

DCi, Shopatron bundle services

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For years, manufacturers have struggled to make sure consumers that were referred to a local dealer actually purchased their products. Now, because of a new combination of services bundled by Direct Communications, Inc. (DCi) and Shopatron, Inc., manufacturers can convert online consumer shoppers into buyers, while supporting their entire distribution network. Closing this sales loop is a true 'win-win-win' scenario for the manufacturer, WD and retail outlet.

Responding to growing demand, DCi's iWebCat online catalog service — which lets manufacturers with an electronic catalog from DCi power their own consumer Web site — has integrated with Shopatron so manufacturers can not only sell their products online, but also use a network of retailers and dealers to fill the orders.

"Manufacturers are looking for new ways to increase sales," says Mark Toebben, DCi president. "Now they can have consumer sales without cutting out their reseller network. Any manufacturer with an electronic catalog from DCi can implement this quickly and easily. It's a way for manufacturers to capture sales because most aftermarket consumers first look for product information on manufacturer Web sites."

DCi's upgraded iWebCat service now has built-in support for manufacturers' retail MAP and unilateral sales program policies.

"Shopatron is excited about this key partnership with DCi," says Brian Clausen, Shopatron president. "This will allow manufacturers to run their catalog and commerce sales through their Web sites. The combination of DCi and Shopatron will create a simplified way for companies to manage their Web sites and make more money."

Shopatron provides a service that manages order processing from a manufacturer's Web site and offers the shopper a wide range of delivery options, including shipment, in-store pickup and beginning in early 2009, installation. Through the Shopatron Coex Freedom order exchange system, an order is assigned to the closest stocking retailer or dealer for fulfillment.

Shopatron is gaining support in the automotive aftermarket. "We've used Shopatron for over a year," says Greg Ghelfi, president of True Flow, an air intake manufacturer. "We find it a great way to sell to customers who want to buy direct without excluding our distributors and dealers."

Lynn Arnett, general manager of Cruisers Car and Truck Accessories, a retailer in Xenia, Ohio, also is a fan of Shopatron. "I get orders from Shopatron regularly. It has expanded my market to literally across the globe," Arnett says. "Naturally, you sell more to customers nearby, plus you get add-on sales when they come to pick up the order, but I've also shipped product to Canada, to France and other countries."

"Shopatron also makes is very easy to see what product to stock. It has helped my local retail sales because it shows me what to have in stock for walk-in customers too," she says.

DCi has created electronic catalogs for nearly 200 of the industry's leading brands. For complete information on this new DCi and Shopatron joint solution, contact Mike Doyle at Shopatron.