


**CLIENT:**

Shearer Supply


**LOCATION:**

Farmers Branch,  
Texas

**INDUSTRY:**

HVAC Wholesale  
Distribution

**PROJECT:**

Digital Commerce  
and Product Content

## Strategy

Shearer Supply has made great service its top commitment since the company was started in 1983 by Wayne Shearer. That service extends throughout their business - from a strong line of HVAC products for both wholesale dealers and residential and light commercial contractors, to dealer marketing and advertising programs, extensive contractor training, and dedicated customer support for all. As a result, Shearer Supply has gained a reputation for providing all the services that any size contractor needs to grow his or her business.

To bring more value and efficiency to their customers, Shearer Supply entered the digital side of general HVAC distribution in 2017, partnering with Unilog to create their first eCommerce website. AJ Brenner, eCommerce and Marketing Manager at Shearer Supply, admitted the HVAC distributor's digital transformation was about five to 10 years behind most of the B2C trends, but they knew it was needed to help push their industry to a new segment. "When we implemented our eCommerce site with Unilog, we were kind of playing catch up [with the B2C marketplace]. We realized it would create a slight shift in how our staff and customers did business, but we also saw the value it would provide," explained Brenner.

## Solution

Unilog's connected suite of product content and digital commerce solutions, called the [CX1 Platform](#), propelled Shearer Supply's online presence and transformed the way they do business. The CX1 suite of products provides the distributor with a powerful eCommerce website and distributor-specific tools to save their customers more time and provide more efficiencies throughout their day. Shearer Supply's digital sales channel is complemented with robust, up-to-date product content they subscribe to and manage via the [CX1 PIM](#), Unilog's product information management solution, which gives them access to a nearly unlimited [catalog of HVAC SKUs](#) that are enriched with the latest specifications, descriptions, images, supporting documents, and pricing.

"One of the big benefits that the CX1 Platform has added to our company and to the website is the ability to have all the product information and all of the specific attributes and documentation in one source – the CX1 PIM – and know that it's accurate," said Brenner. "The PIM gives us the ability to continually check and verify data, and provide a version of the data online that a customer can look at and trust. Because of this high-quality content, customers know we are their resource and their partner in business, and that we're giving them this information so that they can do their jobs to the best of their ability."

As for the website's content management, Shearer Supply takes advantage of the eCommerce platform's [user-friendly CMS tools](#) to customize their site and the customer experience. Through the CMS tool, Brenner said they have made it easy for dealers to find products on their site – even ones they may not even realize they sell – by promoting different product lines via online promotions and banner ads. "Whenever we have a new sale or product line to introduce, we now have a source to advertise that information," he remarked. "We don't have to pay for ad space on Google; our website provides us with free ad space so we can really represent our company and what we're trying to accomplish."

## Results

### CUSTOMER ADOPTION

The distributor knew it was pushing its traditional HVAC customers into a new buying channel with the launch of their website; one that some customers would not be very comfortable using. But Shearer Supply found that once they showed dealers how their site worked, the tools it offered, and the benefits it provided, they slowly started adopting it into their day-to-day work. Just as their digital transformation is a journey, Shearer Supply has found their customer adoption is as well. For those customers who still want that personal touch and support, the distributor tells them they can still have those weekly conversations with their sales staff, but now they have time-saving options that enable them to shop and order on their own. With continued training and internal advocacy, Shearer Supply has seen steady adoption growth and reports that about 20% of its total customer base is now using their eCommerce site.

Brenner contends their bigger customers have been instrumental in driving that growth. "Many of our larger customers are connected with each other, so word has spread that we've taken our eCommerce into a new level. There's a lot more benefit to shopping with us than shopping online at Amazon; we have tools and features that help their business run and, in the end, help them make more money and grow their business."

### INTERNAL ADOPTION

As is the case with many small to mid-sized HVAC distributors, Shearer Supply's salespeople have many different responsibilities. Brenner says their eCommerce site has become a value-add that saves their sales team time and allows them to focus on their primary job of finding new business. The staff has found the online storefront to be a great sales tool when trying to land a new customer. A sales rep can demonstrate the onsite tools, the different functionality and checkout options, and how they can help the dealer grow going forward.



