

My Best Friend's Closet
Michelle Leys, Owner
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Summary by Danielle Keefe

Running her pop-up consignment shop would be nearly impossible for Michelle Leys years ago, but in today's world it is not a problem due to the advanced technology we now have. After experiencing a variety of different jobs and positions, traveling the world, and later becoming a stay-at-home mom, Michelle decided these things weren't satisfying her anymore. She knew she had more to offer and she was ready for a change, but she still wanted to be able to spend as much time with her kids as possible. These factors, combined with her passion for the fashion industry, were the driving forces behind My Best Friend's Closet.

My Best Friend's Closet is a four-day pop-up consignment shop that comes around only twice a year and offers designer-quality clothing for bargain prices. From her experiences in the fashion industry, Michelle knows consignment shops can be difficult to sell to a consumer because there really is no sense of urgency. Her decision to create a pop-up consignment shop that is only held twice a year for a four-day period created this sense of urgency needed to attract consumers and get them to actually make purchases once they are in the shop.

Several factors need to be taken into consideration when planning for My Best Friend's Closet, and many of these things would not be possible without the help of digital technology. First, Michelle needs to decide on a floor plan for the store. Ultimately, the floor plan will depend on how much merchandise the consignors choose to provide, which can vary with each pop-up shop. This means that Michelle has a very short window of time between deciding on a floor plan that correlates properly with the merchandise she is provided with, and the translation of this merchandise into the desired floor plan creating the actual store. With the help of technology, this is doable though because Michelle can simply use a computer program to set up a neat and orderly design layout for her pop-up consignment shop.

Along with the floor plan, Michelle needs to sort through all the merchandise she is provided with. This is another area of the business that would be very time-consuming, and almost impossible, without technology. Due to the numerous databases now available online, Michelle can have her consigners enter all the necessary information for each item they will be providing the consignment shop with. They can choose the price points at which their merchandise will be sold and whether they would like it to be donated at the end of the four-day sale if it does not sell. Also, at the end of each day while the shop is open consigners are able to log onto the database and see if their merchandise is selling, what price it sold for, and what their take away from the sale will be after the profit is split with Michelle. This technology makes My Best Friend's Closet not only possible but also easier for Michelle. Without it, Michelle calculated that it would take about five days working full time to sort through the hundreds of tags consigners provide her with and manage the countless number of sales.

Finally, Michelle learned that advertising was key to notify and attract consumers to the shop. Technology allowed her to create her own website for My Best Friend's Closet and start a Facebook page, which she posts pictures and announcements to during the four days the shop is open. It is clear then, that Michelle's unique consignment shop would be nearly impossible to manage and probably unsuccessful without the technology that is available to us in today's world.