

CASE STUDY

West Music

West Music Deploys ShopVisible's eCommerce Solution to Deliver a Streamlined Experience for Both B2C and B2B customers



THE COMPANY

West Music Company began over 70 years ago as a family-owned retail and repair shop. Over time, inventory expanded, driving the company to eventually become a wholesaler, importing instruments from all around the world for distribution. WestMusic.com was established as a natural evolution of their national catalog business dedicated to music education and educators. West Music now has over 180 associates, six regional locations, and multiple eCommerce websites and catalog departments.

THE CHALLENGE

A few years ago, West Music was operating its eCommerce business on several homegrown platforms that were proving costly to support, maintain and upgrade. Disparate brand identities provided a fragmented experience for B2B and B2C customers alike.

"When you say West Music in different parts of the country you have different experiences with the brand," says Ryan West, VP and co-owner of the venerable music instruments and services company. "In Iowa and Illinois, we are a full line music retailer. A customer in California is more likely to view West Music as an institutional company focused on classroom products. At any point in time we are interacting with purchasers, end users, administrators, even district level entities. We wanted to make sure all our customers experienced a similar value proposition regardless of what category they come from."

THE SOLUTION

Today, www.WestMusic.com, which is built on the ShopVisible eCommerce platform, has helped West Music take a giant step forward in satisfying all these interests.

"ShopVisible has helped us take disparate brand identities and meld them into a common single West Music experience that recognizes our educators nationally and around the world, and continues to tell the story of our culture and history," says West.

"And we have brought better customer services to our local customers to ensure they are not excluded from the eCommerce experience, as more and more customers are shopping online before they come into the store. The ability to bring more of our in-store inventory online and provide visibility to these customers helps extend our relationships," says West.

A key West Music core value is that a customer represents a relationship, not just a transaction. Over time these connections have expanded from a regional to a national level, including teacher workshops across the country and customers who shop online from anywhere in the country or world.

Sustaining these relationships requires a source of fresh and interesting content. "As we looked at other eCommerce platforms, a robust CMS was not a core feature," says West.

“ShopVisible’s platform is able to handle a variety of content formats without having to have to tack on a third-party CMS. It provides greater visibility and stability than we had previously.”

THE RESULTS

Recognizing that their B2B buyers are seasoned online shoppers from years of a continually improving B2C ecosystem in their personal lives, West Music delivers a B2C experience to their B2B customers while ensuring that they can support the complexities of the B2B purchasing process.

On the front end, top menu navigation has been condensed to three key choices, for both school/institutional (B2B) and individual (B2C) customers—Browse Products, Learn & Discover, In Our Stores:

- **B2C-like interface:** Simple iconography within ‘Browse Products’ helps customers easily locate the goods and services offered, regardless of whether they are individuals, teachers or administrators. Product pages feature high-quality photography and in-depth product detail.
- **Rich educational content:** The ‘Learn & Discover’ educational tab extols the power of making music through a rich multimedia environment filled with blogs, videos, workshops, events, lessons and musical advocacy initiatives. Many of the subject matter experts on the videos and blogs are West Music’s own employees, which helps further the personal touch.
- **Omnichannel shopping:** For West Music’s brick and mortar store customers, the “In Our Stores” section provides a graceful way to give local customers the visibility to make purchases from the website or store, updated news and events, and other local services such as lessons and repair. Interface, menus and drop downs are touch friendly, designed for the increasing volume of mobile and tablet traffic.

On the back end, ShopVisible’s SaaS-based hosting helps West Music flatten out its IT and third party costs and be more strategic in its infrastructure spend. Benefiting from a large community of ShopVisible users who are constantly upgrading and innovating on the platform, West Music has learned how to streamline business operations by listening to best practices of other ShopVisible platform users.

“With ShopVisible we have found a long term partner. They have helped us fully realize our business goals today, with the flexibility to help us innovate as the world’s online shopping experiences are continually being reinvented.”

—Ryan West

West Music Vice President and Co-Owner



CHALLENGE

- Operating on several homegrown systems
- Disparate brands provided a fragmented customer experience
- CMS capabilities lacking

BENEFITS

- West Music provides a B2C customer experience to business customers while also supporting the complexities of B2B purchasing
- Streamlined website experience creates a true omnichannel buying experience
- Robust CMS capabilities enables rich educational content in many formats

ShopVisibleTM
e-commerce platform

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