


TIME+SPACE DISTRIBUTION SEES SUCCESS WITH INTERSELL E-COMMERCE

Time & Space Distribution Ltd. was started by sound engineer and music producer, Ed Stratton. Supplying sample CDs, virtual instruments, DVD learning resources and music hardware and software the business became one of the leading suppliers in Europe.



The screenshot displays the Time+Space website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the company logo, contact information (Order now call: 01837 55200), a product search bar, and a shopping bag icon. Below the navigation bar, there are several promotional banners and product categories. A prominent banner for iZotope features a quote from Jason Graves: "The perfect combination of musical inspiration and technical achievement." Other sections include "Tutorial Videos", "Sample Libraries", "Virtual Instruments", and "Hardware". A "News" section on the right side of the page contains several articles, including one about an exclusive UK distribution deal for iZotope and Time+Space.

"We regularly create and upload news articles and product reviews to promote new products and special offers that we've added to the site and it's easy to see a link between these and an increase in sales in the products that they're promoting."

Time and Space has a wide and varied customer base ranging from bedroom hobbyist music producers to film score composers. Aspin were commissioned to build their new e-commerce website. The new website combines a retail e-commerce website and a trade customer ordering system, both of which are managed with Aspin's InterSell e-commerce management system.

The retail e-commerce website includes news, events, education, and information pages, in addition to its product catalogue. Browsing the product catalogue, users can view product specifications and any customer reviews or press reviews relating to the product. Where appropriate, they can also download MP3 samples of the product. The site also provides a countdown of its top ten selling products and a list of the user's most recently viewed items.

Logging into their account, registered users are able to view their saved orders and order history, track their orders and amend their delivery and payment details. Many of Time & Space's products are sold as shipped products; however the website also offers a range of samples for digital download. Catering to the needs of the suppliers of downloads, many of whom are small independent producers; the website sends monthly sales reports of downloads which InterSell automatically generates and sends out.

Trade customers ordering from the site have the option of a rapid order entry facility, or can add items to their orders via a quick search facility that is linked to the product catalogue. Unlike the retail website, the trade ordering system will apply any relevant price list or discount structures to the user's order before it is processed. Using The InterSell e-commerce management system Time and Space can update and amend specific content, maintain the product catalogue, create and manage product promotions and add news items to the site. Closely integrated with Time and Space's Sage Line 50 accounting software, the website exports orders and new account details directly into Sage, and also imports data at regular intervals, updating the product catalogue, order history and each trade customer's account details. Almost a year after the new launch of the new website, Aspin spoke to Joel Heatley, Time and Space's sales manager, about its implementation and continuing development:

Q: What has worked well on the website?

A: We used to maintain our old static website via Dream-Weaver which was a lot more time consuming. With InterSell we've increased the size of our website's product catalogue. Time and Space offer over a thousand different products and we add anything up to ten products every week so having a system that helps us do this quickly is essential. InterSell even enables us to create links between related products and news articles. One of the main advantages of having such an extensive catalogue is that customers are always able to order from the website if they cannot find the products they want with our dealers. We're also able to upload significantly more information relating to each product in the product catalogue. Each product page has a number of different sections including product details, customer and product reviews. As a result, we're able to provide detailed specifications, which is especially important for the software products we sell. Hopefully, this means that customers can get a good feel for the products before they buy them. The InterSell system also provides a range of sales reports and this has made great deal more realtime information available to us.

Q: What effect has the website had on sales?

A: We regularly create and upload news articles and product reviews to promote new products and special offers that we've added to the site and it's easy to see a link between these and an increase in sales in the products that they're promoting. The list of the top ten selling products shipped and top downloads, which is automatically generated from the website's sales figures, has also proven to be really popular particularly in the case of downloads. Once a product gets into the top ten it tends to stay there for a long time. Therefore, it appears that this goes some way in influencing our customers' purchases.

Q: What plans do you have for the future of the website?

A: Aspin have already helped us with the technology to display the website in multiple languages and we hope to be going live with this very soon. We also hope to have a greater degree of integration between Timespace.com and YouTube. The website currently has a range of different video clips of both product demonstrations and tutorials but we'd like to increase the number that are available, adding a video section to as many of our products' pages as possible. Because of the nature of our business, many of our suppliers regularly upload video clips to YouTube, and we'd like to be able to link dynamically to pages on YouTube using search tags on our site.

At the same time we're also looking add to social bookmarking tags to the site that would enable visitors to our site to link article and product pages to their own homepages on social networking sites such as Facebook and My Space.

Q: What would you say is the key to a running a successful website?

A: Planning is obviously very important. You need to be prepared to invest a lot of time in maintaining the website and generating new ideas and content. The new website has put a lot more features at our disposal, which we make full of use, and this, to some extent, has helped us to keep the site's content fresh and up to date.

Q: Finally, what made you choose Aspin?

A: We looked at six suppliers during the course of our initial selection process. One of the problems with many of the other suppliers was that they were providing off-the-shelf products that could not be easily adapted to our specific needs. Aspin gave a good demonstration of their InterSell product and also provided consultancy, helping us to work through development issues and providing bespoke additions to the core InterSell product. We knew that whichever supplier we choose we would need to forge a long term relationship with them. With Aspin we were confident that we could achieve that.



Website: www.timespace.com

For more information about InterSell e-commerce please call +44 (0)1794 500 200 or visit www.aspin.co.uk/ecommerce

InterSell: E-commerce that will attract customers, and grow your online sales.