



WORKBOOK

Small Web Site Investments That Pay Off

SEVEN "QUICK WIN" WEB SITE IMPROVEMENTS

Workbook: Small Web Site Investments That Pay Off

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Omniiture created this workbook using research from Adele Sage, with Harley Manning and Andrew McInnes, of ForresterResearch based on their best practice guide “Small Web Site Investments That Pay Off”. Use this workbook to execute seven web site improvements that will result in quick wins for you and your company. You’ll also notice that we’ve provided report and page screenshots for you, highlighting optimization strategies for each quick win.

Some small Web site projects yield quick ROI. Forrester’s research uncovered seven low-cost techniques that increase conversion rates, boost cross-sell opportunities, help users find products, and improve click-through rates. To identify which quick fixes to make on their sites, customer experience professionals should articulate clear business goals, uncover problems in critical user paths, and compare their lists of problems against the list of quick wins.

This workbook is comprised of three stages and seven low-cost techniques:

Stage one: Outline clear Web site business objectives.

Stage two: Evaluate the critical paths for key user goals.

Stage three: Match the list of problems against the seven quick fixes.

1. Focus on the end of the funnel to boost conversion rates.
2. Optimize site copy, titles, and labels to improve natural search results.
3. Eliminate unused content to improve user experience and save money.
4. Prevent “No results” site keyword searches to help users find products.
5. Prioritize home page content to increase cross-sell opportunities.
6. Put key functionality on the home page to reduce steps for users.
7. Tweak the location and appearance of key buttons to boost click-through rates.

HOW TO MAKE YOUR WEB SITE INVESTMENTS PAY OFF – Stages 1-3

Not every quick win applies to every site. What should customer experience professionals do to diagnose problems and prioritize fixes?

Stage one: Outline clear Web site business objectives. Before beginning any Web site improvement projects, make sure you have a documented, agreed-upon list of business goals for the site. Forrester found for example, that Fidelity Investments’ online user interface design group starts projects by setting business goals like increasing customers’ new account registration rates by 6%. This goal becomes the context for projects like redesigning a registration form to increase the number of users who successfully complete it. These objectives should always be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic, and Timely; use your web analytics to ensure that you are measuring improvement of your metrics.

Industry Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

Financial Industry KPIs:

1. Completed (Online) Applications
2. Application Conversion Rate
3. Self-Service Transactions
4. Self-Service Failure Rate
5. Self-Service Penetration Rate

Lead Generation & BtoB KPIs:

1. Leads Generated
2. Lead Conversion Ratio
3. Cost per Lead
4. Web Inquiries
5. Web Inquiry Failure Rate

Media & Content Sites KPIs:

1. Page Views
2. Monthly Unique Visitors
3. Page Views per Visit
4. Visits per Visitors
5. # of Subscriptions

Retail KPIs:

