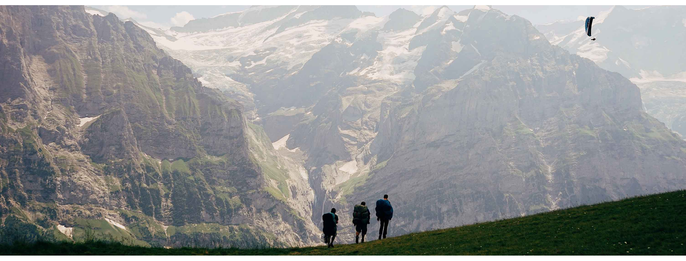

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Cascade Designs: Creating a 360-degree customer view with Salesforce

In the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, Cascade Designs temporarily switched its Seattle manufacturing facilities to produce face masks for healthcare staff. Read more here.

At a glance

We helped a popular outdoor gear company unify its websites and connect its service and marketing tools with a custom solution that integrates three Salesforce clouds. Now customers can engage with all their favorite outdoor brands in one place, and employees are empowered to deliver seamless, data-driven experiences.

What we did

- Salesforce Marketing Cloud implementation
- Salesforce Commerce Cloud implementation
- Communities on Salesforce Service Cloud
- Cross-cloud technology
- Platform integration
- UX refresh
- Real-time customer insights

Putting customers first

Cascade Designs was founded back in 1972 by a small group of innovators and engineers, all of them outdoor enthusiasts looking to create the next-level gear they wanted for their own adventures. Still privately owned today, the company has grown to include six beloved brands and hundreds of must-have products like the Therma-a-Rest camping mattress and the Platypus hydration pack—all reflections of the team's passionate attention to detail.

"Cascade's products are awesome," says Jen Glass, practice area director at Slalom Seattle who led the project team. "I'm a Seattle native, I love the outdoors, and I grew up with this company. They are the top tier."

> "We were looking for a solution that helped all the tools work together. One center of truth about our customer and all the customer touchpoints.
>
> **J.R. Peikola**
> senior ecommerce manager, Cascade Designs

Dreaming of new connections

Here's the thing you really need to know to understand Cascade Designs: everything it does, it does for its customers. Whether innovating new products or writing a return and repair policy, creating a positive customer experience is the heart and soul of the company.

Cascade's existing marketing, ecommerce, and service tools had served the company and its customers faithfully, but it was time to make a change and take the company into a new digital era.

A simpler upgrade would have been possible, but the team sensed a richer opportunity. "We had a bigger vision," says J.R. Peikola, Cascade Designs' senior ecommerce manager. "We wanted a 360-degree customer experience, but our tools were kind of cobbled together. There were some connections, but none of them played together very nicely. We were looking for a solution that helped all the tools work together. One center of truth about our customer and all the customer touchpoints."

> **"It's a new challenge to integrate the three clouds. The B2C Commerce tool is relatively new to the Salesforce family. Integration still needs to be a significant focus during implementation.**
>
> **Jen Glass**
> **practice area director, Slalom**

Salesforce, three ways

The Cascade Designs team liked the concept of using a single vendor. They felt it offered the best possibility of eliminating data silos and achieving true integration. They'd already successfully implemented Salesforce Service Cloud, and that was how the idea came about: What if they adopted Marketing Cloud and built their ecommerce on Salesforce too?

Following the old outdoor rule that you should never go it alone and having worked with Slalom on the Service Cloud implementation, the Cascade Designs team reached out for help with this new and more complex project.

"We also liked Slalom because they were local," says Andy Zuchetto, the senior application development manager at Cascade Designs. "They were just down the street, and we thought it was really important to have developers, technical architects, and project leads in the office working with us on a day-to-day basis."

Finding a partner who would be committed to sharing skills and knowledge with the team also felt important. "With Slalom, our team could learn while we were going through the project," adds CIO Barry Paxman. He was mindful of creating a solid foundation within the company and choosing the best path to long-term success. "We wanted to be able to learn through the process."

It takes a team to climb a mountain

With an ambitious six-month timeline, Slalom partnered with Cascade Designs developers and ecommerce experts from Salesforce to design and build a custom solution that fully integrated Salesforce Commerce Cloud with Salesforce Service Cloud and Salesforce Marketing Cloud.

