



# Transforming Learning Experiences & Engaging Customers

## CASE STUDY

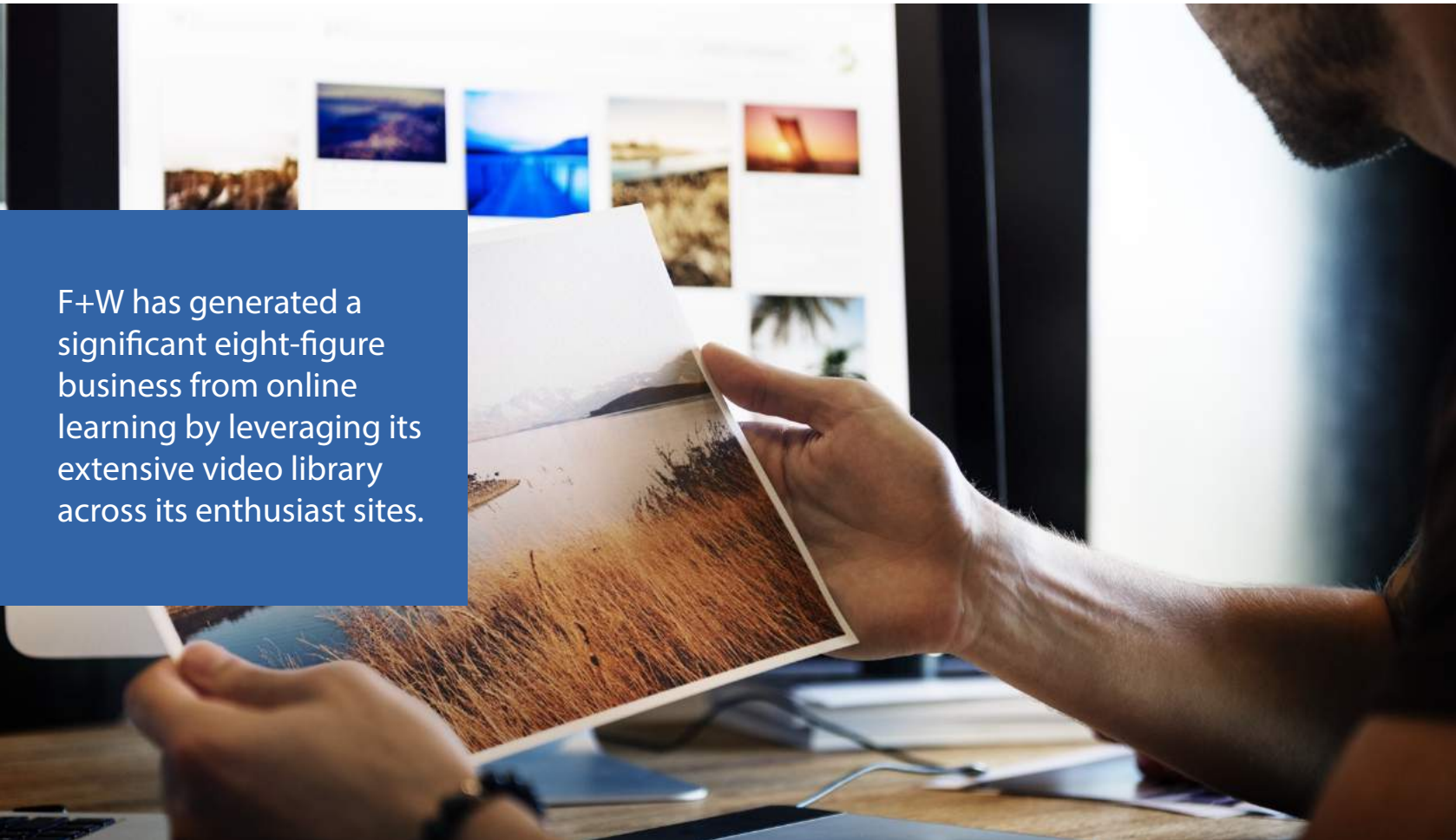
T H O U G H T I N D U S T R I E S

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Before August 2014, F+W had a number of successful online learning and video subscription sites that offered learning experiences to passionate communities in crafting, writing, and web design. However, some of these businesses were built on technology platforms established years before. F+W recognized the opportunity to consolidate on one platform—one that could not only match what they were doing, but help bring their online learning to the next level.

