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ROB LEVY,  
PRINCIPAL  
ELECTRICSHOPPING.COM

## The Company

**Electricshopping.com** is a London based internet retailer of home appliances and merchandise. Started in early 2001, it provided a low price guarantee along with free shipping in the UK to establish itself as the premier destination for electric home goods in Europe.

## The Situation

“As a rapidly growing pure-play internet retail business, our hosted ecommerce infrastructure was holding us back. We required a platform upgrade that would substantially reduce our labor intensive manual processes, mesh with our systems, and would pillar our ongoing evolution.”

ROB LEVY, DIRECTOR, ELECTRICSHOPPING.COM.

## The Challenges

Electricshopping.com needed to better support an expanding business. To do that,

- electricshopping.com needed to increase the efficiency of the order fulfillment process.
- electricshopping.com needed to mirror their online back office with their current offline processes.
- electricshopping.com needed to support enhanced marketing capabilities such as cross-selling, promotions, branded micro-sites, and international site variants.

## The Solution

Elastic Path Software's flexible, developer friendly, ecommerce platform implemented by London based integration partner Exentric Thinking (<http://www.exentricthinking.com>).

## The Results

- Lower abandonment rate among new shoppers
- 10% increase in average order size
- Increased back-office throughput by 250%
- 200% increase in daily orders
- Reduction in order processing errors by 150%
- Ability to track, segment and reward repeat customers
- Added the ability to scale technology with operational requirements



## The Story

Electricshopping.com is a London based internet retailer of home appliances and merchandise. Started in early 2001, it provided a low price guarantee along with free shipping in the UK to establish itself as the premier destination for electric home goods in Europe.

With access to £3.5 million worth of inventory, electricshopping.com was processing approximately 100 orders per day. However, they were quickly reaching the threshold of their hosted ecommerce platform. The hosted system had inadequate back-office controls, so they were heavily dependant on paper-based processes. Orders were prone to errors, order statuses were nearly impossible to relay to customers in an efficient manner, accounting and ecommerce systems operated in silos, and with increasing order volume the company was forced to move towards future-proofing their ecommerce infrastructure.

Electricshopping.com had a longstanding European-based ecommerce platform in mind when they approached London based digital agency Exentric Thinking. **“They had previous experience with the ecommerce platform but quickly determined we needed something with more flexibility in order to support and help grow our rapidly evolving business,”** stated Rob Levy, Principal of electricshopping.com.

After evaluating numerous ecommerce software vendors and options, including building a custom in-house system, it was determined Elastic Path's ultra-flexible, Java-based commerce software was the best fit.

As a UK based retailer, electricshopping.com required slightly different rules to accommodate EU specific discounting and taxation. Unlike North American based retailing, if a discount is offered in the UK it is taken off after taxes. Modifications such as this were simplified by using Elastic Path's pluggable strategies for pricing, taxation, discounting, and shipping.

A key ingredient in marketing electricshopping.com products is leveraging manufacturer relationships. A branded micro-site solely for the Kenwood range of products was deployed at a separate web address [www.kenwoodmajor.com]. This site is controlled through the same Commerce Manager as the main site, creating a unified back-office for handling products, promotions, discounts, customers and orders. Micro-site's are able to be marketed directly on search engines and comparison shopping engines; brand related searchers are delivered a more enticing search result.

To aid in converting these visitors to purchasers, electricshopping.com utilizes discounting strategies in product merchandising. In addition to a low price guarantee, they discount products from the manufacturers recommended retail price by default.

**“The Elastic Path attribute management system was absolutely essential to the implementation of features such as recommended retail price discounting,”** said Darren Scott of digital agency

Exentric Thinking. **“It made our job so much easier because we didn't have to make any changes at the database schema level.”**

In order to generate lift in conversion rates, featured products are displayed on the homepage and generic content pages. This gives the marketing manager the ability to constantly be putting optimized product in front of visitors in order to trigger a purchase.

Visitors can quickly determine if a product is relevant to their budget or brand allegiances by having the ability to sort categories by price and brand. They can 'add to basket' immediately from products on category pages, or after clicking for additional details. These quickly implemented features deliver greater conversions and contribute to increased sales.

Customers have the option to flag their order as being of higher priority for an extra £4.50. This guarantees the order is placed at the front of the picking and packing queue and that it will leave the warehouse that same (working) day. In most cases the order is delivered within 24 hours, which contributes to a very satisfying experience, increased customer affinity and repeat purchases. With effective merchandising now in place on the store side of the commerce operations, electricshopping.com also had to fix the back-office operations.

**“Being able to mirror existing business processes was key to increasing efficiency for us,”** stated Levy. **“The system should work around what we do; we should not have to alter our own processes to suit that of the system”.**

Warehouse personnel access an order status interface via wireless handheld devices and wall mounted touch screens. As they gather the products from around the warehouse, order status is changed to 'picking'. Once all products are collected the status is switched to 'packing' as they are boxed for pick-up by the courier. When the courier arrives to take the package, statuses are switched to 'shipped' and a tracking number is attached to the order record. Customers have full insight into the status of their order at each stage via their account screen on the storefront. This has reduced the amount of customer service requests significantly and freed up staff to attend to revenue generating activities.

Just 8 months after re-launching electricshopping.com on the Elastic Path ecommerce platform, order errors have been reduced by 150% and they now process between 200-300 orders per day – a 200% increase.

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