

VENDASTA LOCAL BUSINESS CASE STUDY

SAAZY COMIX



ESTABLISHED 1993
AMAZING STORIES

#1
ISSUE

IT'S VERY POSSIBLE AS A SMALL BUSINESS TO COMPETE AGAINST THE BIG BOX STORES. IF YOU HAVE THE RIGHT MARRIAGE OF TECHNOLOGY AND EXPERTISE, THEN THE SKY'S THE LIMIT.

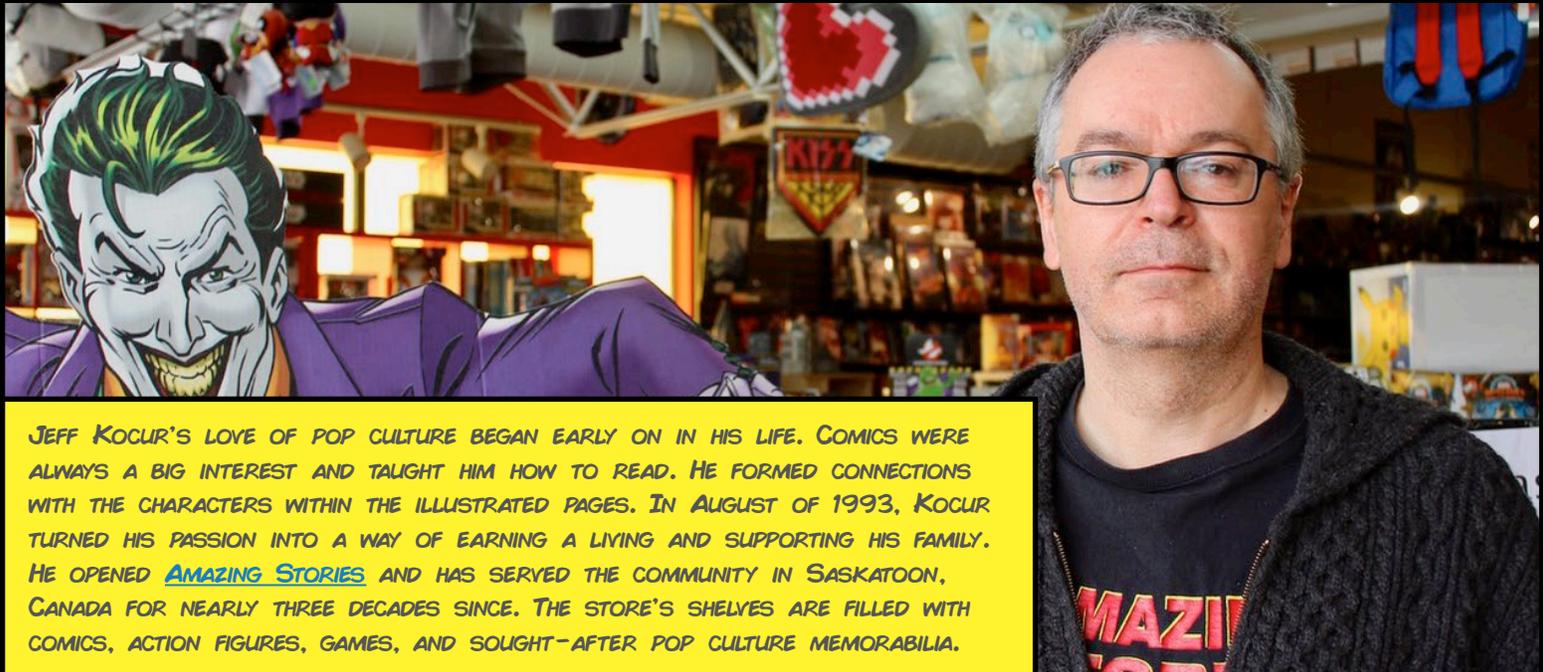
JEFF KOCUR, OWNER
AMAZING STORIES,
SASKATOON, CANADA

WOW!!!

LAUNCHING ECOMMERCE BRINGS
\$135,000

IN LESS THAN A YEAR
WITH THE HELP OF A
TRUSTED LOCAL EXPERT!!!

