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# DryCASE

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— Nathan Tayloe | CTO and Partner, TGK

When your e-commerce platform works against your business goals, what is the best way forward?

DryCASE chose Miva for a modern store that provides the best possible experience for their users while giving the company the information they need to effectively grow their business.

## Problem

- » Clunky and outdated user experience
- » Complicated site maintenance
- » Limited metrics and traffic visibility

## DryCASE

DryCASE is an electronics accessory company that made their way into the world of high-tech gadgets via a different path than many of their competitors. Today their products protect smartphones, tablets, and other electronics from the elements, but their parent company, Dry Corp, first started in the medical industry.

Dry Corp produces waterproofing solutions for casts, bandages, and other medical implements. They provide a high-quality rubber sleeve and a patented vacuum sealing system that keeps the cast or bandage dry, even when fully submerged in water. After losing a new phone to rain damage while riding his bike to work, one of the Dry Corp founders had a moment of inspiration. Could the technology that keeps medical components dry also protect electronic gadgets?

To test the idea, the Dry Corp team set out to build a prototype. They used transparent plastic for the sleeve, modified the shape to fit a phone, and kept the vacuum sealing system. After extensive testing with various devices, they launched their first product for electronics in 2009.

This product, the DryCASE, protects phones in up to 100 feet of water using

a clear vacuum-sealed pouch that still allows users access to various phone functions. Since launching, they have steadily expanded their product line to include various DryCASE sizes and features. The company now even sells waterproof headphones so you can enjoy tunes while catching waves or floating down the river.

## A Focus on e-Commerce

From the beginning, DryCASE has sold their products directly to customers online ([www.drycase.com](http://www.drycase.com)). Shortly after launching their initial e-commerce website, DryCASE brought on Tayloe Gray Kristof (TGK), a full-service digital marketing and creative services agency, to help them maintain the site and improve online marketing efforts. Nathan Tayloe, CTO and Partner, oversees the relationship with DryCASE.

“We began our relationship with DryCASE in 2010,” Tayloe says. “At the time, they were operating with HTML and Volusion for their e-commerce platform, and were not interested in converting the site to a different platform just yet.”

## Challenges on Volusion

While maintaining the Volusion site, Nathan Tayloe says he and his team encountered three main issues.

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## Solution

- » A single-domain site powered by Miva
- » Miva and WordPress simplify daily maintenance
- » Miva is the platform your business can grow with

### Poor User Experience

- » "Volusion has limitations that end up impacting the shopping experience for their customers," Tayloe says. In particular, he explains that since Volusion requires a separate hosted site for the webstore, there is not enough control over the checkout process. "One of the biggest problems with Volusion is that you don't get an 'Add to Cart' or 'Buy Now' link from your website," he says. "All you can do is link to a product page on the Volusion store. From there the user can add the item to their cart."
- » "The result is a checkout experience that feels clunky and outdated," he says. "When a user clicks 'Add to Cart' from the main website, they still haven't performed the action. It actually takes another four clicks to add an item to the cart since they need to re-initiate the checkout process when they land at the Volusion site's product page."

### Maintenance Pain

- » Tayloe says having the store set up as a subdomain on Volusion's servers also causes issues for the team maintaining the site. "Knowing where everything is supposed to live gets really convoluted," he says. "You have to put files on Volusion's servers, but also on the hosting server where the rest of the HTML site is. This creates problems when you're trying to keep everything served up consistently and securely. Also, updating the site is complicated because you need to keep track of what goes where between the two different locations."

- » "When you have split hosting," Tayloe continues, "you also run into this problem where you can't replicate the look and feel 100% between Volusion and the HTML site. So you get visual inconsistencies like headers that don't look quite right, or link behavior that isn't what the user would expect."

### Hindered Metrics Tracking

- » A third issue stemming from Volusion's requirement that the store be hosted separately on their servers is the difficulty of consistently monitoring traffic across the two different domains. "You get a convoluted picture of your overall site traffic," Tayloe says. "It's hard to clearly see how customers are progressing through your conversion funnel when you have to aggregate traffic data and user behavior across two different sites."

### Making the Switch to Miva

In early 2014, DryCASE made the decision to upgrade their e-commerce platform. TGK recommended Miva and helped DryCASE build the new site in time for a June 2014 launch. In addition to the upgrade to Miva for e-commerce, TGK converted the rest of the DryCASE website to WordPress.

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CTO and Partner, TGK

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Nathan Tayloe talks about why they chose to use WordPress and Miva together. "WordPress is much more than a blog platform today," he says. "With DryCASE, we deployed it as a full, robust content management system that is easier to use than the old HTML website. We recommend Miva as an e-commerce platform because it nicely integrates with WordPress."

Tayloe highlights the benefits of the new site.

