CLIENT
McGuckin Hardware

LOCATION
Boulder, CO

INDUSTRY
Independent Hardlines Retailer

PROJECT
Digital Commerce Overhaul with Curbside Pickup

RESULTS
Web traffic more than doubled YOY and web sales jumped 1,320%

PROBLEM

McGuckin Hardware, a retail customer of Orgill Inc., the world's largest independent hardlines distributor, has been a staple in the Boulder community since 1955. McGuckin transformed their small family-owned storefront into a 56,000 square-foot retail location filled with an eclectic mix of product offerings. With 125,000 in-store items ranging from plumbing and HVAC products to camping equipment and home décor, McGuckin considers themselves "Boulder's Favorite Everything Store."

In addition to their brick-and-mortar location, McGuckin has offered its customers online shopping for nearly 10 years. Their original eCommerce platform, however, offered less than a third of their in-store items and restricted them from integrating additional products and functionality to improve their online experience. Looking to enhance their online storefront as they did their Boulder store, Bill Harrison, Technical Operations Manager at McGuckin, reached out to Orgill and Unilog for assistance.

SOLUTION

When McGuckin joined Orgill's dealer network, Harrison learned the independent hardlines distributor had partnered with Unilog to provide dealers an array of tools to expand their digital presence through its Integrated eCommerce program. At the heart of this Integrated eCommerce program is a cloud-based eCommerce solution as well as access to Orgill's Industry PIM, a massive collection of enriched product data, which are both powered by Unilog.

The Unilog-driven platform, with its built-in product information tool, would enable McGuckin to unify their sales channels and create an online shopping experience to mirror their store, while the massive product catalog would provide a virtual endless aisle of products for their customers. With new items added and updated daily, the Orgill Industry PIM currently offers their dealers more than 800,000 items with enriched product content including images, product descriptions, specs and attributes, related documents, and more. "In the past, I've had numerous people working on enriching data and it's been incredibly time-consuming," said Harrison. "So, to have a single entity come in and enrich all our product in a timely manner was huge for us."

In early 2020, McGuckin was preparing for their site launch when they encountered an unexpected disruption to their business: the COVID-19 outbreak. When businesses, schools, and people went on lockdown, McGuckin lost almost half their employees and was forced to shorten their hours of operation. At the same time, many customers did not feel comfortable going into the store, so the retailer patched together a curbside pickup option onto their legacy site, which became instantly popular. Even though in-store traffic decreased during this time, their sales increased significantly.

McGuckin did not have the curbside pickup feature slated on their new site's roadmap but, after seeing the demand, they knew they had to make it available. So they asked Orgill and Unilog to build it into their new site just before their go-live. "The Orgill and Unilog teams did a great job responding to our request. They managed to get the curbside pickup option up and running on the site, which only pushed our launch date back by a week," said Harrison.

RESULTS

With the launch of their new McGuckin.com site, the hardlines retailer is now able to provide a stellar shopping experience for customers with a host of new products, features, and tools. McGuckin, as a result, is seeing more site traffic, increased customer engagement, and a surge in online sales.

DOUBLE THE PRODUCT OFFERINGS

Online shoppers can now choose from 80,000 enriched products which represent nearly 95% of McGuckin's in-store items. The catalog is maintained and updated by Unilog daily to ensure the retailer has the most current product information available for their customers.

Harrison admits their legacy eCommerce platform was mediocre, at best, due to the lack of products. But now, with

> *An online storefront offers tremendous growth potential. Without it, you're falling behind.*
>
> Bill Harrison
> Technical Operations Manager
> McGuckin Hardware

more than double the inventory, their online business has taken off. "The added product content has definitely been a game changer; it's made a considerable difference to our customers," he added.

While access to the Orgill Industry PIM was their initial motive for working with Unilog, Harrison says they are impressed how well the Orgill and Unilog eCommerce platform has integrated with their existing ERP, Epicor Eagle. The backend system synchronization enables them to display real-time pricing and availability on their eCommerce site and automate order processing. "The further we go along in this process, the better it gets."

EXPANDED PICKUP AND DELIVERY OPTIONS

While in-store and curbside pickup options are popular with local customers, McGuckin also offers household delivery to anyone in the U.S. Unilog integrated Avalara software using an application program interface (API), which calculates the tax for each order based on the customer's delivery address. Harrison says their number of Ship-to-Me orders is comparatively lower than their local pickup orders, but they are typically bigger sales because they are purchasing high-ticket items like power tools. He adds that McGuckin gift cards are also a popular Ship-to-Me item, especially during the holidays. "The Ship-to-Me capability is a big advantage for us because we get a lot of people who order gift cards and have them shipped to another party. If the alternate shipping address feature wasn't possible with the platform, we wouldn't be able to offer this value-added service," remarked Harrison.

Order fulfillment has improved as well. Using lessons learned at the onset of the pandemic, McGuckin streamlined their operations to offer local customers same-day pickup of their online orders, with a goal of completing orders within a one- to two-hour timeframe.

NEW MOBILE AND COMMUNICATION TOOLS

McGuckin recently augmented their eCommerce site with a new mobile app. While they haven't actively promoted it to their customer base yet, their employees are using it to

fulfill orders. The app enables them to look up ordered items and reference the product images to confirm they are pulling the right products. Harrison says it's easier for staff to pull up the items on their phone than to find a terminal in the store, log in to their ERP system, and look up the products.

The McGuckin app offers convenience for shoppers, too, with features like a barcode scanner, voice search, and item recognition capabilities in which a customer can take a picture of an item and the app will search for it within the retailer's catalog. As with the eCommerce site, the mobile app displays content-rich product information, including pricing and stock availability.

