

Site Purpose: To bring online apparel retailers together to a virtual mall, giving the customer easy access to hundreds of shirt designs at once.

Method: To do this, we want a site that can operate with little human interaction. Many operations will be automated and notification will be sent out. To maintain data integrity, error checking and data verification is key.

Definitions:

Administrator – High end user that has access to every function

Vendor – retailer that is selling items through the site. Has access to information pertaining only to his account

Customer/User – a visitor of the site that will potentially buy something

Feature:

There are a couple of features that are key in the development of the site that add to its innovative idea. The features include: users add tags to items, all encompassing vendor portal, advertising tracking.

The idea behind tags is that we want customers to be able to find items as easily as possible. Customers can give a product a one or two word attribute that helps in defining the item. Other customers can browse by those tags or find related tags. Examples of tag implementation are: <http://del.icio.us/>, <http://www.flickr.com>, <http://www.citeulike.org>. An open source module for PHP/MySQL has already been developed and may help: <http://www.getluky.net/freetag/>. You can read more about the concept here: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Folksonomy>.

The vendor portal has to allow the vendors the ability to edit all of their information as well as their products and orders. They will be able to upload products via batch processing as well as individual form. They will be able to view their orders and print out invoices or download open order in a batch file. The portal must allow the vendor to do anything that he would need to do to complete an order or cancel and return it.

The advertising tracking is so we can track where we are spending money and the return on the investment. A simple report of clicks in from the ad that we are paying for and a conversion rate, how many sales and how much for. We will enter the advertising information into the system and be supplied a tracking link and that should be enough for it to work.

Detailed Functions:

Store Section

Product Listing

- User can sort products by price, name, bestselling

Search Engine

- Since people find what they are looking for through searching it must be strong and user friendly
- a list of related tags will also be displayed for users to browse through

Product Detail Display

- The focus of the products that we will be selling is apparel. Since apparel normally has options; size, color, it is important that it is easy for the customer to see them
- may have multiple options that are dependent on each other
- users can email a link of the product to a friend
- users can review the product
- reviews will be posted after screened by Administrator
- additional pictures can be seen that are uploaded by the vendor. There can be an unlimited number of pictures added to a product.
- related products will be displayed. These will be generated by a combination of tag references and category listings.
- “people that bought this product also bought this one” will be displayed
- Breadcrumb will be displayed
- People can sign up to be notified about backorders

Customer Accounts

- Users can sign up with an email, password and username
- They can change their email, password, or username at anytime
- They can log into their account using the username or email
- They can store multiple address in the system
- They can view past orders they made
- They can cancel their order within 1 hour of placing it
- Users can rate the vendor after an order is placed. They can only rate vendors that they have purchased from and have 90 days to submit a review. All reviews will be posted by default.
- Have access to all tags that they have submitted
- Can edit their personal store that is based on their tags and items they bought and rated

Checkout Process

- Through secure socket layer
- Collect shipping, billing, and credit card information
- Have the option to ship it to a friend and add a note

- Have the option to make it a gift in which the invoice will not include pricing and billing information.
- Users will have shipping options depending on what is ordered
- Shipping options will be displayed in groups by vendor and customer will be notified that items are shipped separately and where they are shipping from
- Credit Card authorization is through Authorize.net and possibly PayPal
- Authorization code is stored with the order

Shipping Calculation

- Can be based on dynamic shipping rates gathered from UPS, FedEx, USPS... depending on the vendor
- can be based on per item or value of order
- vendors can offer different methods of shipping (standard, express, overnight)

Vendor Information

- Each vendor will have a front page that will include all their information.
- The vendor's customer service contact information plus return policy
- Form for the customer to contact the vendor
- Shipping rates and tax policy will be displayed
- All feedback of the vendor can be viewed
- A brief profile of the vendor
- Can view all the products they offer with ability to sort them

Customer-defined Organization

- Customers can add tags to any product once logged in
- Customers can add any items to their personal homepage (www.domain.com/username)
- Customers can browse products via tags
- Most popular tags will be listed on homepage
- Most wanted items are listed

