



HeadCount[®]

A member of the World Fair Trade Organization (WFTO), Ten Thousand Villages is the oldest and largest Fair Trade organization in North America, selling artisan-crafted personal accessories, home decor and gift items from around the globe. The non-profit organization sells these handcrafted products online and in store location in Canada and the U.S.

Ten Thousand Villages traffic and conversion program has already proven it will take the organization to exciting new business levels. According to Director of Operations Ann Marie Gaouette-Stevenson, she wishes they started the program five years ago now that she knows what is possible. Even though they just implemented the program less than a year ago, they've already seen an impressive productivity shift in the stores that implemented the HeadCount program compared to those that have not.



"We've only just scratched the surface," say Gaouette-Stevenson. "Imagine a year from now where we will be! We believe working with HeadCount is going to take us to new business levels. The more power we have behind our decisions and strategies the better we are. We're very excited about it."

Increased conversion rates are motivating for staff and the benefits reach artisans all around the world. Before introducing the HeadCount traffic and conversion program, the organization had limited ways to measure store metrics. Some of the staff at Ten Thousand Villages had never even heard of conversion rates. The organization had been very successful for many years based on reputation and exceptional customer in-store experience and had not yet recognized the value of data analytics. But the new HeadCount program has helped staff understand what conversion is and why it is important.



Gaouette-Stevenson said staff are now extremely excited about increasing conversion rates because of what it means for their artisans around the world. "The more we sell, the more we help," she says. "That is the motivation for all of us here. We're helping more families. When we sell more product that means we can go back to our artisans and purchase more."

Ultimately Ten Thousand Villages recognized that in order to continue growing and helping, they needed to look at their business in ways they hadn't in the past and that's why they introduced the HeadCount program.

It was HeadCount's passion, knowledge and enthusiasm that achieved buy-in across the organization. "The training was fantastic," says Gaouette-Stevenson. "HeadCount's enthusiasm and energy along with the depth of understanding of the data was superior – and you can't pretend that kind of enthusiasm," she says. "It's clear that the team lives, breathes, and loves what they do and that really translated to our folks here. By the end of HeadCount's TalkTraffic® web-based training and coaching sessions, Gaouette-Stevenson said staff not only understood the program, but they were passionate about it too."

If passion is one of the ways HeadCount's program is different from any other, so is the emphasis on working with store managers to make sure they understand how to use the data. To achieve that, HeadCount delivered a TalkTraffic session specifically for store managers and Gaouette-Stevenson says store-level staff are now very excited, even the tenured managers for whom this is all a big change. Extending the understanding and excitement throughout the organization is critical because the organization uses the new data for its head-office and in-store decision making – everything from staffing, to planning new promotional campaigns, to even deciding recently to relocate a store based on traffic count.

"It's a very holistic approach to doing business and the people that will be working with the data are very excited to have more tangible ways to measure our ability to grow," says Gaouette-Stevenson. "Everyone wants to improve and we now have a focal point – conversion rates. Our managers are very dedicated and are very focused on their stores. They are proud to work for a non-profit organization that does such good work."



The 'amazing' HeadCount team has lived up to their reputation. Ten Thousand Villages hadn't heard about HeadCount before but had received a recommendation from the Retail Council of Canada. It was HeadCount's strong reputation that convinced Gaouette-Stevenson to champion the company and she has since been impressed with her first-hand experience of the team, underscoring how knowledgeable and customer-focused the team is and how much they believe in what they are doing. "It's their passion. That's what we have too as a non-profit. We are a passionate group of people and it translates to our customers. HeadCount's passion works the same way – that enthusiasm translates to their customers too," she says.

Gaouette-Stevenson's impression of the team is echoed by others in the organization who say the level of service is 'unheard of'. "HeadCount works with our people to give them not only what they need but are always trying to find ways to provide even more help and are constantly inviting us to let them know if they can do something else...I can't remember anyone else ever offering that," she says. "I have to say the team is amazing."

HeadCount is the leading authority on retail traffic and conversion analysis and the company's Founder and CEO Mark Ryski has written two definitive books on the topic, the latest "*Conversion: the Last Great Retail Metric*". For more information, please visit www.headcount.com.

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