Dripify: Safely, easily, (and finally!) get Drip working on your Shopify site

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Shopify manages your e-commerce sales like a champ. Drip makes email campaigns a breeze. Merging the two for seamless sales funnels can create some pretty ugly hacks, so I built a custom app to smooth out a few rough spots.

Here's my case study on building an app from scratch in only a week that makes integrating two services just a matter of clicking a few buttons. No hunting for code, and no burning time trying to make your sales process fit an unforgiving template.

E-commerce sites need to work hard for you.

E–COMMERCE SITES NEED TO WORK HARD FOR YOU.

Unfortunately, the very technology that's built to make our lives easier can often turn into a black hole that sucks hours away from generating revenue while you try to find just the right code, and the perfect place for the code to live.

Since merchants like you need to be spending more time tending the front door instead of a stream of backdoor technical issues, I decided to build a custom app that I knew would make your life easier.

The process made me realize the possibilities for all of e-commerce, one custom app at a time.

The Big Idea
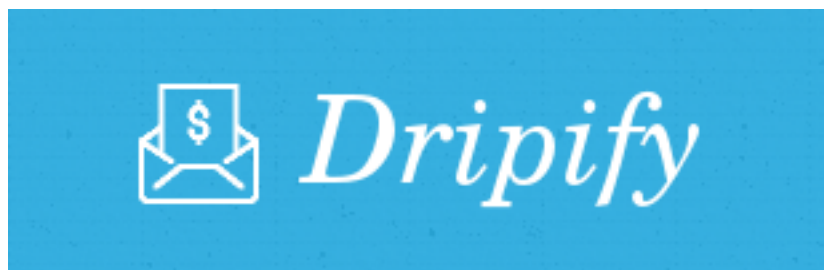
I blocked a regular week of development and went full-force into creating an app called Dripify that lets a Shopify merchant set up their Drip account right from the Shopify platform. The Dripify app then embeds your Drip opt-in widgets directly into Shopify, so you can collect emails from any visitor to your store - you won't need separate methods for collecting and then inputting data.

Honestly, installing Drip manually isn't rocket science, but it does involve editing HTML and inserting new code on your theme, which can be confusing and nerve-wracking. Then, after all that meticulous work, if you haven't done it correctly Drip

won't function, which means lost time, lost revenue and a big pile of frustration.

I thought everyone would enjoy having this job reduced to just a few clicks, so I dove into the project.

Defining the Target

It's easy for programmers to grab hold of a problem and fix more than they anticipated, and I'm no different. Code is powerful, and creating useful software is a lot of fun.

Since I budgeted a week to make the app, I wanted to be clear on my objectives and stick with them. Here are my design targets and constraints:

DEFINING THE TARGET

> Make the interface as simple as possible, which meant ensuring that the setup crossed platforms cleanly in just a few steps.

> Make it completely understandable to the average Shopify user, who may not be code savvy.

> Make uninstallation just as easy as installation.

> Tangle with as little of the Shopify APIs as possible to avoid bugs and conflicts.

> Have complete reliability.

> Nail the deadline.

Making the Magic

MAKING THE MAGIC

Part of the beauty of the Dripify app was its simplicity.

Using Ruby on Rails, I was able to use as little as one-thirtieth of Shopify's APIs to create the app itself. Keeping the interface this clean meant I could build what what the problem needed to solve without introducing unnecessary complications and weeks of my time.

With focused effort on clear needs and outcomes, I was easily able to break the project into neat work sessions on Shopify authentication, Drip authentication, and Drip widget embedding.

All of the work fit into a single workweek without all-nighters or last-minute drama. Straightforward coding solutions were able to turn a tedious task into a few clicks of a keyboard and mouse.

End Result

END RESULT

As you can guess, the Dripify project was very successful. I made the deadline quite comfortably, even with time for minor tweaking to polish a few details. Now Dripify is available as a public app in the App Store, all ready to go.

Here's a tour of the app, showing an on-screen walk-through of Dripify in action.

1. Mary finds the app and clicks to install it to her shop.
2. Shopify prompts Mary to authorize the app using OAuth.
3. Mary sees the dashboard, and there she sees the button to install the Drip snippet and clicks it.
4. Drip prompts Mary to authorize access.
5. Once authorized, Dripify uses Mary's Drip details and adds them to Shopify.

Installation complete, that's it!

END RESULT
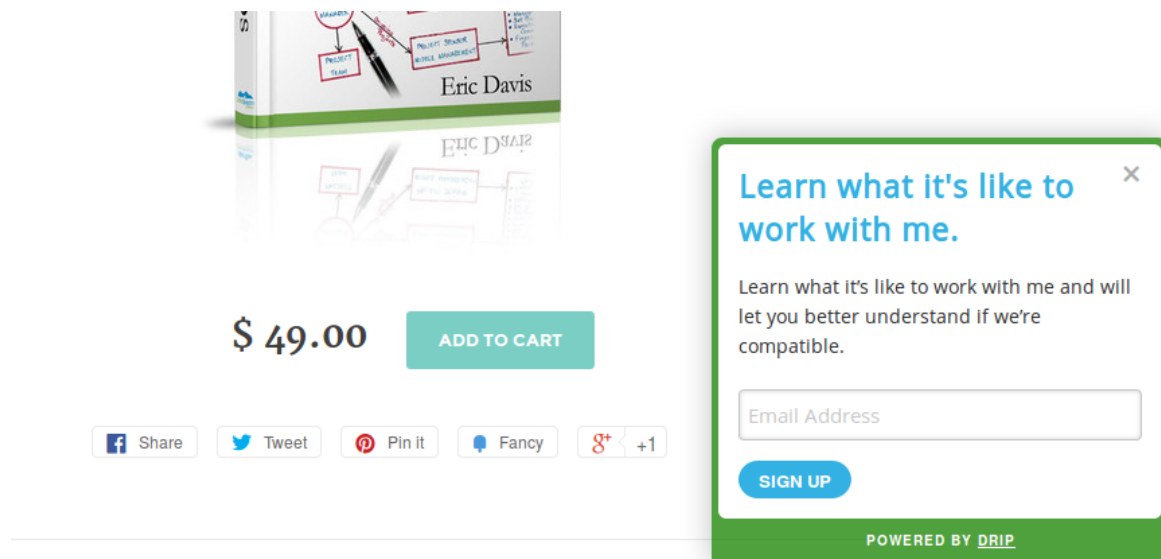
Making this sort of add-on to improve functionality is a tidy, clear-cut project, which is simple to design and schedule from start to finish. The ROI on this kind of Shopify add-on is calculated as much in gained revenue and hours as it is in headaches avoided.

While I can't make every aspect of your business easier, I can help you identify and smooth out places in your Shopify store that can save you time and effort. As a programmer, I see liter-

ally dozens of places where the interface between Shopify and other apps could be significantly improved.

Even if your business doesn't need Shopify to talk to Drip, there are probably a number of places in Shopify that could be better aligned to your business' process. Perhaps order intake, delivery pipeline, or automated ways to attract more customers can be improved, for example.

Talk to me about where Shopify is awkward or not quite meeting your needs, and I may be able to provide a solution with **one week** of effort, not **weeks**.