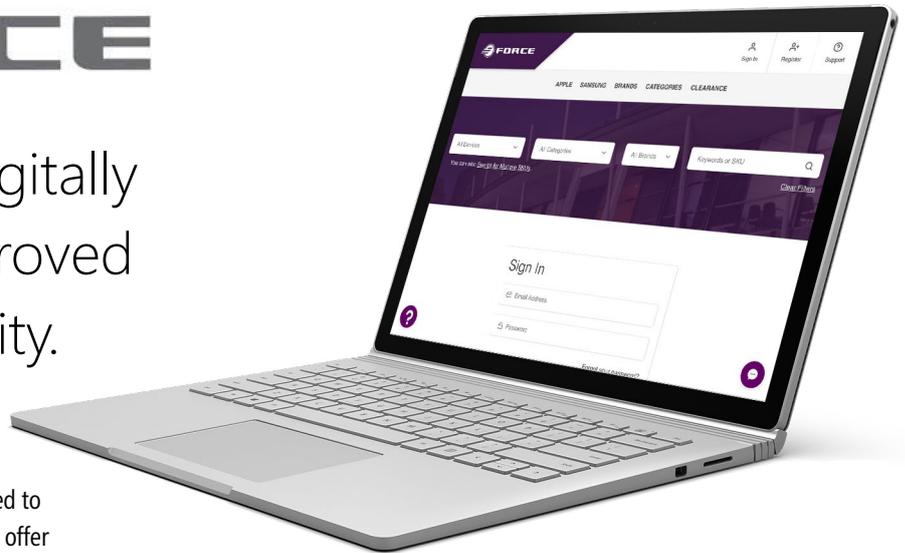




Force Technology digitally transforms with improved eCommerce capability.



Force Technology International Pty Ltd (Force) needed to update and improve its website user experience and offer improved eCommerce functionality for its B2B customers. A key strategic focus for Force was to be customer-led and maintain a leadership position in its space. Working with Empired, Force used the Microsoft stack to upgrade its website and deliver a more responsive, user-friendly eCommerce experience for its customers. The team anticipates this will result in a significant uplift in sales.

About Force Technology

Force was established more than 25 years ago as a wholesaler of mobile lifestyle brand products. Force supplies to a substantial reseller network for more than 3,000 outlets throughout Australia and New Zealand. This includes specialty communication retailers, major retail groups, service providers, and network carriers. Its distribution centre is recognised as a world-class enterprise hub with the power to facilitate a technologically-advanced supply chain.

Existing website needed to be improved

As a full-service supplier, Force is always looking for innovative solutions to enhance its total product offering. This includes making it easier for customers to see Force's extensive product range and service offering, order without friction, and rely on on-time delivery of products.

Force had an existing website with strong functionality but it wasn't mobile-responsive and the team recognised that it could do an even better job of presenting options to B2B customers. Force had invested a significant amount of resources in becoming a market leader and wanted to further enhance the functionality it offered customers to cement that leading position.

Chris Sciortino, Chief Marketing Officer, Force Technology, said, "The existing website had become slightly dated in terms of the user experience and it needed to become mobile-responsive. The main goal was to improve the overall customer experience for the retailers that order from us. It was important to make it the best in the sector.

"Furthermore, Force is committed to being customer-led and the website update was a great opportunity to do that. This was a transformation opportunity that would set us apart from the competition."

