

# Ecommerce Site for Custom Apparel

## Introduction

Custom apparel refers to clothing, hats, gloves, bags and other accessories that are exclusively designed as per buyers' needs. Typically, these display company's logo, some message or even taglines. Our client is in the business of providing branded uniforms or workwear to its customers, customizing to their exact needs. They get their apparels from SanMar, a renowned wholesale apparel company, and do the imprinting as per the customers' demands.

The client was using an old website, developed in WordPress, to manage its business operations and was evidently finding it difficult to address the evolving business needs. They sought a revamped, fully functional ecommerce application. Additionally, they required an automated system to import SanMar product data into the website, and seamlessly integrate with QuickBooks for efficient accounting purposes.

## About the Client

**Client:** Confidential | **Location:** USA | **Industry:** Lifestyle/E-Commerce

## Technologies

WordPress, Laravel, PHP, MySQL, jQuery, JavaScript, HTML, CSS, AJAX

Tools: QuickBooks Online

Third-party Library : SanMar

## Challenges

- The primary goal of this project was for the client to enable its customers to buy fully customized apparels. Customization can be done either through embroidery, screen printing or some other process. But it all begins with the task of pulling information of apparels from SanMar on a regular basis and displaying them on the website according to their availability. This was a critical task that had to be done right. It had to be founded on pulling information for a wide range of products and keeping them updated; so that there is no discrepancy in what is available with SanMar and what gets displayed.

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- The client maintained its accounts in QuickBooks Online (QBO) but faced the challenge of having to manually enter details for products and customers. They expressed the need for a seamless integration with QBO and the new ecommerce website to streamline this process.

## Project Description

### SanMar Products Import

The catalog of SanMar products on the old WordPress website hadn't been updated for a long time. Generally, SanMar maintains a huge inventory of items. Now the items, based on their availability, get discontinued or closed out from time to time. Also new ones get added too. A csv weekly file is released by SanMar that contains all the updated product information.

In its existing state, to update the apparel catalog the client was importing the product information from a file to its WordPress website. The process needed- manually downloading and uploading chunks of the file using a plugin. This was not only time consuming but was also slowing down the website. The infrequent updates was leading to data discrepancies, with discontinued items on SanMar still appearing as active on the client's site. Automation was needed for a smoother and more accurate process.

### Our Approach

Instead of making a chunk of files and storing them in the server, our approach was to read chunks of data (1000 rows) at a time from the csv file and store them in an array. Then using Laravel's inbuilt function we inserted/updated the whole array in the backend which comparatively took much less time. On importing all the data from the csv file to the backend, we temporarily deactivated/removed all those data records which were not in the current file. We scheduled the function to run once a week. Before importing we took the backup of the backend table to avoid any failure. After the completion of the import, the client was sent an email notification.

### Benefits and Results

By establishing a well-maintained items catalog on the website, we ensured easy and timely fulfillment of orders.

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## QuickBooks Integration

QuickBooks is an accounting software package which is developed and marketed by Intuit. Intuit also offers a cloud service called QuickBooks Online (QBO). The user pays a monthly subscription fee rather than an upfront fee and accesses the software exclusively through a secure logon via a Web browser.

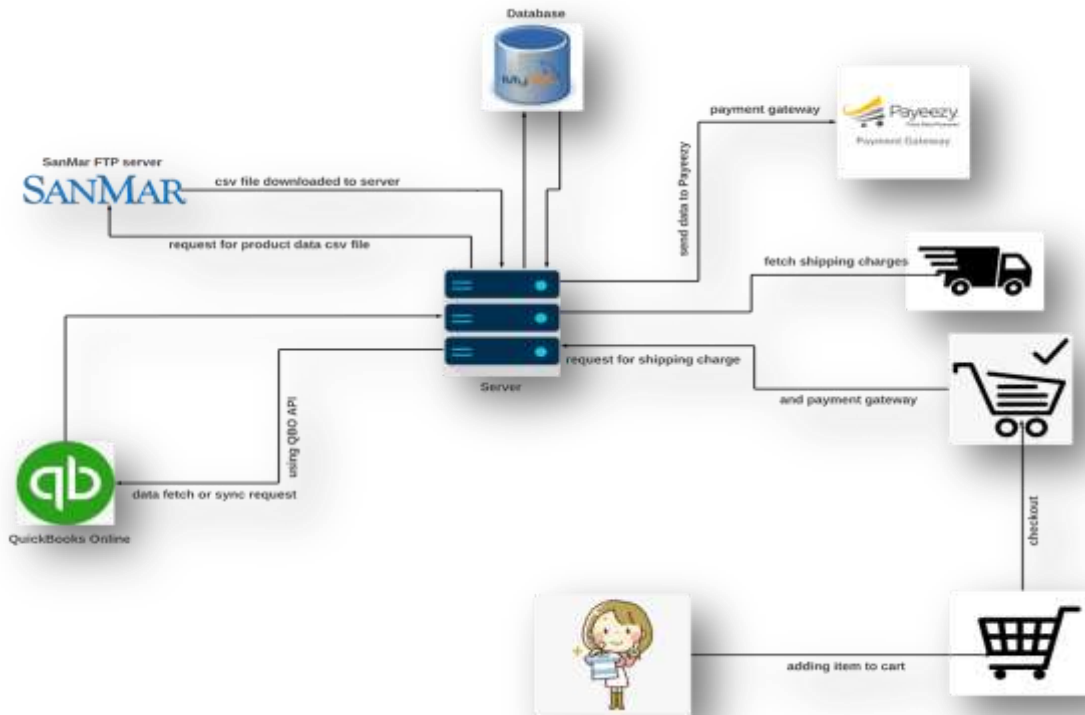
The Client has an account in QBO. They keep all the customer information, manage inventory, bills or invoices, and accept business payments in QBO. They have been using QBO for a long time, so the product and customer information were of high volume in the account. They manage the inventory of some of the products in QBO also. We needed to check whether a user or product in the website also existed in QBO. Otherwise there was a fair chance to create duplicate users or products in the QBO account.

## Our Approach

We used QuickBooks APIs to send users, products and orders information from the website to the account with proper validations and checklists. Provision was made to import bulk product information from website to QBO account. We followed the OAuth2.0 authorization process for APIs and accessed their data from QBO.

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## Data Flow Diagram



## Screenshots



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