

Case study

Impex Stones: Rock-Solid Integration

Industry: Wall sidings and decorative stones
ERP: Acoma

k·ecommerce.
powered by **mdf commerce**





Back in 2005, Deitan Foisy noticed an ad in a Montreal newspaper for a shipping container full of stone. Curious, he went to see it and asked for the price. He liked the material, and wondered if he could find a better deal elsewhere. So he visited a few other sellers unloading stone in the Montreal area, and compared prices.

By now, Deitan Foisy had a business idea. He ended up flying all the way to China and purchasing a shipping container of stone there, which he shipped back to Quebec. He placed a series of ads in local papers and sold off the whole container within two weeks.

By 2007, Impex Stones was open for business, selling natural and decorative stones, brick veneer, wall panels, wood siding and more. Their first products were Californian decorative stone and Old Montreal brick. As the business expanded, they were joined by their friend Jean-François Dufour, who became the Director of Operations.

Today, they sell to 450 retailers across the Maritime Provinces, Quebec and Ontario, working with a network of suppliers in China, Algeria, Italy, India, and all over the world.

The Challenge

Impex Stones first ventured into online commerce with a Shopify website. This site had a lot of the functionality they needed to sell their products. But there was a major drawback: they weren't able to integrate it to their Avantage accounting solution.

As a result, they had to enter updates to the Shopify web store manually every day on an Excel spreadsheet. Similarly, they had to make updates in the accounting software. The order-taking process at the time consisted of receiving orders by email or fax. They had to enter these orders one by one in their accounting system and then print them out. Each order took 8-12 sheets of paper.

This problem persisted when they switched to an Acomba ERP: they had no way of integrating it to their web store. Not only was this a waste of their small staff's time, but entering the orders in the system manually was a source of expensive (and avoidable) error.

Further, because Impex Stones sells only to retailers, their products' end users (that is, the customers of the retailers they sell to) often had questions about proper installation, use, and maintenance. The company wanted to offer a means of providing this information to their end users.



“ I could not imagine that in 2019, we would have to use a human resource for data entry when this resource could bring us more value in another way. ”

Jean-François Dufour,
Director of Operations,
Impex Stones

Automated order and invoice entry

Real-time inventory management

Streamlined accounting process

Saved time and eliminated errors

The Solution

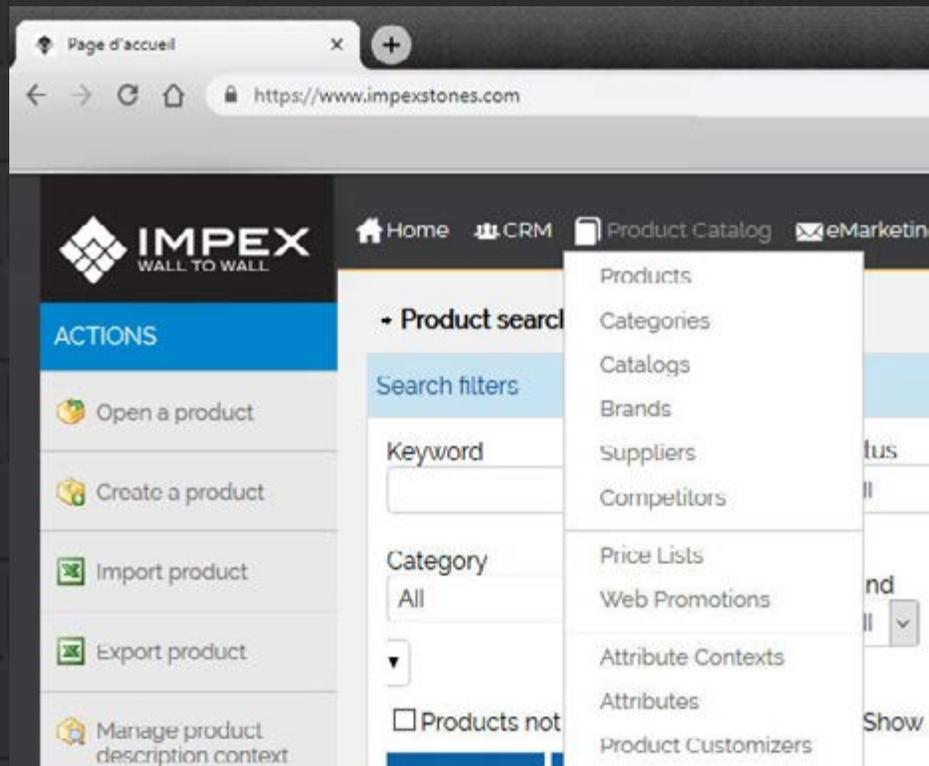
After a demo of the k-commerce solution, the Impex Stones team realized that ERP integration was the missing component of their ecommerce strategy.

