



## Elastic Path™ Case Study: Hockey Canada and Elastic Path team up to score a winning ecommerce launch



*"Hockey Canada has worked with numerous vendors, and from that perspective, our experience with Elastic Path has been nothing short of phenomenal. With their ecommerce and online marketing expertise, the team helped us from concept, structure, and design through to the intricate details. Trusting our ecommerce operations to a one-stop shop ecommerce partner was paramount to our success."*

– Dale Ptycia  
Senior Manager, Licensing at Hockey Canada

**Company at a glance:****Name:** Hockey Canada**Industry:** Sports**Year Founded:** 1914**Headquarters:** Calgary, AB, Canada**Annual revenues:** \$14.0M**URL:** [www.hockeycanada.ca](http://www.hockeycanada.ca)**Business Goals:**

To find a partner to launch and manage a Hockey Canada-branded online store

**About Hockey Canada**

In 1914 the Canadian Amateur Hockey Association was formed as the national governing body for hockey. The inaugural meeting brought together a number of representatives from across Canada's hockey community and signified the resolve to primarily oversee uniformity of playing rules, the assembly of national championships, registration of players and representation at international events.

Today Hockey Canada is the country's National Sport Organization (NSO) and governs ice hockey from entry level through to Olympic and World Championship teams. It is also responsible for a wide array of education and development programs, national and international events, participant insurance, etc.—all leading to positive hockey experiences for all participants, volunteers, and athletes.

**Business Goals**

Hockey Canada was seeking a partner with ecommerce and online marketing expertise to help guide their ecommerce strategy and manage a robust online store. Previous bricks-and-mortar vendors were not nimble or agile, and their small internal team at Hockey Canada had limited knowledge about ecommerce. Hockey Canada's brand was relegated to a status one-addition league brand that consumers could choose from. When shopping for Hockey Canada products, fans would be directed to a third party site in order to complete their purchase. Not only did this hand off the customer to a third party vendor, the vendor also advertised products from competing leagues and brands.

This provided the customer with many opportunities to choose alternative products or abandon their cart, thus lowering conversion rates for Team Canada (Canada's national hockey team) product purchases. Compounding the ecommerce shopping experience, consumers had numerous other online vendors offering Team Canada merchandise.

**Selecting an Ecommerce Outsourcing Provider**

Hockey Canada found a perfect fit in Elastic Path for several reasons:

**One-stop shop**

Hockey Canada could fully outsource the entire ecommerce operations to one vendor. This included store operations, merchandising, call center, fulfillment, hosting, consulting, and development services.

**Ecommerce and online marketing expertise**

One of the unique differentiators Elastic Path offered was their strong knowledge of ecommerce from a technical and operational side as well as the online marketing side. Many vendors could set up a store, but Elastic Path also provided the online marketing best practices to increase traffic and conversion rates.

**Consistent branding**

Elastic Path really understood branding through their experience dealing with official licensed merchandise. Elastic Path could provide design services for a Hockey Canada-branded site. The fans' entire experience from click to purchase would carry to the Hockey Canada brand.

## Services

From concept to launch, the new online store took three months of set up and work.

### Development

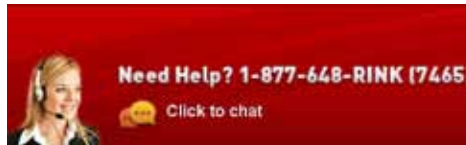
Elastic Path created the online store for Hockey Canada from the ground up. This included web development, integration with third party tools, and creative design that was consistent with the brand. Elastic Path worked closely with Hockey Canada's managers to implement custom ecommerce features that would provide a dynamic online shopping experience.

### Store Operations and Customer Care

The entire store operations from setup to day-to-day management were handled by Elastic Path:

- brand management
- catalog management
- visual merchandising
- cross sells and upsells
- product promotions
- demand generation
- marketing services
- conversion optimization
- product reviews
- localization

Elastic Path provided a ready team of customer service representatives who were fluent in both national languages of English and French. These customer service reps handled phone and email inquiries, live chat, fraud detection, and also processed returns, exchanges, and refunds.



## Merchandise Management

The Hockey Canada team was able to focus on day-to-day operations of the sports organization while the Elastic Path team managed merchandising, purchasing, vendor management, and fulfillment of the Hockey Canada online store.

## Consulting and Marketing

Elastic Path helped plan and execute an online marketing strategy that was aligned with the wide array of Hockey Canada marketing initiatives and events. There were seasonal events, retail events, and special events such as the World Junior Hockey Championships. Hockey Canada created special edition green jerseys for The World Junior Hockey Championships and needed to promote this special item on the online store.

## Elastic Path:

- Website Development, Hosting, Store Operations, Customer Care, and Merchandise Management

## Results:

- Smooth launch of an online store that helped strengthen and build relationships with current and new fans

Elastic Path developed all the components of this “green jersey” marketing campaign:

- Email campaign including design, copy, and distribution
- Store banner ad
- Product photography and copy for the online catalog
- Pre-sale functionality to allow fans to purchase before the green jersey was available

**Store banner ad**



**Product photography and copy for the online catalog**



**IIHF World Junior Championship Canada Replica Green Jersey**

\$119.00

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2010 IIHF World Junior Championship Team Canada Replica Green Jersey Canada's National Junior Team will proudly wear a special-edition green jersey during the 2010 IIHF World Junior Championship, in honour of the people of Saskatchewan and as a salute to the province. The 2010 IIHF World Junior Championship will mark the first time the tournament is being hosted in a single location of Regina and Saskatoon.

You can own a piece of history and cheer Canada's National Junior Team on to its bid for a sixth consecutive gold medal hockey victory. The Team will wear the green jerseys twice – once in a pre-competition game and once during the championship.

This item is available for pre-order only and will be available for shipment the first week of January, 2010.

For more information, please contact customer service at 1.877.648.2465

[Read more](#)

## Results

Hockey Canada wanted another channel to nurture their relationship with their current and new fans as well as service their microdemographics—coaches, referees, volunteers, and trainers. An online store would allow them to strengthen these ties as well as create a supplementary revenue stream. With their limited internal resources, Hockey Canada wanted to rely on a partner who could launch and manage their ecommerce business end to end.

Elastic Path launched the Hockey Canada online store (English version at [www.store.hockeycanada.ca](http://www.store.hockeycanada.ca) and French version at [www.boutique.hockeycanada.ca](http://www.boutique.hockeycanada.ca)) in October 2009 after only a few months of development. The store immediately created excitement within the fan base with special merchandise and offers. Hockey Canada was able to bring a seamless customer experience from the arena to their online store.

Having worked with many major global brands, the Elastic Path team also brings Hockey Canada fresh ideas for numerous future ecommerce initiatives:

- Bundled products
- Special online-only products and promotions
- Social marketing initiatives
- Custom jersey builder
- Fan reviews
- 2-page checkout to streamline the buying process

## About Elastic Path

Elastic Path Software provides an extendible platform, hosting, outsourcing, and consulting to help clients achieve success with ecommerce. No other vendor provides the flexibility to move between these models at any time. Decide how much control you need—from full access to source code to outsourcing your entire ecommerce business. Major global brands such as Virgin Media, Time Inc and Sony Ericsson rely on Elastic Path. For more information, please visit [www.elasticpath.com](http://www.elasticpath.com).

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