E commerce case study

Today, loyal shoppers vaults their favorite sites far more frequently than they would any bricks-and-mortar store. In this fast-evolving interactive landscape, you need a strategic, actionable approach for creating user experiences that build trust, maximize organic search rankings, and shape lasting customer relationships. This paper covers three pillars that support customer trust, opt-ins, conversions and long-term value: Content, Design, and Strategy.

Optimized content and design combined with useable data and performance marketing strategies can impact organic search rankings, improve your lighthouse (CTR) and conversion rates, and ultimately boost your bottom line. Content: Relevant, unique and trustworthy content and policies can drive a site's lasting success. Yet even great content can get lost In the crowd without smart SEE (Search Engine Optimization). Improve search engine performance with both on- and off-page SEE using tactics featured here. Design: Clear, effective, on-brand design and site navigation drive traffic, CTR and conversions.

Designing for commerce optimization helps you avoid purchase delays and cart abandonment while Increasing site stickiness. Strategy: use analytics and apply performance marketing strategies to pull it all together for quality user experiences and on-brand communications and policies that build trust, win conversions and earn long-term loyalty Some aspects of great content, especially for commerce, are immortal: Content should be relevant, offer fresh and unique information and insights, support the decision-making process, and offer consumer-centric policies.

Yet, great wordsmith alone won't deliver an eager audience that hangs on your every word, poised to buy what you're selling. Content for commerce websites, mobile devices and APS must leap a higher bar: It must be findable (searchable), shareable, bookmarked, and memorable. Enter content optimization. To get your site into the circulatory system of the web and beyond, you need to frame your site content for search engine and social media performance on page SEE You have complete control over your own site content, so let's start there.

By using relevant keywords, title and header tagging, quality content, and reputable links and seals, you can better manage and improve your site performance. Here are some keys to on-page SEE success: Keywords Use keyword research tools such as Google Towards Keyword Tool, Keyword Eye and SEE Book Keyword Tool to identify relevant, high-traffic key- words to drive clicks and increase organic rankings. Research competitor's advertising keywords with pay-per-click (PC) tools such as Compete Search Analytics.

Tagging How, and how well, you tag formatted content elements on your page (such as headers and titles) will impact the breadth of search engine exposure your site pages enjoy. Title and header tags should include relevant keywords. Use consistent image tags for improved accessibility and greater search engine exposure. Linking Internal: Broaden search engine exposure and make content more accessible for deep linking by using keywords on anchor links and internal page URL. External: Ensure that your site is linked to - and from - as many reputable resources as possible.

Use link analysis and back-link-building tools such as Opponents Explorer and Backslider's Tool to build your link profile and track your progress. Include reputable seals and logos from highly ranked (and trusted) partners such as Trustee. Placing Trustee seals on your web and / or mobile site, app or ad may boost your ranking because Trustee consistently appears among the top ten SERE (Search Engine Results Page) rankings for privacy and trust searches Off page SEE Beyond your site content lies a vast world of social networking, bookmaking, syndication and user-generated media that may impact your site's performance.

No matter how well you optimize your own site, your site's success may suffer if you don't work with these external elements. Here are tactics for increasing your search engine performance and driving traffic to your site from the great beyond. Social Networks Build and maintain a compelling Backbone fan page (ditto for Inning, Linked and other relevant social networks) to grow a loyal social audience, promote products, and drive traffic to your site. Content Sharing Create and share content that everyone wants to read - from blobs to email newsletters.

Then build avenues via IRS and blob feeds and to help spread your word. Add Twitter buttons to your site and watch the world tweet your content far and wide. Social and Real-time Bookmaking Make everybody lists by encouraging bookmaking on a range of tools, from Dig to Delicious. Add bookmaking and sharing buttons to your site, like those from Addicts (wry. Addicts. Com), which offers free analytics for your social and real-time link

traffic. Customer Review Engines Add links to your site to encourage reviews on sites such as Yelp and City- Search and turn customers into advocates.

Got a real-world location? Post static window stickers at your entrance to tout your reviews. Site Directories Get listed on as many directories as possible by seeding industry directories as well as general directories such as the DOOM Open Directory Project (http:// www. Doom. Org/). Collocation Services Integrate your real and virtual locations and drive traffic to all of them by running check-in promotions via sites like Foursquare (www. Foursquare. Com), Goal (www. Goal. Com) and Backbone Places (www. Backbone. Com/places).

While you're at tags). Associative Branding Raise your search engine rankings by associating your brand with other venerable organizations; for instance, you can piggyback on Trustee's highly ranked SERE position by placing the appropriate Trustee seal (for web, mobile, app or ad) on key pages. Content Best practices Having stressed the importance of SEE both on- and off-page, let's back- track briefly to discuss content best practices. Before you run off to complete your SEE checklist, take a look at your core site content.

Does it engage your audience? Does it impart the information visitors are seeking? Is it pithy, to the point, and easily read? Does it inspire trust and loyalty? Here are some of the keys to great content that help your site succeed on its own terms... Differentiate your Message Stand out from the crowd by providing unique, relevant and useful content that hoecakes your value to visitors and prospects. Review competing site content and ask

yourself, " what are they NOT saying that I would want to know? And then fill that knowledge gap on your own site. Satisfy Customers Give the people what they want by providing a mix of free (unique) content, but also capturing their information by requiring a lead form / email address for value-added content. Don't ask for too much information too early, however. Build trust giving visitors a solid taste of what you offer (through blobs, free white papers, etc.) before asking them to sign up for more. Teach Something You know best, so share it via webzines, white papers, blobs, videos, and on- line classes.