1. Revenue
2. Average Revenue per Visit
3. Orders
4. Average Order Value
5. Order Conversion Rate

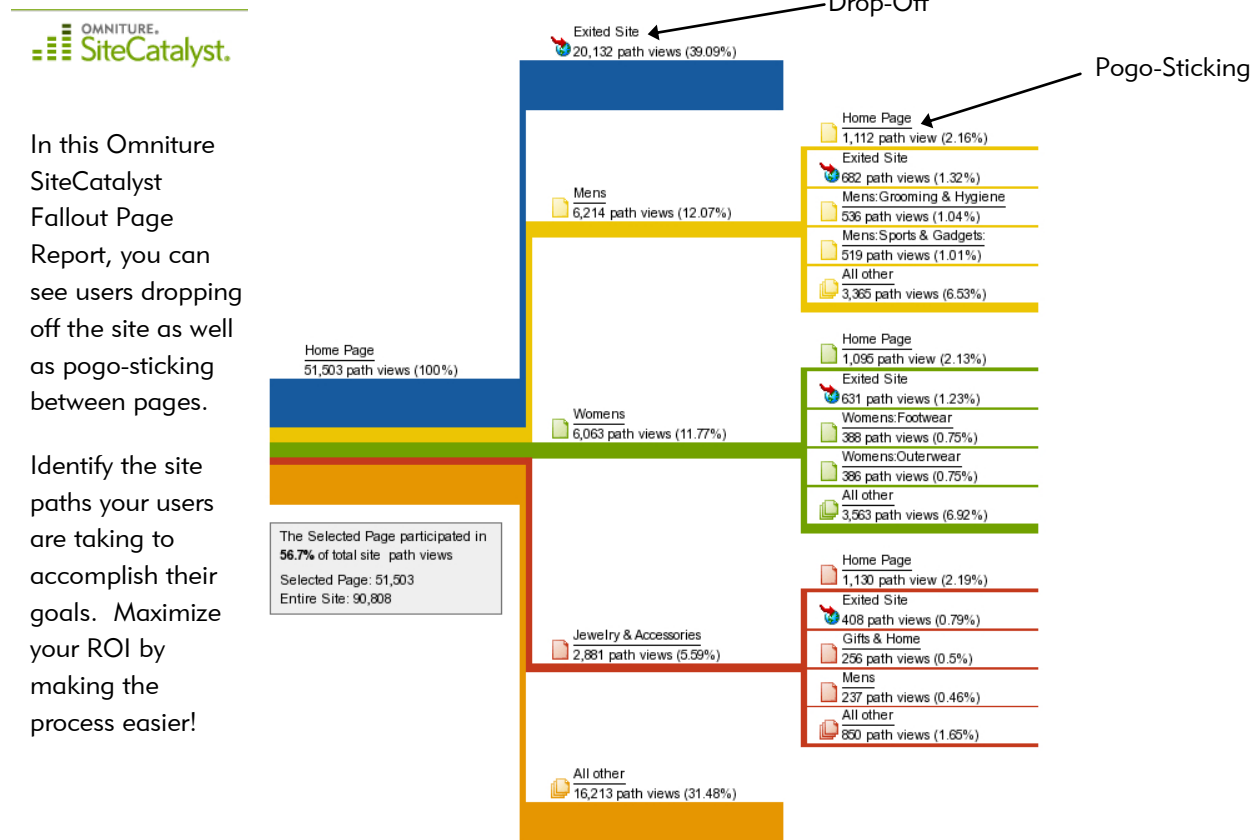
Travel KPIs:

1. Revenue per Booking
2. Look-to-Book Ratio
3. Sales Cycle
4. Origin & Destination Reporting
5. Campaign Affinity Variance

What are your site's business goals?

My Goals:	Documented and Agreed Upon	Metrics to track my goals:
1.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Stage two: Evaluate the critical paths for key user goals. Examine the site paths for the key user goals that support the business goals outlined in stage one. Improving the flows for those few key goals will streamline the processes for all users. How do you evaluate them? Use your Web analytics tool to look for problems like pogo-sticking and drop-offs. Your output from these analyses will be a list of problems that need fixing.



What are your site's critical paths?

