



ecostore USA, a case study

ecostore USA is a company founded like most companies with an idea – an idea sparked by women knowing that toxic chemicals impacted lives and an understanding that women and men want to live healthy and do good for the environment.

Bringing this “idea” into fruition took place online with the discovery of ecostore New Zealand. From this discovery, online relationships developed from forming a company to creating relationships with moms and dads online.

The Challenge

Money, time and resources are all challenges facing a start-up company. But for ecostore USA, the real challenge was the competition. Yes, the competition. The competition that engages in greenwashing, or eco-friendly products that claim to be “green.” These companies have huge marketing budgets and convince the public that the products are green when they are not.

ecostore USA’s challenge was to win over the consumer. ecostore USA focused on building relationships and trust, and education, using a grass roots perspective. Ecostore USA forged a path for true authenticity as the company first began in Meijer stores in the Midwest and had big plans for national launches in the future.

The Solution

ecostore USA realized that moms heavily use digital media. ecostore USA recognized that moms talk, connect and share online the products and brands that they trust. So, ecostore USA focused on word of mouth marketing through building relationships with mom bloggers through social media.

ecostore USA took seriously the value of listening and monitoring the online “mom” conversations. Without going through huge focus groups and spending millions of dollars, ecostore USA started connecting with bloggers and asking them to sample their



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products with no obligation but to tell the truth. ecostore USA listened to the responses, testimonials and rave reviews and recognized it was onto something but the outreach needed to be ramped up and expanded for more coverage, more opinions and more exposure.

ecostore USA decided to engage mom bloggers entrenched in the digital world and who know what a blog outreach letter should look like and what blog tours are trusted. ecostore USA let these moms help it build the campaign from the ground up. ecostore USA took this idea, consulted with a few bloggers after doing the research and ended up with a blog outreach letter that included blogging with integrity, making sure that a blogger knows how to disclose, product and reflects ecostore USA's desire to hear about its product from all angles. When a blogger is contacted by ecostore USA it is its mom friend in the digital playground that swings from Facebook to Twitter each day!

Facebook and Twitter became quick referrals for ecostore USA because it approached social media space the same way as its blog outreach and blog tours, with respect. ecostore USA listened, engaged and participated in the conversation. To help it grow, ecostore USA once again consulted a mom blogger who knows social media. This mom blogger helped ecostore USA grow the space without fancy expensive programs. This mom blogger interacted with other social media users and built on relationships to help ecostore USA face the challenge of being authentic, building trust and educating the consumer.

The Result

- To date ecostore USA has grown and launched nationally into Duane Reade stores of New York City.
- Since ecostore USA began its true social media launch in February 2009, ecostore USA has acquired over 2,000 followers and continues to add several each day. ecostore USA maintains and interacts on a daily basis. It is quality, and not quantity, which has led to ecostore USA's ecommerce site showing Twitter as the number 3 referring URL.
- Facebook shows as ecostore USA's number 39th referring URL to its ecommerce website.
- Mom bloggers URL's represent 90% of all referring URL's in ecostore USA's top 100 to their ecommerce website.
- From January 2009 to March 2009 ecostore USA experienced an increase in online sales by 202% as compared with October 08 through December 2008.
- When ecostore USA ran its August 2009 BOGO sales on the heels of a live presence at BlogHer '09 in Chicago and Facebook contest, ecostore USA experienced a substantial increase in traffic to the ecommerce website along with 162% increase in customers who made purchases that were not just Gift Certificate sales, but rather, out and out sales.
- From July to September, ecostore USA's sales have steadily grown as a result of all the social media campaigns and steady traffic in page hits and sales through



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events like BlogHer. The social media campaigns, including the mom blogger outreach and reviews, are difficult to measure. However, after looking at the orders and reports, ecostore USA believes that social media has resulted in an estimated increase of around 130-175%.

- Ecostore USA has begun to see more unsolicited blog posts because mom bloggers love ecostore USA's products, sales and savings.
- At BlogHer 09' in Chicago when the Vice President of Sales, Lyne Appel Downing stood up to make a comment during one of the sessions, bloggers started cheering and waving excited to the company had representation.

About ecostore USA

ecostore NZ was founded more than 15 years ago by Melanie and Malcolm Rands from their home in an eco village in New Zealand.

All of the families that lived in the farm based eco village shared a commitment to organic growing and healthy living, making this an ideal environment in which a young, environmentally conscious business could thrive. Each household in the village was responsible for their own waste water, which quickly highlighted the problems caused by using regular supermarket cleaning products that relied heavily on cheap, petroleum-based, synthetic ingredients.

The team at ecostore USA has partnered with ecostore NZ and loves making a difference in people's lives. ecostore USA does not compromise on performance, so customers can be assured of the efficacy of the products - they truly work. We offer more than 100 products, each one meeting the most stringent environmental and sustainability standards. The guiding principle of every formulation is and will always be that the end product must not only be good for the user, but good for the planet

A Michigan based company.



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