

CASE STUDY

e-commerce retail

Kate Hill – Sue Rice Swimwear – Bonza Brats

Good retailers need a web presence to extend their bricks and mortar experience online.

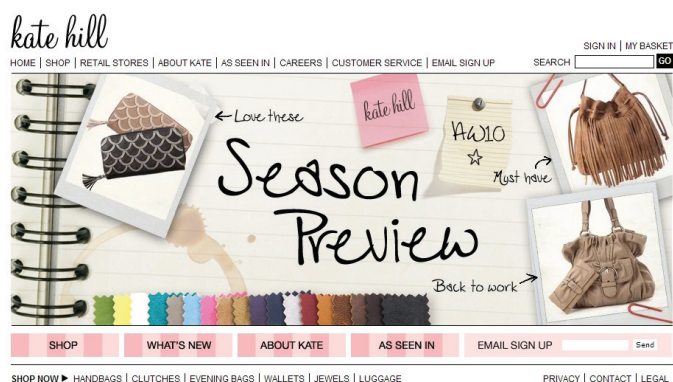
If you already own the basic components of the Harmony enterprise management system, you can easily add an e-commerce component and at relatively low cost because much of the infrastructure cost has already been spent on the core system.



Mark Freidin

Kate Hill's Mark Freidin has a wealth of experience implementing e-commerce solutions and was assisted by the Harmony team with some of the early implementations. Harmony's e-commerce module allows users with minimal computer knowledge to manage all text and image web site content through

Harmony's Content Management System (CMS) tools. Mark says: "In the early days it was quite a learning curve for all of us with the first implementation. However, the FBS team was able to meet our needs and offer the features we requested such as localised inventory checks so online shoppers can identify whether an item is available at their local store. The 'tell-a-friend' feature is valued as it allows visitors to email details of an interesting product directly from that page. These features seem to be lacking in many Australian enterprise e-commerce implementations. The FBS team created it with ease. Relative to what



it cost us, Harmony's e-commerce offers a lot considering this system is fully integrated". Mark also worked with FBS on the Victoria Station web site back-end. It is no easy task working with multiple stakeholders in bringing an e-commerce project to successful completion as there is often the added customer challenge of 'decision by committee' with conflicting opinions from directors, marketing, graphic design and purchasing - the project manager is often caught in the middle. Mark says

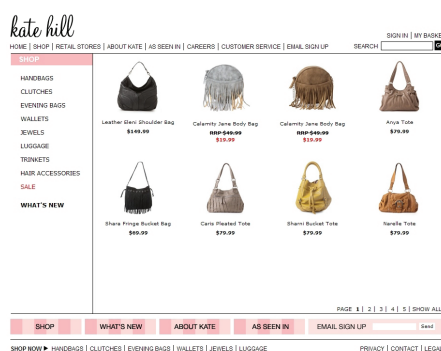
About Future Business Systems

Future Business Systems (FBS) is an Australian software development company supporting Enterprise Management Systems since the mid 1980's. They supply comprehensive software solutions based around their Harmony software suite consisting of over 45 integrated software modules.

FBS supports customer use of its software by providing training and installation services, and offers on-going hardware and networking support services. FBS also offers web development services, to deliver software solutions to suit businesses operating across multiple channels.

FBS has a growing list of over 250 client businesses engaged in manufacturing, import and distribution, and retailing located across Australia and New Zealand, Hong Kong, Malaysia and China.

Retail clients span chains with 4 to 250 shops and operate within a large range of sectors including apparel, footwear, manchester, giftware, and home wares. Well known clients in retail include Blue Illusion, Review, Sires, Tarocash, YD, Collette Dinnigan, TS14+, Events, Carla Zampatti, Famous Footwear, Wittners, Lincraft, Pillowtalk, and Victoria Station.



"the FBS team were able to accommodate these issues and work within the constraints to produce an enterprise class e-commerce system incorporating order fulfilment and real-time inventory checking to ensure an order placed is an order that can be

delivered because the stock is available." An example of one of these implementations is the Kate Hill web site (a brand of the Victoria Station Group of companies) which was built in conjunction with Kate Hill's in-house graphic designer/html coder. Mark concludes: "We have our own internal resources and were able to provide FBS with a printed version of exactly how we wanted the site to look and feel after receiving final sign off from the directors. This enabled us to describe how we wanted

kate hill

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the site to work. We provided all the web pages and graphics in HTML format to FBS who then built and integrated the site into their proprietary Harmony back-end. This was done quite quickly. Our relationship with the FBS web development team is sound. This is essential to implementing new features and technologies into the site as our online business continues to grow”.



Sue Rice

Sue Rice Swimwear design, manufacture, retail and wholesale swimwear. The company has harnessed the online channel with much success. But to be successful online they had to come up with a way of overcoming the fact that swimwear ordinarily requires a customer to view, touch and try on the garment. Sue started her online presence with a stand-alone web site, utilizing her past expertise in custom swimwear. She devised an ingenious

Size Calculator to accept the customer's specific measurements and calculate the correct size relative to the swimsuit styles on offer. It was hoped that the Size Calculator would take the guess work out of buying online, making the buyer feel more confident and minimizing exchanges

and returns. When this site finally launched with the Size Calculator, sales blossomed. But with growth came the need to accurately manage inventory on the site. If stock was low on a certain style or size it meant manually going into the Content Management System (CMS) or removing

the item from the site. When new stock came in, the stock quantities had to be manually adjusted in the CMS. Valuable time was lost doing this. Sue Rice applied for a Textile, Clothing and Footwear (TCF) grant

to enable her to integrate inventory, manufacturing and retail operations into the web site. With grant in hand Sue approached FBS. After 18 months of work the new Sue Rice site was launched. Sue now has a system that is fully integrated with the Size Calculator, full stock control and only needs one point of contact for technical support. FBS is pleased

that through innovation, solutions were created to meet the unique requirements that Sue's site faced in its development phase.

How does it all work? Online orders generate an email to the despatch team with all the order details. The order is then picked and packed and released. This automatically creates an email with an invoice attachment (pdf) that is sent to the customer. The site is hosted off-site at the FBS Melbourne data centre allowing for quick support should there be any issues. The WinPos point of sale system in the store automatically updates the inventory database when a stock item is sold. When stock is manufactured it is automatically added to the inventory of the system and at the same time updates web site inventory. If an item was out of stock and is now back in stock it will automatically update the web site so that the stock on the site is displayed in real time.



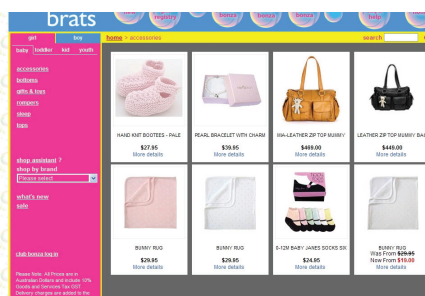
Stan Kouros

Bonza Brats is a prominent retailer of children's apparel and accessories. Founder and CEO Stan Kouros says: "We trimmed customer support staff overhead who were spending excess time attending to customer enquiries about purchase order status and stock availability. Our customers can now view live information about such details via password-protected access to our

system and also see the latest products, prices, specifications, and photos. We were able to categorise the items independently of our internal categorisation and products can also appear in multiple areas”.



Stan says that using Harmony's e-commerce makes trading with the general public straightforward and secure. "It is a retailer's delight as all sales are pre-paid using secure payment options and the familiar shopping basket model. Orders can either go directly to our main warehouse or one of our shops for fulfillment or be placed into a log for prior approval. The products on our web site are a sub-set of those on our stock system”.



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