At the same time they launched their app, McGuckin also implemented a new messaging platform called Instaply to improve communications with customers and offer immediate answers to their questions. The application utilizes a single phone number that customers can send text messages to concerning product questions, services, and more. Their questions are fed directly to McGuckin's employees, who then communicate with one another through a backend interface before responding to the customer. The messaging tool enables Harrison to see the conversations employees are having with each other as well as the customer to make sure their questions are being handled properly.

McGuckin's employees also use the platform to alert customers when their order is ready for pickup. If an item is out of stock, they can save time by texting the customer to ask if they would like a substitute item. After just a month of use, Instaply has streamlined their communication channels and strengthened customer confidence.

LOYALTY PROGRAM

Along with the site launch, the hardlines retailer rolled out a new customer loyalty program based on the Orgill-built FanBuilder™ program, branded as "McGuckin Rewards." Rewards members can access their account dashboard on the eCommerce site to track their rewards points, view their purchase history, see their receipts, and determine how close they are to their next rewards payout. The program is integrated to their point-of-sale system, so customers can be rewarded in store and online. It is not only driving in-store foot traffic, but also encouraging online ordering and customer engagement.

McGuckin promotes the program with in-store banners, signage, and bag stuffers, and provides coupons printed directly on their shopping bags to use toward an online purchase. Their marketing efforts have resulted in nearly 80,000 Rewards members and generated a wealth of customer data to help them create more personalized marketing campaigns. "With the rewards program offered through our former distributor partner, they owned all the data we collected, which meant we couldn't access it in order to send out targeted e-mails to customers," explained Harrison. "Now, with Orgill's FanBuilder™, we own all the customer data so we can use it to promote items that align with our shoppers' buying behaviors."

IMPRESSIVE METRICS

In less than a year, McGuckin's site has already delivered impactful results. In the first month of their site launch, web traffic numbers more than doubled compared to the year prior and web sales jumped 1,320%. Harrison attributes this, in part, to the high demand for online ordering at the start of the COVID-19 outbreak, but also because of their more expansive online product catalog. Even now, nearly a year after their go-live, their web sales are well over 1,000% compared to the same period the year before.

McGuckin's in-store average order value (AOV) has also increased by 23%, despite their customer count declining 16%. Online AOV has grown 34% with the help of promotions, clearance sales, and their "Customers also bought" feature at the bottom of product detail pages. It presents McGuckin customers with similar and complementary products related to their item search, which helps them fill their shopping cart.

While they are monitoring key website metrics, Harrison acknowledges they are still not anywhere close to where they need to be as far as tracking their site performance. "There's so much more we can be doing to analyze data," he admitted. "We want to dig deeper to find opportunities to enhance our online presence, increase engagement, and grow sales."

> *To have a single entity come in and enrich all our product in a timely manner was huge for us.*
>
> Bill Harrison
> Technical Operations Manager
> McGuckin Hardware

FUTURE ROADMAP

McGuckin is continuing the momentum brought on by their digital transformation. To enhance the in-store customer experience and add more convenience, their next release will include the aisle and bay location for each product. The retailer realized many shoppers want to get in and out of a store without having to rely on a store associate for help. "The pandemic has changed the way customers shop in our store. Many want to look up a product on their phone or laptop, easily locate it in the store, and quickly check out so they can lessen face-to-face interactions. Aisle and bay location information on our site and mobile app will allow them to do that," explained Harrison.

They also plan to launch Google Local Inventory ads to gain more exposure. This new offering from Google is designed to drive more web and in-store traffic by showing shoppers local inventory for products they are searching for online. For instance, if a person searches for a grill on their mobile device, Google Local Inventory will display product results tied to McGuckin's inventory of grills, along with a link to their product page and a map pinpointing their store location.

Another enhancement slated for their roadmap is their mobile app. While Harrison insists the mobile app has some great bells and whistles, they have plans to fine-tune it to include more features, provide a better loyalty program interface, and have the ability to push product promotions and coupons. Their goal is to build in special incentives that will compel customers to download their app.

McGuckin has learned firsthand the importance of having a digital commerce platform. The pandemic has driven many more people to shop online and Harrison believes companies that don't offer eCommerce are missing out on a huge amount of business. "An online storefront offers tremendous growth potential. Not only will it bring in more sales, it will also lead customers to transact with you in other ways. Without eCommerce, you're falling behind."

As they continue to enhance their digital branch, Unilog is helping McGuckin every step of the way. "With all the new features we have coming out, Unilog and Orgill have been very good about listening to our needs and helping us bring our eCommerce vision to life," said Harrison.

ABOUT MCGUCKIN HARDWARE

Started in 1955, McGuckin Hardware operates a single 56,000 square-foot store with 200 employees, 16 registers, and 18 departments ranging from Garden and Housewares to Automotive. Nestled at the base of the Flatirons rock formations, McGuckin Hardware is an integral part of the Boulder community. To learn more, visit https://www.mcguckin.com.

ABOUT UNILOG

Unilog is a global technology company that delivers powerful, affordable eCommerce solutions for the B2B marketplace. Our cloud-based eCommerce platform and product data enrichment services help distributors, manufacturers, and specialty hardgoods retailers increase online sales, reduce cost to serve, and enhance their digital channel. For more information, visit www.unilogcorp.com.

996 Old Eagle School Rd.
Suite 1119
Wayne, PA 19087

www.unilogcorp.com
info@unilogcorp.com
484-580-8933