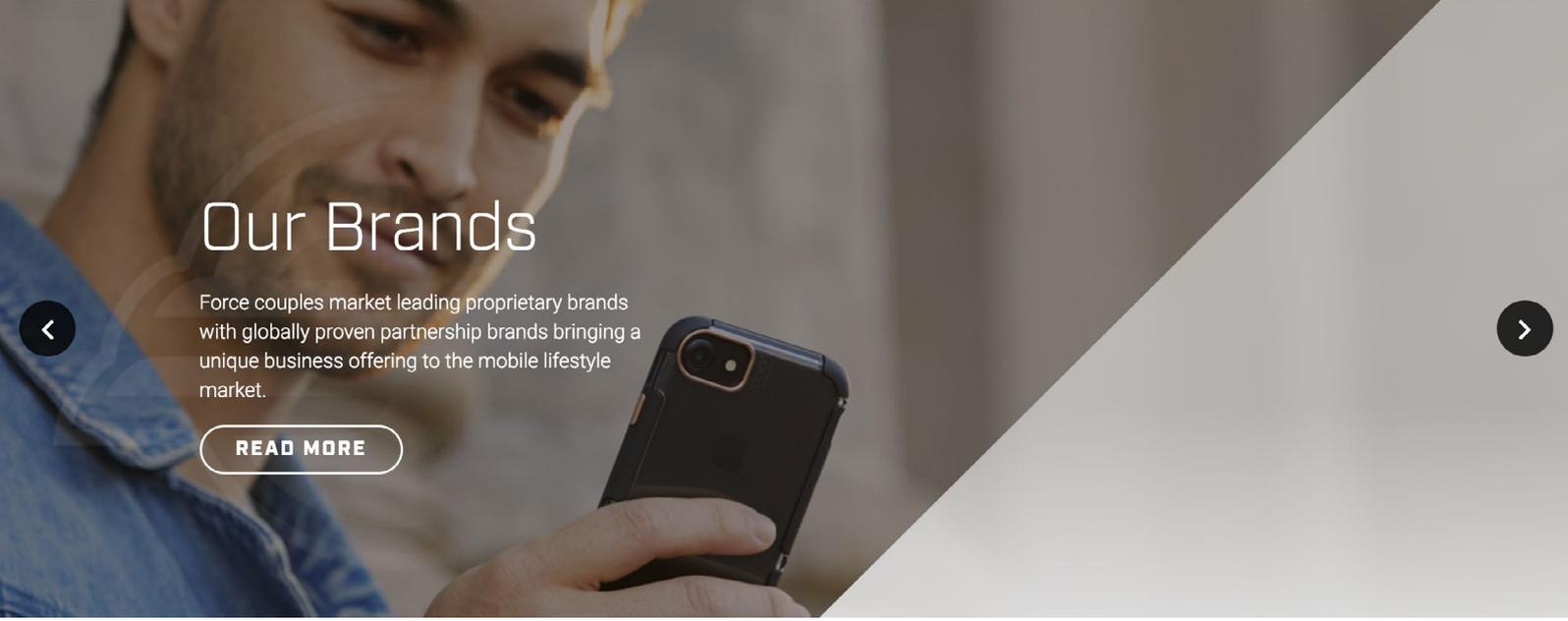
Customer feedback highlighted areas for improvement

The team started by gaining functional feedback from customers. Through telephone surveys, Force uncovered its customers' pain points and wish list, identifying areas for improvement especially around search and ordering functionality. As part of its work with Empired, the team collated this feedback and prioritised the pain points to turn them into functional elements that could be included in the new site.

Chris Sciortino said, "In this way, the scoping process was very customer-led. Engaging with key active, engaged power users, we were able to get a real sense of what was needed and how to proceed."

Once it was clear what elements needed to be addressed, the Force team began searching for a solution. It started with considering off-the-shelf solutions to upgrade the existing site structure. However, on further investigation it became clear that the opportunity was about more than just upgrading the existing site; it was about creating an entirely new site with modern functionality.

Chris Sciortino said, "To maximise functionality and have development flexibility, we needed to work with a partner that would offer a collaborative experience while providing strategic advice and best practice. Empired shared our goal of having the best eCommerce site recognised within our industry. While we considered other options, it was clear that the best path was to engage with Empired."



Our Brands

Force couples market leading proprietary brands with globally proven partnership brands bringing a unique business offering to the mobile lifestyle market.

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Three key pain points dictated requirements

Empired took Force on a journey from understanding its customers' requirements to putting those requirements into a solution. Both the Empired and Force teams understood the absolute necessity of keeping every activity customer focused.

