1DIGITAL®

CUSTOM DEVELOPMENT CASE STUDY

Perfecting Your Workflow with eCommerce Custom Development

I was sitting on the floor, working on my bike this week. I like to try my hand at simple repairs myself, rather than take it to the bike shop down the block, because I pride myself on a certain amount of self-sufficiency. However, this time I got to a point in the job where I hit a hard stop. I simply did not have the specialized tool required to remove this particular part from the frame. I could visualize what it looked like, hanging there behind the repair desk at the bike shop, but I just didn't have the right tool to continue. It reminded me of something I hear all the time from the eCommerce merchants we work with. 'I would love it if only my site could do this thing for me, but it just can't. I've called the platform and there's no way.' Fortunately, I usually get to say that there can be a way. Through eCommerce custom development. One of 1Digital's most essentials services is taking a client's unique requirements and building them a unique tool. Something that will slot into their business' workflow just like the perfectly sized pedal crank.

We recently built this kind of custom tool for the technology re-sale service Mac Me an Offer. Mac Me an Offer and their sister site Mac of All Trades had been working with 1Digital for SEO marketing for some time. Mac of All Trades sells refurbished Mac equipment, while Mac Me an Offer buys used Mac equipment to refurbish and then sell. They had a great symbiotic relationship that was interrupted by the fact that the two interdependent sites were on two different platforms.

Mac of All Trades was a BigCommerce store while Mac Me an Offer was a WordPress site.

"The fragmentation was making things really hard," said Amato Cole, Director of Marketing at Mac of All Trades. "It was hard training someone new. It was hard asking someone to be able to work on both sites since there wasn't much overlap at all between the systems." On the other hand, they knew they liked BigCommerce because they had such a great experience using it for Mac of All Trades for the past few years. "It sounds cliche but it really is the mantra of, 'it just works," Amato said. "It's so reliable. We're in the business of making money not fixing issues with our website."

Amato and his team knew they wanted to consolidate, but it wasn't as simple as a basic eCommerce migration. Mac of All Trades is an eCommerce store and therefore a natural fit for the BigCommerce platform. Mac Me an Offer is more of a user interface, where users log on, get a quote for their technology, and arrange to send it to the Mac Me an Offer team to refurbish. This is certainly not what the BigCommerce CMS was designed to handle. So we know if we wanted to bring both the sister sites onto the same platform we would need to do some heavy-duty eCommerce custom development.

"I talked to everyone on my management team and said give me everything on your wishlist, that you would want this site to do," Amato said. Amato then took the items that made it onto everyone's list. Those were non-negotiable and would have to be doable in the new site. "Everything else could be compromised on, or we could figure out an alternative route," Amato said.