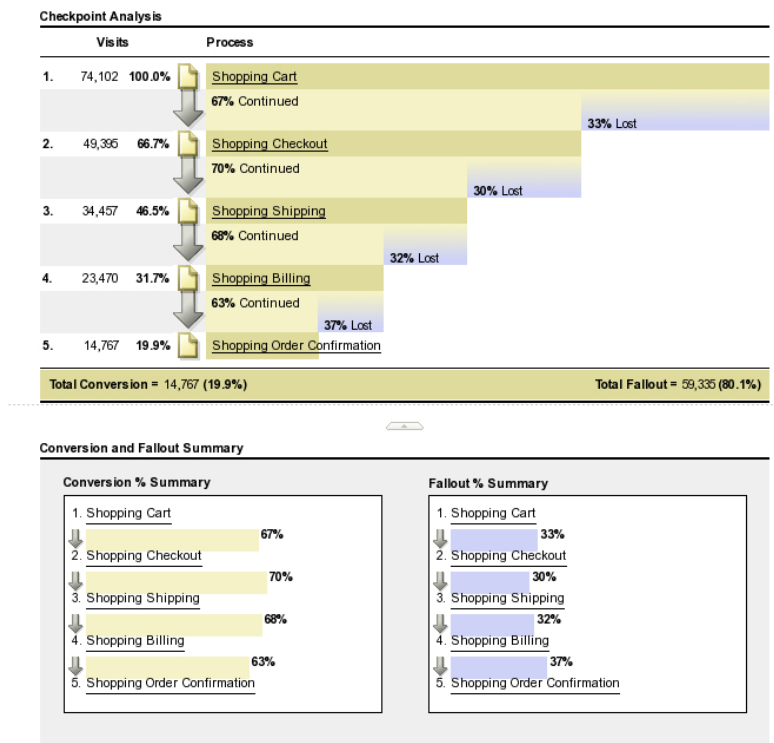
Critical Paths:	Pulled Pathing Report:	List of Problems:
1.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4.	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5.	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Stage three: Match the list of problems against the seven quick fixes. Take the list of problems you made in stage two and compare it against the list of quick wins to identify fixes you could implement quickly and inexpensively. For example, if your Web analytics tool reveals that users are dropping off on the order review page of your checkout, it could be that the review page looks like a confirmation page. Change the copy or appearance of the page to emphasize that it's a review step, and your conversion rate should go up.

SEVEN "QUICK WIN" WEB SITE IMPROVEMENTS

With an average tenure of barely two years, CMOs are under a lot of pressure to show results quickly. What Web projects can give them a big bang for their buck *and* provide fast results? Forrester talked to interactive design agencies and user companies to find out what kinds of small projects have yielded the highest returns. The resulting suggestions:

1. **Focus on the end of the funnel to boost conversion rates.** The easiest way to increase conversion rates is to ensure that people who already want to buy can do so easily. Optimize the checkout (or application) process by removing any barriers, clarifying language, and eliminating superfluous elements (see Figure 1). Comb Web analytics data to find drop-off spots; then employ heuristic evaluations and usability lab tests to determine what might be causing the abandonment. Forrester found for example, that a retailer had an order review page that 20% of customers were mistaking for an order confirmation page because of the way it was laid out — so shoppers never completed their purchases, even though they thought they had.



This checkpoint analysis report from Omniture SiteCatalyst shows the greatest user drop-off is right before order confirmation.

Optimize for maximum conversion, with automated testing, by testing different fields, error messages, and page layouts in your checkout / application process.

Figure 1 Optimizing Checkout and Application Processes Increases Conversion Rates