### Entire Site Unified Under One Domain

- » "With Volusion," Tayloe says, "the webstore was separate from the rest of the site. Now, with Miva and WordPress, we have the ability to really customize every single piece of the website and have it sit on our own servers. This means we can dial in the look and feel, and provide universal branding."
- » "We also have more control over the user experience," he says. "We can craft the checkout process, for example, to be exactly how we want it to be." While Volusion took users to a different domain to complete their purchase, the new Miva site allows DryCASE to keep the users on one domain. "This means we can limit the number of clicks it takes for a customer to check out," Tayloe explains. "One of the big things we wanted to do with the new site was create an entire branded checkout process that is efficient and user-friendly. We were able to do that thanks to the clean integration between Miva and WordPress."
- » "We also get a lot more reporting detail," Tayloe continues. "We can now measure conversion performance against our goals, do funnel visualization, and look at user behavior to figure out how we can improve the experience for them."
- » Finally, Tayloe points out the SEO benefits that come from having the site on a single domain. "It's really an underrated benefit," he says. "We're no longer running the risk of SEO penalization for duplicate content. Before, it was a constant process to make sure we wouldn't be unfairly penalized for duplicate content, just because the webstore and the rest of the site were on two separate domains. Now, we can focus on our optimization efforts without worrying about this happening."

## Easier to Maintain

- » "The new site built on Miva and WordPress is easier for the client to maintain on a day-to-day basis," says Tayloe. "Before, they had to staff someone in-house who had a web development background to go in and add products to the Volusion store. Now they can have anyone go in to add, modify, and update the site. This is the case both with the webstore on Miva and the rest of the site on WordPress."
- » Colby Raker is the Sales and Public Relations Coordinator for DryCASE, and she works with the site on a daily basis. "On the old site," she says, "all the non-store content was HTML put together using Dreamweaver, so it wasn't easy to get in and make changes. Now that it's on WordPress it is much easier to update." Raker also says interns and assistants who have no web experience are now able to update the site when needed.
- » Nathan Tayloe mentions that since anyone in the company can update the site, this saves time and money that a smaller business may not have to spend on website maintenance. He notes that another important maintenance task, data backup, is much easier with the new site. "Having everything in one place really helps on the maintenance side of things," he says. "Backup is much simpler, so if something were to happen where the site went down, bringing it back online will be easier."

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## Better Support from Miva

- » "The amount of support we get with Miva is great," Tayloe says. "I've never worked with a company where I'm able to reach out to a developer, or to a president like Rick, that cares so much about its third-party developers. If I run into a problem, I can always reach the Miva support staff for assistance."
- » "With Volusion," he continues, "you have to reach out to the community, and a lot of times you feel like you're alone out there in left field. I've had issues in the past with Volusion where they've flat-out told me we can't do something. With Miva, they are always committed to finding a solution, and that really makes it feel like a partnership."

## Results with Miva

DryCASE has seen excellent results with their new website. "Well, the first and most obvious benefit," says Colby Raker, "is that the cart and the rest of the site just look so much better than they used to. With Miva we can really manipulate things and get the look exactly how we

want it." She also mentions the new site's mobile-responsive design. "We definitely needed the new site to be mobile responsive," she says. "It was a great improvement to get that in there."

Raker also says they've seen better metrics. "Engagement and conversion are both up," she says. "More people are coming through and filling out the contact forms and getting in touch with us." Nathan Tayloe credits the streamlined checkout process for some of the improvements they've seen. "It has certainly helped conversions," he says. "The user doesn't have as many clicks to go through, and that makes a big difference."

Tayloe says that while the new site has helped improve key metrics, it also gives DryCASE a better ability to see and evaluate these metrics in the first place. "An important part of this new site is the ability to get a solid look at what is going on with traffic," he says. "Before, the data was skewed because pages were in two different places. There was no good way to evaluate marketing campaigns or ad spending because stuff was all over the place."



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"Now, we have reliable data in the first place," Tayloe continues, "and this puts us in a position to start tuning the advertising campaigns. We can make recommendations for changes that are based on solid data." He also talks about Miva's integration with Google Analytics and the Google Merchant Center. "Everything's in much better shape," he says. "We can get a lot more reporting now that the Google Analytics piece is set up correctly, and

with Miva we can feed data back into our Merchant Center platform to get accurate cost-per-click data."

### **A Platform for the Future**

Nathan Tayloe talks about the different outlook DryCASE has for their website now that they've upgraded to Miva. "With Volusion we really couldn't do the things we wanted to do," he says. "By switching to Miva, DryCASE now has

the platform they need for future growth and expansion."

"And that's really the biggest thing," Tayloe concludes. "The Miva platform is built so that you can grow on it. You won't grow to a certain point and then get stuck. If DryCASE is doing \$50 million in ten years, they'll still be doing just fine on Miva. That wouldn't have been the case with Volusion." 

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