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**Implant
Direct's new
e-commerce
site lets
dentists
buy online
pain-free**



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Implant Direct's new e-commerce site lets dentists buy online pain-free

Since re-launching its site on the Magento e-commerce platform, the manufacturer and distributor of dental implants and related supplies is selling more products as it helps dental surgeons more easily find and buy what they need.

Edition digital commerce platform from eBay Enterprise Inc., a unit of eBay Inc., says Ahmad Rashidi, Implant Direct's director of I.T. and web operations.

Mixing a retail experience with B2B features

In today's world of B2B e-commerce, where online business buyers are demanding a helpful and easy shopping experience much like what they experience on consumer retail sites, Implant Direct realized it needed to sharply change its e-commerce technology and strategy. And like other B2B e-commerce companies, it needed to take a dual approach. So Implant Dental made its customer-facing web site easier to

Product innovation is built into the history and culture of Implant Direct, which was founded in 2004 by Dr. Gerald Niznick, a pioneer of dental implant technology. Dr. Niznick amassed more than 30 technology patents over several decades before retiring as the company's president last fall.

Dr. Niznick remains a board member and consultant, as Implant Direct continues its tradition of innovation by marketing such products as its new Legacy4 System that gives surgeons additional options for installing and securing dental implants.

But while Implant Direct's dental products expertise is long-established, it has not always had a corresponding ability to present its products and engage customers effectively online. That changed in April 2013, when it relaunched its e-commerce site on the Magento Enterprise

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shop, with features such as rich images and videos, product recommendations and tools for configuring custom-built products that are common on retail sites. And it introduced on its e-commerce site business-oriented features like letting its customers control access by buyers based on their area of responsibility, and—of particular importance to its health industry customers—maintaining detailed records of how particular surgical and other products are packaged and sold to health care professionals according to the regulatory requirements of government agencies.

The technology embedded in the Magento Enterprise Edition—and the flexibility it offers in deploying customized site functionality and features—has enabled Implant Direct to provide the special kind of e-commerce purchasing experience its customers require, Rashidi says.

The new site, he says, goes far beyond just helping Implant Direct increase online sales. Implant Direct now can better help dental surgeons to quickly find and get what they need, a crucial aspect of its role as a manufacturer and distributor of the complex and sophisticated array of dental implants, surgical tools, biomaterials and other products that dental surgeons use. “We take responsibility with our e-commerce site to empower our doctors to make decisions,” Rashidi says. “We need to make it easy for customers to find products and make a purchase.”

More Resourceful

Before it launched on its new e-commerce platform last year, ImplantDirect.com wasn't able to offer an effective or efficient way for customers to research and buy online, he adds. The site operated on a software-as-a-service e-commerce technology platform that was shared with other companies and offered limited options for customizing web content and site functionality. “It was not possible to make the changes we wanted,” Rashidi says. “We have many products, but it was impossible to have a true product management system.”

And instead of operating on a technology platform that was designed to ideally handle up to about 50 orders per day, the Magento Enterprise Edition platform is designed to handle thousands, he adds.

In addition to having greater capacity, ImplantDirect.com now operates more like a retail e-commerce site, but one tailored with the business buyer in mind. It offers additional functionality that lets Implant Direct's customers research and purchase a wide range of products in more helpful ways.

For example, when buying a “ScrewPlant Implant,” a customer now sees a product page that also displays links to several related categories of items that are compatible with that specific product: a properly fitting healing collar, a specially calibrated torque wrench, the properly sized dental drills, and the proper grafting material. “For a particular implant by size, we enable our customers to easily and quickly purchase all of the items they need to complete a procedure,” Rashidi says.

Another product page feature, which buyers are accustomed to seeing on retail e-commerce sites, lets buyers enlarge product images into large, high-resolution displays. In the Resources section, customers can view numerous videos that demonstrate products and how they're used in surgical procedures.

The product page also features other cross-selling displays. The ScrewPlant Implant page positions next to the Add to Cart button a link to a video about Implant Direct's new Legacy4 system, which groups in a package multiple items needed for a dental implant. On a product page for a DEKA SmartLaser machine used in surgery, the Add to Cart button is next to a display with information on signing up for a continuing-education course on the latest techniques in minimally invasive laser surgery.

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More helpful customer service

As a more effective B2B e-commerce site, the new ImplantDirect.com also offers better ways for Implant Direct itself to improve its operations.

To further assist customers, Implant Direct's customer service agents in its contact center can access a Magento tool-verification application that provides agents with information on which instruments, tools and materials are needed to go with the products that a dental surgeon orders online. They can also use the application to determine whether the surgeon has already ordered any of those items. Overall, this helps Implant Direct meet its regulatory requirements of ensuring that health care professionals acquire the right tools that they need to do their jobs. "It helps us meet our due diligence as required by government agencies," Rashidi says. "We make sure we're including all product details from start to finish, making sure doctors make the right decisions."

In addition, contact center customer service agents can now help customers with an online assisted-shopping feature, through which the agents can use an order-entry interface to enter and manage customers' telephone orders without having to switch to a separate order-entry system.

The Magento technology also enables Implant Direct to better manage its personnel, which has already led to a decrease in returned merchandise, Rashidi says. Because of the way the Magento platform is designed, Implant Direct can assign specific order management functions, like invoicing purchase orders and managing shipping, to particular groups of employees. This has provided for consistent levels of service and data reporting—which were difficult to manage under its former e-commerce platform—resulting in fewer returned items, he says.

Overall, the new site has helped to produce a stronger relationship between Implant Direct and its customers, Rashidi says. Along with other improvements, including more and better trained personnel, the Magento site and its improved display of product details and images has coincided with increases in average order values and an increased number of product lines purchased per order, Rashidi says.

The company is on a growth curve as it continues to live up to the innovative culture set by Dr. Niznick, he adds, one that its new e-commerce platform will help to nourish. "We are growing and getting more market share as we educate our existing customers and as more dentists enter the market, and as we're developing more robust products," Rashidi says. "And now with Magento, we can continue to scale up." ■

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