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

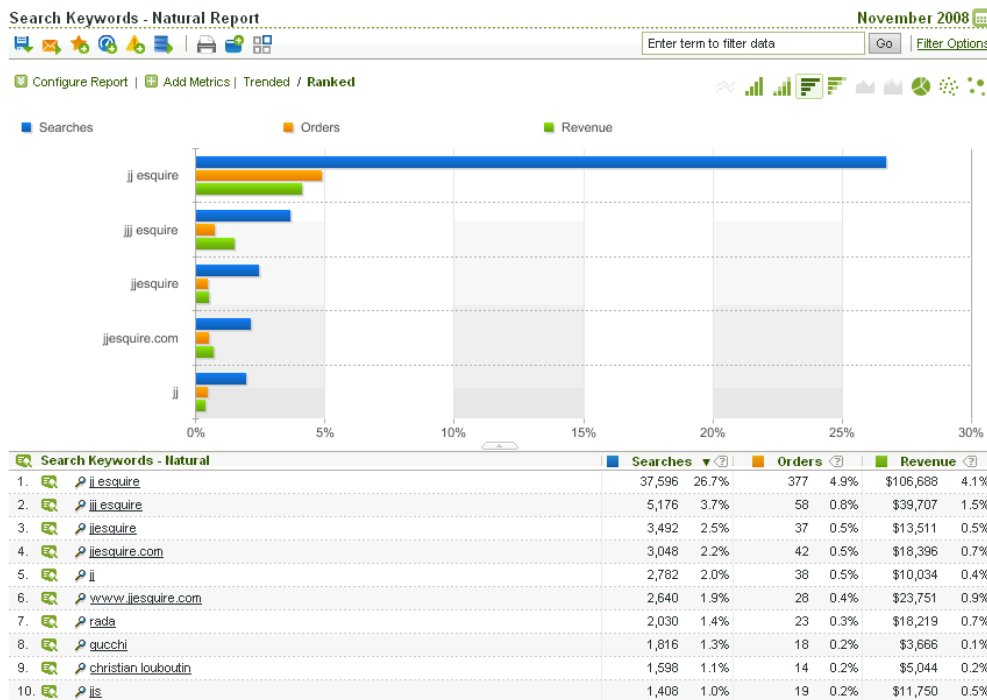
Recommendation	Example
Be clear why the site is asking for personal information.	A top credit card company site added contextual help to its business credit card application pages. The help window explained why the firm asks for a taxpayer ID. After making that change (plus removing two extra fields), the form completion rate jumped from 15% to 24%.
Provide clear error messages.	A big travel site found that many users received an error message on the login screen saying that the email address they entered wasn't "valid." Analysis showed that the email addresses were valid — just not the ones on record for the customers' accounts. When the company clarified the error message to indicate the real problem, it dramatically improved the successful login rate. In general, Tealeaf has seen that resolving this type of common Web site customer experience issue can lift site conversion rates by 2% to 5%.
Remove unnecessary fields.	Optimost finds that some sites still have fields during checkout that they call "fossils." Some fields ask for information that's obsolete — like a fax number — or labels that are no longer relevant, like "home phone" and "business phone" when only one number is needed. Extra fields make the form look longer, and users may not realize they're optional. Optimost tweaked the form pages for Delta Air Lines to optimize the reservation process and achieved a 1.2% increase in conversion on the credit card page.
Make sure your order review page doesn't look like a confirmation page.	Avenue A Razorfish reports that one client had an order review page that looked so much like an order confirmation page that 20% of buyers mistook it for their order confirmation and, as a result, did not go on to complete their purchase. The agency said that on average, they see about 5% of shoppers making that mistake on sites.
Streamline the order review page.	ZAAZ cited a client's site where the order review page had one "confirm" button but three different "edit" buttons for different sections of the order. The company tightened the page by combining the information into one section with one edit button and also moved the confirm button higher on the page. As a result, there was a 1.5% to 2% increase in conversion rate.
Don't require registration to complete a purchase.	Twenty-three percent of US online shoppers abandon sites mid-purchase rather than complete a required registration process. Making registration optional allows firms to close more sales and still offer a streamlined ordering process to those customers who are ready to register.
If checkout must require registration, integrate it into the process.	Blast Radius recommends that checkouts requiring registration should integrate the username and password fields into the process, rather than requiring them upfront as a potential roadblock. The agency also suggests that clients use customers' email addresses as their user names to make registration as easy as possible

What are your current Checkout and Application processes?

Current Checkout / Application Processes:	Optimization Questions:	Changes you'd like to implement and optimize for ROI:
Personal Information Requested:	Is personal information absolutely required? Does the page clearly specify why this information is needed?	

Error Messages:	Are the error messages clear (field specific, what is required of the user to correct the error)?	
Form Fields:	Which fields are really necessary?	
Order Review Page:	Is it clearly different from the Confirmation Page? How can you streamline the order review page?	
Registration:	Is registration prior to purchase really required? If registration is required, is the registration process streamlined into checkout?	

