



Tire Buyer Focuses Ecommerce on Performance, Mobile Growth

Rackspace helps power site performance, a key factor in customer retention.

Tirebuyer.com is out to change the tire industry, letting customers purchase tires online directly from a nationwide network of some 10,000 professional tire shops, from independent retailers to the larger players such as Goodyear and Firestone.

The Bellevue, Washington-based company offers more than three million tires and wheels, from all the leading brands. Featuring award-winning customer service, the site also promises 1-2 day delivery, via a North American network of 140 warehouses and its own fleet of 800 delivery trucks — buyers can see what's in stock, what fits their vehicle, place their order, and purchases ship for free to a participating location near the buyer for installation.

Although Tirebuyer.com has only been selling tires and wheels online since 2009, it has 80 years of industry experience behind it. Tire Buyer is a subsidiary of Charlotte-based American Tire Distributors (ATD),

the nation's premier tire distributor serving customers from more than 100 distribution centers nationwide.

Using TireBuyer.com consumers can compare products, read consumer generated reviews, buy tires, and have them delivered and installed at a participating Tire Buyer network shop of their choice.

"We've noticed that once we moved to Rackspace, performance has improved which is helping us from a search engine perspective as well as a conversion rate."

Doug Wilson

Vice President of Marketing, TireBuyer.com

AT-A-GLANCE

CUSTOMER'S BUSINESS:

Tire network and consumer ecommerce site, shipping tires and custom wheels directly to qualified local dealers for installation.

CHALLENGES:

Design and implement a reliable, scalable ecommerce platform that supports rapid growth — changing the way people buy tires.

RACKSPACE® SOLUTIONS

Rackspace Managed Cloud, Dedicated Servers, Cloud Servers, Cloud Load Balancers, Cloud Files, Hybris Ecommerce Platform

BUSINESS OUTCOME:

Consistent uptime, better performance - more flexible infrastructure, access to key expertise, and lower cost.

Buyers can see what's in stock, what fits their car, what sells well in their area based on climate. When they check out, they can choose from a list of area installers, as well as their locations, fees and user ratings.

WHERE THE RUBBER MEETS THE ROAD

Keeping an ecommerce retailer online is critical. Because online shoppers won't wait more than a few seconds for seller's site to load, poor performance could mean serious potential loss of revenue and repeat sales. As more and more firms push their business online, in a highly competitive marketplace, downtime can mean potential loss of revenue and irreparable damage to a company's brand.

According to Doug Wilson, TireBuyer.com Vice President of Marketing, the Rackspace relationship is helping build the Tire Buyer brand and driving traffic to the

"This is a 24/7 operation, and Rackspace is there any time we have an issue or need help. I would definitely recommend Rackspace. We have seen an improvement in both page load times and uptime."

Mark Terao

Vice President of Ecommerce, TireBuyer.com

website. "We pay a lot for online advertising, so when people click on them we need the site up and running and those landing pages available," said Wilson. "Having the uptime and the reliability is really important."

When Tire Buyer wanted to build a reliable, scalable and secure ecommerce platform, it called Rackspace. Together the companies established a private cloud with dedicated servers, in contrast to the shared approach the organization took working with a previous hosting provider.

"We came to Rackspace because our previous hosting provider was not providing the level of service that we were looking for," said Mark Terao, TireBuyer.com Vice President of Ecommerce. "We weren't reaching satisfactory uptimes and whenever we'd experience an outage, we weren't getting the level of service that we required."

DIFFERENCE-MAKER FOR SUPERIOR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

According to Terao, TireBuyer chose the hybrid ecommerce platform for its flexibility to drive sales on the website and to make changes on the website on the fly.

"There are many good ecommerce platforms out there like IBM, and ATG, but the thing that attracted us to hybrid is that it was a more scalable and flexible solution for our needs," said Terao.

Another essential for TireBuyer is search engine response time. Consumers are expecting faster response time from their pages and in fact Google rates that as one of the things they consider in their organic ranking technology.

With 5.6 billion mobile phones already on the planet (and smartphone penetration at 2.1 billion and rising rapidly*), innovation based on consumers' location and behavior will continue to soar — as will mobile marketers' efforts.

"We're seeing a lot more people on their mobile phone first, researching there, then they go to a laptop or desktop to finish the transaction," said Terao. "The speed of the site on a mobile device

is important for us as well, so whatever hosting provider we're with, that is vital."

"With a huge transition into mobile — conversion is different since people have a different experience, obviously on a smaller device," said Doug Wilson, TireBuyer.com Vice President of Marketing. "How to optimize for that change in the market, is a challenge. We have to understand how people are using these devices, so we make the experience the best it can be. Everyone's going to be completely mobile pretty soon, and that causes a complete shift in how things happen now, so very interesting."

THE DIFFERENCE FOR A SUPERIOR CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Fanatical Support[®] is extremely important to TireBuyer. According to Terao, TireBuyer has taken advantage of Rackspace expertise, as well as the always-on reliability.

"The Rackspace Digital Team is very important to us, because they have the expertise that we don't necessarily have in-house," said Mark Terao, Vice President of Ecommerce for TireBuyer.com. "The managed service level for us means that whenever we have a question, we know we're going to get an answer quickly, and we know that with our experience with Rackspace, we get that response we are looking for very, very quickly, and there's always a follow-up behind that as well."

"We've noticed that once we moved to Rackspace, performance has improved which is helping us from a search engine perspective as well as a conversion rate," said Wilson. "Page load time, and uptime of the website are all critically important for us to have the most cost-effective marketing."

"We consult with Rackspace because we do trust their judgment, and their experience," said Terao. "What you're getting with Rackspace and their team is Fanatical Support that they talk about, but they also 'walk the walk' as well. You're going to get great support. You're getting people that are experts in the field, and you're probably getting best in class as far as the industry's concerned."

* Source: Kleiner Perkins Internet Trends, 2015

ALL BACKED BY
FANATICAL SUPPORT.

Toll Free: 1.800.961.2888 | International: 1.210.312.4700 | www.rackspace.com

Copyright © 2015 Rackspace US, Inc. | Rackspace® and Fanatical Support® are service marks of Rackspace US, Inc. registered in the United States and other countries. All trademarks, service marks, images, products and brands remain the sole property of their respective holders.

RACKSPACE® | 1 FANATICAL PLACE | CITY OF WINDCREST, SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS 78218 U.S.A. | DATE MODIFIED: 08142015