Use your teaching content to train visitors about your products and services - it can help support their decision to buy (and will help build your reputation as a go-to information source). Inspire User-generated Content (UGH) Empower sharing and content creation among users by providing tools and resources for collaboration, forums, user-based support and other ICC tools. Go beyond sharing buttons by inspiring conversations on blobs and other hosted content that you can co-create with your users.

Be a Policy Leader Prove you're serious about protecting customers by showcasing transparent, opt-in policies that clearly state how visitor data will be collected, stored, used and shared. Alert users when policies change, and use a service such as Trustee's Privacy Policy Generator (or consult with Trustee's enterprise team for larger initiatives) to create Designing for trust The best way to convert site visitors from browsers to customers is with a compelling, consistently designed user experience that makes discovery a pleasure.

When it comes to commerce experiences, the stickier the better. If your goal is to welcome visitors and ease them quickly into a shippable experience, don't try to break all the design rules or shock visitors with bleeding edge gadgetry. However, your site should have enough flair and brand appeal that it doesn't look like every other site on the market. Here are tactics and tips for usable site design that can help commerce sites soar, and sell...

Commerce Design Tactics Nail the Landing Page and Lead Form Quality landing pages and lead forms make all the difference in driving click-through and delivering high-value leads. As the gateway to your site, your landing page must communicate your value proposition and direct visitors to key areas (shop, learn, buy, etc.) with clear, compelling pathways and calls to action. Likewise, lead forms must provide a relevant offer to the user, show the value of your products or services, and provide a clean and simple way for customers to connect with your company.

Streamline your Look and Feel One key to sticky, trustworthy design is maintaining a clean, uncluttered site (less is more) that matches user expectations for how to navigate and use a site. Make user thaws clear on the homepage, and highlight your highest priority site experiences and content right from the start, to drive faster click -through. Use Information Architecture Best Practices Smart information architecture can take the guesswork out of design and content planning and creates a more fluid user experience.

Strive to be consistent and user- focused in the way your site flows, from navigation and page hierarchy to section and feature naming. Create a site

map and use CSS (cascading style sheets) to further standardize site flow, look and feel, and usability. Apply your Brand Everywhere Use brand assets (color palette, logo, typeface, etc.) consistently across all touch- points (including web, social, mobile and app) to ensure that consumers recognize your online persona wherever they find it.

Include branded gaming and social experiences for products and features that reinforce your brand family values. Incorporate decision support tools, such as feature configurations, how-to guides, product comparison charts, and multi-angle imagery to transform your site into a go- to information resource that builds customer trust (and leads to more conversions). Avoid Purchase Delays To speed the path to conversion, understand customer shopping patterns and structure your user experience accordingly.

Display persistent cues about the number of cart items, and keep the checkout link visible on all pages. Reduce cart abandonment at check-out by avoiding surprises (such as high shipping costs, hidden handling fees, out-of-stock notices) and by providing an anonymous purchasing option (instead of requiring customer registration or log-in before purchase Optimize Cross-selling Opportunities Design persistent recommendation zones for all product pages, and ensure they are populated with relevant options for accessories and other products to enhance the item being viewed.

Likewise, provide easy access to ICC / community and review areas where users can research and share product and purchasing experiences (and support each other's decisions By bringing optimized content and design best practices together, you can build customer trust in your site and

shaping-term relationships. But these are pieces off larger puzzle. Strategy and analytics can glue these pieces together for the big picture. Plan your integrated content and design strategy around user experience research ND site performance analytics.

This provides the backbone of support that can guide and validate your planning not only at launch but throughout regular maintenance and redesign efforts. To wrap it all up, apply performance marketing best practices to ensure an ongoing focus on relevance and user-centrism, and build trust by implementing privacy policies that reflect your company's dedication to customer protection. Analytics for Success Numbers don't lie. Use analytics tools to document and track user behavior and spotlight opportunities to improve conversions and drive user engagement.

Implement for Accuracy Google Analytics, Website Optimizer and other analytics tools (including those for Backbone advertisers) are critical to your success. Take free online training to learn how to use these tools, and ensure that you've installed and implemented them accurately to avoid inaccurate data collection. Visualize and Track Use Google Analytics funnels and reports for Content Quality, Link Placement, CAT and more to keep an eye on the numbers that reflect your strengths and weaknesses.

When using online advertising programs such as those for Google Towards) or Backbone, use the systems' free conversion tracking tools to map clicks to conversions and measure overall advertising ROI. Analyze Trends and Seize Opportunities Track user behavior, bounce rates, length of time on page and other factors that help identify your most compelling and best-converting

pages, and use this data to spotlight underperforming pages that should be upgraded or replaced.

By knowing what works, it's easier to see what doesn't work and adjust accordingly. Performance Marketing Strategies for Success Use the wealth of online analytics tools to gain actionable intelligence about mindset, will help you build trustworthiness, relevance and ease into the online experience. Along with the content and design practices discussed earlier in this paper, keep an eye on the big picture of your brand's performance across all channels in which it plays.

Offer integrated experiences from bricks-and-mortar to web, from mobile to APS, within social networks and through shared content experiences. Effectively communicate and build on your messaging across these realms without spamming users with excessive messaging. Ask users for their information only if you are willing to share something of value in exchange (such as access to richer content, or a free newsletter). And make all communications and list- sharing opt-in.