

Bath & Body Works Improves the Customer Experience of its Web Site with Keynote Systems

Impact Highlights:

- Keynote's custom engagement WebEffective® studies performed in 2006 and 2007 each surveyed 400 site visitors
- Study insights led Bath & Body Works to enhance its site; including more photographs, detailed product descriptions and by redesigning Web pages to make popular user reviews more prominent
- Keynote's studies helped the company prioritize site improvement projects; for example, Bath & Body Works learned it should focus more on content than navigation

Company

A division of Limited Brands, Inc., Bath & Body Works sells spa products for use at home through more than 1,600 stores nationwide and its Web site, www.bathandbodyworks.com. Its products include shower gels, lotions, candles, and accessories. The company was founded in New Albany, Ohio in the fall of 1990.

Challenge: Continually Improve Customer Experience

Bath & Body Works uses its Web site to support its sales efforts in numerous ways. Some customers use the site to learn about the latest promotions and store locations. Others want information about products, such as ingredients and usage. Still others make purchases online.

However customers use its site, Bath & Body Works wanted to

continually improve their experience. Therefore, it wanted to:

- Get users' feedback on content, including product descriptions, photography, ingredients, usage instructions, messaging for promotions, and pricing.
- Encourage brick-and-mortar customers to shop online and become multi-channel customers.
- Identify and prioritize projects for improving the site.
- Track the demographics of site visitors and whether they change over time.

Bath & Body Works had already used traditional focus groups and usability studies in which they recruited several dozen people and engaged them in a real-time dialog as they used the site. Yet these studies had limitations. George Hitler, Web Operations Manager for

Bath & Body Works, explained, "Usability studies are valuable because they allow us to see body language and mouse clicks. However, when you recruit someone to do a usability test, they are always there for the incentive. Even though they fit the user profile, it's an artificial environment. We wanted to test larger numbers of real users in a more natural setting."

Solution: A WebEffective enabled study uncovering the true intentions of users

In October of 2005, Bath & Body Works selected Keynote Systems to perform a custom WebEffective research study. WebEffective is an on-demand research tool to perform comprehensive behavioral and attitudinal research. Hitler said, "We were impressed with Keynote's unique ability to conduct an on-line survey and track actual customer behavior. Keynote's WebEffective technology allowed us to do this quickly, efficiently, and on a large scale."

Bath & Body Works' study was completed as follows: The WebEffective tool intercepted 400 site visitors. A pop-up window asked these visitors questions and was able to change the subsequent questions based on their answers. The user experience study began by qualifying visitors; for example, participants had to be over 18 and who intended to do more on the site than find a store location. Next, the tool downloaded an ActiveX program onto visitors' PCs that tracked user click streams; the ActiveX download performs this task more reliably than usability tools that rely on remote connections. After site visitors finished what they came to do--whether that was place an order, write a product review, or look for a sale--they were asked questions

based on the activities performed during the visit.

To date, Bath & Body Works has completed two Keynote WebEffective studies: one in August of 2006, the second in August of 2007.

Results

Bath & Body Works' WebEffective studies have provided a large amount of valuable information that it is using to improve its site and prioritize projects.

After it completed its first study in 2006, Bath & Body Works identified content as a primary target for improvement. Over the past year, it adjusted the functionality on the product page making descriptions easier to find and read. It also enhanced the photography, product descriptions and other content. As a result, in the 2007 customer experience study, Bath & Body Works found that the number of users who were extremely happy with the content jumped from 77% to 89%--a significant improvement.

Despite the improvement, Bath & Body Works in its 2007 study drilled down further into the site's content. It discovered that customers wanted even more detailed product descriptions and a better sense of what the fragrances smell like.

Another finding was that the majority of visitors come to the site to learn about sales and promotions. While these visitors were very happy, customers who wanted to make a purchase were frustrated by products not being available. Hitler explained, "We didn't realize how frustrating that could be for customers. Now we're looking into whether they were frustrated because they couldn't find items or they were out of stock. If they were out of stock on

About Keynote

Keynote Systems (NASDAQ "KEYN") is the global test and measurement company for mobile communications and online business performance. As an independent and trusted third-party, Keynote provides IT and marketing executives with an unbiased view into their Internet services from around the world. For over a decade, we have been providing measurement data and testing capabilities that allow companies to understand and improve their customer's online and mobile experience.

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the site, we need to find ways to tell them that we still carry the product and that they can get it at a store."

Just before the 2007 study was performed, Bath & Body Works added a new customer review section to its site and included questions about that. It found that the customer reviews themselves were rated highly but their location on the page required scrolling, so visitors weren't necessarily seeing them. They are now making the reviews more visible on the page.

A smaller, but important takeaway was the interest Canadians have in the site even though no stores currently operate in Canada nor does Bath & Body Works ship orders there. Hitler explained, "Limited Brands recently announced that it's going to expand internationally. Even though we don't have stores in Canada and customers can't buy our products over the Web, a lot of Canadians want to participate in the customer experience study and give us feedback on the Web site. As we build stores in Canada, we'll be looking at how our Web presence can better serve them as well."

Overall, Bath & Body Works has found that WebEffective studies from Keynote give it a real world view of how its customers perceive its site. And it is using that information to make ongoing improvements that will encourage the growth of its base of true multichannel customers.