- Optimize site copy, titles, and labels to improve natural search results.** Optimizing a Web site for natural search results doesn't have to mean a site overhaul or a major content rewrite. Start with low-hanging fruit like making titles and category labels keyword-specific and adding a glossary. Forrester interviewed Lincoln Educational and found they used their focus groups to find out what language its audience used to describe relevant topics, such as "mechanics" versus "technicians." Although Lincoln Educational and industry dealerships refer to the career position as "technician," pages that use that term also include the term "mechanic" so that search engines will still find the site no matter which label users prefer. One top 10 bank invested in pages built specifically for search and has increased its search engine visibility by 1500%. The bank's vice president of online marketing reported, "This effort has already paid for itself in the revenue that it's driving for us."



Run a Natural Search Keyword report and use the results by keyword to optimize your titles and category labels.

Use a report like this one from Omniture SiteCatalyst to optimize by orders and revenue.

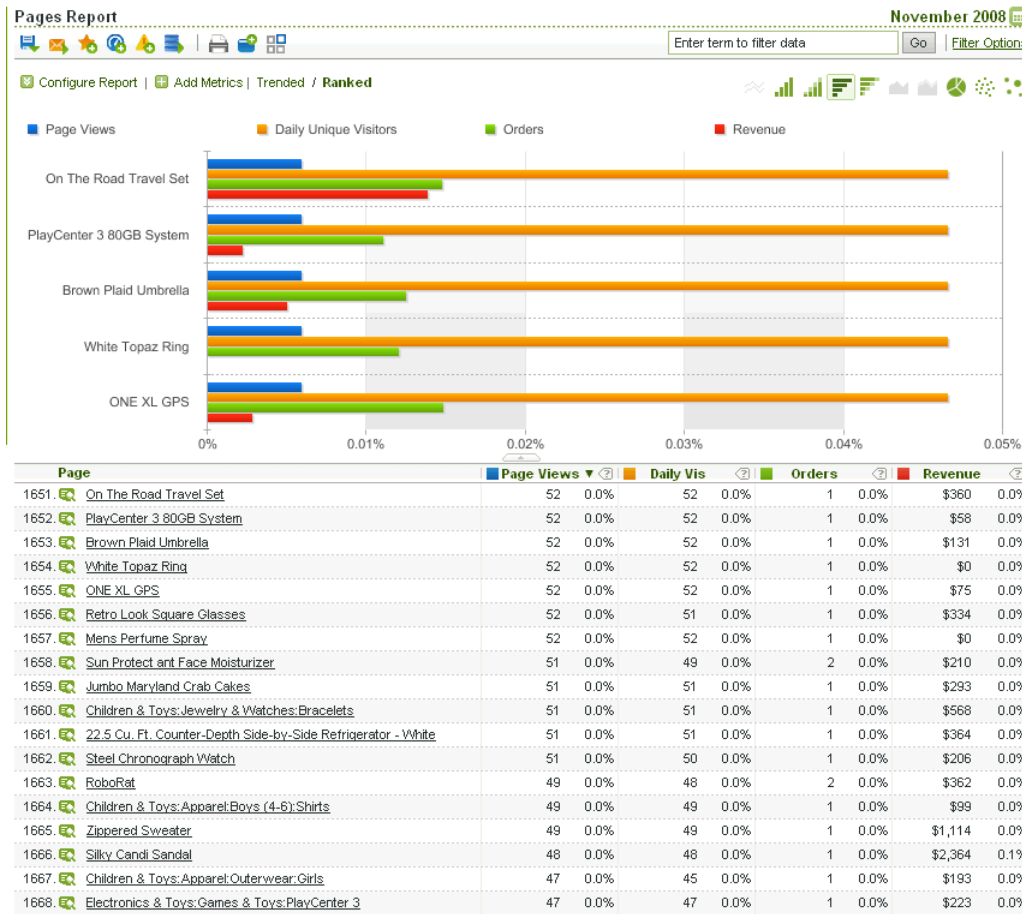
What are some of your key titles and category labels?