Together with the Mac of All Trades team, we ended up devising a plan for a two-part system. The site would run on the BigCommerce CMS.
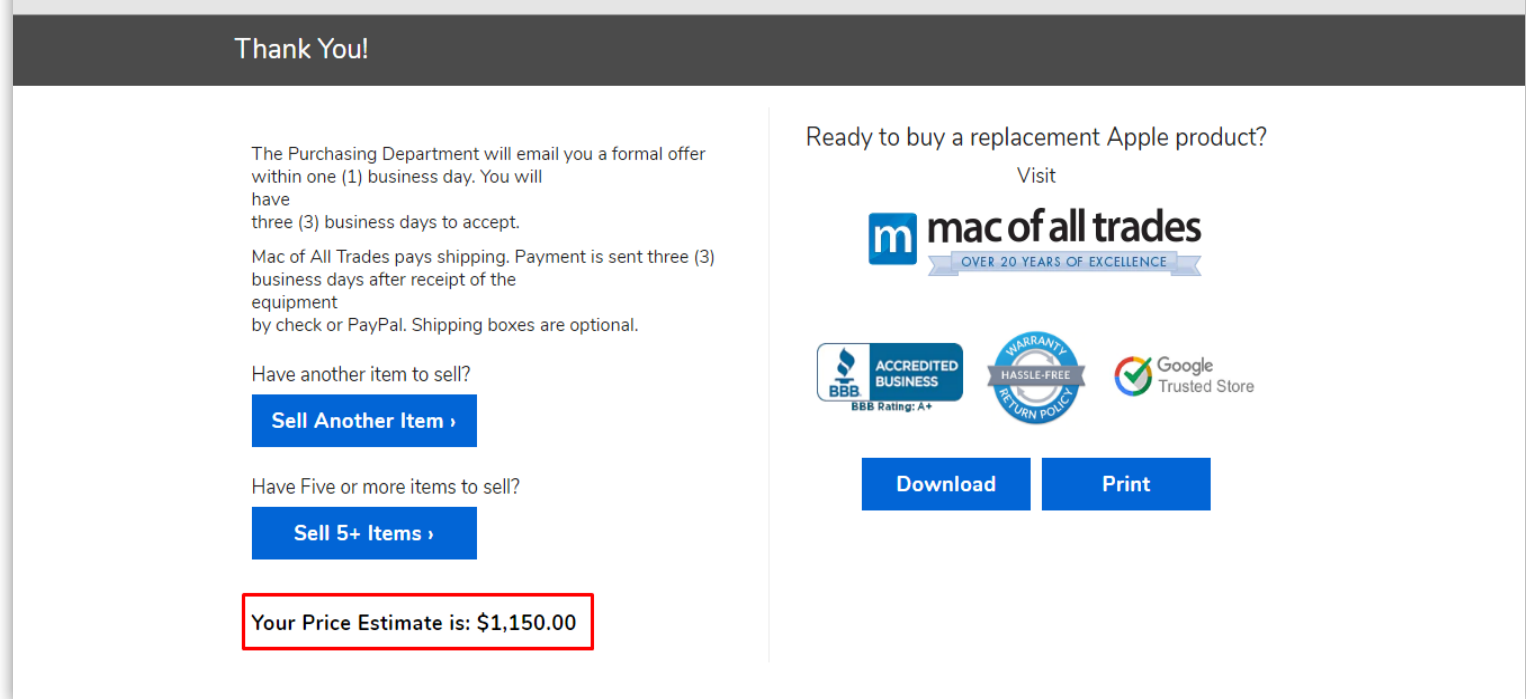
The Estimator Tool, which takes the user through the process of getting a quote on their equipment, would be a separate custom system. It would be hosted on a third party server and connected to the BigCommemrce site via the platform's open API. When I asked Amato if he was nervous, knowing he would have to work with a system outside of the BigCommerce platform, which had proven so reliable, he told me, "If it were anybody else but you guys I would have been concerned to the point of throwing out the project entirely. But that's the reason I called you guys in the first place. Your reputation made me have no concern. I was like, 'they got this'."

On the frontend of the new Mac Me an Offer site, you might never be able to tell you were using a tool from outside of the BigCommerce environment. The steps that the Estimator Tool takes you through are seamlessly interwoven with the custom design of the new site.
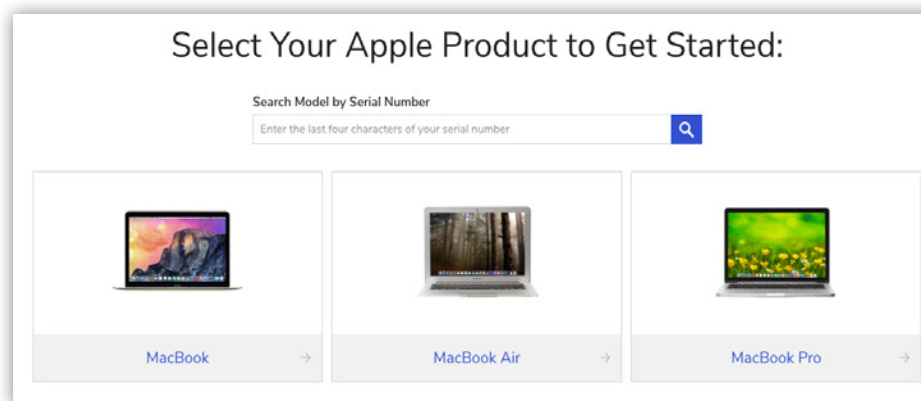
The user, who must have created an account on the site in order to complete their quote, begins by answering some questions about the equipment they want the sell. These include things like the type of equipment, model series, and serial number.

