

 LINNWORKS™ WITH *shopifyplus*

flatspot

How Linnworks and Shopify Plus helped Flatspot, together

Flatspot is a leading online destination for men's contemporary fashion and streetwear with a ballpark annual revenue of £4-6 million. The business has established a fiercely loyal army of social media advocates all over the world, with a customer return rate of more than 65%.

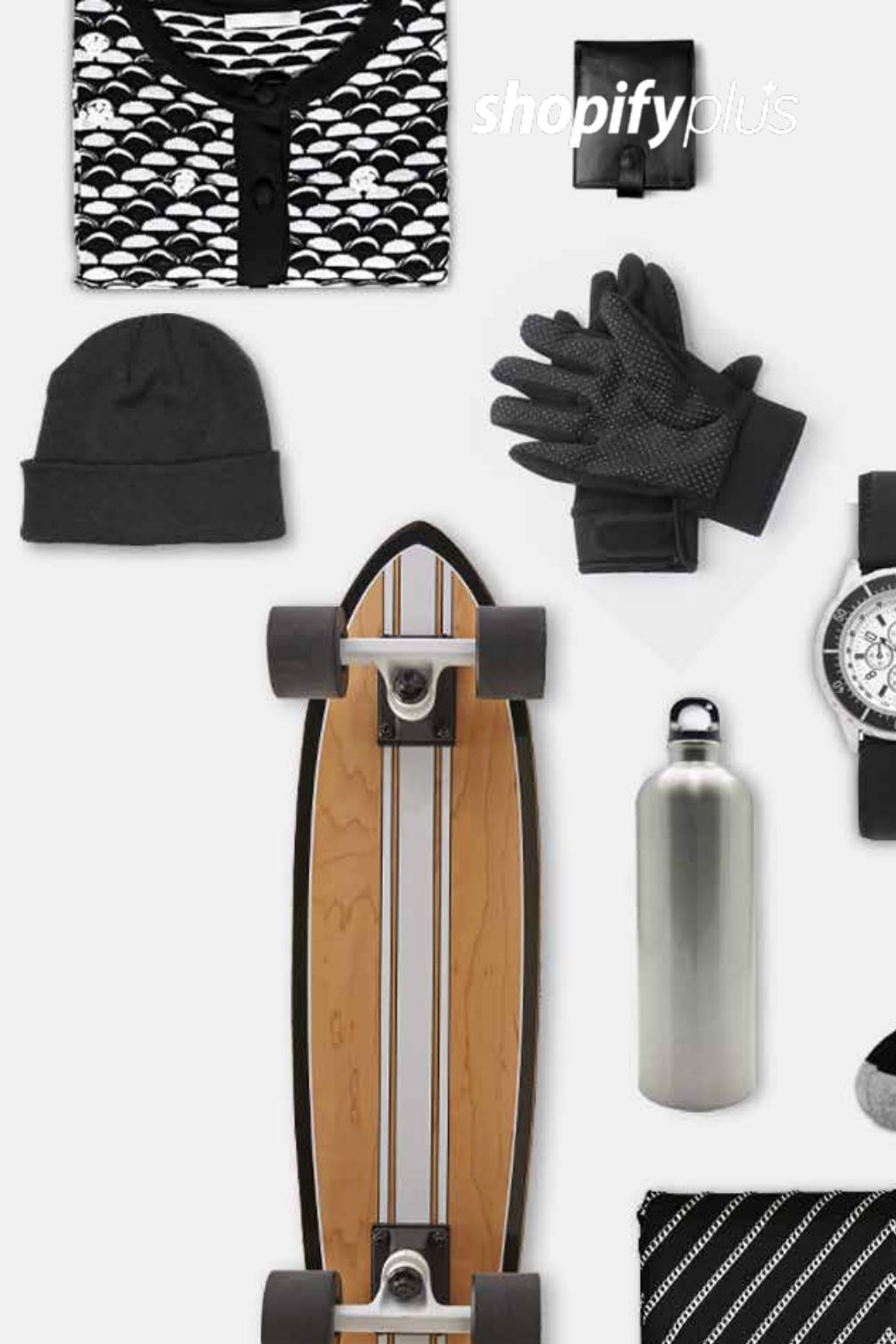
In 2016, Flatspot hit a ceiling with both of its previous solutions. The limitations of the inventory management system were stifling the team's efficiency, while an on-site security attack meant that the business could no longer use or trust its eCommerce platform.

Faced with resolving these challenges as quickly as possible, the Flatspot team got straight to work. Nathan Bawden, Lead Data Coordinator at Flatspot, knew that they needed the new software to match the team's non-technical needs and enable growth and efficiency.

The result? A swift move to Linnworks followed by a seamless integration with Shopify Plus.

