

## IBM Customer Reference



### *Art Van Furniture*

Synopsis: *A Michigan-based, family-owned furniture business drives US\$80,000 in online sales during the first six months of its new e-commerce site going live by using IBM WebSphere Commerce Express V5.6 software*

Location: Warren  
Michigan  
United States

Industry: Retail

Focus Area: e-business infrastructure, Small & Medium Business, On Demand Business

URL: <http://www.artvan.com>

#### Customer Background:

A family-owned business founded in 1959, Art Van Furniture, is the leading furniture retailer in Michigan, with 30 retail stores in 29 cities throughout the state. The company employs more than 3,500 associates and operates approximately 400 delivery and service vehicles.

Art Van Furniture is ranked among the top ten leading United States furniture stores by "Furniture Today" magazine. In 2003 and 2004, the company was voted Michigan's Best Home Furnishings Store and Michigan's Best Contemporary Furnishings Store by "Detroit News" readers.

#### Business Need:

Previously, Art Van Furniture's customers had to physically visit one of the company's store locations in order to place an order. The retailer recognized the inconvenience of this process and noted that some of its competitors were offering online shopping alternatives. Wishing to improve the shopping experience for its customers and determined to keep up with its competition, Art Van Furniture sought an e-commerce solution that would allow its customers to place orders online .

The company wanted to establish an online presence to drive more sales and enable its customers to buy furniture 24x7. Art Van Furniture also hoped to reduce its call center costs by driving more customers to the Internet sales channel.

#### Solution:

With help from IBM Business Partner Dynamik Technologies, Art Van Furniture implemented IBM WebSphere Commerce Express V5.6 software on a Hewlett-Packard/Intel hardware platform.

Not only does the new site allow customers to place orders online for the company's own furniture product line, it also lets customers plan their rooms using preset templates. And by leveraging the WebSphere Commerce Express software's capabilities, Art Van Furniture can perform online marketing, merchandising, order management and business analytics to personalize the consumer shopping experience.

The WebSphere solution for [www.artvan.com](http://www.artvan.com) currently manages a catalog of between 1,000 and 3,000 products. Every day, it is accessed by 10 to 15 internal users and thousands of external customers.

Art Van Furniture integrated the IBM WebSphere Commerce Express e-commerce solution with its existing backend system to manage orders, inventory and product fulfillment processes in a highly automated manner.

#### Benefits of the Solution:

The IBM WebSphere Commerce Express solution has enabled Art Van Furniture's customers to place and track their own orders 24x7. In the first six months of operation, the client generated more than US\$80,000 per month using its new e-commerce sales channel. Art Van Furniture expects to drive sales of more than US\$100,000 per month within the next three months by further leveraging the Web solution. Additionally, as the e-commerce site becomes more automated and more orders are routed through the Web site rather than the client's call center, Art Van Furniture will lower its costs to process and administer orders.

The client chose the IBM WebSphere Commerce Express software for this solution because it recognized the product's best-of-breed value and felt comfortable working with IBM, the company's longtime solutions provider.