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**Andy Newlin**  
Web Operations Manager

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**SIERRA**  
*TRADING POST®*

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#### ABOUT GOOGLE CHECKOUT

Google Checkout™ is a checkout process that you integrate with your website, enabling your customers to buy from you quickly and securely, using a single username and password. Checkout also works with Google’s search advertising program, AdWords, to increase your sales and minimize your expenses throughout the online sales and marketing process.

For more information, visit <http://checkout.google.com/sell>.

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# Sierra Trading Post achieved a 60 percent new user acquisition rate through Google Checkout.

## Business

Sierra Trading Post purchases overstock and closeout items from name brand vendors and passes savings of 35 to 70 percent on to its customers. The company operates three retail stores, an online store and nine mail order catalog titles with an annual circulation of more than 60 million. Based on the company’s annual sales on the web, Internet Retailer ranks Sierra Trading Post in the Top 500 Online Retailers in the U.S.

## Approach

Like every merchant, Sierra Trading Post strives to sell more and spend less. For years, Sierra Trading Post has used the Google AdWords™ search advertising program to effectively attract new customers. Because sales in the online channel continue to grow, the company is always looking for ways to boost orders and minimize expenses.

Andy Newlin, the Web Operations Manager, knew he’d found an effective option when he heard about Google Checkout, a transaction process that merchants integrate with their websites. Checkout helps reduce shopping cart abandonment because customers can purchase quickly and securely using only a single username and password – all of their purchasing information is stored in their Google Checkout account. Checkout also helps increase the effectiveness of AdWords, letting Sierra Trading Post add a Google Checkout badge – a small shopping cart icon – to his AdWords ads. This makes it easier for shoppers to find Sierra Trading Post through Google search. Equally advantageous, Google picks up the tab for transaction processing based on the company’s AdWords spend. (For every \$1 a merchant spends on AdWords, they can process \$10 in Google Checkout sales for free.)

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“We felt that the Checkout badge would help us increase the competitiveness of our AdWords campaign. And, we reasoned that people who click on ads featuring the cart icon are more likely to be serious shoppers,” says Newlin. “Our decision to integrate Google Checkout into our site was also prompted by free transaction processing.”

To introduce customers to the new checkout service, Newlin and his team used homepage promotions, an email newsletter, AdWords campaigns, and coupons offering customers \$10 off on a purchase of \$30 or more.

## Results

Within a few weeks, Google Checkout was processing 20 percent of the company's overall sales, and more than 60 percent of these sales were from new customers. The company also began seeing triple-digit growth in the number of sessions from referring sites offering Google Checkout coupons. "We've been impressed at how strong Google Checkout performs in helping us acquire new customers," Newlin says.

Customer service also reports that shoppers are generally satisfied using Google Checkout. "We've received direct feedback from people thanking us for improving the online shopping experience," says Newlin. "Two older customers who had never shopped online tried it for the first time using Google Checkout and told us they were pleased with how easy the process was."

In addition to increasing sales, Google Checkout is making improvements to the other side of the balance sheet by reducing expenses. Since adopting the service, Sierra Trading Post reports that the transaction processing costs have dropped an average of nearly 10 percent.

