

# Boutique Ring Maker Flourishes to Win Shopify's Build a Business Competition

PayPal and Shopify partner to help a specialty ring manufacturer grow from a two-person operation to an international success



## Company

Carbon6

## Founder

John Easley

## CEO

Claire Easley

## Industry

Retail

## Website

carbon6rings.com

## Challenges At-A-Glance

- Establishing credibility and trust with a global client base
- Offering customers multiple payment methods, including credit
- Reducing credit card processing fees
- Creating transparency in credit card processing reports

## Company Snapshot

After losing his wedding ring (and multiple replacements), Carbon6 founder and lead product designer John Easley decided he would make his own. His creation had to be just right – comfortable enough to go unnoticed, strong enough to be worn while he worked and attractive enough to fit any occasion. After countless hours of research and inspiration from the engineers at Lamborghini, John developed his own process of molding carbon fiber rings.

Together, John and his wife, Claire, soon found their unique carbon fiber rings had wide appeal. Powered by a growing demand for their products and over \$400,000 in Kickstarter funding, the Easleys turned one carbon fiber ring into an international online ring store.

## The Challenge

Carbon6's successful Kickstarter campaign fueled international growth within just a few months, saddling their young operation with a number of unfamiliar challenges. As sales grew, Carbon6 needed the ability to manage the increased volume of payments as well as a way to offer credit options for customers wanting to finance their rings. They were also looking to lower their credit card processing fees and add greater transparency to their processing reports.

Given the investment and sentimental nature of rings, Carbon6 needed a complete payment solution to effectively manage transactions, offer payment options and establish trust and credibility with a broader base of customers – especially overseas buyers shopping online.



“It’s often hard for customers abroad to take the plunge and buy something from a small, boutique vendor. We chose PayPal because it’s secure and consumers trust it with their purchases.”

– CLAIRE EASLEY  
CEO, Carbon6

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## Benefits of the PayPal & Shopify Partnership

- Accelerated purchasing process for international customers using PayPal Express Checkout
- Increased credibility and trust in the eyes of customers worldwide
- Reduced credit card processing fees
- Increased transparency in credit card processing reports
- Greater peace of mind to Carbon6 customers – and the Easleys – about the payment process

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## About PayPal

With 188 million active customer accounts, we have created an open and secure payments ecosystem that people and businesses choose to securely transact with each other online, in stores and on mobile devices. PayPal is a truly global payments platform that is available to people in more than 200 markets, allowing customers to get paid in 100 currencies and growing.

## Solutions & Results

The Shopify-PayPal partnership equipped Carbon6 with ecommerce resources to optimize their business for growth. Shopify’s integrated platform gave the Easleys all the tools and features needed to quickly set up and manage their online store. PayPal’s suite of payment technologies supercharged their limited in-house resources so the process of managing higher payment volume was simple and affordable. The power of the PayPal brand also helped fuel Carbon6’s expansion into global markets, enabling them to build credibility and trust with new customers.

## Expanding Business to International Customers

Solutions like PayPal Express Checkout and PayPal Credit helped make it easier for Carbon6 to convert customers worldwide. Express Checkout gave Carbon6 a scalable, easy-to-use payment option that allowed customers to make purchases from anywhere on any device, which was key given 70% of their sales came from mobile traffic. PayPal Credit<sup>1</sup> extended Carbon6’s sales reach even more, enabling customers to pay for rings over time while Carbon6 gets paid up front.

In addition to the features of PayPal, having the PayPal logo present at checkout also gave Carbon6 more credibility in the eyes of global customers who were unfamiliar with their products and brand.

“Buying something from another country is hard,” Claire Easley said. “Often the site isn’t in their language, it doesn’t accept their currency and it can be scary. And we learned that people felt secure with PayPal.”

## Offering Transparency Where Merchants Need It Most

Reliable reporting is vital to a rapidly growing operation like Carbon6. PayPal helped add clarity with detailed reports that took the guesswork out of calculating credit card processing fees and organizing credit information. In addition to transparency, PayPal’s cost structure helped keep Carbon6’s processing fees down. The combination of clear reporting and lower credit card processing fees enabled the Easleys to seize opportunities and manage their growth.

## Global Success Powered by Successful Partnerships

Partnering with Shopify and PayPal was the perfect way for Carbon6 to parlay the appeal of its innovative carbon fiber rings into a successful global business. Shopify’s hassle-free platform gave the Easleys the tools to manage every aspect of their online store without needing a large internal staff. PayPal’s innovative payment suite and reputation as a global leader in payments helped Carbon6 gain an edge in reaching and converting more customers around the world. The three-way partnership has been so effective that Carbon6 recently won Shopify’s 2016 Build a Business Competition, reinforcing the sentiment the Easleys shaped their company around – individual elements, no matter how strong, become much stronger when they work together.