

Raleigh Bicycles

Raleigh's IT department boosts company profits with a new customer extranet

A case study from

mrc

The Basics

Founded in 1890, Raleigh Bicycles began as a small bicycle company on Raleigh Street in Nottingham, UK. Today, Raleigh is one of the most recognizable bicycle brands in the world, operating in over 140 countries. Raleigh's UK branch (which still operates in Nottingham) sells and distributes bicycles along with a wide range of cycling accessories to bicycle dealers across the UK.

The Challenge

Raleigh UK took in most sales through their 14-person call center, but a few of their competitors were rolling out web-based ordering systems. Some of Raleigh's dealers noticed the competition's new ordering systems and expressed frustration to Raleigh over their lack of a web-based ordering option.

The problem: They knew they needed a solution quickly, but Raleigh's 3 person IT staff had neither the time nor the resources for a project of this size.

The Solution

After ruling out a few generic, off-the-shelf software solutions, they discovered m-Power, a web application development tool created by Michaels, Ross & Cole (mrc).

m-Power allowed for fast development of a real-time extranet and met all of their requirements. Additionally, mrc's UK staff had plenty of development experience, so they could assist Raleigh's IT staff in building the extranet. "It was clear that m-Power offered Raleigh the right tool at the right price backed up by considerable experience," said Barrie Timson, Raleigh's Business Systems Manager.

The best part: m-Power was not only cheaper than all the other options, it also let them create a custom solution faster than it would've taken to deploy a generic, off-the-shelf solution.

The Value

After Raleigh released their new extranet, they immediately saw huge benefits. First and foremost, their customers loved it. In fact, 60% of all sales now go through the extranet. Secondly, the new extranet helped Raleigh in a few unforeseen ways:

Increased Efficiency

Since Raleigh's dealers had access to everything they needed via the extranet, calls into Raleigh's call center declined sharply. So, they were able to reassign much of their call center staff to more pro-active sales roles.

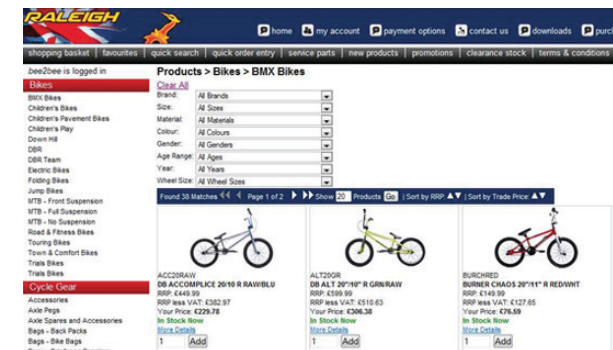
Increased Profits

Not only did more dealers place orders online, but overall sales dramatically increased once they released the new extranet. According to Timson, the new extranet "Has contributed significantly to company profitability."

Partnership

Raleigh sees their great relationship with mrc as a critical aspect to the story. In mrc, they have a partner that understands both their business needs and web application development.

Example



Raleigh's web-based order entry area on their new extranet