

Lehigh Valley Safety Supply kicks up Web sales of safety shoes.

Overview

■ Application

Online B2C and B2B storefront selling safety shoes

■ Business Benefits

700% increase in Web sales in 2001; decrease in selling costs; ability to attract new large corporate accounts

■ Software

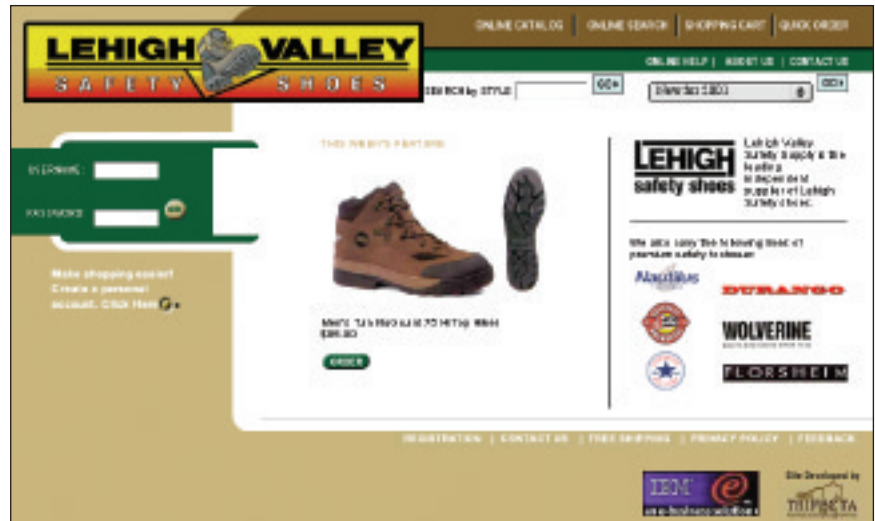
IBM WebSphere® Commerce Suite, Version 5.1;
IBM WebSphere Application Server;
IBM DB2® Universal Database™;
IBM VisualAge® for Java™;
IBM MQSeries®

■ Servers

IBM RS/6000®

■ Business Partner

Trifecta Technologies, Inc.



With the help of IBM WebSphere Commerce Suite Version 5.1 and Trifecta Technologies, Lehigh Valley Safety Shoes now has a robust, online channel for selling safety shoes, with many personalized features.

For over half a century, trucks have been driving to factories in the industrial heartlands of the U.S., outfitting workers with the safety footwear that prevents slips on oily floors and injuries from falling objects. Also, small specialty retail stores selling safety shoes have appeared in heavily industrialized areas across the country. With their business spurred by Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations requiring safety shoes in factories, safety shoe vendors saw little reason to stop selling shoes from their outlet stores or off the backs of trucks. However, industrial consolidation and migration have left fewer factories in historically industrialized areas. This makes drives longer and selling safety shoes through traditional channels more expensive.

“IBM offers a stable e-commerce platform with continuous technological enhancements that enable us to stay comfortably ahead of our competitors.”

*– Jim Codrea, Vice President,
Lehigh Valley Safety Supply*

e-business—using value networks to reach new markets



Different occupational hazards require different types of safety shoes, and Lehigh Valley Safety Shoes now has a cost-effective vehicle for selling a full range of safety footwear.

Unlike its competitors, Lehigh Valley Safety Supply saw an opportunity in 1996, when it launched the industry's first online safety shoe storefront using IBM Net.Commerce (now called WebSphere Commerce Suite). Lehigh initially showcased its 12 most popular shoes but quickly added more styles to its online catalog as sales increased. Helped by its Web sales, Lehigh Valley Safety Supply has become the largest independent supplier of Lehigh Safety Shoes in the U.S. It still provides shoemobile service to companies located in Eastern Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York and the Delmarva Peninsula. But with its Web site now firmly established among factory workers and growing among company purchasing agents nationwide, it is well ahead of the rest of its industry in cutting sales costs by shifting to e-commerce. And Lehigh is staying ahead of the competition with its new Web site, which incorporates the enhanced functionality of IBM WebSphere Commerce Suite, Version 5.1.

Assisted by IBM Business Partner Trifecta Technologies, Inc., Lehigh now has the ability to customize marketing initiatives and provide personalized customer service for major business accounts through Commerce Accelerator, an easy-to-use management interface. With upselling, cross-selling and customized marketing campaigns developed with WebSphere Commerce Suite, Version 5.1, Lehigh expects to increase online sales by 700 percent in 2001. Given this kind of growth, Web sales will soon account for a significant portion of Lehigh Valley's total sales, and this presents opportunities for decreased sales costs and higher profits.

Jim Codrea, Vice President of Lehigh Valley Safety Supply, attributes his company's success on the Internet to an established relationship with IBM and Trifecta. "When we created our first site with Trifecta, we evaluated some other companies' e-commerce software. Those other companies don't exist any more. IBM offers a stable e-commerce platform with continuous technological enhancements that enable us to stay comfortably ahead of our competitors."

