



Fishing Store Loses Hundreds of Products Before Black Friday

A Case Study by Maura Woodman | Mar 6, 2020

Whisker Seeker faced potential losses of \$120,000 USD if site not restored

A lifelong entrepreneur, Matt Davis was looking to start one more business before heading off into semi-retirement. "I told my wife I'm going to build one more company from scratch, just one more. So I started in my basement with \$20,000," says Davis. At 52, with a young family, he wanted to focus on something he knew well. As many entrepreneurs do, he turned to one of his passions to seek opportunities.

As an experienced recreational fisherman, specifically catfishing, Davis was convinced there was a large unmet need for high-quality products. "I got tired of

companies who thought they knew about catfishing and they really didn't. It's something I know inside and out." Six years after launching, Whisker Seeker is now the largest catfish equipment manufacturer in North America. Products are available in over 470 stores and the company has opened a second warehouse.

Yet, traditional retail channels only drive a fraction of total sales for Whisker Seeker. Today, the bulk of its business is done online. "Around 80% of our business is direct to consumers and we've created a great program," says Davis. "We treat our customers well, provide a quality product at a fair price and 98% of our clients get their orders in two days." With a team of only four employees, Davis says they have built a well oiled and tightly run machine. Even the smallest of disruptions can be costly.

Black Friday: Going From Prepared to Panicked

It's the highest-grossing day of the year and the kickoff to the holiday shopping season. Ecommerce retailers take Black Friday VERY seriously as consumers now spend billions of dollars online during this time. Whisker Seeker starts preparing for the event two months in advance. Matt Davis says there are many moving parts. His small but nimble team has their hands full. "We have email campaigns, SMS text campaigns, flyers, price changes and much more. And then there's actually changing the site over." All the hard work typically nets Whisker Seeker \$120,000 in sales, for just one day.

Three days before Black Friday, Davis and his team were struggling with a bulk import of changes. They were trying to upload a specific CSV file but just couldn't make it work. The e-commerce platform that Whisker Seeker was built on had customer support, so they reached out. Davis says their support needed to delete all of his 300 plus SKUs and then reupload the bulk import, just to make everything work.

Unfortunately, the fix did not go as planned.

Davis soon came to realize that their efforts to add the bulk import resulted in the accidental wiping of his entire product catalog. Every product, every SKU and every photo was gone; permanently deleted three days before the world's biggest online shopping spree. To make matters worse, the platform provider was powerless in fixing the disaster – they didn't have a backup.



About the Client

Whisker Seeker Tackle

<https://whiskerseeker.com/>

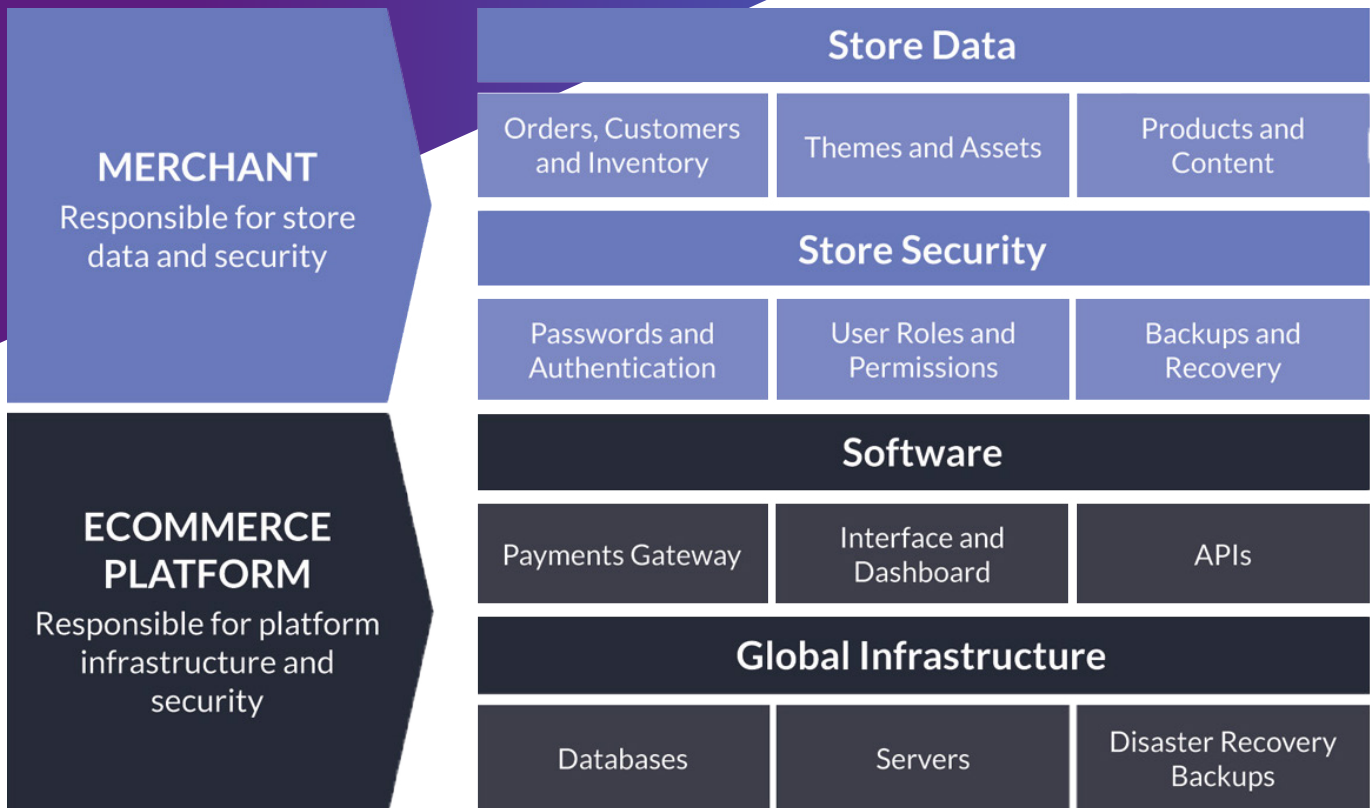
Largest manufacturer of cat-fishing equipment in the USA, 5 employees

