Backyard Nature Products relaunches its B2B buying experience, leveraging customer segmentation with Zoey

The Company

Backyard Nature Products

Founded in 1994, 27 employees

backyardnatureproducts.com

What They Like About Zoey

1. Zoey's core feature set supports a modern B2B & wholesale business, while still allowing for B2C sales.

2. Specific product lines can be made available only to certain, qualifying customers, and pricing for each customer segment can be managed individually.

3. Glew Analytics makes it easy to analyze trends and stay on top of sales on a daily basis.

4. Ordering for many B2B customers can be moved online, reducing manual order processing.

5. The Zoey team ensured they would receive the appropriate support to launch the site, instead of having to do everything themselves.

The Challenge

Right after acquiring the company, the new ownership team at Backyard Nature Products had their eCommerce website hacked beyond repair, leading them to make a decision to start with a completely fresh solution. They selected Zoey for this process.

The Success

- They can focus on their core wholesale audience, while offering a shoppable option for B2C customers

- They can create customer segments around pricing and catalog to move more orders online

- Zoey's salesperson-focused solutions can be used to allow their team to take orders into Zoey anytime, anywhere, on any device.

- They were able to go from a hacked website to a newly launched Zoey storefront in only 12 weeks, allowing them to move quickly to begin recapturing and growing their online sales.

What Makes Them Special

With more than 25 years of experience and a committed new owner, Backyard Nature Products is poised for growth. With both direct-to-consumer and B2B/wholesale customers, they're able to service an array of interested buyers with time-tested product lines.

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By the Numbers

Time for a Change

A new owner acquired Backyard Nature Products, a business established in 1994 that sells an array of outdoor products, particularly furniture and bird feeders. The business' Drupal website was outdated and an obstacle to accomplishing the new owners' goals.

The website development priority increased when the site was unexpectedly hacked, said Mike Kasdorf, Director of Backyard Nature Products. "Around two weeks after we closed on the business, the site got attacked by hackers overseas. Our hosting company locked down our database and the site was completely stuck. That incident immediately elevated the site development priority to #1."

Even prior to the hacking, Kasdorf knew the site would need to be replaced. "When we came in, we knew the website was an underperformer," Kasdorf said. "Functionally, it was a mess: Customers would put items in their cart, but then their cart items would disappear. Or the site wouldn't let them check out for a myriad of technical reasons. It began to seem that nearly everything was wrong with it."

Evaluating their Options

Initially, research began on some of the most common platforms, such as Magento, Shopify, WooCommerce and BigCommerce. "All of those were good, even great platforms, but were lacking the thing that we needed that most of all," Kasdorf said, which was the ability to manage both B2B and B2C customers through a single storefront.

"Backyard Nature Products' bread and butter is selling wholesale to retailers and that's still our top priority. We had to be able to sell at wholesale while also offering the opportunity to up our B2C game, do better marketing, build our brands, and integrate some beautiful elements of design around as well."

The platforms which did offer some way forward, including Magento Commerce and Shopify Plus's B2B offering, were too expensive. "We looked at planforms which could do everything in the world for you. Those were attractive... until we saw it would cost us $2k or more per month."

After working through those solutions, Kasdorf began alternative searching online and tripped across B2B-focused eCommerce solutions, such as Zoey. Kasdorf and the Backyard Nature Products team found these solutions much more in line with what they wanted. Ultimately they narrowed down the choices to both Zoey and the B2B eCommerce solution provided by RepZio.

In Their Words

"One of our customers is a national retailer with a specialty line of private label products made solely for them. With Zoey's capabilities we were able to create a custom catalog specifically for those customers which nobody else can see. That was awesome. Our team never knew something like that was even possible. The customers just love it."

Mike Kasdorf, Director, Backyard Nature Products

Kasdorf said it was the sales and support model offered that led to the selection of Zoey. "We started pushing hard on that button both with [Zoey] about what service looks like and the other company. Zoey's team clearly brought a problem-solving approach. That was very attractive to us."