Thought Industries' platform offered a highly scalable technology designed to build profitable learning businesses. Additionally, it offered a unique capability to easily package and upsell physical and digital product sales not only within the learning environment but at point of purchase for online courses and videos—a feature no other learning platform offers. This provides learners the ability to purchase everything they need to take a class: the learning content, the book and all the product required. In the first few weeks following a migration, F+W saw immediate benefits that helped further the companies' mission to educate, connect, engage, and inspire like-minded groups of people.



F+W has generated a significant eight-figure business from online learning by leveraging its extensive video library across its enthusiast sites.



## ABOUT F+W

F+W strives to offer the most complete—online and offline—customer experience for enthusiasts of all types: Arts, crafts, antiques & collectibles, design and outdoor are just a few of the hobbies, pastimes and personal interests it serves via its many underlying brands.

Enthusiasts and hobbyists alike turn to F+W for authoritative, relevant and helpful information along with the most complete assortment of products, services, books and magazines catering to each community. F+W continually seeks to find innovative ways to meet the needs and wants of today's consumer.

## CHALLENGES

In business for nearly 100 years, F+W has evolved from print publisher to diversified multi-media and eCommerce provider with more than 30 online stores, each serving niche communities with specialized content and products. As part of the Company's evolution, it integrated online learning as a means to connect with and engage both consumer and professional audiences.

However, the platforms used for F+W's school and video sites did not offer an engaging experience nor did it offer the potential for product integration -- an important business initiative for the company. Additionally, working from two disparate technologies didn't make it easy to manage. Their previous platform, being more academic focused, was not conducive for consumer learning. Nor did it offer a customized experience, engagement tools, or data analytics tools. Most importantly the sites didn't offer a direct-to-consumer purchasing option for goods and services within the video platform.

F+W needed a new solution. One consolidated platform that could offer a seamless transition for current users and subscribers, and one that could be tailored more specifically to F+W's needs (e.g. the creation of course sessions, so instructors could dedicate one-on-one attention to students).

Our users see real value in our online learning business -- it's interactive, offers a true one-on-one relationship and connects users with experts in the marketplace. As a result of working with Thought Industries, online learning has become a high value, high price point product that's led us to an eight-figure business.

Director of Online Product Development, F+W

# SOLUTION

Thought Industries introduced an all-in-one platform that could host both online schools and video on-demand sites. The platform allowed for not only fully-branded sites, but also a more robust user experience.

F+W needed to move large repositories of content, including thousands of videos, hundreds of thousands of user records, and securely transfer payment data for recurring subscriptions quickly. This would also have to happen with no down time and no loss in revenue capture. Thought Industries worked closely to ensure all data and user accounts across 19 sites were accurately migrated from multiple platforms and sources so that the end users could enjoy a transition to the Thought Industries platform without interruption. The transition did not require significant back-end management, and F+W deemed the experience “the quietest migration ever.”

The current sites simplify the process of authoring content while the platform enables F+W to easily create tailored microsites, landing pages, and sophisticated offers and bundles for the product and marketing team to leverage. Additionally, some sites offer built-in eCommerce functionality that make the overall consumer experience that much richer.

