



Combine A Passion for Retail with a Solid Automated POS Solution – Result: The Maui Nix Surf Shops

How do you go from a hunch? - A bet on something big?—
With limited retail knowledge - to a successful series of surf shops called Maui Nix?

IN THE BEGINNING

10 years after the first Maui Nix store opened it grew from a “Mom and Pop” operation to an efficiently run flagship store. Soon after, a second store was opened in a mall in southern Florida and then a third was opened a year later. The Maui Nix business quickly grew to 8 stores with all locations in Florida, except for their Winston Salem, North Carolina store. “We always thought bigger than we were,” says George Karamitos, Owner”.

George Karamitos’ family started out in the restaurant business in Daytona Beach. Maui Nix is a 3-way partnership that began as a “dream” of George’s, with solid financial backing and support from his Father, Nick, and his Uncle Peter, and grew to a successful enterprise that continues to grow today. “If it was not for my family’s financial backing and belief in me, Maui Nix would not have gotten started.”

A DREAM OF SOMETHING BIG!

George Karamitos had a fascination with real estate and stores from a very young age. Even though he studied political science at the University of Florida, his real love remained with real estate and the development of a business that became Maui Nix. When George got out of college, his knowledge of the retail world was limited to the family restaurant. In 1989, the idea for Maui Nix grew out of the purchase of a one acre parcel of land where the Karamitos family started a resort shop called Beachtowne,USA. The store offered t-shirts and other beach wear to tourists on the busy Daytona Beach strip. Because they had the land, and George had the dream, he decided to open a surf and skateboard store. The location was perfect: in the heart of traffic, tourism, resort shops, and Spring Break destination and there was nothing like it in Daytona Beach.

INSPIRED BRANDING AND MERCHANDISING

Enter the Maui Nix flagship store in Daytona Beach, Florida, and you are immediately impressed with the 18 foot palm trees, sky lights, water fall, gleaming wooden floors and staircase, and great merchandise attractively displayed. And of course the mascot: the Maui Nix guy! The Maui Nix Surf Shops always have a full time merchandiser on staff to insure that their products are kept attractively displayed and organized. The architectural features and creative display of merchandise work together and demonstrate the success the The Maui Nix Surf Shops have become.



EFFECTIVE POS AUTOMATION

Expanding their merchandise offerings from the original store, that primarily offers t-shirts and sweat shirts for the resort crowd, meant getting into a much more sophisticated retail climate. George found out right away that it was no longer possible to pick up a phone and order 5 dozen shirts from a vendor. Now they needed to buy quarterly, project inventory out, and anticipate demand. They tried to keep track of the business manually as they had in the past with the resort shop, but this soon proved to be too big a challenge. In 1989, the first Maui Nix store opening began with great enthusiasm and anticipation of making two million in the first year. Inventory swelled, business was brisk, but due to the lack of a comprehensive retail management solution to project and control purchasing, their inventory was way out of proportion to their sales. At the end of the year, they had no profit to show for all the business they had done because of inefficient management of their inventory.

George met with his retail consultant, and in addition to other sound business advice, he told him: "You have to get a good automated POS system". Moving to an automated POS software solution was the key to being able to manage and analyze the activity in their new business venture. Now they could project sales; purchase inventory appropriately by using the open-to-buy tool; and manage all the distinct categories of product they carried in their surf shop, including: apparel, skateboards, surf boards, and sandals. Maui Nix began buying quarterly and projected the business out as accurately as possible to avoid short falls or excess inventory.

FINDING UTC RETAIL MERCHANT

Their original POS software was good but not built to manage beyond a five store chain. The software company experienced a series of new owners and became less and less responsive to the needs of Maui Nix. Maui Nix again contacted their retail consultant who recommended UTC RETAIL. UTC RETAIL's Merchant application contained the functionality of their previous software with the added advantage of a no fee Gift Card application. UTC RETAIL spent time with Maui Nix to understand their business objectives and ensure that the transition to the new Merchant software solution was as easy and painless as possible.

THE PATH TO BUSINESS SUCCESS

UTC RETAIL's Merchant software helped Maui Nix manage their inventory and revenue to keep them profitable. Now they easily maintain their margins, reduce inventory stock to sales, and have increased inventory turns from 1.8 to 3.0. A solid retail management solution, such as UTC RETAIL Merchant, helps the retailer make relevant investments and buy less, more often.

Maui Nix manages inventories in all their shops by categorizing each product as if it was a separate store. The surf shops have 36 classes of business categories encompassing men's and women's sportswear; t-shirts; accessories; hard goods; and footwear, to name a few. Keeping track of the right categories, has enabled Maui Nix to easily analyze what is selling throughout their enterprise and plan according to the current fashion and buying trends they see from their customer base.

By utilizing UTC RETAIL's Merchant solution to plan each year's investment in merchandise based on the financial stability of their current stores, Maui Nix is able to look to the future and plan for the opening of new stores as the demand grows.

Maui Nix is a true success story demonstrating the move from a traditional resort shop using manual tracking and analysis to a fully automated merchandising application that resulted in a fleet of upscale, trendy, and successful surf and skateboard shops. Maui Nix continues to grow, and in their words are: "dedicated to bringing our customers both the cutting-edge and classics in fashion, boards, and accessories. We are proud to feature well over 100 different surf and skate brands that lead the trends in our industry."

If you are considering a technology upgrade call on the retail experts at UTC RETAIL who will meet with you to understand your business challenges and help develop a path forward to keep you in the game. **Call 1-800-349-0546 and ask to speak to one of our retail specialists.**
