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CASE
STUDY

Fueling growth and improving operational success with a transition to 3PL services

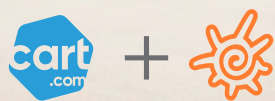


Fueling growth and improving operational success with a transition to 3PL services



It's every retailer's dream to create a popular (and protective) product that sells well and fuels a brand's success. However, scaling operations when facing rapid growth can cause a hitch in the stride of any business. There comes a time when self-fulfillment is no longer an option: when your office is full of packages and order and returns processing starts falling behind. UV Skinz is a brand that takes great pride in its mission and is fully dedicated to 100% customer satisfaction. As the company continued to develop and its customer base grew, UV Skinz took action to maintain its stellar reputation by beginning the process of transitioning fulfillment operations to a 3PL provider.

Retailers today face a new level of complexity and expectations. In addition to consumers' desire for fast and free shipping, apparel operations often experience a high level of returns - after all, it's hard to try things on virtually. The right 3PL partner can be a game-changer for apparel brands. The right solutions support scaling while offering invaluable services that improve the brand experience. These 3PL solutions and services give you the ability to handle omnichannel operations, manage SKUs and inventory effortlessly, elevate your returns processing and gain real-time order management visibility, letting you deliver on your brand promise, with every order.



Through the relationship with Cart.com, UV Skinz was able to scale its fulfillment operations and pursue new avenues for growth. This has allowed them to continue their legacy of offering an exceptional customer experience while seamlessly handling a growing business, increasing order volumes and peak period surges.

A brand built from legacy

UV Skinz's About Us page starts with a strong message: **For us, sun protection is not an afterthought...it's our story.** It's what drives us. The message stems from a legacy, the death of founder Rhonda Sparks's husband, Darren Lee Farwell. Rhonda launched the brand UV Skinz to provide families with sun-safe education and innovative products. Darren's story inspired her to share her knowledge of how skin cancer works - how Darren's love of the outdoors, serious childhood sunburns and prolonged exposure to the sun while surfing and snowboarding led to a melanoma diagnosis in his late 20s. After a five-year battle, Darren lost his life to cancer.

After losing Darren, protecting her three little boys from the sun became Rhonda's top priority. Frustrated by the hassle of constant sunscreen application and concerned about the chemicals involved, she turned to surf rash guards - but found them uncomfortable and lacking style. Unable to find a better solution, Rhonda spent two years developing her own sun-protective swimwear. In 2006, the first UV Skinz swim shirt was born, launching a brand that now offers a full line of UPF 50+ apparel for the whole family; continuing Darren's legacy with every piece shipped.



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an afterthought...
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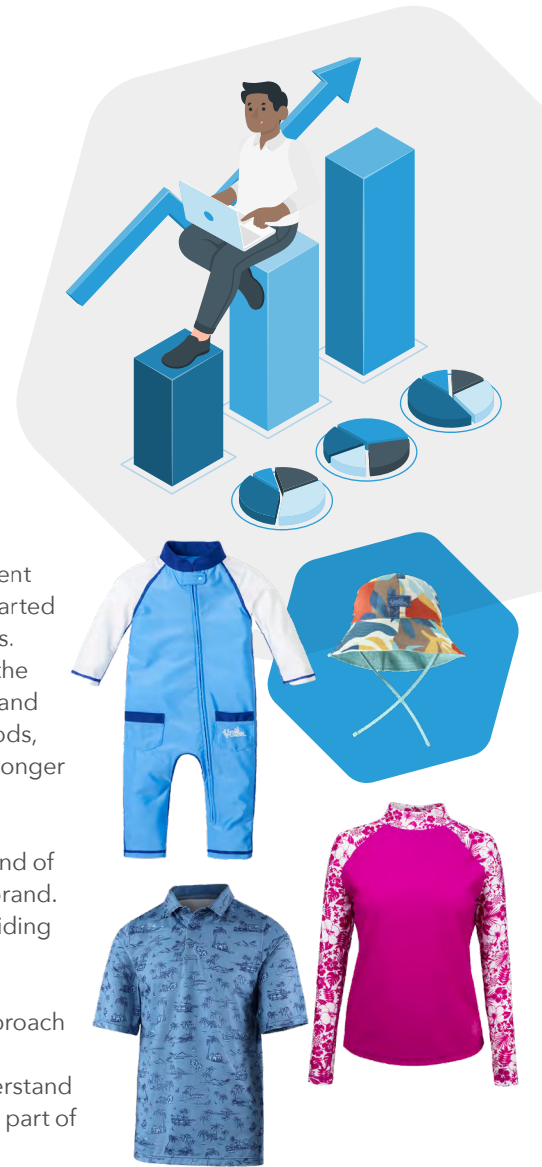
Scalability: Keeping pace with customer demand

UV Skinz runs on a talented, efficient team. Everything they do as a company keeps them on track with their mission. Jenna Metheny, UV Skinz's Office Manager and Jill-of-all-trades says, "We're always focused on making sure that kids are protected, but that goes hand in hand with all the other communities that aren't even aware how much sun protection is needed." The brand's efforts are working. They grew in popularity and expanded product offerings. Beyond basic retail, the company also partners with different organizations offering custom apparel for camps and employees in sectors with heavy outdoor work. They participate in donations and giveaways. With this rapid growth and expansion, UV Skinz also encountered increasing challenges in scaling its fulfillment operations to keep pace with customer demand.

