

## ReadyReturns: A UPS Success Story by TrueShip

Hanks Clothing started in 1949 as an Army and Navy store in Binghamton, NY. Over the years, Hanks has sold everything from surplus Army tents, airplane compasses, snake bite kits to campers, guns, and sporting goods to dress clothing, suits, jeans and work boots. One thing that has kept Hanks alive through six decades is the ability to change with the times and adapt to the changing business world. In March of 1991, Hanks Clothing embraced the change the internet was bringing on and launched the HanksClothing.com website.



Originally just an informational portal used to drive local sales, their website grew to be the largest portion of Hanks business in just nine short years. They saw triple digit growth in 2009, but this new success also brought new challenges. One of these challenges was the rapid growth of customer returns due to the increased business.

“I have a strict policy of processing all returns the day they are received,” said Brian Needels, General Manager of Hanks Clothing, “I believe a customer’s refund should be processed as quickly as we processed the charge when we shipped the item. Therefore, my policy is no one goes home until all returns are done for the day.” Needels went on to say that meant during the peak return season in January employees were a bit overwhelmed and extra hours were put in.

Nobody likes returns, but Returns Happen™. It comes with the territory for a leading online retail business. Hanks Clothing recognized that an online retailer had to honor its return process in a timely manner to be successful. They were willing to put in the long hours to become a leader, but they knew there had to be a better way.

“A big portion of the problem was handling the customer calling for an RA,” Needels stated, “We wanted an easy, 24 hour, web-based way for a customer to get a return label at their convenience. If we could give this to the customer online, it would ease the phone load and make the returns process much more efficient for us and so convenient for the customer. The answer was TrueShip’s UPS Ready® solution ReadyReturns™.”

### The UPS Ready® Solution

Today, Hanks customers are rewarded with no hassle returns. It’s one of the benefits of shopping at Hanks. Using their order information, these customers are able to instantly login, review their order details, and process their own return or exchange. In a couple clicks the customer has a prepaid UPS return label and packing slip. ReadyReturns then points the customer in the right direction with Google Maps and automatically finds The UPS Store or drop box location closest to them.

There is a direct relationship between flexible returns practices and future customer orders. Nearly 85% of online shoppers said that they would not buy again from a merchant if a convenient return process was not offered. On the other hand, if the return was convenient, 95% would buy again. (Source: 11/23/2009 Parcel Returns Survey: Best Practices in Returns Management.) To Hanks point, by implementing a customer friendly returns solution they have improved customer service and increased repeat business.

Every returning shipment is visible through the ReadyReturns Administrative DashBoard. This gives Hanks a picture of tracking and time in transit, as well as the customer information, order number, product and reason for return. The second the return is processed, Hanks knows what to expect.

ReadyReturns complements a powerful set of UPS Ready® tools with extraordinary flexibility over presentation and business rules. Hanks can determine what customer information is required to login into the system as well as which orders or products qualify as returnable. They can set time and retail limits on the value of the return and for how long they are willing to accept them after purchase. ReadyReturns also extends Hanks options beyond returns and into exchanges to deliver a complete system that can grow with the changing possibilities of their business.

Hanks integrated ReadyReturns into their website virtually overnight. No programming or technical skills were required. They easily customized it with their colors, text and HTML to give it a natural look within the pages of their online store. ReadyReturns is a web-based service, but customers never leave Hanks site.

## **An End to Long Hours**

Hanks Clothing realized that a flexible and reliable return policy was essential to building and growing an online clothing business. With ReadyReturns, they now have a system that empowers them to live up to the high standards of customer service their customers have come to expect.

“Now a customer can request a return label at 3:00 AM if they want and in less than 60 seconds have a return label ready to go”, remarked Brian Needles. “That’s the service we were looking to offer. Once we implemented it, the returns processing was back on track.”

ReadyReturns is exclusively for UPS customers. It is extremely affordable and now available to any business for a 60 day free trial at TrueShip.com.

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