



Endicia®

Case Study: Goodwill Industries



San Francisco-Area Goodwill Industries Efficiently Processes eCommerce Orders, with Smart Solutions from DYMO™ Endicia®

For nearly a century, Goodwill Industries has created solutions to poverty through the businesses it operates and the jobs it provides. Most recognizable are the hundreds of Goodwill stores throughout the United States, which sell donated clothing, jewelry and household items, and are staffed by individuals seeking to overcome barriers to employment to get a fresh start in life. But these days, Goodwill is embracing 21st century technologies to advance its mission. This trend is evident at Goodwill Industries of San Francisco, San Mateo and Marin Counties, where they have established an eCommerce point of sale.



Background

According to Johnny Cochran, eCommerce Manager for Goodwill Industries of San Francisco, San Mateo and Marin Counties, online sales have become popular options for shoppers seeking to easily and quickly search for and purchase Goodwill items. Especially popular are books, movies, music, games, clothing, collectibles and other products, which are most often sold through eBay, Amazon, ABE Books, Alibris.com and other online marketplaces.

“With the additional revenue from online sales, we are able to further expand our services,” explained Cochran. “So it is important for us to run our eCommerce channel as cost effectively as possible.”

But efficiency was a challenge when the San Francisco-area Goodwill operation began its online channel in 2006. Initially, the online store – with both auction and fixed price options – only accounted for a handful of orders, five or so, each day. But as order volumes grew, the eCommerce team wouldn’t have been able to keep up without implementing software automation. Cochran explained that originally Goodwill processed each order taken through their eCommerce marketplaces manually, and it required about five minutes of time to weigh, enter in shipping information, print out a packing slip and finalize each order. Then, an employee would take the shipments to the Post Office™, where postage would be affixed and the items – finally – shipped.



“We realized that when our order volume increased, we needed to be ready to handle it much more efficiently – or we would never be able to keep up with demand,” recalled Cochran.

The Solution

Based on advice from eBay, Cochran investigated electronic postage options and decided to try DYMO Endicia, the industry's leading postage technology solution provider with more than 25 years of experience and almost \$6 billion in postage printed. Specifically, Goodwill uses DYMO Endicia's Label Server, which helps users streamline their shipping and postage needs within their existing software systems.

A key benefit of DYMO Endicia's time-tested, easy-to-use, software-based postage solution is that it is easily integrated within the Goodwill order fulfillment process, meaning online orders do not have to be re-entered into the eCommerce management software system (for auction items) or multi-channel sales software (for fixed price items). Thus, shipping labels are generated quickly and accurately – with the average order requiring only about five seconds for the postage to be prepared. And, now that Goodwill's online sales orders have experienced an almost 100% growth, as they currently process as many as 1,000 orders each day, the dramatic time savings – over 4 ½ minutes per order – is a lifesaver, said Cochran.

“DYMO Endicia works exactly how we hoped it would,” he added. “We would never be able to handle such a high volume without it.”

Another advantage of DYMO Endicia is that it eliminates time-consuming trips to the Post Office™. Each day, the U.S. Postal Service® picks up all Goodwill packages from its distribution facility, ready to ship and all listed under one barcode for easy tracking. In addition, Cochran and his team make use of a number of Label Server's optional and automated features, such as customer e-mail notification when the order has shipped, stealth postage, customized labels and customs forms for international orders. Cochran added that Goodwill's eCommerce operation is on track to exceed its annual revenue goal of \$2.5 million, and he credits much of the success to the efficiencies gained from using DYMO Endicia Label Server.



“It just plugs right into our system and streamlines the entire process,” he said. “We couldn't be happier.”

The Future

As more individuals in the San Francisco area, and throughout the U.S., become aware of the ability to purchase Goodwill items online, Cochran envisions ongoing growth for the eCommerce channel. Indeed, while books/movies/music/games account for the majority of online sales, Goodwill is planning to broaden sales from other product categories, too. Plus, the eCommerce channel enables Goodwill employees to learn a number of marketable skills that are not afforded workers in the retail stores, which further extends its workplace training.

“eCommerce is a key initiative for our sales and program growth, and we view DYMO Endicia as a true partner,” Cochran said. “Its Label Server technology is an important resource, and the added productivity and efficiencies help us in our ongoing efforts to find and implement solutions to poverty.”