Event That Triggered the Installation of Rewind

Hundreds of product images and descriptions accidentally deleted three days before Black Friday.

Time Spent to Get Fully Operational

70+ Hours



The Limitations of Cloud Data Storage

There is an inherent level of faith we have when saving files “in the cloud.” This faith is not misguided; it’s simply based on a lack of understanding. Only certain types or sets of data are saved “in the cloud.”

Most online software platforms follow something called the Shared Responsibility Model of data storage. In short, this means online software companies will take every initiative to ensure their product is always working. On average, sites like ecommerce platforms are accessible 99.98% of the time. However it’s all the unique data and content, specific to each ecommerce store, where the risk lies. Individual sites are on the hook for backing up their own data. The list of items which need protecting encompass everything from images, product descriptions, pages, customer lists, themes, menu navigation and much more.

There are manual methods for backing up information, typically through exported CSV files. However, it’s an

imperfect method as the downloads do not include all store content. The information inside a file can also become outdated very quickly. This means that depending on the size and complexity of a store, an ecommerce team would have to download and organize dozens, if not hundreds, of CSV files for each backup. And this arduous task needs to be done regularly, since sites are always changing. For store owners and managers like Davis, this is not a realistic backup strategy.

“*If I had known ecommerce platforms do not provide full backups and can’t restore your site; I would have been using Rewind from day one.*”

Matt Davis
 Founder of Whisker Seeker Tackle

A Race to Restore

After some back and forth and troubleshooting with the platform team, there were still elements of the product catalog that were gone for good. Davis now had less than three days to fix the outstanding issues.

"We're a seven-year-old company and there are a lot of old photos. Some we could not find or some photos did not fit with how we changed our website in those years," says Davis. "So we had to start taking pictures, getting logos on them and getting them uploaded back into the online store."



It was the biggest nightmare of my life. I literally thought I was going to have a heart attack.

Matt Davis
Founder of Whisker Seeker Tackle

Davis says outsourcing was not an option due to such a short time frame. The team spent the next 70 hours painstakingly reshooting multiple product images for over 100 SKUs and getting them online. They finished just in time for Black Friday. Yet, the chaos didn't end there. Whisker Seeker typically spends the last days before Black Friday preparing shipping and delivery logistics. It was time they lost. "The headaches just continued," says Davis. In the end, the Whisker Seeker team managed to pull it all together and still hit their sales goal for Black Friday.

Installing Rewind for Peace of Mind and Future Protection

It was a few weeks later that Davis noticed a digital ad for Rewind. With the anxiety of recent events still fresh in his mind, he says it took mere minutes to make the decision to install Rewind. With more than 80% of his revenue being driven by online sales, Davis says he wanted to take any and all precautions to protect his revenue stream.

Davis says he is also protecting his team's time. Resources will no longer be eaten up putting out fires, trying to get the site fully operational. Whisker Seeker can spend time and money where it matters most; growing sales.

"It was the biggest nightmare of my life. I literally thought I was going to have a heart attack," says Davis. "If I can make my life a little easier, even if it costs me a little bit more money, I'm going to make my life easier."

[Rewind Backups for BigCommerce >](#)

[Rewind Backups for Shopify >](#)