THE JOURNEY TO ECOMMERCE



JEFF KOCUR'S LOVE OF POP CULTURE BEGAN EARLY ON IN HIS LIFE. COMICS WERE ALWAYS A BIG INTEREST AND TAUGHT HIM HOW TO READ. HE FORMED CONNECTIONS WITH THE CHARACTERS WITHIN THE ILLUSTRATED PAGES. IN AUGUST OF 1993, KOCUR TURNED HIS PASSION INTO A WAY OF EARNING A LIVING AND SUPPORTING HIS FAMILY. HE OPENED [AMAZING STORIES](#) AND HAS SERVED THE COMMUNITY IN SASKATOON, CANADA FOR NEARLY THREE DECADES SINCE. THE STORE'S SHELVES ARE FILLED WITH COMICS, ACTION FIGURES, GAMES, AND SOUGHT-AFTER POP CULTURE MEMORABILIA.

OVER THE YEARS, THE TEAM AT AMAZING STORIES HAS BUILT PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH CUSTOMERS AND THOSE STRONG CONNECTIONS OFTEN BECOME EXCITED AND HONEST CONVERSATIONS.

"PEOPLE ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT THEIR HOBBIES, THE COMICS, THE TOYS AND ALL THAT. THEY'LL TELL YOU ALL ABOUT THE WEBSITES THEY GO TO AND SHOP AT, SO YOU'RE AWARE. EVEN THE PEOPLE THAT SHOP WITH US TODAY - THEY'RE ALL SHOPPING ONLINE AS WELL," KOCUR SAYS.

"GETTING AN ECOMMERCE WEBSITE SET UP WAS ALWAYS IN THE BACK OF OUR BRAINS," SAYS AMAZING STORIES MEDIA EXPERT JODY GASON. SHE EXPLAINS THAT THE TEAM ALWAYS SAID, "'ONE OF THESE DAYS WE NEED TO GET OFF OUR BUTTS AND DO THIS' BUT IT NEVER HAPPENED ... AND THEN IT HAD TO HAPPEN."

WATCH NOW

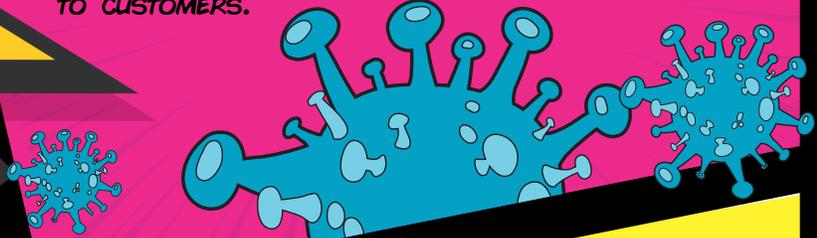
GET A BEHIND-THE-SCENES LOOK AT THE DAY-TO-DAY OPERATIONS OF AMAZING STORIES AND HOW THE PANDEMIC IMPACTED THIS LOCAL BUSINESS THAT HAS SERVED ITS COMMUNITY FOR 27 YEARS.



SURVIVAL!

THE ONE TRUE MISSION

ON MARCH 11, 2020 THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION DECLARED COVID-19 A GLOBAL PANDEMIC. WITHIN TWO WEEKS, JEFF AND HIS TEAM AT AMAZING STORIES WERE FORCED TO CLOSE THE DOORS. OTHER THAN A FEW CURBSIDE SALES EACH DAY, PAINSTAKINGLY MANAGED MANUALLY OVER THE PHONE AND THROUGH THEIR FACEBOOK PAGE, THE RETAIL STORE HAD NO WAY TO MAKE ITS THOUSANDS OF INSTORE PRODUCTS AVAILABLE TO CUSTOMERS.



"YOU WOULD HUSTLE FOR EVERY SINGLE SALE AND THEN AT THE END OF THE DAY YOU HAD ONLY COMPLETED 10 TRANSACTIONS AND WERE COMPLETELY EXHAUSTED," GASON SAYS.

"BASICALLY IT WAS PANIC FROM THEN ON, AND WONDERING, HOW DO WE SURVIVE? HOW ARE WE GOING TO KEEP OUR REVENUE GOING IF WE CAN'T HAVE OUR DOORS OPEN?" KOCUR SAYS.



