

Stick With an Industry Specific Solution

BY IAN GRIFFITH

In recent discussions with a prominent retailer who was selecting an e-commerce solution for his store, I was surprised to discover that the benefits of an industry specific solution for both his POS system and website were being overlooked. Part of the reason for this was the involvement of a project manager from outside the industry. However, the resulting conversation brought home just how many problems have already been solved by industry specific vendors.

At the scale that most liquor stores are operating online, and for the budget that most are willing to invest, there are very few features that an industry specific website cannot provide. On the other hand, working with a generic e-commerce solution leaves you with a number of problems to solve with someone who has little experience with your product mix. Why would a retail store choose to tackle these problems afresh when they have already been addressed by industry-specific providers for hundreds of other clients?

We suggest not wasting valuable resources doing the following:

- Expanding your product descriptions to be complete enough for consumer consumption
- Expanding the classification of your wines by appellation and grape variety and organizing your beers and sakes by type.
- How to handle the variability of vintages in your inventory
- Managing vintage specific ratings, labels and tasting notes for wines as vintages change, but the SKU stays the same.
- Restricting wine orders to states where you can't ship, and collecting sales tax for those states where you have a permit

- Calculating shipping costs to include packing material costs and adult signature requirements
- Integrations with age verification vendors, POS companies, common carriers and payment gateways.

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At Beverage Media, the BevSites platform was built specifically for retailer liquor stores. We integrate with most common liquor store POS systems to automatically update price and availability to your website. Your store SKUs are matched to our extensive database on product labels, tasting notes and ratings for wine, beer and spirits.

A website on our e-commerce platform includes dynamic navigation that is based on regional and varietal classification that goes well beyond the categorization in your POS system. What's more, this system is already built and just needs to be implemented for your store. You will be buying into a system that has a proven track record without paying for the full development cost. ■

To comment on this column or to learn more about how Beverage Media can help with a website for your store visit BevSites.com, or contact Ian Griffith at 617-864-1677. Follow us on twitter at twitter.com/bevsites.