AppFinity WebStore Raises the Bar
on E-commerce for The Turtle Company

Two-way, real-time integration between the WebStore and accounting system yields dramatic time- and cost-savings.

The Turtle Company, located in Paramus, New Jersey is the developer of Book Sox® www.booksox.com the original ready-to-use fabric book cover that stretches over hard-covered books with ease. The company sells products through its Web site and numerous large retail chains, including Staples, Office Max, Walgreens and ShopRite.

One-way Communication Increases Risk and Decreases Efficiency

Many years ago the Turtle Company launched a custom-designed E-commerce site, which was able to download customer orders directly into the company's in-house AccountMate SQL accounting software. While adequate for processing customer orders, the site didn't provide two-way, real-time information flow between the site and the accounting system, making some processes redundant and time-consuming.

For example, since the product Web pages were hard-coded and static, the system didn't allow Turtle Company staff to add, remove or edit products on the fly. Every time they needed to make changes to their product pages, the company's consulting firm had to come in and replace the existing page with a new page that contained the updated product information. To do this, the consultant had to access the back end of the site and duplicate all the information that was needed to update the product pages. Since this process always involved duplicate data input, there was the ever-present risk of errors creeping onto the site.

Another issue was the absence of any clear logs that would help determine whether or not an order was acceptable or in need of corrective action. Staff had no way of seeing the actual order or related customer information until after the order had already been sent to the accounting system. Without the ability to "screen" orders as they came in, there was a constant risk of unacceptable orders getting approved and processed, and the prospect of time-consuming work for staff to resolve the situation.

AppFinity and Microtask Team up to Deliver Customized, Real-time E-commerce Solution

In early 2008, Turtle Company MIS director Rich Bobrowicz and his colleagues decided it was time to upgrade the site's E-commerce capabilities and resolve some of these ongoing issues. Bobrowicz contacted Luis Leon, managing partner of Microtask Consulting (www.microtask.net), Turtle Company's trusted computer consulting firm for many years. Leon was asked to help find an E-commerce solution that would streamline the online ordering process so that staff could be more self-sufficient, efficient and accurate.

Leon's first move was to contact his long-time associate Dennis Lo, co-founder of AppFinity Software. As the "brains" behind the fully customizable approach used in the design and

development of AppFinity's WebStore E-commerce system, Leon had no doubt that Lo and his team could deliver the right solution for his client.

Microtask provided AppFinity with all the requirements and design specifications for the new system, including:

- Two-way, real-time communication between the WebStore and the accounting system

- Ability to add, remove or edit descriptions, prices and images in the accounting system and have that information automatically updated in real time to the WebStore

- Automatic population of Web pages from templates stored in WebStore's database

- Ability to see pending orders prior to approval — unapproved orders to stay that way until any outstanding issues are resolved. Once resolved, the orders can be approved for download and eventual processing in the accounting system, amended and re-submitted for approval or simply deleted.

- Additional reporting options such as detailed transaction listings and transactions summaries

After getting all the initial design specifications from his client, Microtask and AppFinity worked in tandem to develop a customized AppFinity WebStore that could fulfill everything on the Turtle Company's wish list. AppFinity's team performed most of the custom programming and Microtask followed up with on-site testing and tweaking of the new features and functions of the WebStore until it was ready for deployment.

One of the most compelling modifications to the system was the inclusion of confirmation e-mails that are sent to customers right after they place an order. "We wanted to make sure that the ordering process is as convenient and secure as possible for our customers," said Bobrowicz. "I know that our customers really appreciate the confirmation e-mails and the fact that we follow up with them immediately if anything is amiss with their order. Now that we have so much control over the site, we can detect any problems with orders when they come in and remedy the situation immediately with the customer in order to expedite processing," he added.

Bobrowicz also appreciates the enhanced efficiency of the database-driven engine that enables quick and easy updating of the site without the need of outside programmers. "With AppFinity's WebStore, we can build a template that is automatically populated with the information stored in the database. All we have to do is hit Save and it's done. You can't believe how much this one feature saves us in time, money and headaches."

Staff and Customers Agree — AppFinity WebStore Is a Winner!

The Turtle Company has reaped significant benefits from its new AppFinity WebStore system. "The WebStore has delivered on everything we asked for — the site is more organized, more professional-looking and easier to use," claimed Bobrowicz. "With the new streamlined ordering and approval process, the system has made all of our jobs much easier than before. Our customers really appreciate how easy it is for them to place orders and they take comfort in receiving their confirmation e-mail right away, so they know their order will be processed and shipped promptly. That's the level of customer service we always strive to deliver," he added.

Bobrowicz was no less effusive in his praise for Luis Leon and his company. "Microtask is always there for us. They are very knowledgeable and they respond quickly to any concerns we have and they go out of their way to make us happy. On this project, Luis was the go-to guy, orchestrating all the details of the project with AppFinity and ensuring our satisfaction with the results throughout every step of the process. You couldn't ask for a more responsive and professional company than Microtask."

Leon expressed his gratitude for the tremendous synergy his company has enjoyed with AppFinity. "This project was a real team effort between Microtask and AppFinity. Dennis Lo and his team take the time to learn exactly what my client wants and then they deliver on their promise …quickly. Dennis and I go back all the way to the early days of AccountMate and I have absolute confidence in his ability to deliver the ideal E-commerce solution for my clients."

About AppFinity Software

AppFinity Software Corporation (San Francisco, California) is dedicated to the design, implementation and support of e-commerce solutions that leverage existing technology investments and minimize ongoing IT costs. AppFinity solutions are fully customizable and can integrate with most existing commercial Web sites and today's most popular accounting software systems to deliver complete business solutions that enable companies to focus on their goals without exhausting precious resources on unnecessary IT expenditures. AppFinity is driven by a relentless quest to provide an extraordinary level of customer service that is peerless in today's fast-paced, high-stress business environment. To learn more about AppFinity Software, visit www.appfinity.com.

About Microtask Consulting

Based in Teaneck, New Jersey, Microtask Consulting, Inc. is a full-service information-technology consulting firm that specializes in providing comprehensive business solutions to small and mid-size businesses in the NY metro area. Since 1987, Microtask has been helping companies make the most of their investments in technology. For more information on Microtask, visit www.microtask.net.