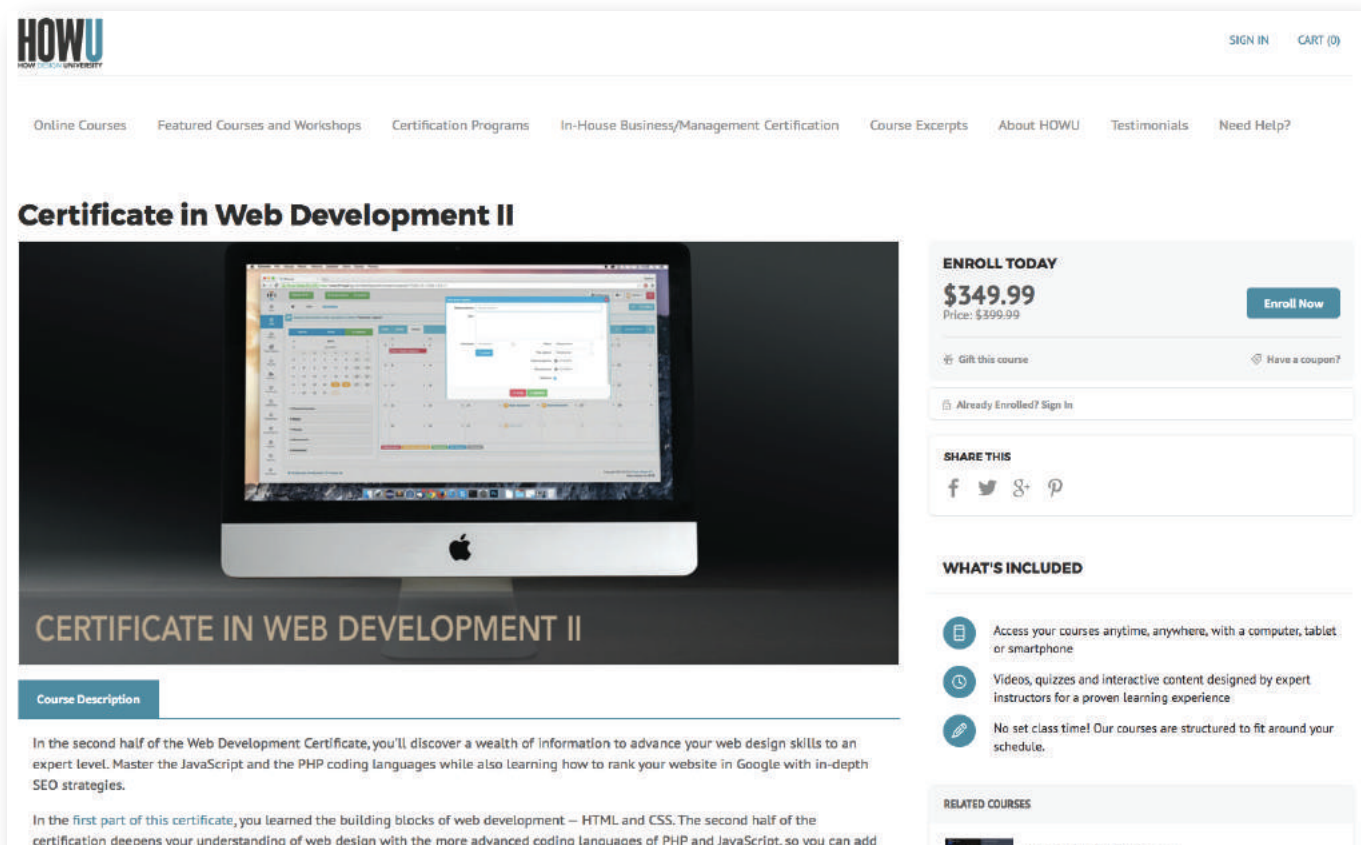
The screenshot shows the HOWU (How to Use University) website. The header includes the HOWU logo and links for SIGN IN and CART (0). A navigation bar lists various course categories. The main content area is titled 'Browse' and features a search bar and a sidebar with categories like 'Online Design Courses' and 'Certifications'. The main content area displays a grid of course cards, each with a title, image, price, and a 'View Details' link. Courses include 'Certificate in Web Development II', 'Typography 101: Letterform Design', 'International SEO: Reaching a Profitable Global Audience', 'InDesign Fundamentals: Tools & Tips', 'Certificate in SEO for Designers', and 'Certificate in Animation'.



# RESULTS

With the help of Thought Industries, F+W increased customer value and strengthened its customer relationships. Looking specifically at the numbers, as of October 2015:

- 11 school sites and 8 video sites live on the Thought Industries platform
- Instructor-led courses and seminars
- In 11 different market categories
- Over 7,800 items in its video library
- Across six distinct categories



**HOWU**  
HOW TO USE UNIVERSITY

SIGN IN CART (0)

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## Certificate in Web Development II




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-  No set class time! Our courses are structured to fit around your schedule.

**RELATED COURSES**




[JavaScript for Beginners](#)

**Course Description**

In the second half of the Web Development Certificate, you'll discover a wealth of information to advance your web design skills to an expert level. Master the JavaScript and the PHP coding languages while also learning how to rank your website in Google with in-depth SEO strategies.

In the first part of this certificate, you learned the building blocks of web development – HTML and CSS. The second half of the certification deepens your understanding of web design with the more advanced coding languages of PHP and JavaScript, so you can add

Learn more about Thought Industries'  
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