"WebSphere Commerce Suite, Version 5.1 has a Java development environment that enables us to customize applications as they are needed."

—Doug Pelletier, President, Trifecta Technologies, Inc.

Shoes that fit services that please

Customers wanting safety shoes simply go to www.safetyshoes.com and browse the catalog or search the online catalog for footwear by size, brand, type of protection, style number or industry characteristics. This wide range of search parameters makes it easy to find the perfect shoe. Plus, new functionality provided by WebSphere Commerce Suite, Version 5.1, including a richer data model, has reduced the amount of time the customer spends searching through the catalog. The customer can make a selection in seconds.

New Java programming capabilities

Trifecta developed the new features for Lehigh Valley's site using the advanced Java tools and programming capabilities of WebSphere Commerce Studio, Professional Developer Edition, included with WebSphere Commerce Suite, Pro Edition, Version 5.1.



Trifecta Technologies specializes in building full-function e-commerce Web sites using IBM WebSphere Commerce Suite and other products from the IBM WebSphere software platform for e-business.

Explains Doug Pelletier, president of Trifecta Technologies, Inc., "WebSphere Commerce Suite, Version 5.1 has a Java development environment that enables us to create or customize applications as they are needed. Using IBM VisualAge for Java, we can create an EJB to shorten customers' searches. Or we can create an eSpot that can go on any page to provide a customized marketing initiative that Lehigh Valley Safety Supply activates using Commerce Accelerator. Lehigh Valley's managers can publish, unpublish and edit these applications themselves using the Commerce Accelerator interface."

Complete solution in four weeks

Trifecta designed and developed a single-tier architecture for Lehigh Valley with all the components of WebSphere Commerce Suite on one IBM RS/6000 server. The entire Web site project, including catalog development, search engine customization and all the specialized Java features for targeted marketing, took just four weeks. It is a 100% pure Java environment based on open, industry standards.

Part of WebSphere Commerce Suite, IBM WebSphere Application Server functions as a runtime environment for the Java code, communicating with the commerce engine to retrieve product information, order data and customer profiles from DB2 Universal Database. IBM HTTP Server delivers the Web pages to the shoppers' Web browsers.

According to Pelletier, "IBM makes it easy to develop a robust e-commerce solution quickly and to create a simple, powerful infrastructure for deployment. The result is, we've been able to spend more time with our customers designing new features for the site and helping them identify the business rules that will drive these features."

Flexible CRM

While customized marketing campaigns are pushing individual Web sales higher, the Web site's tight integration with customer relationship management (CRM) efforts is winning new large corporate accounts like JDS Uniphase. Corporate customers can set up accounts online, place orders and use Web-based self-service to check their orders and accounts. They can also call a Lehigh Valley customer service representative for additional information while placing an order and have the representative complete the order for them.

Comments Codrea, "When corporate customers look at the functions we've developed with IBM WebSphere Commerce Suite, their reaction is: This is the company we want to do business with."

More integration on the way

In the near future, Trifecta will integrate the new Lehigh Valley Web storefront with its ERP system, which also runs on an RS/6000 server. IBM MQSeries, the software upon which Commerce Integrator is based, provides prebuilt and easy-to-use connectors to establish fast, efficient messaging with backend systems.

Comments Codrea, "With our shoemobiles, we introduced the concept of bringing the store to the customer. Now with WebSphere Commerce Suite and Trifecta Technologies, we're doing this without leaving the office, satisfying customers' needs better than ever and leveraging our investments in efficient backend systems."

For more information

Please contact your IBM marketing representative or IBM Business Partner.

Visit us at:
ibm.com/software/webservers/commerce

For more information about Lehigh Valley Safety Supply and Trifecta Technologies, Inc., visit:
www.safetyshoes.com
www.trifecta.com



© Copyright IBM Corporation 2001

IBM Corporation
Software Group
Route 100
Somers, New York 10589

Produced in the United States of America
10-01
All Rights Reserved

DB2, DB2 Universal Database, the e-business logo, IBM, the IBM logo, MQSeries, VisualAge and WebSphere are trademarks or registered trademarks of International Business Machines Corporation in the United States, other countries or both.

Java and all Java-based trademarks are trademarks of Sun Microsystems, Inc. in the United States, other countries or both.

Other company, product or service names may be trademarks or service marks of others.

This case study illustrates how one IBM Business Partner and IBM customer use IBM products. Many factors have contributed to the results and benefits described. IBM does not guarantee comparable results. All information contained herein was provided by the featured IBM Business Partner and its customer. IBM does not attest to its accuracy.

References in this publication to IBM products or services do not imply that IBM intends to make them available in all countries in which IBM operates.