Key Titles/Category Labels:	Keyword specific words:	Titles & Labels Updated
1.		<input type="checkbox"/>
2.		<input type="checkbox"/>
3.		<input type="checkbox"/>
4.		<input type="checkbox"/>
5.		<input type="checkbox"/>

What are some keyword specific words to add to your glossary?

Glossary Words:	Glossary Updated
1.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. **Eliminate unused content to improve user experience and save money.** Use Web analytics data to look for content on the site that is rarely used and remove that content altogether. Forrester discovered that when Macromedia redesigned its site, its review of Web analytics data showed that roughly half of site content received little or no usage, which led it to eliminate infrequently used pages and concentrate on designing paths that encouraged traffic through higher-value content.



Run a Pages report, like this one from Omniture SiteCatalyst, and remove rarely used content to improve the user experience and funnel traffic through higher-value and higher revenue content.

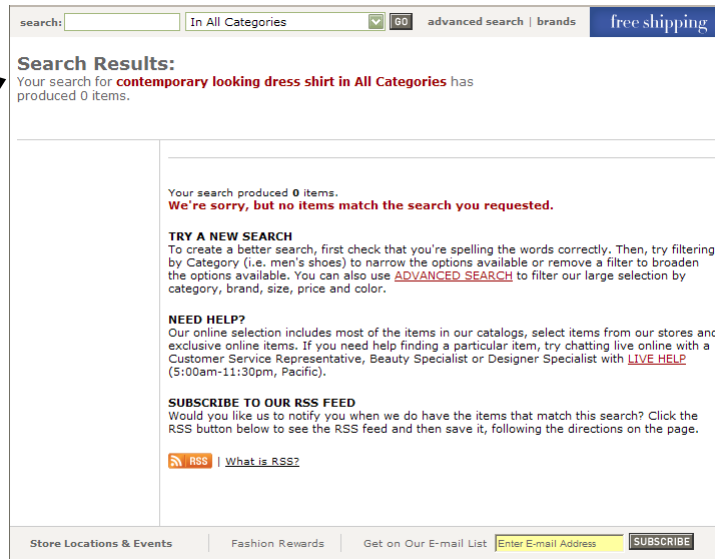
What are some poor ROI and rarely used pieces of content on your site?

Rarely used content:	Content Removed
1.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	<input type="checkbox"/>

4. **Prevent “No results” site keyword searches to help users find products.** Web analytics data can indicate which search terms yield no results on your site. Use that information to add tags to your products — like the names of equivalent products from competitors that customers have been searching for to no avail. And when there really are no results to display, use your search results page to suggest either alternative products (like best sellers) or alternative search terms that encourage users to continue exploring.

Don't lose revenue due to “no results” search keywords!

Replace “no results” search pages to suggest alternative best selling products or alternative search terms.



