



ShipperHQ

Customer Story: Boat Outfitters



[Teak Isle](#), the marine industry's leader for OEM fabricated plastic parts, began its journey in the small Orlando suburb of Ocoee, Florida in 1975.

Committed to product design and prototyping, Teak Isle's staff of over 250 skilled employees manufacture an extensive range of custom fabricated marine accessories. From simple CNC cut plastic components, to elaborate cabinetry systems, Teak Isle creates new and innovative products that help solve any boaters building needs.

Customization is everything in the marine trade. You see, each boat comes with its own unique set of spatial restrictions. For boat builders, this means working directly with manufacturers on custom products that fit their new boat models.



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Teak Isle's dedication to customer service, in addition to their personal touch, is a big reason why they became the go-to retailer for over 200 leading boat builders across the United States. After carving out a niche for themselves offline throughout three decades, Teak Isle decided it was time to take the leap and create an online store of their own. That's when the idea for [Boat Outfitters](#) was developed.

“BoatOutfitters is the retail division of Teak Isle Manufacturing,” said Andrew Brown, Director of eCommerce for Boat Outfitters. “After the recession in 2008, we realized there was huge potential for us to reach a brand new audience by selling our goods directly to consumers online. Unlike big box stores, our level of service is much higher. If you need something custom built, we are able to leverage the same design and engineering teams that builders trust to design their own boats.”



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Like Teak Isle, Boat Outfitters creates built-to-order products and sells stock marine accessories. But instead of selling goods to builders installing parts into new boats, they sell products to consumers and smaller boat dealers that need replacement parts. Because Teak Isle's influence is so widespread, when a customer wants to replace hardware like a latch or hinge, it's likely that Teak Isle was the company who selected and installed the hardware originally.

To put it mildly, Boat Outfitters knew they had to nail their eCommerce experience. To deliver on this promise, their team enlisted [Kadro](#), a Magento eCommerce Software Development company. Kadro brought Boat Outfitters' back-office systems into one integrated solution for ordering and fulfillment. But with a full transitioned site in the works, there was one thing that could prevent Boat Outfitters from achieving their goals: their shipping strategy.

"Shipping has always been a challenge for us because we offer such a variety of parts in shape and size. We build about 1200 unique SKU's here each week, and none of them are the same," said Brown.

Before Boat Outfitters was introduced to [ShipperHQ](#) (we'll get to that in a sec), they did custom codes and set up some automated calculations at the product level. Their team had to do the math to calculate the billable rate, which included taking into consideration both physical and dimensional rate.

With the billable rate, their staff also had to go back and audit the numbers manually, which opened up the risk for human error. In the world of shipping, this means undercharges and overcharges could occur.

Thankfully, with high praises from Kadro, ShipperHQ was brought in to save the day.

"Kadro recommended ShipperHQ to us when we replatformed to Magento," said Brown.

"Shipping wasn't a top of mind consideration early in the replatforming process, but Kadro knew right away that ShipperHQ would be the right fit for our business. We needed something to assign unique rules to our products. Within an hour of looking at ShipperHQ's customization options, we knew they were exactly what we were looking for."

The biggest benefit Boat Outfitters saw after signing up for ShipperHQ was the ability to offer automatic freight quoting for customers wanting to purchase oversized items. Each month, Boat Outfitters received about 65 freight shipments, equalling out to about 100 total inquiries. Before ShipperHQ came along, when a customer reached the online checkout, they had to wait for a member on the Boat Outfitters customer service team to contact them with shipping quotes for their orders.

For each inquiry, Boat Outfitters customer service team quoted up to 5 carriers. This lengthy process gave customers the opportunity to cancel, and it meant the customer service team had to manually see if the order



had converted on the customer level.

“ShipperHQ saved us about 15 man-hours per month from quoting freight shipments alone. Their freight quoting feature is more self-service, which means a customer can make a decision independently.”

But freight quoting is only one part of the story. With ShipperHQ, Boat Outfitters is also able to show its customers correct lead times.

Previously, Boat Outfitters would receive about 5 escalations per week related to lead times being overlooked. Customers would call in complaining about expedited shipments, specifically in regard to the fact that it was unclear their package would not arrive the next day due to the product’s multi-day building period.

As more and more escalations added up, so did the associate costs. For customers who were upset about not understanding the lead times, Boat Outfitters would refund shipping completely, ranging anywhere from \$7 to over \$50 per order.

Telling customers what the estimated delivery date was at checkout became a major pain point for Boat Outfitters. But with ShipperHQ, they are able to divide products into shipping groups based on lead time (which could be anywhere from 1 to 16 days), and accurately communicate to customers when they can expect their package.

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Of course, the shipping groups Boat Outfitters created

aren’t only related to lead times. They are also broken down by additional handling, large package surcharge and freight only. With shipping groups in ShipperHQ, Boat Outfitters can even exclude certain products from their free shipping model or omit a carrier from showing up if a cart total doesn’t meet a price threshold.

All of these shipping groups together, including whether a product is assigned to an oversized group, help drive the logic behind expected delivery date and shipping rates in the shopping cart and checkout.

“With ShipperHQ, we are able to implement any shipping rules that make sense for our business. Now we can effectively offer oversized products, change shipping groups at the checkout page, and quote shipping appropriately in real-time.”

Looking to replace boat parts of your own? Make sure to visit [BoatOutfitters.com](https://www.boatoutfitters.com) for all your marine accessories needs.



Are you a retailer like Boat Outfitters experiencing challenges such as freight quoting and shipping lead times? Start configuring sophisticated shipping pricing and delivery options with a **30-day no-risk free trial** from ShipperHQ.