

Cider: An Indispensable eCommerce Platform for Subscription Marketers

Overview

Marketers enjoy lightning-fast concept-to-market for their promotions, with Cider, Advantage's eCommerce platform. Cider offers a marketing portal for speedy creation and assignment of promotions, built-in support for third-party plug-ins and a flexible administration panel for customizing the look and feel of the site.

Powerful widgets in Cider allow you, for instance, to highlight special products in a carousel, offer a rotating deal (hourly, daily, etc.), or highlight special products in a sidebar with an advertising widget.

Advanced shopping cart and self-service capabilities are part of Cider, as is a flexible theme design allowing you to tailor your brand(s) and improve the customer experience.

And Cider shares the same business logic engine as Advantage, giving your online presence access to the thousands of Advantage features. The platform is also designed with key architectural considerations: security, scalability, and extensibility—you can be sure that Cider is ready to handle your demanding online needs.

Key Benefits Offered by Cider

- Accessible marketer tools – The web-based dashboard offers an easy way to utilize the Advantage promotion engine and access the powerful Advantage marketing features for maximum business benefit.
- Data intelligence – Clients will be able to analyze online data analytics along with Advantage sales data to understand customer habits through rich data relationships; marketers will have more information available to them for promotion and refinement of business strategies.
- Extensible platform – The platform is designed so ACS and clients can extend it to support custom client or future requirements; the chosen CMS facilitates this development model.
- Seamless Advantage integration – A fully integrated system is a key strength so clients do not have to support multiple systems, wrestle with different data models, or engineer integration touch points.
- Evolving capabilities – ACS will continue to expand the platform as part of its standard product package.
- Maintained platform – As a standard package component, the platform will be supported by ACS personnel in the same way the core application is.

Central Components

There are six fundamental components of this platform.

- Shopping Cart – Sophisticated shopping cart incorporating many of the base Advantage features
- Customer Self-Service – Allows customers to manage their account and orders
- Marketing Dashboard – Portal for marketers to set up promotions and landing pages
- Administration Panel – Platform configuration tool
- Third-Party Plug-Ins – Allows plug-ins like Google Analytics
- Representational State Transfer (REST) API – Middleware layer that interacts with Advantage

Technical Details

Several systems and technologies are used to deliver this platform.

- [Orchard](#) – Free, open-source, community-focused Content Management System; this CMS provides the backbone of the eCommerce platform; Orchard offers a structure for the AdvantageCS team to build a platform that is extensible and scalable allowing future growth.
- Advantage – Continues to serve as the critical hub of business logic; the eCommerce platform does not rely on its own logic, but instead uses the same logic as the Advantage application.
- REST API – A modern and developer-friendly approach to providing an integration layer with the Advantage application business logic; offers a platform independent integration option as well.

Feature Highlights

Shopping Cart

- Promotion codes
- Coupons
- Variable checkout
- Upsells / cross-sells
- Credit card integration
- Suggested products
- Guest checkout
- Persisted carts
- Theme application
- Gifts
- Subscribed products
- Downloadable products
- Conference & Events
- Real-time inventory checks
- Product search
- Recently viewed items
- Multi-currency
- Discount hierarchy

Customer Self-Service

- Social login
- Order history
- Receipts
- Saved payment updates
- Address updates
- Communication preferences
- Newsletter opt-in/out
- Subscription maintenance
- Conference registration maintenance
- Payment application
- Shipment tracking
- Account recovery
- Customer service issue tracking

Marketing Dashboard

- Add promotions / offers
- Set promotional pricing
- Configure marketing language
- Set effective dates on promotions
- Promotional landing pages
- Order confirmation emails
- Product metadata
- Upsells / cross-sells
- Premiums with offers
- Highlighted products
- Category pages
- SEO
- Checkout pipeline
- Newsletter sign-up at checkout

Admin Panel

- Theme application
- Product metadata
- Product catalog
- Taxonomy
- Widget control
- Workflows
- Feature control / customization
- Media management
- Multi-language
- Roles and permissions
- Error tracking
- Multi-tenant
- Standard CMS functions