"It's a new challenge to integrate the three clouds," says Glass. "The B2C Commerce tool is relatively new to the Salesforce family. Integration still needs to be a significant focus during implementation. We knew there were some connectors, but the stretch was figuring out how for those connectors would take us."

The three companies worked as one team with a single goal in mind: reaching that holistic view of Cascades' customers and deploying a sophisticated use of Salesforce technology to build real-time data connections between the three cloud systems.

Communication and coordination were vital, and the team followed an agile methodology. "Everyone was so hands-on," says Peikola. "The efficiency is what really made this project stand out. It's pretty remarkable how quickly we launched."

Creating one place to shop

On the commerce side alone, the team replaced 32 individual legacy websites—one website for each of Cascade's six brands multiplied across five languages and countries—with a single multi-brand, multi-national, and mobile friendly website. Now, customers can buy a family-sized MSR tent, a SealLine Pro Dry Pack, and a Luxe Pack Towel in one shopping cart and with a single customer profile.

It's easy to schedule repairs for gear, too. The team created multiple tools using Service Cloud and Communities, including an automated application and approval process for Cascade Designs' Pro Purchase Program, a wizard for warranty and repairs claims, and a self-help flow for the website.

It's a seamless experience for a customer, says Casey Wagner, ecommerce merchandising manager: "We've worked toward providing a place where customers can get all the information they ever need, be it for purchasing, discovering, repairing, handling warranty cases, or finding good deals."

Insights across the clouds

Insights across the clouds

Cascade went from managing six siloed marketing lists to a single cross-brand engagement platform with Marketing Cloud. With this streamlined content management, single customer profiles, and a complete historical picture, the marketing team is developing targeted campaigns across brands and through multiple channels.

On the customer service side, agents now have comprehensive customer histories at their fingertips. Previously, resolving an issue often required multiple steps such as wading through email chains, following paper trails, or talking to colleagues. Today, data from the Service, Commerce, and Marketing Clouds is synced in real time and visible in one system. A complete record of customer interactions—that's everything from orders and payments to previous customer service conversations, service emails to marketing emails, and warranties to returns and repairs—are found with a click.

Increased transparency has also led to richer connections between teams and a renewed sense of the Cascade Designs' mission. "I would say there's more understanding about the inner workings all together," says Brittany Alexieff, marketing manager at Cascade Designs.

On a daily level, working with their systems has become a more nimble and intuitive process for all employees. "The IT team were the gate holders, more or less, of the site. And we worked with them to get things accomplished," says Pelkola. "Now we're able to do the same things with less technical chops. We can make changes on our own."

Looking to new horizons

Without the need to "gate keep" for other teams, and with streamlined workflows and speedy integrated systems, Cascade's technical team has bandwidth to dream up new strategies and ideas. One of the greatest opportunities lies in personalization, tailoring website experiences so that customers who are in the Pro Purchase program encounter it differently than, say, a brand-new visitor. In short, Cascade Designs is ready to grow both its B2B and B2C channels, all while providing excellent customer service.

Much like climbing to the summit of Mount Rainier, the iconic mountain close to Cascade Design's hometown, the satisfaction in this project hasn't only come from reaching the project's goals—it came from the process, the journey, the teamwork. And that, as Andy Zuchetto says, "is definitely an achievement to be proud of."

Ready for deeper customer insights?

Let's talk

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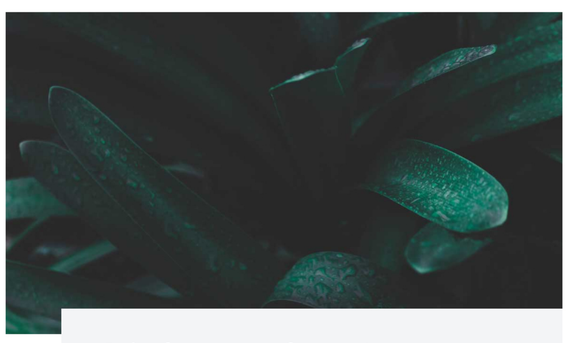

Salesforce transformation

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