

# New website enhances customer experience

## The business problem

Exeed had an aging ASP-based e-commerce website that was complicated and slow for customers to use, difficult for the company to manage and support, and which was becoming increasingly unreliable. Because of its out-dated architecture, the website also lacked the flexibility and extensibility to support Exeed's business model as it changed over time.

### Key outcomes

- Better website reliability and performance
- Enhanced customer loyalty
- Increased business flexibility
- New revenue opportunities
- Reduced load on call centre
- Improved support

### About Exeed

Exeed is a leading IT distributor providing thousands of resellers around New Zealand with products from companies including HP, Microsoft, Netgear, and most recently, Samsung.



Exeed believes a great distribution business is built on more than just shipping a box, so for resellers from one-man bands to the largest national IT services companies, excellent customer service is a cornerstone philosophy. Whether it's meeting a tight timeframe, achieving a specific delivery request, or customising a configuration solution, Exeed's team will pull out all the stops to ensure their resellers win the deal.

## The solution

Exeed engaged Optimization to replace their existing site with a new standards-based secure e-commerce website that offered like-for-like functionality – including pricing, promotions, ordering, and order tracking – but which delivers a much enhanced user experience. For resellers, it is now far easier to find products, check pricing, place orders, and track their orders and invoices. Exeed expects that this will reduce the load on its 0800 number, because customers will be able to reliably and effectively conduct much more of their business by self-service over the web.

"The new website has had a direct impact on the volume of business we transact online by making it easier for our customers to find and order what they need," says Justin Tye, Exeed's Managing Director. "Optimization delivered on time a completely new website that accurately reflected our brief. We have been very impressed with the Optimization team and their ability to listen to our requirements and develop our solution in a complex environment."

The flexibility inherent in the new site's standards-based architecture means it gives Exeed a robust foundation for future business growth and development. For example, the site can be readily adapted to support additional product vendors and product ranges, and there are also new opportunities to generate additional revenue through enhanced capabilities for online advertising.

The new site had to be ready to go live in time for a major online Christmas promotion commencing 1 December. The architectural approach adopted by Optimization allowed for thorough unit testing and use of automated testing, resulting in a trouble-free go-live.

"It's always a nerve wracking moment for go-live on a project, especially with such a business critical function. Optimization seamlessly managed the transition to our .Net-based solution without any downtime or impact on our transactional business," says Kristal Jamieson, Exeed's Strategic Marketing and Communications Manager.

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Justin Tye  
Managing Director, Exeed



## Project business objectives

Build a new online commerce site that was attractive and easy to use and that also had a very high level of reliability and performance.

Smoothly integrate the new website with existing backend customer, stock and finance systems to streamline both customer-facing and back office business processes, reduce risk and increase cost-effectiveness of the IT environment.

Implement a website architecture using a standards-based approach to minimise support overheads.

Provide the flexibility and extensibility for future enhancements and changes without the need to change backend stock and financial systems.

## The Optimisation difference

Exeed initially approached a shortlist of three IT specialists with its requirements. Optimisation was selected because of its willingness to take on the challenges of working with legacy technologies and non-standards-based backend applications.

As a New Zealand-owned and operated company with a powerful customer service ethic, Optimisation also had a business philosophy and approach that was well-aligned with Exeed. As the project progressed, the working relationship Exeed developed with the Optimisation team became another significant differentiator.

"Optimisation has become a great fit for our organisation. Despite the complexities of our legacy architecture, their staff have always remained personable and approachable," says Kristal Jamieson. "The Optimisation support staff have become an extension of our team in many ways, and we value their input and the open dialogue that enables us to continue to improve and manage our in-house systems with ease."

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Strategic Marketing &  
Communications Manager, Exeed

## Technical overview

Optimisation has designed a secure customer-facing website through which resellers can check their pricing, view promotions, place orders, track order status, view invoices, and check their account

details. The site is built using Microsoft's latest web technologies, including the Microsoft ASP.NET MVC2 Framework and the Managed Extensibility Framework in .NET 4.0, to deliver a robust, scalable e-commerce site.

Key benefits of this approach include separation of the presentation layer and business logic from underlying data layers,

and the ability to add in new functionality and components in future without having to re-build the application. Pricing logic, which was previously handled by a separate component, was integrated into the web application and this means the site is now much faster for customers.

The separation of application layer business logic and data layers also enables thorough unit testing and the use of automated testing. This will make it much easier to make changes to the system as the business requires them, test the changes, and then roll new features and functionality smoothly into production.

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