Integrating a k-commerce web store to their ERP allowed them to virtually automate routine activities like order processing, invoicing, and inventory management.

At the same time, the k-commerce solution's product catalog options allowed the team to get their product offering online with beautiful high-quality images, detailed specs, and even instructional videos showing clients how to install and care for their products.

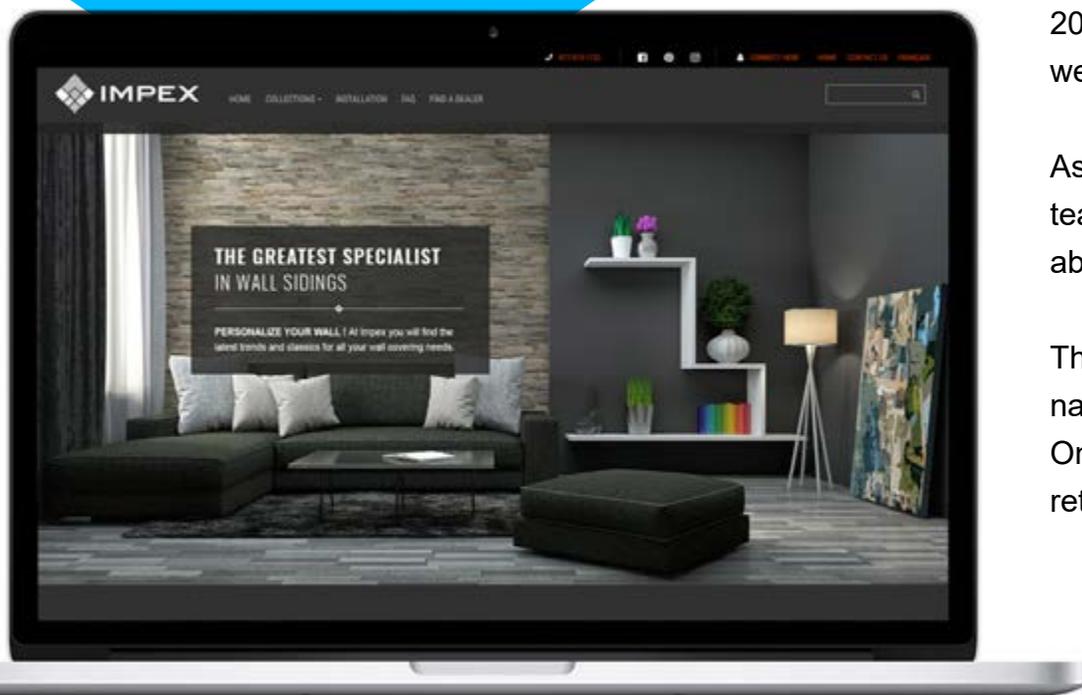
Impex Stones had specific layout and navigation needs that the k-commerce team was able to meet with a custom web store design. The k-commerce design team presented a mock-up within 2 weeks of the initial meeting and the result corresponded perfectly to what Impex Stones had asked for.

On a functional level, Impex Stones got extensive assistance from their project manager and support team in configuring their platform exactly the way they wanted it.



“ We’re completely satisfied. I don’t believe we could have found better for our needs. The k-e-commerce system is adaptable to the client’s requirements, whether for B2B or B2C. ”

Jean-François Dufour,
Director of Operations,
Impex Stones



The Results

An ERP-integrated k-e-commerce solution saves the Impex Stones team a tremendous amount of time that they previously had to spend manually entering orders and invoices. They are better able to manage their small staff’s time and focus on critical business issues while their integrated platform handles all the time-consuming data-entry work.

Ecommerce is a new way to bring their products to market. As a B2B company, Impex Stones sells only to retailers, and the site has been available to their retailers since January 2019. By March, just two months later, 45% of all their orders were already coming through the website.

As for the remaining orders, they come in by email and the team enters them into the ERP. In this way, they’ve been able to reduce their use of paper by 95%.

The company currently enjoys growth of 2% per year in its native Quebec. Their plans are to spread out further into Ontario and then into the eastern United States, with major retailers like Home Depot and Lowes.