Kasdorf added, "[Zoey] was quick to put us in touch with [development support], walking us through the support picture with Zoey. Nothing's perfect, but we felt more comfortable with the service we could have through and around Zoey vs. the other one so we said let's do it."

A Helping Hand

One key to the success of Backyard Nature Products moving to Zoey was the use of additional support to build the site. "The funny thing about this," Kasdorf said "was that our old site was in such bad shape that our biggest priority was just having a site that worked. We simply want our customers to be able to find the product they want, get pricing they expect, add products to their carts, and place their orders."

With modern ecommerce solutions checking those boxes capably, Kasdorf said the next area of focus was back-end user-friendliness. "Whichever platform we chose needed to have a relatively intuitive user interface, and the company needed to offer support resources for training and future development so we could eventually manage the entire system in-house."

Zoey's Customer Success and Implementation teams were a big selling point for Backyard Nature Products. When a Zoey client company can't develop a site internally, Zoey offers an Implementation team to take on that work, for an additional fee, which also includes basic training once the site's ready to go.

Kasdorf noted that one of the best parts of working with Zoey and the implementation team throughout the process was that any issues or problems were resolved very quickly.

"There was great responsiveness to problems during the development process," Kasdorf said. "There will always be kinks and bugs along the way, but you guys would always work them out -- and usually faster than expected!"

Moving Sales Online

One big perk for Backyard Nature Products leveraging Zoey is the ability to segment customers into different groups. By utilizing this feature, Zoey has allowed Backyard Nature Products to streamline sales through the website.

"The ability to set up different customer groups, different pricing levels, and segmented product catalogs is a really awesome feature," Kasdorf said. "One of our customers is a national retailer with a specialty line of private label products made solely for them. Until we launched Zoey, they were never able to place orders online -- they would have to call, email, or fax us their orders.

"With Zoey's capabilities we were able to create a custom catalog specifically for those customers which nobody else can see. That was awesome. Our team never knew something like that was even possible. The customers just love it."

The advanced eCommerce analytics offered in Zoey through the Glew partnership is also a big help, Kasdorf said. "The integration with analytics is so cool. We get daily reports from Glew that tell me how many orders we got, how many new customers & repeat customers, average order value, etc.

"That stuff is gold for managing and assessing growth opportunities. And, it's only going to get better as we integrate our ERP system with the website which will allow Glew to perform analytics on the entire company's data."

Looking Forward

Backyard Nature Products plans to take advantage of Zoey's salesperson-driven tools as it continues to expand its use of the platform to maximize business opportunities. Kasdorf said Zoey's ability for salespeople to work on-site with customers is an added bonus.

"At tradeshows or on customer visits, our sales people can access the order-entry system via a tablet or laptop and enter orders in real-time rather than taking them down on paper and entering later," Kasdorf said.

Kasdorf said they also plan to explore the features they're currently not using yet in Zoey to see how they can continue to evolve the business. "We look forward to digging into Zoey's capabilities to understand what else we can integrate and automate. Integration and automation are the two areas of continual research and experimentation which will help our business scale in every facet."

To go from a 15-year-old hacked website to a modern B2B and B2C eCommerce website in 3 months was a major early turning point for the company, one that Kasdorf says is a welcome change. "We're now in the stage of trying to keep up with all of our online orders to make sure they're getting processed. It's a good problem to have."

He added, "We have been really happy with the ability to have a website that anyone can visit and buy our products. The opportunity to drive traffic, whether existing B2B customers, new B2B customers, or new retail buyers, is huge. We're already seeing a wonderful return on our investment."

About Zoey

Zoey is a powerful eCommerce solution for B2B and wholesale businesses. We offer three major solutions to run a business: A mobile app for taking orders on the go, a self-service web portal for eCommerce, and a web-based admin for product, customer and order management. Our featuress include net terms and credit limits, sales quote generation, customer groups, access restrictions, and quick order capabilities.

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