# Case study

**Dietzgen:**

Faster Sales, New Markets, Satisfied Customers

*Industry: Wide-format printing*
*ERP: Microsoft Dynamics GP*

**k·ecommerce.**
powered by **mdf commerce**

Dietzgen is a wholesale distributor of materials for the printing industry. Working with a global network of manufacturing partners including textile mills and extruders, they process large rolls of paper (about the size of a small car), cutting them into smaller rolls that fit onto Wide Format printers to reproduce building plans, photographs, artwork, advertising signs, window graphics, and more.

Founded nearly 30 years ago from a single location in Tampa, Florida, **Dietzgen has expanded over the years into a national footprint of 8 dedicated facilities in strategic locations across the US**. Some of these locations are converting sites, which remains Dietzgen's principle business.

Other sites are entirely for distribution: some close to major printing cities like **Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles, while others, such as Atlanta, are set up to serve multiple states**.

Each site converts, packs, stocks, labels and distributes hundreds of orders per day in order to reduce freight cost and lead times for Dietzgen's materials to get to their customers.

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# The Challenge

Like many business-to-business (B2B) distributors, Dietzgen was an **offline company who for decades managed orders, invoices and customer relationships by email, fax and phone**.

The company's product offering included thousands of different SKUs representing numerous item categories, and almost all of it was siloed in various locations. While a good portion of it was contained in Dietzgen's Microsoft Dynamics GP ERP system, other information was kept in static PDFs and file folders, on Excel spreadsheets, and even in emails.

Getting all this information to their customers was thus a significant challenge, particularly because they would have to send it all by email or over the phone. There was no central location for either the company or for their clientele to find what they were looking for easily.

Additionally, like many distributors, Dietzgen's customer relationships were highly individual, with personalized product offerings and pricing for each client. **So the key was to find a solution that would bring all the relevant pieces of information together in a way that their customers could search and find them**.

But it wasn't as simple as choosing an ecommerce platform. They needed a platform that worked with Dynamics GP, but Dietzgen's Dynamics GP system didn't use product spec functionality. This meant that even with all the product records properly entered, only about 20% of the total product information they needed was actually in the ERP. 80% of their product information would still need to be entered manually into any ecommerce platform they chose, even with full ERP integration.

**20%** of the total product information they needed was actually in the ERP
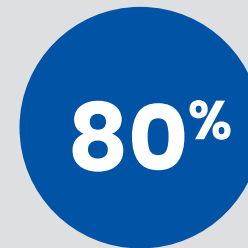
**80%** of their product information would still need to be entered manually into an ecommerce platform
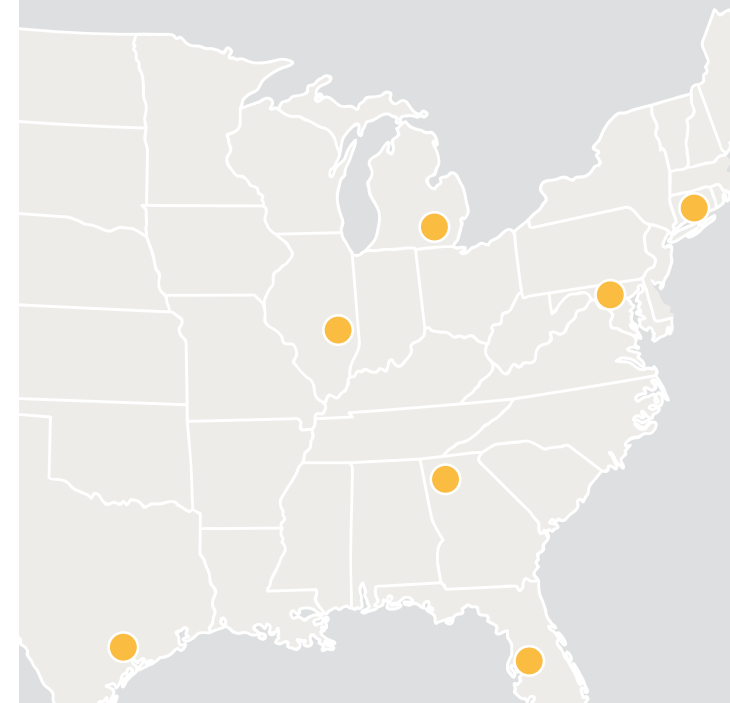
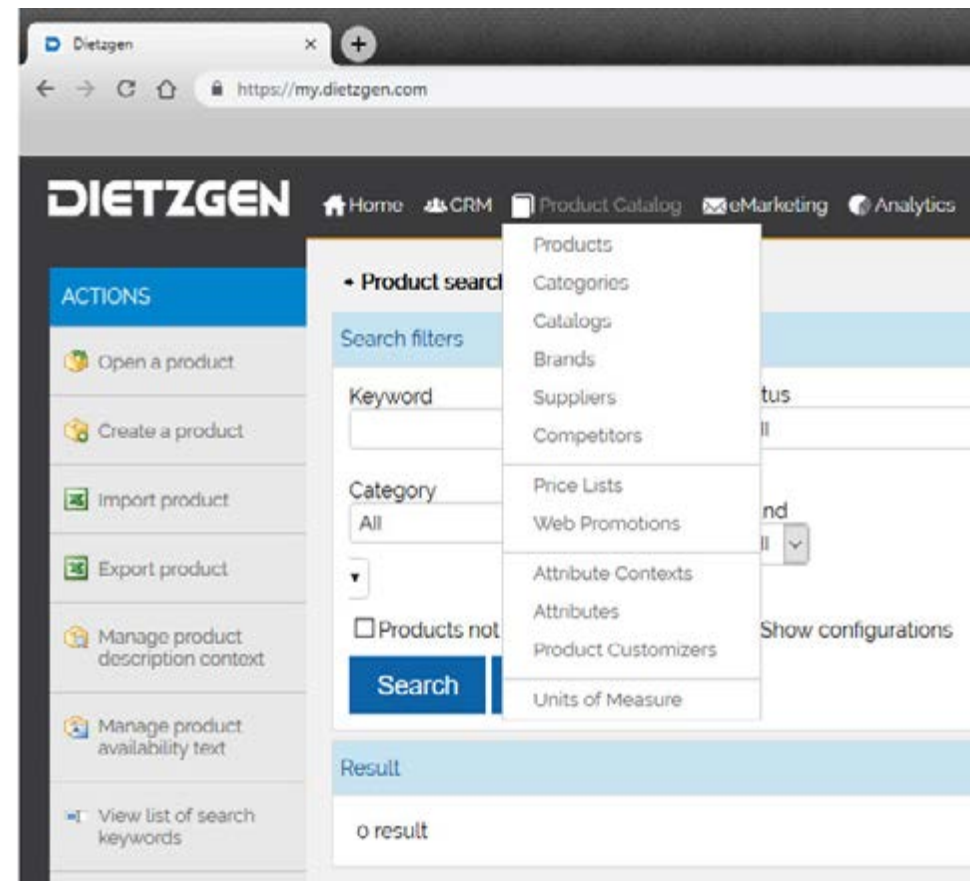| Streamlined business data | Automated routine tasks | Comprehensive product information | Instant customer access |