UV Skinz initially ran fulfillment operations out of Rhonda's barn. Old photos show self-fulfillment at its finest: orders and boxes stacked on a table. In the early days (18 years ago), the brand started with Kid's UPF 50+ swim shirts and quickly expanded into Women's, Men's and Baby products. As things took off, UV Skinz built out office space that better suited their needs - however, as the company grew, the need for a 3PL partner became apparent to prevent delays in processing and shipping orders. Desiring a long-term solution to prevent bottlenecks during peak sales periods, such as seasonal promotions or product launches, where surges in order volume can lead to longer fulfillment times, UV Skinz began to look for suitable fulfillment partners.

The company recognized that these issues would not only impact their ability to deliver the kind of customer experience they aimed for but also threatened their reputation as a customer-first brand. Finding a like-minded 3PL would allow the UV Skinz team to focus on what they do best, providing first-class customer service and continuing to develop innovative and stylish sun protection.

UV Skinz found Cart.com through a recommendation. The 3PL services offered a tailored approach designed to address their pain points and enable scalability. Moreover, Cart.com was able to provide swift onboarding. One concern that UV Skinz voiced early on was that Cart.com understand how important the customer experience was since they would be relinquishing the fulfillment part of the customer journey.



Cart.com's tailored 3PL solution streamlines operations and supports growth

Cart.com and Rhonda staggered onboarding, starting with handing over 30% of the operations. Once those were going well, it was bumped up to half. Now, Cart.com handles 100% of the orders. Jenna shared, "We saw that our customers were receiving their orders accurately." While there were a few initial challenges, she noted, "Cart.com collaborated with us to become strong partners, addressing issues and ensuring our customers enjoyed a seamless and pleasant experience with our brand."

Cart.com's fulfillment services have been instrumental in meeting UV Skinz's logistical needs, offering a robust and scalable solution during peak sales periods. The partnership has streamlined operations by seamlessly managing inventory across multiple Shopify stores, eliminating the need for manual updates and providing real-time order visibility. Cart.com has also facilitated the efficient transfer of inventory to Amazon's FBA, managed returns with precision and secured excellent shipping rates. By collaborating with trusted carriers, Cart.com has ensured superior shipping services that align with UV Skinz's commitment to exceptional customer satisfaction.

UV Skinz has also enjoyed having a dedicated Customer Success Manager, who has been integral in helping facilitate UV Skinz's growth. "We love working with Kayshu. She has that same drive to take care of her customers the way we like to take care of our customers. I know when I bring her any type of issue that she's going to jump on it," said Jenna.

"Nearly three years ago, when UV Skinz partnered with Cart.com, it felt like handing over my 'baby' to a stranger - nerve-racking and uncertain. But from the very first day, I knew we had made the right choice. Our account manager, Kayshu, went above and beyond by staying late to ensure a last-minute rush order was fulfilled for one of our customers. It was exactly what our in-house team would have done, and it gave me confidence that Cart.com shared our commitment to customer care," Rhonda added.



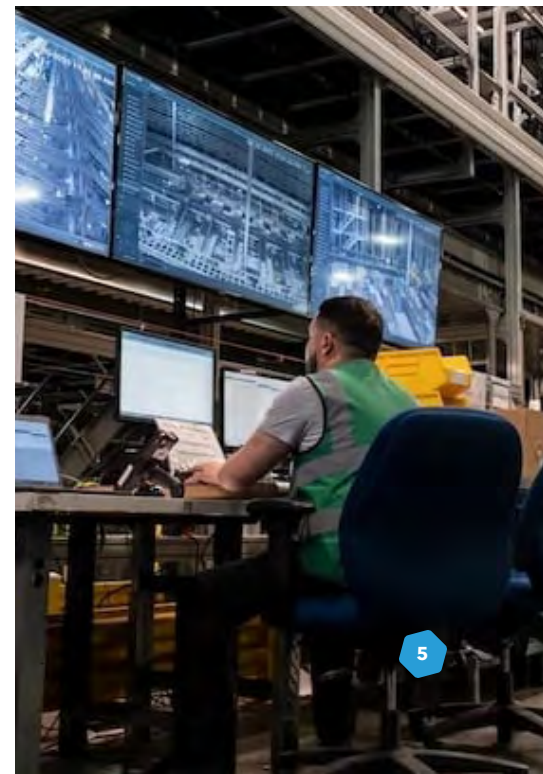
“Cart.com has been instrumental in supporting our growth, consistently demonstrating alignment with our core values and acting as a true extension of our team.”



