Kerridge
Commercial Systems

Trading Depot sees turnover double since investing in K8

Trading Depot, the online trading sister company to Grant & Stone, offers more than 48,000 product lines to a loyal and growing customer base who maintain its 'excellent' rating on Trustpilot, the online review community. The company supplies plumbing and electrical products, sanitaryware, flooring, PVC windows and doors, some heavyside materials such as paving and more than 30,000 tools.

TRADINGDEPOT.co.uk
TOP BRANDS AT TRADE PRICES

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Darren House,
General Manager ,
Trading Depot

"We're seeing huge growth," said Trading Depot General Manager Darren House. "While around 70% of our customers are homeowners, the remaining 30% are tradesmen who are happier shopping in an online environment today than they were 10 years ago. Although we don't offer trade accounts, we offer a choice to builders who are looking for a keener price and are happy to wait a day or two for their delivery. We also offer a click and collect service from our warehouse. I like to think there's a traditional merchant feel about the business as we offer great customer service including technical support over the phone at pre-purchase stage."

At the front end of Trading Depot's business is a Magento eCommerce platform that interfaces directly with their ERP system - K8 - a solution developed by Kerridge Commercial Systems. As each order is placed, the data is drawn into K8 and, if the product is in stock, a pick note is automatically produced in the warehouse and data sent to the labeller ready to print.

Before going live on K8 in April 2017, the team at Trading Depot had to manually re-key orders in to their legacy ERP system. "It was a really cumbersome process," said Darren. "We used to print out the orders from Magento and, while one member of staff spent all day re-keying them into the old system, another used to type out the labels! We were working on two totally separate systems and only able to process around 50 – 80 orders each day. Plus, there was a high risk of making errors when retyping postcodes and product codes etc. We upgraded for a short while to exporting orders from Magento on CSV files every couple of hours, and then importing them to the old system. But the process wasn't reliable so we still printed them out and cross-referenced them manually!"

When Darren joined Trading Depot from sister company, Grant & Stone - which was implementing the K8 system across the group – a demo from KCS showed how upgrading to K8 could totally automate sales order processing. And, he was able to protect the investment Trading Depot had already made in Magento using K8's Magento plug in. (Companies with no existing eCommerce platform can take advantage of KCS's Web Builder when they implement K8. It's a responsive eCommerce suite that enables the fast deployment of fully integrated online trading and a B2B online customer portal.)

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K8

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Darren House, General Manager, Trading Depot

The benefits were immediate. As orders come in from Trading Depot's website or the company's Amazon or eBay shop, they are automatically drawn into K8 and a pick note for goods in stock is processed with no human intervention. If part of the order is direct, a member of staff briefly intervenes to instruct K8 to send that part of the order directly to the supplier. On the old system the team had to type a separate email to the supplier along with the re-keyed customer information.

"Now that our Magento platform interfaces with K8, customers can see an accurate reflection of our stock levels," explained Darren. "So many websites tell customers that products are in stock when in fact they're not. This annoys customers who only find out after they've placed their orders, and end up waiting lengthy delivery times rather than risking not getting a refund. We like being straight with our customers and can now confidently show the actual stock position on around 80% of stock in our warehouse or held by manufacturers and other third party suppliers - and we're working on increasing this figure."

This new confidence has also enabled Darren to make shipping more profitable because knowing something is definitely in stock means he can offer and charge more for a premium next day delivery service. K8 also allows Darren to take advantage of 'buy 10' deals because purchasing and sales can be set up separately - unlike on the old system.

Further significant cost savings have been made from not having to replace the three staff lost due to natural wastage since the implementation of K8. "The business is now so streamlined we don't need to replace them," he said. "In fact turnover has doubled in the seven months since K8 was implemented and, although I can't put that all down to K8, there's no way we could have managed the current level of business using the old system."

There are 14 K8 users at Trading Depot, where the system processes orders, manages stock, pricing and the company's financial accounting. Next month Darren hopes to trial K8's warehouse management module, which could fully automate the picking and packing process and help him achieve his ambition of running a completely paper-free operation.

Darren concluded, "In K8 we have a reliable and flexible system that keeps manual intervention down to a minimum."

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