



**CLIENT**  
North Coast Electric



**LOCATION**  
Seattle, WA



**INDUSTRY**  
Electrical



**PROJECT**  
E-commerce  
Implementation &  
Enhancements

“ I think the differentiation that we see between a lot of other organizations is Unilog’s willingness to be flexible, to listen to their customers, and to recognize that this is an industry that they’re committed to. Their success, to a large degree, is dependent upon our success. ”

**Les Johnson**  
Chief Information Officer

### OPPORTUNITY

North Coast Electric (NCE), a full-line electrical distributor based on the West Coast, became a pioneer in their industry when they developed their first online web order entry system in 1997. While it was a bit rudimentary, NCE could see the potential to benefit both their customers and their business. After a few years of working with their basic system, NCE determined they needed to build a true e-commerce site, so in 2011 they started their search for a digital commerce provider.

“We wanted a partner who understood distribution, who understood the industry and how it’s unique from retail e-commerce,” said Les Johnson, Chief Information Officer at NCE. “Our industry is not an early adopter, so we needed someone who was patient with our technology and who would make sure the solutions we were providing met the needs of our marketplace, as opposed to meeting the technology’s abilities.”

In 2012, NCE engaged with Unilog and began a partnership to develop two online stores: a B2B web store for electrical customers and a separate site for retail lighting customers. NCE made an investment in enriched content; first they expanded their staff and built a team to develop and maintain their online content. They also invested in training and support for their inside and outside sales force to understand the new technology and embrace its benefits.

After they launched their online storefronts, NCE saw a surge in e-commerce activity. By incorporating the functionality and technology needed to service their customers, NCE could provide a single portal and become a differentiator in the electrical distribution marketplace.

## DIGITAL EVOLUTION

With the growth of technology and the increased acceptance of e-commerce in the marketplace, NCE partnered once again with Unilog in 2015 to digitally evolve their websites to give customers a more efficient way to shop online. Called the “Web 2.0” project, it included two core initiatives: upgrade NCE’s sites to the new CIMM2 Touch platform and redesign the overall look and functionality.

CIMM2 Touch, the latest version of Unilog’s e-commerce software, offers a new interface, a new content management system (CMS) and other refinements. The cloud-based SaaS digital commerce platform also features leading-edge software architecture to provide a better overall performance.

In addition to a new design, NCE wanted to offer more capabilities for their B2B and B2C customers. “I think everyone is looking for availability, reliability and performance,” said Johnson. “Beyond that, I think they’re looking for the ability to do things in a more efficient and effective manner; that’s why we use our customers as part of our design group. Whenever we entertain the idea of including a feature, we always reach out to our customers and ask them what they think.”

From that customer feedback, NCE asked for three major functionality enhancements to their digital storefronts:

- **Adaptable web search** – Understanding that search is key to an exceptional customer experience, Unilog is creating additional algorithms to provide better, more relevant search results, regardless of how a customer searches for a product.
- **Simpler checkout process** – A consolidated and improved customer transaction process to make it even quicker and easier for customers to check out.
- **Improved user interface** – A completely redesigned user interface incorporating more industry best practices and familiar processes for customers.

## EXPECTATIONS

North Coast Electric knows digital evolution is integral to their success. “Evolving our websites is important – not only to our customers, but also to the future of our company,” remarked Johnson. “These new sites give us the ability to reduce our operational costs and increase our ability to deliver services and products – not only in terms of the quantity, but also the quality of those resources.” NCE recognizes that digital commerce is a journey to meet customer needs and expectations. Unilog continues to assist NCE in their e-business evolution, measuring and sharing their successes along the way.

### About North Coast Electric

North Coast Electric is a full line electrical distributor located in the Northwest and Alaska. What began as a small electrical business in 1913, North Coast Electric now has 32 locations and 577 associates, and is the largest independent family-owned and locally operated electrical distributor in the West. [www.northcoastelectric.com](http://www.northcoastelectric.com)

The logo for Unilog, featuring the word "unilog" in a bold, lowercase sans-serif font. The "uni" is in red and the "log" is in black.

[www.unilogcorp.com](http://www.unilogcorp.com)

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### About Unilog/CIMM2

Unilog is a global technology and services company that specializes in e-commerce solutions and enriched product catalogs for the B2B marketplace. Unilog’s flagship product, CIMM2, is a fully integrated e-commerce platform designed to fit the unique requirements of the wholesale distribution industry.

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