



CASE STUDY

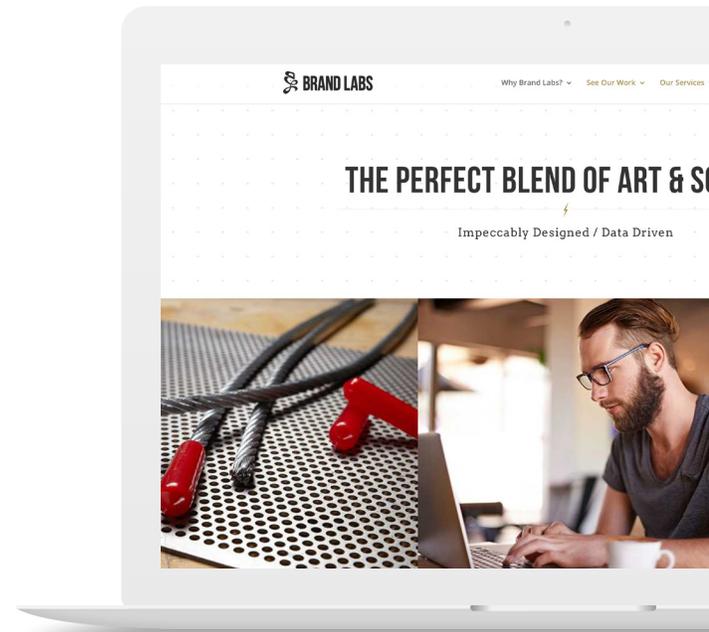
Brand Labs increases business 25% by offering BigCommerce as a platform option

- Brand Labs outgrew its initial ecommerce platform partner
- The agency needed an open source, flexible option with better support
- 90% of their customers are choosing BigCommerce for their platform

Overview

Dane Downer and Kevin Harman started an ecommerce solutions agency in a roundabout way. Downer first worked with Harman to create an education and lead-gathering website for the manufacturing company Harman's family owned. That work gave them an interest in trying their hand at ecommerce.

They launched RedHatsandMore.com, a product site for members



of the Red Hat Society. It's success spawned Brand Labs. The Rochester, Michigan agency works with wholesalers, manufacturers, and retailers on building, developing, relaunching and marketing online businesses. Clients include Apple reseller Mac of all Trades, and Autograph Foliage, a high-end artificial foliage and holiday decoration company that sells to theme parks, movie sets, and hotels.

Challenge

When Downer and Harman started RedHatsandMore.com, they built an ecommerce platform. "It worked well and helped us move ahead of our competitors, but we were spending more time fixing and updating it than we were on our actual business," Harman says.

When they launched Brand Labs they sought a partner with a pre-built platform they could put clients on. The ensuing relationship with an early innovator worked but it didn't evolve. "We became so handcuffed in terms of what we could do. We got tired of having to say no to clients," Harman says. "They didn't provide what we needed and what our customer needed."

The platform provider also offers professional and marketing services -- the same services Brand Labs offers. "That makes them our competition," Downer says.

That's when Brand Labs turned to BigCommerce.



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Solution

The co-founders were aware of BigCommerce “for years, but what really sealed it for us was their commitment to the B2B space.

We felt like our business models were so aligned. It was a natural choice,” Harman says, adding that Brand Labs typically works with companies with annual revenues of \$2 million to \$50 million.

Having wrestled with operational roadblocks with their previous platform, an open-source platform is a big win. “We showed BigCommerce to our development team and they came back saying, “We like it.” They had not been happy working with the archaic structure of the previous platform where changes and integrations involved crazy workarounds,” Harman says, adding, “My devs are 100% behind it.”

For a business craving flexibility and innovation, teaming up with workflow-optimizing apps is important. The ShipperHQ, Smile.io, Yotpo, AutoResponder Max and Nextopia apps that integrate with BigCommerce “do wonders for our clients. With other platforms we needed custom integrations for some of these products,” Harman says. BigCommerce removed the resource-heavy work, allowing Brand Labs to focus on more opportunities to gain more business.

Probably the biggest BigCommerce benefit: Brand Lab’s customers with content in WordPress don’t need to port it. Conversations with prospects looking to re-platform have become much easier. “We feel confident we are putting the best platform in front of them,” Harman says.

Results

Downer and Harman say Brand Labs is slated to grow revenue by about 25% this year, and they attribute a part of that to BigCommerce. While they maintain customers on other sites, for re-platforming and new sites, nearly 90% of its customers are choosing BigCommerce. “Our entire team is BigCommerce focused. It’s profitable for us, it takes less of our time to develop, and customer service from BigCommerce is great,” Harman says.

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And it opens Brands Labs to serving mid-market companies with a global presence. “They are multi-site, single inventory companies that would have needed an enterprise solution in the past. BigCommerce is a good fit,” Harman says.

Brand Labs customers are also seeing the results.

While Mac of all Trades has only been on BigCommerce for a couple of months, revenue is up and conversion rates are the highest they have been.

For Autograph Foliage, Brand Labs was able to tie in a backend discounting tool into the platform to provide the same service

customers received if they called for a quote. Online selling has helped the company grow by seven figures in revenue in the past year.

One of Downer and Harman's favorite case studies involved custom chocolatier, Bon Bon Bon. The company was on a modern platform that Brand Labs works with. It just wasn't working. "It wasn't easy for a customer to build a custom box of chocolate," Harman says adding, "The design didn't reflect the owner's personality."

Brand Labs designers used BigCommerce to create a site that works like the owner envisioned. "Their sales have gone up dramatically."

Harman and Downer are looking forward to putting more customers on BigCommerce especially now that the platform has a full-featured plug-in to WordPress. "We're having a lot of conversations around that and love that aspect. BigCommerce is really focused on content which is needed in ecommerce."



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