Once they get a little deeper into the process they'll answer questions about the quality of their item and what accessories they might be shipping along with it. In more common cases, this step will be able to give the user a quote for their item immediately.

Thank You!

The Purchasing Department will email you a formal offer within one (1) business day. You will have
three (3) business days to accept.

Mac of All Trades pays shipping. Payment is sent three (3) business days after receipt of the equipment
by check or PayPal. Shipping boxes are optional.

Have another item to sell?

Sell Another Item ›

Have Five or more items to sell?

Sell 5+ Items ›

Your Price Estimate is: $1,150.00

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When a quote has been given, accepted, and processed, the user will see a confirmation page and receive a confirmation email that includes their quoted price as well as a shipping label so that the user can easily send their equipment to Mac Me an Offer to be refurbished.

The reason this system can be so straightforward and easy for the end-user of the site, is the custom development tool working in the background. During this process, it is running logic and doing calculations to provide the customer with the appropriate quote and get their transaction completed.

Amato and his team interact with this backend system via a custom dashboard we created. This dashboard allows the Mac Me an Offer team to check things like what quotes have been sent out, which ones need to be edited or approved, and manage the offers they are willing to make for each particular type of item.
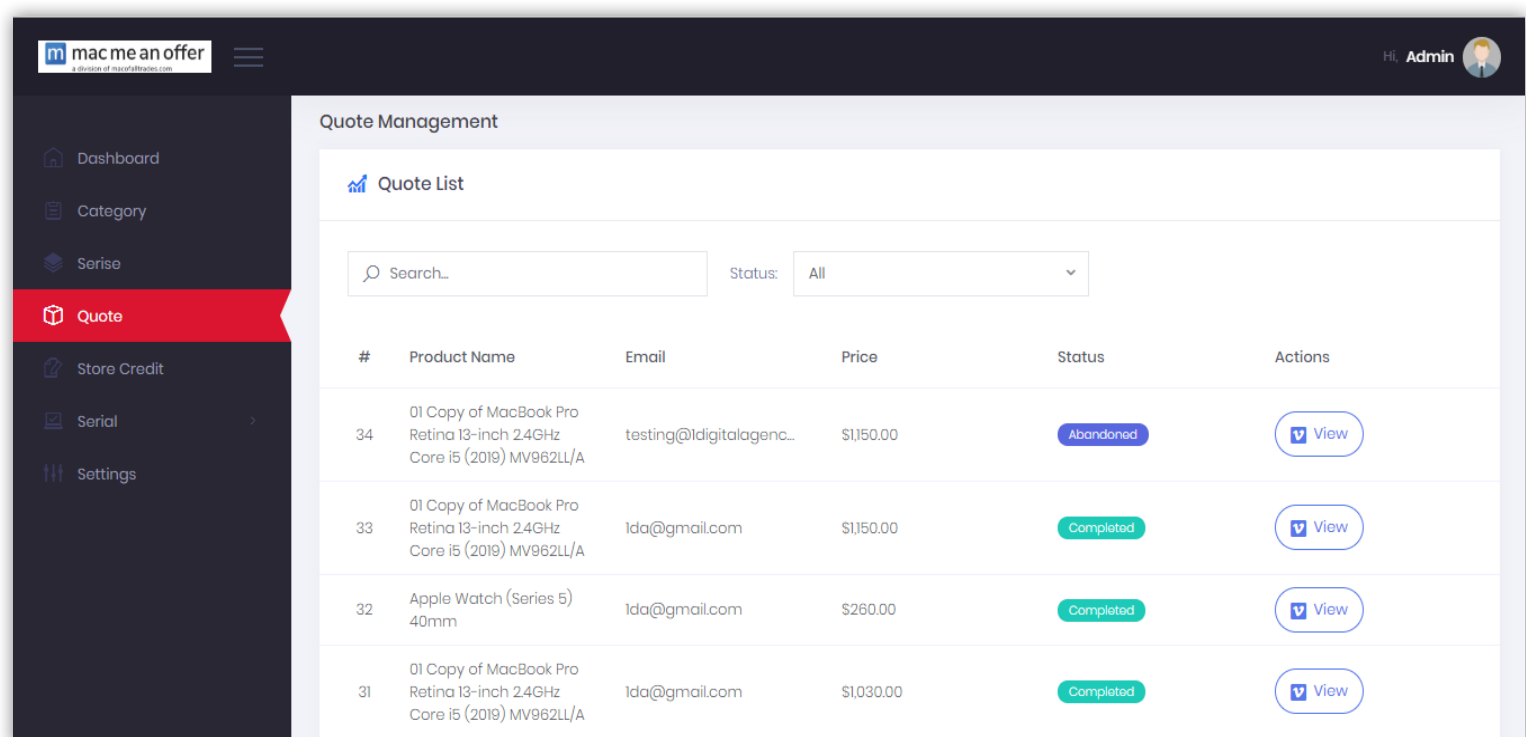
These quotes are all created by a series of custom script logic that is dependent on the questions the users answer while they are filling out the Estimator Tool on the frontend. Mac Me an Offer knows how their offer for any product goes up or down based on it's reported condition, whether or not it includes its original charger, and all kinds of other variables. For each variable, the custom system checks the