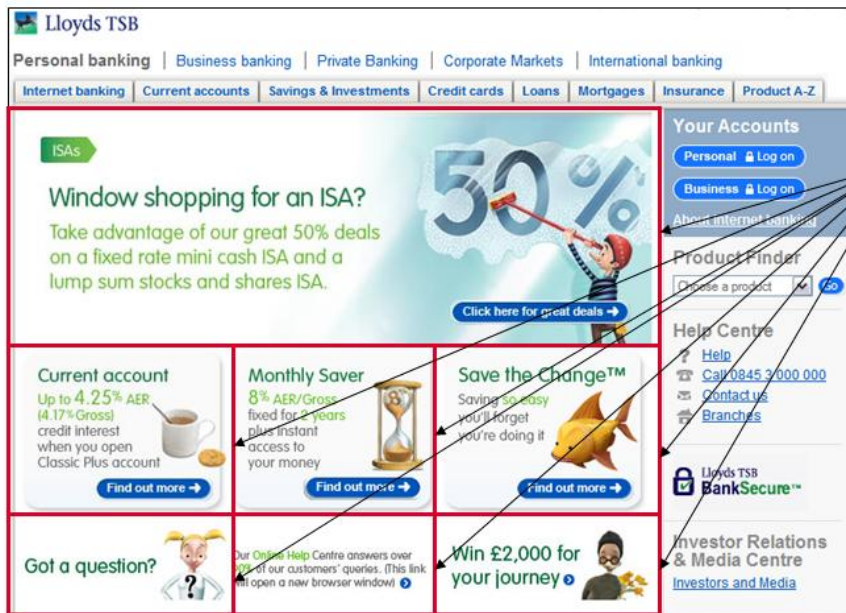
Internal Search Terms	Revenue per Site Search	Search Success	Order Conversion Rate	Revenue	Avg Order
1. camera	\$12.04	14,816 26.5%	4.94%	\$139,992 29.5%	\$619
2. Canon PowerShot	\$13.84	2,400 4.3%	2.13%	\$20,759 4.4%	\$649
3. The Sims Vacation	\$11.65	2,889 5.2%	1.74%	\$20,717 4.4%	\$668
4. Microsoft Halo	\$27.98	1,106 2.0%	2.94%	\$19,053 4.0%	\$953
5. LCD Computer Monitors	\$23.78	1,221 2.2%	3.23%	\$17,642 3.7%	\$735
6. Optical Mouse	\$21.96	1,219 2.2%	3.22%	\$16,362 3.5%	\$663
7. Olympus Camedia	\$14.52	1,893 3.4%	2.50%	\$15,665 3.3%	\$580

Display optimization search results by more than simply popularity, as in this Omniture SiteSearch report. Optimize results for each Site Search keyword by gross margin, revenue, and order conversion.

What are some search terms that yield no results?

No results search terms:	New search tag words / alternate product to suggest:	Search Tag Words Added / Alternate Product Suggested
1.		<input type="checkbox"/>
2.		<input type="checkbox"/>
3.		<input type="checkbox"/>
4.		<input type="checkbox"/>
5.		<input type="checkbox"/>

5. **Prioritize home page content to increase cross-sell opportunities.** Navigation and calls-to-action on the home page should support key user goals like shopping and self-service. Forrester discovered that Blast Radius worked with an eCommerce site that initially had eight modules on its home page: One led to a dead-end bio page, others led off the site completely, and only one linked to specific products for sale. Find space on the home page to display subcategories, either the full lists, or at least the top five or six choices for each category. Exposing the subcategories creates awareness of the breadth of product offerings, which promotes cross-sell and upsell opportunities without the expense of a recommendations engine. For example, Staples credits the exposed subcategories on its home page with increasing the average number of items per order.



Use automatic testing and targeting, like Omniture's Test&Target, to test varying cross sell promotions.

Make sure winning promotions are determined through statistical significance!

What are the calls to action on your homepage?

Home Page Calls to Action:	Call to Action Goal:	Changes to Support Cross-Sell and User Goals:	Changes Implemented
1.			<input type="checkbox"/>
2.			<input type="checkbox"/>
3.			<input type="checkbox"/>
4.			<input type="checkbox"/>
5.			<input type="checkbox"/>

What are the items in your homepage navigation?

Home Page Navigation Categories:	Subcategories to Display	Subcategories Displayed
1.		<input type="checkbox"/>
2.		<input type="checkbox"/>
3.		<input type="checkbox"/>
4.		<input type="checkbox"/>
5.		<input type="checkbox"/>

6. **Put key functionality on the home page to reduce steps for users.** Instead of making users click a link to get to your main site functionality, let them begin key processes — such as logging into an account, booking a room, or generating a price quote — immediately. For example, an airline was convinced that linking to its flight search application from the home page was effective. But when the company conducted an A/B test comparing the link with putting search fields right on the home page, it saw a 45% increase in conversion rate with the new design.