Administrative Portal

Vendor Login

- Each vendor can login via username and password
- There will be one super user for each vendor that has access to everything pertaining to that vendor and can add new users
- All users can only access information about their company only
- Cookies last for 1 day
- Once logged in they will be routed to their portal home page
- The portal homepage will display their open orders, recent reviews, and site news

Inventory management

- Vendor users can add products to their offerings
- Products can be added individually or batch
- Batch additions must follow defined form

- Product additions are error checked
- Products can have stock tracking or not
- Images can be added to the products
- Images are resized by the system and the original is saved

Order Management

- Vendors will be notified via email when a new order is placed
- Vendors can use the portal to print an invoice/packing slip
- Vendors can download order reports (open orders) that are generated once a day when an order is placed
- Vendors must provide shipment information once order is completed through the portal or via batch processing
- Once the order is completed the customers credit card is charged and vendor gets credit for the order

Returns

- If a customer is canceling or returning an item the vendor must provide that information through the portal

Reports

- Vendors can generate reports on sales
- Vendors can generate product view counts

Edit Settings

- Can add and edit vendor's emails and passwords as well as privileges.
- Edit shipping, return, and tax policy
- Edit customer service contact information

Advertising Tracking

Traffic Tracking

- Track visitors from advertisers based on unique id.
- Tracking their visits for 30 days
- We can add advertising campaigns with costs
- We have a link generated once the ad campaign is added. (ex. <http://www.domain.com/someid>)
- That link can redirect the user depending on the attributes set

Sales Conversions

- Track sales from advertisers
- Track for 30 days

Reports

- Ability to generate reports based on dates and advertisers
- Conversion cost reports
- Cost per click report

Methods for batch product uploading

We want our vendors to have an easy time using the site and adding their products to our database. The best way to do this is really make everything simple and to the most basic functionality.

We are going to offer the vendors an option to upload products in two steps. The first is the most basic data and is all required. The second step is optional and only has optimizing features and we are not going to implement that now.

The data that we are going to require for each product is

SKU – a unique identifier for the product assigned by the vendor and unique for each product

Name – product name

Price

Description

Weight

Type – the type of clothing. There will be a predetermined list they can use

Image

There will be two separate methods of adding products based on what type of product it is. If the product has one or no options there is one method and the other method is for products with two or three options. We will only have products with up to three options.

For products with one or no option the batch file might look like this

sku	name	price	description	weight	type	image	option_name	options
234U	Red Cross	15.99	A 100% cotton white shirt	0.5	t-shirt	http://some.url/image.name	size	Small, Medium, Large, Xlarge
...

Vendors can use an Excel template that we can generate and they fill it out with one product on each line. They can save it tab delimited and upload it.

For products with multiple options there will be a two file process. The first will be the basic product information:

sku	name	description	image
234U	Red Cross	A 100% cotton white shirt	http://some.url/image.name
...

The second is where we can gather the options data.

sku	style	price	weight	color	size
234U	Ringer Shirt	16.99	0.8	Red, Gree, Blue	Small, Medium, Large
234U	T-Shirt	15.99	0.5	White, Red, Blue, Black	Small, Medium, Large
234U	Tank Top	12.99	0.3	White, Black	Small, Medium, Large

The second file will automatically be filled in based on the first one. So what that means is that they upload the first file. Once they do that they have the ability to download another template file with the sku filled in for a number of predetermined clothing styles

along with predetermined weights. They can fill-in data for whatever number of fields they want. Any record that does not have the required fields will not be added.

sku	style	price	weight	color	size
234U	Ringer Shirt		0.8		
234U	T-Shirt		0.5		
234U	Tank Top		0.3		

We want our vendors to have the ability to add as many different variations on one t-shirt design and still be simple.

Another function they should be able to have is when adding attributes they will have the ability to add additional cost easily. What that means is if they want to offer XXXLarge sized shirts but they cost more they should be able to. The best way I could think of doing that is something like this:

ex.: Small, Medium, Large, XLarge, XXLLarge 2, XXXLarge 2.5

So the batch process will separate the options by commas and then price by spaces.

Image Uploading

We want to give as many options to image uploading to our vendors so the way we can do that is either letting them enter a URL where the image resides and we can copy it when the image is uploaded. Or they can leave the field blank and when their products are added they will have a list of items that don't have images and they can upload images for each one from a local machine.