LIKE THE MANY VILLAINS FEATURED THROUGHOUT THE PAGES OF THEIR COMICS, COVID-19 WREAKED HAVOC. REVENUES WERE TORCHED AND A DEAD STOP WAS PUT ON SHIPMENTS OF THEIR MOST POPULAR INVENTORY. AMAZING STORIES NEEDED A WAY TO SHOWCASE ITS OFFERINGS ONLINE AND MAKE IT AVAILABLE TO CUSTOMERS QUICKLY BEFORE THE PANDEMIC NEMESIS SANK THE BATTLESHIP FOR GOOD.



TURNING TO THE **TRUSTED** **LOCAL EXPERT**

SADDLED WITH THE CHALLENGE OF TRYING TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO LAUNCH AN ONLINE STORE AND NO IDEA WHERE TO BEGIN, JEFF TURNED TO A VENDASTA PARTNER AND ONE OF THE TOP DIGITAL MARKETING EXPERTS IN THEIR AREA FOR ANSWERS.

"WE GOT A LOCAL AGENCY TO HELP US OUT AND BASICALLY THEY HELD OUR HAND AND SHOWED US EVERYTHING. THERE WAS A LOT TO DO - FROM ENTERING INVENTORY, TO SOCIAL MEDIA," KOCUR SAYS.



SNAPSHOT REPORT

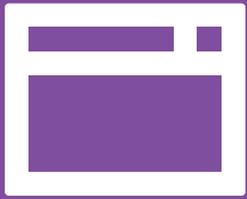
THE AGENCY WORKED CLOSELY WITH JEFF AND HIS TEAM TO IDENTIFY AREAS THAT NEEDED TO BE ADDRESSED IMMEDIATELY TO GET AMAZING STORIES SELLING ONLINE. KICKING OFF THE PROCESS, THE AGENCY CONDUCTED AN IN-DEPTH REVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF THE BUSINESS'S DIGITAL FOOTPRINT, USING SNAPSHOT REPORT, VENDASTA'S AWARD-WINNING AUTOMATED SALES INTELLIGENCE TOOL.

ONCE THAT ASSESSMENT WAS COMPLETED, THE AGENCY PARTNER ASSISTED IN DEVELOPING AN INFORMED DIGITAL STRATEGY THAT HELPED THIS SMALL BUSINESS CLIENT:

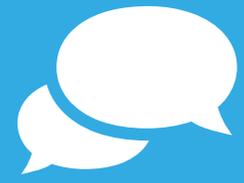
- ✓ GIVE CUSTOMERS THE ABILITY TO SHOP AND COMPLETE TRANSACTIONS SECURELY ONLINE
- ✓ ARM STAFF WITH THE TOOLS TO TRACK AND FULFILL ONLINE ORDERS
- ✓ MANAGE THE BUSINESS'S SOCIAL MEDIA POSTING AND ENGAGEMENT EASILY
- ✓ CONTROL THE ACCURACY AND LOCATION OF THE WHERE THE BUSINESS IS LISTED ONLINE
- ✓ VIEW AND RESPOND TO CUSTOMER REVIEWS COMING IN FROM MULTIPLE SOURCES
- ✓ TRACK AND ASSESS THE SUCCESS OF ALL NEW ECOMMERCE AND DIGITAL MARKETING EFFORTS



THE MARKETING AGENCY THEN DEPLOYED AN ECOMMERCE SOLUTION STACK FOR AMAZING STORIES, WHICH INCLUDED:



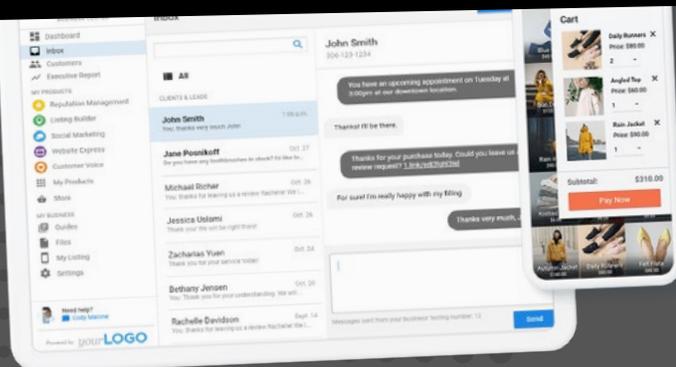
WEBSITE PRO: WITH SIMPLE WOOCOMMERCE/ WORDPRESS INTEGRATION, AN ONLINE STORE WAS LIVE AND READY TO BE FILLED WITH INVENTORY WITHIN TWO DAYS



SOCIAL MARKETING: WHERE AUTOMATIC NOTIFICATIONS AND SCHEDULED REPORTS SUPPORTED EFFORTS TO INCREASE SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENT AND DRIVE PRODUCT PAGE TRAFFIC

REPUTATION MANAGEMENT: THAT HELPED TO TAKE CONTROL OF AMAZING STORIES' ONLINE REPUTATION TO GENERATE MORE REVIEWS, SHOW UP WHERE CUSTOMERS SEARCHED, AND GATHER MORE INSIGHTS ABOUT CUSTOMERS - HELPING TO INCREASE SALES.

