison shopping sites exist to let consumers see the big picture. Our Comparison Shopping solution enables retailers to do the same – offering the ability to get a good look at the entire landscape, market products across multiple sites easily and effectively, and focus in on the most persuasive campaign strategies. All of which means more control, more relevancy and more opportunities for sales.

Webstores

Our Webstores solution brings the power of the ChannelAdvisor platform to the one place where all eyes are on a single retailer. We make it easy to create a web presence that’s both an effective sales channel – driving conversions and extending brand reach – and that increases efficiencies across all channels, by smoothly upselling products from an eBay store, for instance, and cross-promoting products across multiple marketplaces.

Paid Search

Rich Media