Since implementing both eCommerce solutions, the Linnworks and Shopify Plus integration has delivered a number of key benefits for the leading online retailer:

1. **Reliability**
2. **Better business processes**
3. **Cost-effective growth**



The challenge: Overcoming business inefficiencies and cyber security attacks

In 2016, Flatspot had reached a ceiling with its current order management system. There were several issues with the old software which meant that the team's processes were becoming too inefficient to grow the business any further.

“The tipping point? It was actually my fiancé, who back then worked at Flatspot, that said to me this is ridiculous. The API limitations of the old system could only export X number of lines at a time and the reporting was also useless,” recalls Nathan.

On top of this, the way the old system worked was creating operational chaos for the team. Manual tasks that needed to be automated were impacting the team's day-to-day efficiency and stifling the growth of the business.

“The guys here were bulk printing shipping labels and matching them up to invoices and then matching the invoices up to the products. It was just completely nuts,” says Nathan. “Bulk printing meant that products were getting sent to the wrong places. Our customers kept getting the wrong items because it was just a big pile of products and a big pile of shipping labels. This wasn't scalable in any way.”

Just two months later, Flatspot came into more turmoil with its old eCommerce platform. A big security breach by an independent hacker meant that the credit card information belonging to the company's customers was being stolen.

As a small business, no one on the Flatspot team had enough technical expertise nor the resources available to stop the cyber security attack and regain control over their website. In fact, the company only had one option:

“We had to shut the site down,” recalls Nathan. “Essentially, there was this bug on our site and we had no way of knowing if it was still there, still active and still retrieving credit card information.”

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The solution: A long-term fix for operational chaos

For Flatspot, the transition to Linnworks and Shopify Plus was a smooth and seamless one. It was imperative that the team had new systems that improved the business and didn't cause any disruption to daily processes.

Therefore, the two new solutions needed to be easy to use and replicate some of the same processes, but this time around provide reliability and enable growth and efficiency.

What made Flatspot trust Linnworks to get the job done?

As an experienced eCommerce professional, Nathan was already very familiar with Linnworks. When his wife mentioned the limitations with the old system, he was working somewhere else already using Linnworks.

"I've actually helped three or four new businesses onto Linnworks and was then taken on by Flatspot in 2016 to help with the new integration," recalls Nathan. "Certainly, anybody from up here in the office, if they were stretched downstairs, could pick and pack orders, because you don't need any real prior knowledge to be able to do it."



“Now, with Linnworks, anybody from up here in the office, if they were stretched downstairs, could pick and pack orders, because you don't need any real prior knowledge to be able to do it.”

Fast forward two months, Flatspot was hit with the security attack on their eCommerce platform. The company needed to move very quickly to ensure that there was no disruption to daily business, so it was essential the new platform was quick to set up and easy to use.

What's more, with the team now acknowledging their capabilities and focussing on the future, it was also vital that the new solution took care of all security threats and kept the software up-to-date to save Flatspot time and money.

“As we couldn't clone anything from our previous site in case it was infected, we needed to get something set up really quickly and it had to be something super easy,” says Nathan. “All the security side of things needed to be managed by the new eCommerce platform so that we weren't having to worry about all that stuff or pay developers to install patches.”

What made the team so sure Shopify Plus was the right move for Flatspot?

“We actually started out on a Shopify store and moved away from the platform because, at that time, Shopify wasn't set up to handle the number of products that it can deal with these days,” recalls Nathan. “In that sense, we've gone full circle. From Shopify, to an open source eCommerce platform, and then back to Shopify again.”



The benefits: Efficient and cost-effective growth

Since implementing Linnworks with Shopify Plus, Flatspot has continued to go from strength to strength. The team now has a much more efficient business process, which means that daily business operations are much smoother, and orders don't end up with the wrong customers.

What's more, the Flatspot team now spends far less time on manual and technical tasks, such as printing and packing orders or website maintenance, and has more free time to focus and find new ways to improve and grow the business.

As a result, Flatspot hasn't had to take on any extra staff to cover the extremely busy and stressful periods that the seasons can bring for many online businesses. This has saved the company from spending thousands of pounds unnecessarily every year.

“We are more efficient, and our time is more efficiently spent. This has, of course, freed us up to do other things and it's also meant we haven't had to take on additional staff to cover the busy Q4,” says Nathan.



“Now, with Linnworks and Shopify Plus in place, our team is far more efficient than ever before.”

Considering an inventory management system to support your Shopify Plus store?

Linnworks and Shopify Plus work together seamlessly to help leading online retailers to future-proof themselves with reliable, secure systems that enable growth and efficiency.

Speak to one of our Shopify Plus experts to get started.

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