

## News & Commentary

### Dubai Online Shopping Retailer Kentessa.com Drives Higher Sales Despite Economic Downturn

Thursday 04/09/2009 3:21 AM ET - Prweb

As the global economic downturn significantly affects margins for brick and mortar retailers, for e-commerce companies like Kentessa.com, it is providing a glimmer of good news as the company continues to display a steady earnings growth. The new online shopping site in Dubai, U.A.E is reporting a 120 percent month-over-month sales increase since its launch in 2008. On the heels of these strong results, Kentessa.com is scaling capacity by doubling its product offerings within the next three months, while overhauling the design and architectural platform of its site to align with leading e-commerce trends.

With the foresight to capitalize on the broadband infrastructure that was established in the last three to four years in the U.A.E., Kentessa.com's CEO Hamad Ahmed identified early on that an opportunity existed for a niche e-commerce market in the U.A.E. Most households now in the U.A.E. have high-speed Internet and are taking advantage of the convenience that online shopping offers.

"The feedback we've been receiving from our customers has been extraordinary," said Hamad Ahmed. "Large shares of our customers are international and are ordering gifts for a relative or family member living in Dubai and once they find out about our exceptional service and wide range of products, they become repeat customers." Approximately 80 percent of the population of the U.A.E. are emigrants from the United Kingdom, India, Russia, Philippines, and Australia and make up over 100 different nationalities.

Operating since fourth quarter 2008, Kentessa.com has accumulated a large number of high-quality brand name products at discounted prices. With over 500 items currently in stock, the best-selling product is perfumes. Price range varies from a Barbie Chic Doll that retails for \$8.70 to an emerald heart-shaped necklace for \$948. While the online retailer takes orders from anywhere in the world, deliveries are exclusive to the U.A.E.

The Dubai Online Shopping (<http://www.kentessa.com/customerservice.php>) site carries Mont Blanc pens, Patchi (<http://www.kentessa.com/chocolate.php>) chocolates, Swarovski crystal, accessories such as cuff links and necklaces, home decor items, toys, designer perfumes and flowers for occasions such as thank you and corporate gifts, birthday, anniversary, and holiday presents. The designer perfumes and corporate products are sold up to 25 percent below market price. Unique to Kentessa.com is the same-day or next-day delivery of certain items such as flowers and chocolate. The company is also the only e-commerce site in the U.A.E. to offer its own fleet of temperature-controlled vans that serve as Kentessa.com's courier service.

Repeat customer Meredith Myers takes advantage of Kentessa.com's wide selection of items she purchases for corporate gifts. "I find the site very useful because it saves me a trip to the mall," said Myers, who is originally from Australia and relocated to Dubai in 2003. "I think their team is impressive and they go out of their way to make sure I am happy."

"Our goal is to raise the bar of the online shopping experience and exceed our customers' expectations," said Ahmed. Modeled after highly successful e-commerce sites such as 1800flowers.com and Amazon.com, the team at Kentessa.com have an edge when it comes to managing an e-commerce company. Many employees, including the top decision-makers, are Ivy League graduates who have worked at e-commerce sites like Priceline.com. The company attributes sophisticated website development, in addition to Search Engine Marketing ([SEM](#)) and Search Engine Optimization ([SEO](#)), as indispensable ingredients to their accelerated sales growth.

With Kentessa.com's new design, completed in mid-March, the site is easier to navigate, especially when checking out. "We have reduced the number of checkout

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