



Silver Mine Gifts

The owner struck gold with time and flexibility

A Webgility Case Study

Ralph Goddard entered the online retail business in 2002 as a matter of convenience. While working for a Fortune 500 company in a large office complex, he came to know a neighboring business—an old-school distributor of antique and vintage art deco and Victorian-style jewelry. Given that the inventory was right next door and the distributor had virtually no web presence, Goddard seized the opportunity to set up a small online business for his wife, Melinda. A few years later, Goddard found himself in the position to buy out the distributor, take his online gift and jewelry business to the next level, and leave his full-time job to focus on sales. Fast forward another 13 years and he now sells on his custom site SilverMineGifts.com, eBay, Amazon, Etsy, and OpenSky.

When one of their daughters developed a chronic illness, Goddard realized the importance of running the family business as efficiently as possible. “Being able to optimize workflows and business systems is a big thing with me, so that my wife and I can spend the maximum amount of time with our daughter,” said Goddard. “I often ask myself *‘How do I keep this manageable and productive?’*”

The Industry

In the world of online sales, being flexible in the ever-changing landscape is what separates the successful from the struggling—a distinction that was not lost on Silver Mine Gifts. “You can have your own custom website change from doing very well to doing very poorly because of a Google algorithmic change,” Goddard shared. “You have to be agile and move into other marketplaces without having that disrupt your whole business process.” Without the right solution, Goddard



Silver Mine
GIFTS.COM

Industry: Personalized silver gifts and jewelry

Founded: 2002

Problem: Needed to save time on data entry and wanted freedom to experiment with selling on different marketplaces and platforms without reinventing the wheel.

Solution: Webgility's Unify automates data entry and keeps business systems in sync over multiple channels.

Unexpected Bonus: Webgility customer service allows Silver Mine Gifts to speak to a human and get valuable solutions exactly when they need them.

points out that Google's slight tweaks can be devastating for a small business. For example, with the goal of providing a good user experience, Google search will overlook a web site for not being mobile-friendly. That works out fine for Google users, but it can be financially crippling for an online retailer who may be using a shopping cart that is not yet mobile friendly.

The Challenge

In a small family-run business, everyone does their part. At Silver Mine Gifts, Goddard's wife Melinda handles the accounting, but she was spending as much as 20 hours a month re-entering invoices into QuickBooks Desktop to create purchase orders with a non-integrative order processing software. It's no surprise Goddard found this processing workflow too time-consuming and ineffective, so he began researching solutions. It had also become apparent that Goddard's concerns about the Google algorithm were real, so he was also seeking a solution that would allow him to see his multi-channel business from a holistic perspective, manage all revenue streams from one software, and—based on the shifts



in the marketplace and in organic search. I experiment with different sales channels without disrupting the entire system.

The Solution

Despite Melinda's aversion to change, Goddard eventually convinced her to try Webgility in 2014. Now using Unify to automate workflows, the only thing Melinda has to handle is reconciliation, which is a huge time saver. "My wife can come in for just an hour or two and get all her work done, and that was not possible before," said Goddard. Now when processing orders from their marketplaces, platforms, and their custom web site SilverMineGifts.com, they just use one set of data and integrate with Endicia DAZZle for shipping and processing labels.

"Webgility also allows us to shift the business as needed," said Goddard. "Before I was selling a certain amount on eBay, and this year I'm selling double that because I saw a shift happening from a Google algorithmic change." Goddard points out that because the Internet is so

With Webgility

- Processing time was reduced by 75%
- Annual revenue increased by 67%

"Webgility allows us to shift the business as needed and try different marketplaces."

—Ralph Goddard, owner Silver Mine Gifts

segmented and people have habits around where they shop online, it's important to try your product in different markets, whether it's eBay or Amazon or a different platform. Because those channels charge fees based on sales, you're paying based on your store's performance, which ends up costing much less than what you'd spend on Google AdWords. Webgility allows sellers to see all revenue streams, fees, and expenses and strategically manage margins across all sales channels.

The Result

Turns out the old saying "a happy wife makes for a happy life" rings true for Goddard and his family. "Melinda is very happy and it has saved her a lot of time. I now don't think I could get her off of it," said Goddard. "Time is very important for my wife."

And for the overall management of the business, Goddard is also pleased. "Once you have your



basic business structure figured out, you don't have to reinvent it over again when you add channels," he said. "Amazon and eBay don't change their core structure very often," so it's possible to maintain steady sales across several channels without being thrown off by the whims of Google. Goddard also enjoys the convenience of a consolidated customer list to use for curated email marketing campaigns across channels.

"My wife is very happy with Webgility I now don't think I could get her off of it."

Silver Mine Gifts also found another aspect of Webgility to exceed expectations: "Webgility customer service has been very helpful and friendly, and they made the initial conversion much easier. Their commitment to giving great customer support is valuable." In fact, Webgility's support team ensures its customers get the most out of Webgility, earning a consistent customer satisfaction rating of 98% and above.

For Webgility, it all goes back to the mission to help SMBs get back to what inspires them. Whether allowing business owners to spend more time with their children or empowering them with the freedom to experiment with different sales channels, Webgility provides a peace of mind that is priceless for a family business. 

Worth Its Weight in Gold

Support is a huge factor for any small company without an IT staff. Goddard recommends asking the following questions about support when researching e-commerce software solutions:

- *Do they offer a wide window of support with a real live person that you can talk to?*
Webgility? Yes.
- *How quickly will they be able get on the phone with you?*
Webgility's average response time to a request of customer support is 5.5 hours.
- *How willing are they to do the remote screens and help you through problems and take care of you?*
Webgility? Absolutely.
- *What is their Customer Satisfaction Rating?*
Webgility: 98% and above, week over week.

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