



Case Study - Alibris Helping Books Find a 2nd (...or more) Life Online



It was just over ten years ago that Alibris placed the first books into its online bookstore. Today, Alibris is the premier online marketplace providing consumers, libraries and retail partners quick access to thousands of independent sellers offering rare, out-of-print, new and used books. Currently there are over 100 million volumes listed from over 15,000 active book sellers participating in the Alibris network. Alibris also stocks almost 1 million volumes in their warehouse, mostly as "consigned overstock" from this seller network.

Alibris is much more than an online ecommerce marketplace, and as the leading business to business marketplace provider, Alibris collects payments for its sellers and guarantees the book's quality and delivery to the buyer, giving both a huge level of confidence in every book transaction. When an organization, such as a library, needs 30 titles from potentially numerous online sellers, they prefer to receive just one shipment with one invoice, not up to 30 different book shipments that arrive at 30 different times. For orders such as these, different sellers can send the books to Alibris' warehouse operations, then Alibris consolidates the books into a single shipment with a single invoice. Individual sellers may not be able to do business with libraries and our retail partners, but with Alibris they can. Alibris opens many sales channel opportunities such as this that were previously unavailable to a large number of booksellers.

Shipping for thousands of sellers and many retail partners is a complex process. Early on, Alibris identified a need for the advanced technology required for low-cost logistics capabilities and a smooth, consistent order flow. The shipping software would act as the heart of their shipping operation and Alibris chose Harvey Software's Computerized Parcel System (CPS™). "CPS provides robust technology as a solution to these issues," said Mark Nason, Alibris' VP of Operations. Alibris uses this technology every day to get the job done.

Shipping at Alibris takes many paths. Alibris' very sophisticated shipping operation is the result of years of analysis and refining its processes. For its high volume of domestic and international shipments, Alibris uses all of the major US carriers as well as postal consolidators. CPS is used to ship everything. UPS or postal integrators handle the largest volume of books, with Alibris utilizing United Parcel Service's globally synchronized commerce services.



Alibris ships directly to consumers as well as acting as the shipping agent for a number of its channel partners. Whether shipping to domestic or international destinations, Alibris wants to specify both the carrier and the service. Depending on their agreement with the book's seller, Alibris may ship on their own account or they may use their partner's account. "CPS takes the complexity out of the process", explained Mr. Nason. CPS gives Alibris the freedom to choose who is billed, which carrier is used, which account is used, and they can even have that partner's brand name on the label. It's this extraordinarily high level of service that reflects Alibris' commitment to its sellers, partners and consumers and is a primary reason Alibris stands out.



With a specialty station processing up to 250 packages per hour and a shipping operation with a daily volume of up to 10,000 orders per day, CPS reliability is important. "Support has been key," said Mr. Nason. "You buy the license, and Harvey Software will help make it work." Alibris has control of the best way to ship every package and depends on CPS to make it happen. To learn more about Alibris, visit <http://www.Alibris.com/>

About Harvey Software, Inc.

Founded in 1983, Harvey Software's CPS, with UPS functionalities and services, increases profitability by dramatically improving shipping efficiency and reducing total shipping expenses. CPS accomplishes this by greatly reducing errors, connecting to in-house systems, increasing business rule compliance, simplifying cost center accounting, and empowering shippers with real-time decision making tools. CPS shipping software is approved by United Parcel Service® under the rules and requirements of the UPS Ready Program for use in the United States. For additional information, contact Harvey Software Sales at <http://www.HarveySoft.com>.