LISTINGS MANAGEMENT: MADE IT POSSIBLE TO APPEAR IN LOCAL ONLINE SEARCH, AND MAINTAIN CORRECT AND ACCURATE BUSINESS INFORMATION SUCH AS HOURS OF OPERATION, LOCATION AND UP-TO-DATE WEBSITE INFORMATION ON GOOGLE AND OTHER KEY ONLINE SOURCES



BUSINESS APP: PROVIDED A SINGLE-SIGN-ON DASHBOARD CONNECTING ALL OF THE ECOMMERCE AND DIGITAL MARKETING SOLUTIONS IN A ONE-STOP SHOP WITH PROOF OF PERFORMANCE REPORTING

COACHING SESSIONS PROVIDED BY THE LOCAL AGENCY EXPERT HELPED AMAZING STORIES GET OFF THE GROUND, AND THROUGH MONTHLY CHECK-INS TO REVIEW HOW EVERYTHING WAS PERFORMING, THEY WERE WELL ON THE WAY TO SUCCESS WITH A NEW REVENUE STREAM.

HOLY INVENTORY BATMAN!



WITH A BRAND NEW WEBSITE UP AND READY TO GO, KOÇUR NOW FACED THE CHALLENGE OF LOADING THOUSANDS OF PRODUCT INVENTORY ITEMS ON THE WEBSITE. BASED ON THE ADVICE OF THEIR AGENCY THEY BEGAN BY FOCUSING ON ITEMS THEY KNEW WOULD SELL QUICKLY AND CONTINUED TO INCREASE THE NUMBER OF ITEMS LISTED ONLINE EACH DAY. THE ECOMMERCE STORE ALSO ADDED A SECURE PAYMENTS FEATURE FOR PRE-ORDERED ITEMS.

"WE USED TO PHYSICALLY WRITE DOWN PRE-ORDER REQUESTS ON PAPER AND JEFF WOULD MAKE A SIGNIFICANT INVESTMENT TO BRING IN NEW RELEASE PRODUCTS, NEVER KNOWING WHAT THE TRUE DEMAND WAS GOING TO BE," CASON SAYS. "HAVING THE WEBSITE FOR PRE-ORDERS HAS CHANGED HOW WE ORDER INVENTORY. WE KNOW EXACTLY WHAT TO GET AND WHAT THE ACTUAL DEMAND IS GOING TO BE. THAT'S HUGE FOR US."

THE ECOMMERCE WEBSITE HAS ATTRACTED REGULARS AND NEW CUSTOMERS.

"THERE ARE DAYS WHEN WE COME TO WORK AND THERE ARE A WHOLE BUNCH OF SOLD ITEMS WE HAVE TO PULL FROM SHELVES AND PREPARE FOR PICKUP OR SHIPPING. IT IS KEEPING OUR STAFF VERY BUSY. WE'RE ACTUALLY GOING TO BE HIRING ANOTHER PERSON TO START DOING ORDERS," KOÇUR SAYS.

ONLINE SALES SAVES THE DAY!

IN LESS THAN A YEAR AMAZING STORIES HAS GROSSED MORE THAN \$135,000 IN ONLINE SALES REVENUE.

ESTABLISHED 1993
AMAZING STORIES



"THAT \$135,000 BRINGS US UP TO ABOUT 15 PERCENT OF OUR TOTAL SALES, WHICH IS AMAZING. I MEAN WE'VE GONE FROM ZERO TO THIS," KOÇUR SAYS.

IN ADDITION TO LOCAL CUSTOMERS WHO SHOP IN THE ONLINE STORE, THE ECOMMERCE SITE HAS BROUGHT NATIONAL ATTENTION TO JEFF'S LABOR OF LOVE. MORE THAN 250 NEW CUSTOMERS FROM OUTSIDE THE LOCAL SASKATOON AREA NOW SHOP ONLINE AT AMAZING STORIES.

