

# **QVC.com Case Study**

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*(Written for Omicron Consulting, Inc. The company is a world-class solution provider with expertise in software development and networks. Omicron builds strategic systems and infrastructures that use technology to help its clients acquire and sustain a competitive edge.)*

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## **Summary**

QVC engaged Omicron, Inc. to assess the overall iQVC technical architecture and develop solutions that would position QVC to support the expected exponential growth of the iQVC business.

Omicron's project team needed to develop a complete and customizable solution that would allow iQVC to build a strategic advantage through digital commerce. In addition, the project team was responsible for creating a Web site that would collaborate and exchange information in real time. Each Omicron solution was designed with the flexibility, scalability, and sophistication required to meet the needs of a successful e-commerce business today and into the future.

## **Company Profile**

Today's business strategies increasingly rely on information technology (IT) to gain a competitive edge. As a result, IT management feels the pressure to rapidly deploy new technology-based systems. Omicron, a premier IT consulting firm located in Philadelphia, PA ([www.omicron.com](http://www.omicron.com)), helps meet these demands with an unprecedented depth of expertise in software development and networks.

Omicron's mission is to improve the business effectiveness and efficiencies of its clients through the optimal deployment of information technology products and product related services. Omicron combines distinctive Omicron Consulting methodologies with best-in-class Omicron Systems' products to provide sophisticated systems integration.

## **Business Challenge**

One of the major challenges of the iQVC project was to develop an Internet-based system that would standardize the various aspects of content management and integrate the system within the overall QVC infrastructure.

“Because QVC has a much defined information architecture, the company required a browser-based application that needed to interface with a number of legacy systems”, says Denis Stager, Omicron’s iQVC project manager. The project team also needed to create a system that would allow users to perform various functions on the Web site including a *feature finding* and *product linking* function that would allow users to view similar, related items. And each function had to seamlessly support the user’s experience on the iQVC Web site as well as improve the customer’s overall shopping experience. The project also required a major data conversion that meant integrating 120,000 products into the new system.

## **Technology Solution**

There are many technology choices available in the mix for building Web systems. The key to success is not just choosing the right technologies, but also in assembling them in architecture that carefully separates content (data) from presentation (display). A successful Web site integrates dynamic content with a flexible architecture that is capable of supporting the site, as business needs change.

The N-Tier system created by Omicron uses Microsoft DNA architecture, MQ Series messaging, and Microsoft Data Transformation Services for the conversion of the databases and legacy systems. Each step was specifically designed to promote interoperability and to allow each process to integrate with both new and existing processes. The project uses cutting-edge Internet technology that is scalable and can easily support huge amounts of data and transactions.

## **Results**

As part of a team effort, the project team at Omicron was committed to coordinating the development effort with members of the QVC group and led the various departments and technical personnel in the definition of the system’s requirements. In addition, the Omicron team worked hand-in-hand with QVC’s internal staff on database design and implementation. The result was an integrated application that allowed iQVC to manage its Web site with one application on a desktop. The QVC corporate standard of implementing browser-based applications was met successfully, on time, and within budget.

## **About the Client**

QVC is the world's preeminent electronic retailer with a virtual shopping mall that never closes.

Joseph Segel, founder of The Franklin Mint, founded QVC, Inc. in 1986.

IQVC is QVC's online interactive shopping division with over 15-million page views per week.

QVC has become the number one televised shopping service in sales, profits, and reputation in the United States, reaching over 80 percent of all U.S. cable homes and 3 million satellite dishes.

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