Rhonda Sparks
Founder of UV Skinz



Cart.com has also played a vital role in inventory management at the end of a product's lifecycle, connecting UV Skinz with organizations for donations and ensuring that surplus inventory is handled responsibly. Additionally, Cart.com's support extends to providing cost-efficient solutions for larger projects, further enhancing operational efficiency and sustainability.



Partnering with Cart.com: UV Skinz's transformative results

One key component of growth is the ability to focus on the core business, generate new ideas and develop strategies for the future. Outsourcing fulfillment and returns management to Cart.com allowed UV Skinz to focus on product development, design and the customer experience.

Refocusing on customer experience and innovation

Founder, Rhonda, closely monitors product reviews, identifying trends and quickly addressing customer feedback. With fulfillment operations handled by Cart.com, the company has been able to repurpose customer service staff to focus on proactive service strategies; creating new customer experience and customer engagement initiatives.

In addition, UV Skinz has leveraged AI tools to enhance customer support, providing 24/7 assistance across time zones. While not replacing employees, these tools ensure customers receive instant answers when live agents aren't available. This shift has significantly improved customer satisfaction, enabling UV Skinz to deliver faster, more responsive service while freeing up bandwidth to prioritize innovation and customer-centric initiatives.

Streamlining Amazon fulfillment

UV Skinz used Cart.com to help optimize its Amazon fulfillment strategy, both Fulfilled by Amazon (FBA) and Fulfilled by Merchant (FBM). For top-selling products, when inventory runs low, Cart.com steps in to quickly replenish stock at FBA.

For products with lower sales projections or non-top sellers, Cart.com manages FBM orders, shipping directly to customers. With Cart.com's FBM help, UV Skinz meets Amazon's stringent late shipment requirements of 4% or less. UV Skinz has recently maintained a **0% late shipment rate on FBM orders for over three months.**

98.43%
On-time SLAs

Working with a vendor requires measurable metrics against agreed-upon standards. Ideally, on-time SLAs should fall between 95-100%—this means the 3PL is ensuring an excellent customer experience.

100%
Current order fill rate

Order fill rate signals efficient inventory management, improving customer satisfaction and loyalty by reliably completing orders



What it's like to work with Cart.com

UV Skinz described their partnership with Cart.com as a collaborative experience. From the outset, Cart.com took the time to deeply understand UV Skinz's business model, operational challenges and long-term goals. The relationship went beyond a typical vendor-client interaction, evolving into a true partnership where both parties worked towards shared success. Rhonda said, "Over the years, we've faced challenges - on both sides - but each situation has been met with care, collaboration and a mutual desire to learn and improve. **Cart.com has been instrumental in supporting our growth, consistently demonstrating alignment with our core values and acting as a true extension of our team.** While I've heard countless horror stories from other DTC brand owners about constantly switching 3PLs, I feel incredibly fortunate that we found our people with Cart. I'm deeply grateful for this partnership."

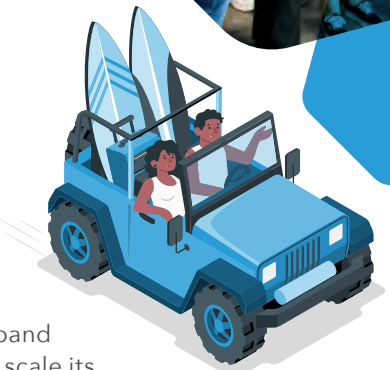
Cart.com's transparency and proactive communication stood out. Their team provided regular updates and insights, ensuring that UV Skinz always had a clear understanding of fulfillment performance and opportunities for optimization. "Cart.com didn't just provide a service; they became an extension of our team, helping us grow without losing sight of our brand values," Jenna said.



What's next for UV Skinz

The UV Skinz team has been able to build out their business and increase their trade show presence. They sell sets in Costco, launched on the Costco Next website and Nordstrom's marketplace and there are many more exciting things on the horizon. Recently, the brand visited its fulfillment site. The Cart.com team shared some opportunities to strengthen UV Skinz's processes around returns and how best to streamline SOPs.

With a fulfillment operation that is now agile, they plan to explore new markets and expand their reach. The partnership with Cart.com has laid a strong foundation for UV Skinz to scale its business while maintaining its brand promise and adhering to exceptional service standards.





Cart.com is the leading provider of comprehensive omnichannel commerce and logistics solutions that enable B2C and B2B companies to sell and fulfill anywhere their customers are. The company's enterprise-grade software, services and logistics infrastructure, including its own network of fulfillment and distribution centers, are used by some of the world's most beloved brands and most complex companies to unify commerce operations across channels and drive more efficient growth.