JJ.ESQUIRE

Free shipping with code JJ123!

Enter SKU or Keywords

WOMEN'S MEN'S JEWELRY & ACCESSORIES BEAUTY & FRAGRANCE GIFTS & HOME CHILDREN & TOYS ELECTRONICS

Improve your conversion rates by testing key functionality on the home page for immediate user access and increased revenue.

Ensure that your site search box and site survey links are displayed and the location is tested.

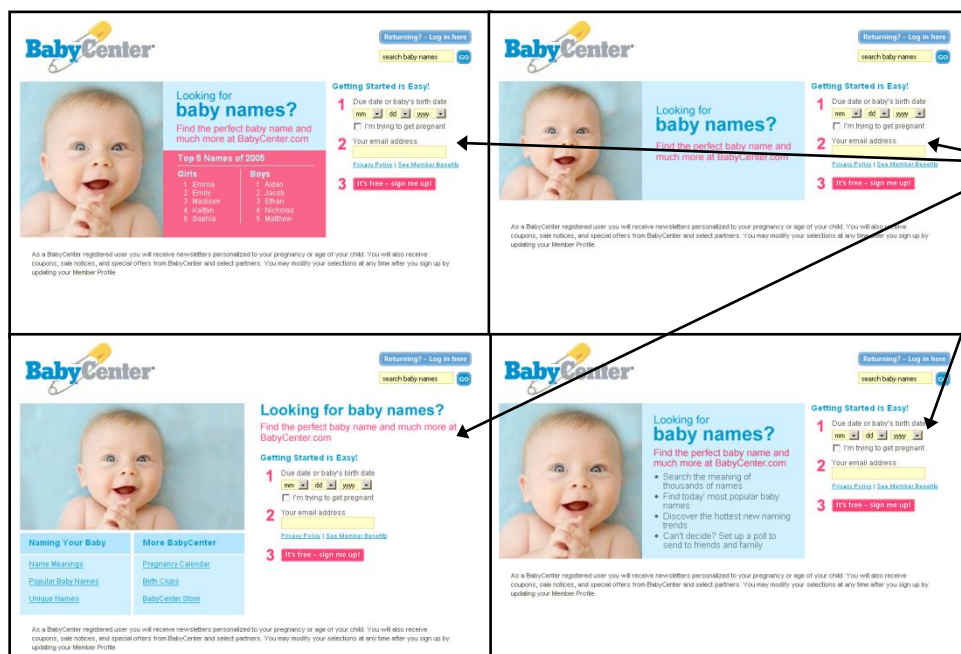
NOW SHIPPING WORLDWIDE! Find Out More >

Feedback Virtual Catalog Wish List Wedding Registry JJ Video My Account Store Location Search Contact Us Site Map Gift Card

What are your website's key functionality items?

Website Key Functionality:	Test on Home Page	Test Successful: Keep on Home Page
1.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. **Tweak the location and appearance of key buttons to boost click-through rates.** The placement, color, and design of a button can have a surprising affect on click-throughs. Forrester found that as one wireless carrier changed the location, color, and copy of the purchase button on its product pages, the click-through rate went up 130%, and the conversion rate went up by 57%. Similarly, ShermansTravel changed the submit button from gray to red and saw a 12% increase in conversion rate. And when the company added the word "please" to its "Submit email" button, conversion rates went up by 6.5%. There's no formula that will work on every site, so be open to experimenting with what will work well on yours. Multivariate testing, or even the more basic A/B testing, can uncover the most effective creative treatments from the list of possible options.



Test colors, copy, locations, and site calls to action to boost click-through and conversion rates.

Continually optimize for maximum ROI by testing new ideas against the previous statistically significant winner.