## The Solution

An ERP-integrated k-ecommerce solution helped Dietzgen to **streamline all their customer, product and business data into a central location** for quick, easy access.

ERP integration **automated many of the most time-consuming data entry tasks** involved in getting the company's product catalog fully online.

With ERP integration, as customer, item and pricing data is added to the ERP, it copies automatically to the web store where Dietzgen's clients and staff are able to find it immediately.

When orders process on the site, they sync directly over to the ERP, where staff sends them on to the appropriate location for fulfillment.

**Streamlined business data**

**Automated routine tasks**

**Comprehensive product information**

**Instant customer access**

k-ecommerce's import/export functionality perfectly complemented the ERP integration, giving Dietzgen a way to **rapidly upload all the product specs and supplementary information** that wasn't housed in Dynamics GP.

The k-ecommerce solution also gave Dietzgen the freedom to configure numerous versions of their extensive product catalog for all their different customers, each version containing all the information that particular customer needs in order to make an informed buying decision.

Additionally, they were able to modify the pricelist functionality so that their **customers could download pricelists from the site**. Dietzgen's price system setup in Dynamics GP is not only highly complex, but can undergo as many as 20 major product line price changes in the course of a single year. So while it might seem like a minor feature, **making this information available for download saved Dietzgen thousands of hours** of exporting, preparing and emailing price sheets to customers.

# The Results

By choosing an ERP-integrated k-ecommerce web store, Dietzgen has been able to significantly shorten their sales cycle. Customers have instant access to key buying decision info, including comprehensive product details, which makes it that much easier to close the sale.

An online channel has allowed Dietzgen to expand their business to new customers and even launch new products more easily.

While in the process of implementing their solution, Dietzgen made two acquisitions that brought significant changes to their business model, including the introduction of brands. The flexibility of the k-ecommerce platform was able to adapt to their changing needs and scale with their business.

As Dietzgen's marketing director, Mark Friedman, puts it: "A good website means my phone doesn't ring and my email doesn't ping! They have all the answers they need."

**Shortened sales cycle**

**Expanded business**

**Launched new products**

> " A good website means my phone doesn't ring and my email doesn't ping! They have all the answers they need. "
>
> **Mark Friedman,**
> Marketing director at Dietzgen