

Destination Baby Goes Mobile With Celerant

Building on the Celerant Command Retail Platform, Destination Baby has positioned itself on the leading edge of m-commerce.

Destination Baby is a Woodbridge, NJ-headquartered store that offers a wide selection of products for infants and toddlers including clothing, furniture, baby essentials, accessories, and safety items. The retailer currently operates a brick-and-mortar location and a thriving e-commerce business, both of which are powered by the Celerant Technology Corp. Command Retail System. Recently, Destination Baby extended its sales platform to include a custom m-commerce site, also powered by Celerant. Today, all three sales channels are integrated – sales are processed and inventory managed from one platform driven by a single-instance database, which also integrates with Destination Baby's custom gift registry, a key driver of the retailer's success. But founder Art Howard, who started the business five years ago, recalls a day when the absence of integration caused his customers big headaches and his company big expenses.

Disparate Databases Wreak Havoc On Order Fulfillment

In launching a store focused on the juvenile market, Howard's first order of business was to build a gift registry application. "Baby showers drive our business, and online gift registries create a visual purchasing vehicle for family and friends across the country," he explains. "We began our registry with an off-the-shelf software product, but within weeks of launching it I was looking for another solution." For starters, Howard says the registry didn't integrate with Destination Baby's POS or e-commerce inventory databases, which created huge amounts of manual labor. "When a customer created a registry online, sometimes comprising hundreds of items, the data came to us in the form of an e-mail. An associate would then have to take the data in that e-mail

and reenter it to create the customer profile and registry," explains Howard.

Each time a registry change occurred (an item was purchased, added or deleted, or a color or size changed) it created *another* e-mail and the need for *another* manual update to the registry. This process of reconciliation with the registry and the retailer's disparate Web and brick & mortar inventory databases didn't happen in anywhere near real-time, which created unacceptable out-of-stock and back order scenarios for its customers. Worse, it created situations that Destination Baby staff were unprepared to deal with – orders placed for items that shoppers thought were in stock, but actually weren't. "We would encounter situations where our POS system would indicate that we had 5 items on hand, when in fact we had none because the systems were not talking with each other," says Howard. As a result, Destination Baby might find itself taking orders for items that were out of stock, because manual updates to the POS inventory system to fulfill Web orders were not happening in a timely fashion. This created inefficiency on the back end, forcing the retailer's staff to manually procure out of stock merchandise and notify customers of back-order situations, resulting in cancelled orders and displeased customers.

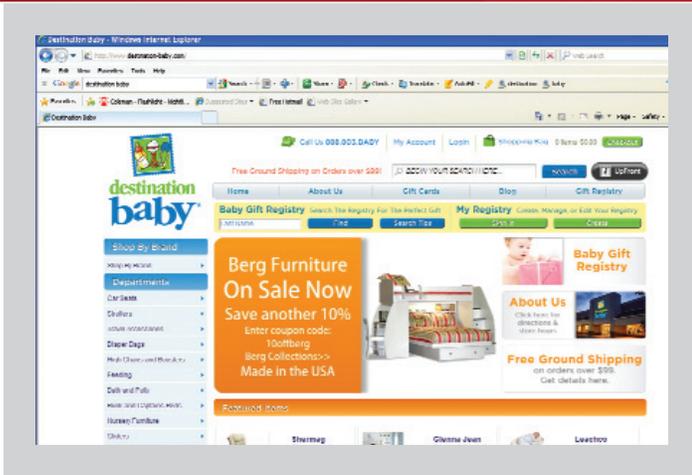


Single Database Enables Real-Time Inventory

Compounding Howard's problems, maintenance of destinationbaby.com was a time-intensive proposition. Adding a new product, for instance, required an associate to manually resize thumbnail and full-sized images. Disparate programs were used to upload images, product descriptions, and prices. "The work we

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-Art Howard, Founder, Destination Baby



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Howard is quick to commend Celerant for bringing new ideas to the table. “Our project manager helped us get to a new level of optimization, working through these initiatives in lockstep with our team. Celerant helped us take our business to a new level of sophistication.” He cites the Celerant e-commerce platform as the key contributing factor in the company’s newfound success with SEO (search engine optimization), and lauds the reporting functions that keep his team apprised of the site’s relevance. The most recent illustration of Destination Baby’s sophistication has come in the form of its m-commerce initiative.



Celerant’s m-commerce offering gives Celerant-powered e-commerce retailers an option to reformat their sites for smaller screens, creating a version of the site that’s more easily viewed and accessed on a mobile device. “Most of our customers are working and on the go, and this application gives them the convenience of pulling up and managing their gift registries or even making purchases on their phones,” says Howard. With its m-commerce offering, Destination Baby expands on and improves the customer experience, allowing expectant moms, their families and friends to take the retailer with them, wherever they roam. **For more information on the Celerant Command Retail System, contact your Celerant representative or go to www.celerant.com.**

had to do to make the old system appear to function was a huge drain on our resources,” says Howard. “It took the equivalent of a full time employee just to manage registry edits and inventory discrepancies.”

Howard sought out a software provider that could facilitate the integration of cross-channel sales and gift registry management from a single, accurate inventory database and provide a single interface for cross-channel product management. Those requirements narrowed his choices to a precious few; after evaluating solutions from half a dozen vendors, he put his money down on Celerant.

The Celerant Command Retail System eliminates cross-channel sales and inventory disparity at Destination Baby by powering all channels in real-time from a single database. Adding new products to the mix takes a fraction of the time it used to – users upload inventory data, product information, and images from a single user interface, which automates the resizing and placement of images and information.

A Mobile Channel Empowers On-The-Go Consumers

Howard says the efficiency enabled by Destination Baby’s new user interface and central inventory database, which enables real-time order management and integration with its gift registry, eliminated the equivalent of a full-time position. “The implementation of Celerant resulted in significant savings and a profound