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# Magento

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## Magento Blog

### [Interview: Signing Time](#)

Posted by [magentochris](#) on Tuesday, October 21, 2008

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Currently we are running three websites using Magento. It is a dream in this aspect. I only have to support and maintain one code base and I'm able

to run multiple websites! ...The ecommerce features of Magento have helped us increase our average order value by 20% since we launched and our customers are more satisfied with the ability they have to manage their orders and their account

- *Signing Time*

Can you tell us a bit about your company?

Signing Time is a labor of love, born out of the desire for one mother to create a community that could communicate with her deaf daughter. Two Little Hands Productions, co-founded by sisters Rachel Coleman and Emilie Brown, is the company that produces and distributes the Signing Time product line.

Our award-winning Signing Time DVDs will help children, parents, educators and professionals learn basic American Sign Language (ASL) vocabulary words. Signing Time truly makes learning sign language easy, entertaining and fun for children of all ages and abilities. The format of Signing Time includes an adult (Rachel Coleman, co-creator) to model each sign, supported by footage of Alex and Leah (real kids, cousins in real life, Leah is deaf and Alex can hear, and Leah is Rachel's daughter), as well as footage of children and families demonstrating each sign in the proper context. Two to four thematic songs are sprinkled throughout each volume to help bring together all ASL vocabulary words that are taught.

Here is the story of Rachel Coleman, co-founder of Signing Time and her daughter Leah, who was born deaf. <http://www.signingtime.com/aboutus/our-story/> Here is a complete list of awards we have won <http://www.signingtime.com/aboutus/awards>

Why did you choose Magento for the project?

Below are the criteria that we used in our matrix to help us decide on Magento. Magento fulfilled all these requirements.

1. Open Source software
2. Needs to be an ecommerce system that an easy backend user interface that is non threatening and non-technical in nature for our sales, and support staff to use
3. Needs to be scaleable. We are a small ecommerce company with projected growth in the future. We wanted a system that we could easily use now yet could grow with us into the future.
4. Need to be able to plug in third party applications with relative ease. Examples are accounting, reporting, 3rd party shipping, CRM.
5. Needs to have strong ecommerce abilities. Examples include ability to run complex marketing promotions and rules, ability to do related products, wishlists, reviews
6. Needs to have a user friendly checkout - one page checkout preferred
7. Needs to be SEO friendly for organic rankings
8. Needs to have some way to manage content or plugin in a system for managing content (CMS pages and static blocks fulfilled this need)
9. Needs to have the ability to manage multiple websites from a single system
10. Needs to have the ability to manage both wholesale and retail pricing and websites.
11. Needs to be easy to tweak and change code and low ongoing cost maintenance. Preferred PHP over ASP or JAVA

What technologies are currently implemented / integrated in the frontend and behind-the-scenes?

- Testimonials Module on the Front end/and back end
- 3rd party shipping integration where we export orders to 3rd party shipper and they import tracking numbers and shipping data when shipped. 100% automated and changes the status of orders and sends the customer an email

- Added Google adwords tracking
- Added custom statuses for orders to help manage 3rd party shipping

Would you recommend enterprise companies use Magento?

Yes. I like that the data layer, design layer, and programming layer are very well defined and independent which helps the system be scaleable and have low cost of maintenance.

What are your future plans with Magento?

We anticipate using Magento well into the future, hopefully forever as long as it continues to grow with the online ecommerce market and develop out new features that come into the future.

Currently we are running three websites using Magento. It is a dream in this aspect. I only have to support and maintain one code base and I'm able to run multiple websites! It saves me time (although the learning curve is a little steep - long term it is worth it)

The three websites - [www.signingtime.com](http://www.signingtime.com) - [www.signingtime.com/merchant](http://www.signingtime.com/merchant) (this is our wholesale website) - [www.babysigningtime.com](http://www.babysigningtime.com)

What other solutions did you consider and/or evaluate?

We evaluated staying with CRE LOADED, a version of os commerce, and OFBIZ - the apache open for business project.

Any recommendations for people evaluating Magento?

I highly recommend Magento. Before choosing Magento our company tried implementing another open source ERP system. After months of work and frustration we scraped the entire project as a lose and started looking for a better solution. We found Magento and although it was very new we felt it would be a great fit for moving our company from OS commerce. After only two months of development and testing we launched and went live with our new website and backend systems. We were able to accomplish our goal for a third of the budget the other open source system was costing and do it in a third of the time. The end result in my opinion is a better system for our needs.

The ecommerce features of Magento have helped us increase our average order value by 20% since we launched and our customers are more satisfied with the ability they have to manage their orders and their account.

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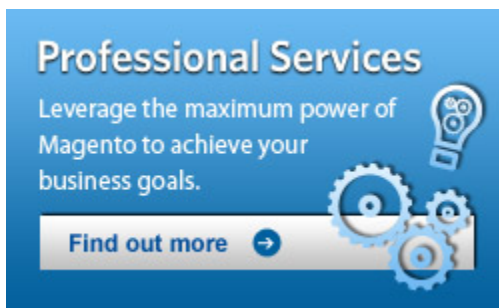
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