Together, Empired and Force identified three key pain points that needed to be addressed. The first was the site's look and feel, and its ability to provide clear information on each of the thousands of product lines offered by Force. Collating the information on screen to showcase that information in a clean, simple way was important to help customers visualise the products.

The second pain point was around search. The previous functionality was augmented by a Google-style search box that let users search more generally for products, in addition to the traditional searches by category or brand, which is an industry standard. The additional functionality helps customers who aren't sure what they're looking for, creating a better user experience.

The final pain point was around responsiveness. Customers using tablets and smartphones for ordering were frustrated by the site's non-responsive design, so it was imperative to ensure the new site would be fully responsive to cater to customers' device preferences.

Empired developed a bespoke solution based on JavaScript, .NET, and NAV integration to solve each of these pain points comprehensively.

Seamless implementation due to collaboration

The implementation process was professional and seamless. Sprint sessions kept the agile project on track with plenty of flexibility for feedback and changes.

Chris Sciortino said, "The management of the sprints was extremely well-executed by Empired. It was a collaborative and enjoyable experience with feedback taken on board and actioned quickly. This helped us get to the key functionality we were looking for."

The solution included integrating the website functionality with Force's enterprise resource planning (ERP) system, which had created challenges in the past. However, the integration with the new system has been smooth.

The messaging engine has also improved with better tools to communicate with customers. Force no longer relies on simple email marketing; the team can now communicate through text messages and more sophisticated emails regarding order receipt and processing.

Chris Sciortino said, "Being able to keep customers informed at each stage of the buying process is a big benefit. It adds to the transparency and visibility that customers prefer, delivering on our promise to be customer-focused."

Force elected to keep both the old website and the new one operating in parallel while customers switched over to the new one. Eventually, the old site will be phased out as customers transition completely to the new site.

Anticipated benefits include incremental order increases

The project was scoped to deliver incremental extra orders through the improved user experience. This included functionality like suggestive ordering, the ability to add extra items into the basket, and so on. These functions are in the early stages of deployment and Force anticipates that cumulative orders and total value of orders will increase as customers become more used to using the new site. From there, the team will look to further enhance those tools to work out the key triggers that lead to incremental basket share.

Chris Sciortino said, "Now that both sites are up, Force will run a promotion to establish some benchmark numbers for both sites. Then, we'll add a further promotion to that to see what uplift it generates. Using improved notifications and extended layout functionality, we'll experiment to see how we can increase orders and value."

Working with Empired

Empired and Force created a strong, collaborative relationship in which the Empired team felt like part of the Force team. This unified partnership was well-received by the Force team.

Chris Sciortino said, "Working with Empired was a great experience. Having the right team in place meant we could deliver according to the timeline. Although the Force team had an understanding of customer requirements, Empired was very much an expert partner that provided significant value around the knowledge base and recommendations."

For more information contact us today:

Empired: contact@empired.com

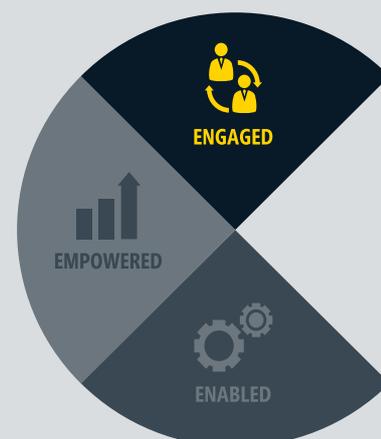
Intergen: enquiry@intergen.co.nz

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Chris Sciortino
Chief Marketing Officer
Force Technology

SNAPSHOT

- Existing website offered opportunities for improvement to deliver a better customer experience
- Empired offered a bespoke solution that was more flexible and offered modern functionality
- Seamless implementation occurred due to strong, collaborative relationship
- Anticipated benefits to include incremental sales increases



ENGAGED

Customer engagement, acquisition & retention.