

Case Study



Industry
Clothing

Site
bambooclothing.co.uk

Challenge
Move from a custom-built eCommerce solution to a CMS with more flexibility and functionality so tweaks and updates to the Bamboo website could be made faster and more easily.

Solution
WP Engine Digital Experience Platform, [Application Performance Monitoring](#), [Integration with WooCommerce](#)

Results
Over the last year, Bamboo has doubled its orders and its website visitor count.

Wooing more customers with WP Engine.

Bamboo Clothing combines the power of WooCommerce and WP Engine to grow its popular online clothing company.

Bamboo Clothing (BAM) was founded in 2006 with the goal of providing comfortable, environmentally-friendly clothing at a reasonable price. All of BAM's products are made from a majority mix of bamboo viscose and the company's business model was designed to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and responsibly—from the garment factory workers to the customer. Based in Plymouth, England, BAM's products are sold to customers around the world via its website, and a number of independent retailers in the UK and Europe have also begun selling the clothing in their brick and mortar shops.



The Challenge.

Bamboo Clothing was founded in 2006 with two goals in mind: provide people with reasonably-priced, comfortable clothing and build a business that would be both socially and environmentally sustainable.

They've seen tremendous success in both areas, and today Bamboo provides its growing customer base with everything from bamboo-based socks, shirts, and pants to hoodies, crop tops, and camisoles.

With all of their growth, however, Bamboo's eCommerce team has increasingly had to make significant changes to the website to keep up with an ever-growing demand.

The company was born online, and in the early days of eCommerce, that meant Bamboo had to build a custom solution in order to power their online shop.

"Back in the early days, the eCommerce options that were available were fairly rudimentary and almost all bespoke," said Justin Sharp, Bamboo's Development and Integration Manager. "We were using a custom-built online shop, which was really good, and it did us proud for almost 10 years."

After about seven or eight years, however, Sharp and his team found they were outgrowing the functionality of the custom-built solution.

“WP Engine provided the most simplicity and ease for our eCommerce team. It made it easy for them to do one-click backups, create clone installs, and rely on rapid support, which was absolutely critical for us. The minute we tried WP Engine and tested it out, it was just a very simple decision.”

Justin Sharp,
Technology Manager at Bamboo Clothing



“Every time we wanted some extra bit of functionality or to make a tweak, it was a big deal to get it done,” Sharp said. “Even the smallest of functionality changes seemed to constitute a development project.”

As the growing pains continued, Sharp was tasked with looking for new options that would give the company more flexibility to make website changes on a regular basis, depending on where they felt the business was going.

“We needed something the existing staff could effectively use to make simple changes to the website, both in look and feel, for things like layouts, promotions, banners, and everything else you’d expect a modern CMS to be able to do,” Sharp said.



The Solution.

Sharp and his team evaluated multiple eCommerce solutions and ultimately zeroed in on [WooCommerce](#).

“We did a couple of demos with different solutions and the resounding victor was WooCommerce,” Sharp said. “The existing team was already familiar with WordPress and it was so easy and quick, it was just a no brainer.”

From a technical standpoint, Sharp added, the extensibility of WooCommerce and WordPress was a major benefit, as was the fact that WordPress is open source.

“The last thing we wanted was to be cornered into a situation where we were using a proprietary solution,” Sharp said. “We didn’t want to have to turn to a company every time we hit a brick wall or a boundary, and we certainly didn’t want to be dependent on a third party that either couldn’t do what we wanted or who would charge us an arm and a leg to get anything extended.”

With the new eCommerce platform selected, the next thing to do was figure out where it would live.

“We suddenly had this wonderful system with a whole universe of developers and companies out there providing plugins and integrations for it, Sharp said. “The question then became, now what, where do we put it? How do we get the best out of it?”

After looking around, Sharp and his team knew they didn’t want to maintain the site themselves, nor did they want to work with a provider that would only support them at the OS level.

“We didn’t want to spend time updating patches or playing with the OS,” Sharp said. “We just wanted to have WordPress up and running and then we could take it from there.”

Again, the team had multiple options to choose from, and after some trial runs with various providers, WP Engine was the clear standout.

“WP Engine provided the most simplicity and ease for our eCommerce team,” Sharp said. “It made it easy for them to do one-click backups, create clone installs, and rely on rapid support, which was absolutely critical for us. The minute we tried WP Engine and tested it out, it was just a very simple decision.”



The Results.

Since getting up and running on their new platform, Bamboo has seen a number of metrics improve significantly. Sharp shared that in the last year alone, they've doubled orders and website visitors.

He added that the success has been partly due to the fact that they can use the new platform to adapt and react quickly.

"Having a great website doesn't suddenly mean you increase your sales, but what it did allow us to do was very easily extend and add all of the superb personalisation and ecommerce tools that are so necessary," Sharp said.

Bamboo's eCommerce team is also using WP Engine's Application Performance Monitoring (APM) tool, a feature which provides a detailed overview of the real-time and historical state of a WordPress application, including throughput metrics, error rates, and end-user response time. APM helps site owners discover performance issues to quickly improve site speed and stability.

"APM is hugely important for us," Sharp said. "Because we change the site so often and add plugins and remove plugins and change theme elements all the time, APM lets us find and fix issues within seconds, so we can keep going."

All in all, Sharp said, Bamboo's move to WP Engine has been a great experience, and the business is thriving because of it.

"We needed the combination of WP Engine and WooCommerce to grow," he said. "I'm excited to see where it takes us next."

About WP Engine.

WP Engine is the world's leading WordPress digital experience platform that gives companies of all sizes the agility, performance, intelligence, and integrations they need to drive their business forward faster. Founded in 2010, WP Engine is headquartered in Austin, Texas, and has offices in San Francisco, California; San Antonio, Texas; London, England; Limerick, Ireland, and Brisbane, Australia.