"WE STILL SELL INTO OUR LOCAL MARKET AND PEOPLE TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE PICKUP OR DELIVERY FOR LOCAL BUYERS, BUT NOW WE ARE SELLING PRETTY MUCH COAST-TO-COAST."



AMAZING STORIES BEFORE AND AFTER ECOMMERCE ADOPTION

BEFORE ECOMMERCE

- TRICKLING REVENUE STREAM WITH MANDATORY STORE CLOSURE
- LIMITED CUSTOMER BASE OF LOCAL IN-PERSON SHOPPERS
- SOME ONLINE SALES HAPPENING ON EBAY TO LIQUIDATE OLDER STOCK
- MANUAL POSTING FOR VARIOUS SOCIAL MEDIA SITES
- PAPER AND PEN TRACKING FOR PRE-ORDERS
- MANUAL UPDATES ON EACH INDIVIDUAL LISTINGS SITE REQUIRED FOR CONTACT INFO AND STORE HOUR CHANGES
- MONITORING AND RESPONDING TO REVIEWS PIECEMEAL ON VARIOUS PLATFORMS

AFTER ECOMMERCE

- 135K+ IN ONLINE REVENUE IN LESS THAN A YEAR
- 250+ NEW CUSTOMERS FROM OUTSIDE OF THE LOCAL AREA
- 15% OF TOTAL SALES REVENUE NOW HAPPENING ONLINE THROUGH [WEBSITE PRO](#)
- [SOCIAL MARKETING](#) OFFERS THE ABILITY TO POST ON MULTIPLE PLATFORMS IN ONE SIMPLE STEP
- SECURE PAYMENT AND DIGITAL TRACKING OF ALL PRE-ORDERS
- ABILITY TO CHANGE BUSINESS INFO QUICKLY ACROSS THE BOARD FROM ONE PLACE WITH [LISTINGS MANAGEMENT](#)
- EASILY TRACK AND RESPOND TO REVIEWS WITH [REPUTATION MANAGEMENT](#)

1.3M
ONLINE IMPRESSIONS

2137
ITEMS PURCHASED

1026
ORDERS PLACED

THE NEXT CHAPTER

NEW AMAZING STORIES FANS ARE POPPING UP TO PLACE ORDERS FROM ACROSS THE COUNTRY. THIS DEMAND HAS CREATED A NEED TO EXPAND THE BUSINESS'S SALES TEAM TO FULFILL THOSE ORDERS, AND A BRAND NEW PANDEMIC-PROOF ECOMMERCE REVENUE STREAM HAS EMERGED. KOCUR AND HIS TEAM LOOK AHEAD TO A BRIGHT FUTURE, WITH THE HELP OF THEIR LOCAL MARKETING AGENCY.

"IT'S VERY POSSIBLE AS A SMALL BUSINESS TO COMPETE AGAINST THE BIG BOX STORES. IF YOU HAVE THE RIGHT MARRIAGE OF TECHNOLOGY AND EXPERTISE I BELIEVE YOU CAN COMPETE," KOCUR SAYS.

AS AMAZING STORIES PREPARES FOR A BUSY YEAR, THEY'RE CURRENTLY WORKING WITH THEIR TRUSTED LOCAL EXPERT TO ADD MORE DIGITAL SOLUTIONS, INCLUDING:



SEO
THROUGH
BOOSTABILITY



GOOGLE
WORKSPACE FOR
TEAM COLLABORATION
& CLOUD STORAGE



CONSTANT
CONTACT
FOR EMAIL
MARKETING



VENDASTA'S
MARKETING
SERVICES
FOR PAID ONLINE
ADVERTISING

AMAZING STORIES HAS A CLEAR BUSINESS STRATEGY TO GUIDE THEM THROUGH THIS NEXT PHASE OF ECOMMERCE ON THE VENDASTA PLATFORM. THEY BELIEVE THE POTENTIAL FOR IMPROVED SALES AND DIGITAL MARKETING WILL CONTINUE TO CLIMB.

"WITH THE PROPER HELP AND THE RIGHT PLATFORM, YOU'RE AWAY TO THE RACES," KOCUR SAYS. "FOR US, I THINK THE SKY'S THE LIMIT."

