Case Study – The Haberdashery Store

The Haberdashery Store is a traditional "bricks and mortar" retailer established for over 20 years. As a small retailer, IT isn't high on their agenda, however they had reached the conclusion that they needed to be able retail online to complement their traditional sales methods.

Audit Findings

Being a small retail business, budget for this was project was limited so a bespoke solution was out of the question.

Any proposed solution would need to be easy to manage and be maintenance free.

Over 100 lines were identified that were suitable for online retailing, any proposed solution would need to be able to cope with the large number of lines but maintain ease of use.

Recommendations

Provide Intermediate hosting package with suitable domain name registrations. Create an online shop using the free open-source OSCommerce e-commerce software with some basic cost-effective site customizations (custom colours, logos etc.). Populate the shop.

Unique Challenges

In order for us to populate the shop we needed to audit and categorise all the identified lines, this included photographing each line so the appropriate image could be displayed to shop visitors.

We had to devise a categorisation scheme to properly organise the shop lines to enable visitors to be able to quickly find the product required.

We arranged the setting up of a merchant account to allow the shop to take online payments. Once done the appropriate payment module was loaded into OSCommerce, configured and tested.

Management & Maintenance

The Intermediate hosting product is fully managed, making it essentially worry free for the client.

The OSCommerce interface is simple enough to use for the staff with only a modest amount of training. Staff are notified of orders by e-mail and essentially only have to interact with the store administrator control panel when cancelling an order or issuing a refund.

 "This was a challenging but satisfying project due to the nature of the setup which included us having to photograph all the lines. But once this was done the site essentially became maintenance free and has remained reliable since it's creation in 2009" – Mark Moran Director, 4IT Systems Ltd