Shearer Supply's website has also completely changed the inside sales team's process. Brenner says they use the eCommerce site as they would a paper catalog in the past. "With the rich product information housed on the site, they can understand what we sell to our customers and then refer to the site to provide them with documentation, attributes, and any other information that they're going to need for their installations." Brenner added, "They can also send direct site links to our customers so they can see their own pricing and availability for the products they're asking about. Because all the product information is stored there, it provides one source of truth and a connected ecosystem for both our internal teams and our customers."

## ANALYTICS INSIGHT

Analytics play an important role in measuring the company's eCommerce success and give their investors insight into the value of what they are investing into their website. A major key performance indicator or KPI they have been tracking is average order value (AOV). Shearer Supply measures and reports on the AOV of orders placed in person and over the phone and, separately, tracks the AOV of online orders. "Our online AOV is double that of our offline AOV," remarked Brenner. "That alone has shown our investors what a huge value-add the website is to our business."

## CUSTOMIZATION CAPABILITIES

The CX1 Platform was designed to be flexible, scalable, and extremely customizable. Shearer Supply took advantage of the open architecture to customize the entire front end of their website - from their home page and dealer landing pages to specific product pages. They also integrated a parts finder tool called the AHRI Product Matchup that displays product results for all the certified components that match and complement a customer's part search. "The parts finder tool has really changed the game for us. In the past, finding replacement parts was a very manual and tedious process for both our customers and our staff. What used to take extended phone conversations and research, can now be solved instantly on our website," said Brenner.

Shearer Supply works with Unilog's partner, ImpaqX, to implement their customizations and additional integrations. The solution provider's expertise and understanding of the CX1 Platform has made it easy for the distributor to accomplish their current digital strategy goals and plan their future roadmap. One of their next initiatives is to integrate HVAC scheduling software widely used in the industry with their eCommerce platform. "Our customers have told us for some time now that they'd like to be able to schedule their jobs and their techs, determine the parts and accessories needed for the jobs, and then order the parts from us all in one place, so we are working to make it happen with the help of the ServiceTitan app." Brenner added, "Once the integration is complete, our customers will be able to click a button and send their product order from the ServiceTitan app directly to us."



"With the rich product information housed on the site, our sales team can understand what we sell to our customers and then refer to the site to provide them with documentation, attributes, and any other information that they're going to need for their installations."

**AJ BRENNER**

eCommerce and Digital Marketing Manager

## Positive Digital Journey

With Unilog's platform and support, Shearer Supply has built a powerful online storefront that has benefited their customers and helped their company grow. While they realize their eCommerce journey has been a long road with many changes and pivots, the independent distributor says their website has helped them find their own niche, provide value-add, and keep them competitive with many of the big players in the marketplace.

"Unilog has just been a great partner over the years. They've been someone that we've relied on, and they've always been someone that has pushed us to be better," said Brenner. "They've shown us different resources, options, and ways we can give more value to our dealers. We're very happy with everything and we're definitely very excited for the future with Unilog and what's to come."

## About Shearer Supply

Established in 1983, Shearer Supply is a distributor of residential and commercial HVAC equipment, geothermal, and ductless brands in the northern half of Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, Western Tennessee, Northern Mississippi, Northern Louisiana, Eastern New Mexico, and the Florida Panhandle. With 15 branches, the third-generation, family-run company works hard to continue the legacy set by their company founder, Wayne Shearer. Visit [shearersupply.com](http://shearersupply.com) to learn more.

Unilog is the leader in connected product content and commerce, delivering the platform, content, and connectivity businesses need to succeed in the digital arena. Our connected suite of solutions helps wholesale distributors, manufacturers, and specialty retailers sell more, stay relevant, and reduce their cost to serve.

For more information, visit [UnilogCorp.com](http://UnilogCorp.com)