



CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

# RAINBOW RESOURCE CENTER



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**Steven Listwan**

Director of e-Commerce, Rainbow Resource Center



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## EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS COMPANY IMPROVES CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AND BOOSTS SALES

### THE COMPANY: RAINBOW RESOURCE CENTER

Since 1989, [Rainbow Resource Center](#) has been an important source of educational materials for parents and guardians who homeschool their children. With a mission “to help you teach your way,” Rainbow Resource offers its customers more than 50,000 educational products — from curricula and textbooks to classroom furniture, arts and crafts supplies, games and puzzles.

### HIGHLIGHTS

<b>Company</b>	<a href="#">Rainbow Resource Center</a>
<b>Headquarters</b>	Toulon, IL
<b>Industry</b>	Consumer products
<b>Products</b>	Educational materials
<b>Solutions Utilized</b>	<a href="#">QAD Digital Commerce*</a>

Three decades ago, when the company first got off the ground, it primarily sold its products through its catalogs. But over the years, as the world wide web proved to be a viable means for retail sales, Rainbow Resource adapted. It launched an e-commerce site to better, more conveniently serve its thousands of customers.

Rainbow Resource built its site in-house from the ground up. And while the site served the company well for a while, over the years, the source code became unstructured and difficult to maintain. “It was essentially a spaghetti code PHP site,” says Steven Listwan, director of e-commerce at Rainbow Resource. “All of our requirements were just tacked on. Nothing had modules. Nothing was easily changeable.”

As e-commerce technology advanced and customer expectations evolved, it became increasingly difficult for Rainbow Resource to provide the shopping experience its customers had grown to expect.

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“The site needed a very customized part and solution with regard to product availability, inventory, rules and display, and the checkout process,” Listwan explains. “It quickly became evident that we needed to replatform.”

After going through a thorough RFP process with several platform providers, Rainbow Resource discovered that only QAD Digital Commerce was fully engaged at both a technical and sales level. “At that point, it was a very easy decision,” Listwan says. “QAD Digital Commerce was the platform provider that could truly handle the complexities of our site.”



## THE CHALLENGE: HOMEGROWN PHP SITE UNABLE TO MEET CUSTOMER DEMAND

Rainbow Resource decided it was time for a new e-commerce site. The company had served its customers well for many years on its existing site, but advancements in e-commerce technology and changing customer demands and behavior meant Rainbow Resource was challenged to meet the needs of its customers and hit important business goals.

Its e-commerce site at the time was cumbersome. Patched together with various forms of unstructured and difficult-to-maintain code, it required four developers to maintain, which was both time-consuming and costly.

Rainbow Resource had a tall order for its new site: it wanted infrastructure stability, improved SEO, optimized product and category search, extended



capabilities of its wishlist features, integration with customer engagement platform and third-party tools.

Additionally, Rainbow Resource's old platform was not using responsive pages, so the site was not usable on mobile or tablet devices. And its server infrastructure was not capable of handling large traffic volumes, which resulted in the site going down often. These critical errors were preventing Rainbow Resource from growing as a business.

## THE SOLUTION: EASILY ADAPTABLE, FLEXIBLE AND STABLE PLATFORM THAT MEETS CUSTOMER NEEDS

Rainbow Resource engaged in an extensive RFP process with several platform providers, to find the [right solutions partner](#). During the initial project scoping, QAD Digital Commerce created mockups, designed templates and assigned a project manager to handle the communication with Rainbow Resource. When Rainbow Resource reviewed those scoping documents, mockups and templates, it quickly decided that QAD Digital Commerce was the ideal platform.

“We chose QAD Digital Commerce not only because their platform is easily adaptable and highly flexible, but also because of their willingness to truly listen and understand our needs,” Listwan says. “And thanks to their ability to talk technical at any point, we never had to waste time working through project managers who aren't technical. The QAD team itself is very technically adept.”

QAD Digital Commerce was able to immediately provide solutions for the critical issues Rainbow Resource was having with its old platform. It helped

# 30% ONLINE ORDER INCREASE

Rainbow Resource with responsive and device-friendly web page designs, provided robust application infrastructure to handle a large volume of traffic and designed solutions to accept third-party tools with any feature they want.

QAD Digital Commerce successfully implemented on-site search tool Hawksearch to optimize Rainbow Resource's product search, customer-engagement platform Emarsys to provide critical business intelligence and marketing insight, and user-generated content tool TurnTo to provide product reviews.

QAD Digital Commerce also implemented a wishlist feature for Rainbow Resource to help grow their business. And it provided a solution to manage Rainbow Resource's external ERP system from within the application.

“Secure step-by-step checkout, PayPal Express Checkout, Hawksearch, TurnTo, Emarsys and admin imports are some of the features out of many that we developed specifically for Rainbow Resource Center,” says Bachir Kassir, director at QAD.

Rainbow Resource has been on the QAD Digital Commerce platform since 2019. And while Listwan says they continue to develop and fine tune the site, it has been a remarkably stable platform. “We used to have a lot of crashes, old data for orders wouldn't come through correctly, and often customers weren't able to check out,” Listwan says. “All of that has been resolved with the QAD Digital Commerce platform.”

## **BENEFITS: 30% ONLINE ORDER INCREASE, ELIMINATION OF 25% OF ORDER PROCESSING COSTS**

QAD Digital Commerce has allowed Rainbow Resource to focus on its core operations: integrating them into the platform to improve productivity, business growth and internal processes.

“QAD Digital Commerce’s out-of-box solutions helped Rainbow Resource overcome issues and leverage features that it was missing in its old platform,” Kassir says. “Because our platform is highly scalable and packed with essential features, it can help almost any company grow an e-commerce business.”

Since moving to the QAD Digital Commerce platform, Rainbow Resource has seen a plethora of improvements on its e-commerce site:

- It’s able to better communicate with customers about product availability and order status.
- It can now integrate more complex product

types and bundles and offer more information to customers about those new product lines.

- Its orders are up more than 30%.
- The company has eliminated upwards of 25% of its order processing costs.
- Instead of employing four developers to build and manage the site, it now only needs one — saving the company time and money.

“We had wound-up and hand-coded a cart and information system that just no longer worked for our business,” Listwan says. “QAD Digital Commerce came in and helped us unwind all of that to create a successful e-commerce site that has structure and is standardized. It was no small feat, but their expertise and dedication to the project made it a huge success.”

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### **ABOUT QAD DIGITAL COMMERCE**

[QAD Digital Commerce](#) is a leading e-commerce platform for medium- to large-sized businesses and part of the [QAD Complete Customer Management capabilities](#). We provide a complete range of website set-up, custom programming, support and online marketing services. QAD Digital Commerce is a [software-as-a-service \(SaaS\) platform](#) containing more than 100 features to maximize sales and reduce costs for B2B companies and retailers.

\*QAD Digital Commerce was formerly known as WebJaguar.