response against its logic and delivers the user with the appropriate quote. If a response is given for which there is no predetermined logic, this is known in the system as a knockout response. It alerts the Mac Me an Offer team that they have an estimate to review within the custom dashboard and make an offer on.

I asked Amato if he had any concerns about training his team on an eCommerce custom development system hosted outside of BigCommerce. After all, their goal in the first place had been to reduce fragmentation within the tools the Mac Me an Offer Team was using. "There is always going to be a psychological resistance to change," Amato told me, "but beyond that side of training, there hasn't been any issue getting to that point. The system is automated and easy to work with. I either read the documentation you guys provided and was good to go, or I asked questions, you guys answered them, and then I was good to go."

So what's next for the Mac Me an Offer team, now that the new and improved BigCommerce site has launched? "Thanks to the execution of this project being as perfect as we had hoped, we are now in a position where we can fearlessly market Mac Me an Offer," Amato said. "We couldn't before because of the obscene amount of labor needed to run it. Now that labor has been so minimized that we can add much more business as a result."

If there's something you've been wishing your eCommerce store could do, that you thought was just beyond your reach, maybe it's not. Talk to the eCommerce custom development experts if you want to see what's possible. At 1Digital we've built 3rd party eCommerce custom development tools for all kinds of merchants with all kinds of unique requirements. Automating your workflow with a custom tool could save your business time and money, allowing you to get back to focusing on what you do best, leading your business forward.

CONSIDERING OUR CUSTOM DEVELOPMENT SERVICES?

1DIGITAL
Genius Ecommerce®
Award-Winning
Digital Marketing Agency

Using Expertise to Maximize Conversion Rate

If you're site needs to be leaner, cleaner, and all around better at taking a visitor and turning them into a customer, you should rely on an expert. We've built hundreds of eCommerce sites. Our experience in this industry has built our sixth sense for what works best. When you partner with an eCommerce Agency like 1Digital® your site benefits from those decades of combined experience.

Reach out to our team for a site audit that can help you identify what about your site is working and what could be improved. Our team of great designers, developers and marketers can go over your online presence with a fine-toothed comb. When it comes to something as delicate, complex and important as your site's conversion rate, it helps to have a ringer in your corner.

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BEFORE & AFTER   **GET STARTED**