

Must-Have eCommerce Features

Road Map: The Retail eCommerce Playbook

by Sucharita Kodali

April 18, 2019

Why Read This Report

Digital business professionals often struggle with how to prioritize the countless issues that populate eCommerce to-do lists. This report takes a prescriptive look at industry standards and opportunities for differentiation in a retail eCommerce experience. We've divided the key opportunities into features and functionality to improve site navigation, product detail pages, and the checkout experience. We also discuss areas of opportunity such as fulfillment, customer service, and omnichannel execution.

This is an update of a previously published report; Forrester reviews and revises it periodically for continued relevance and accuracy.

Key Takeaways

Great Site Navigation And Product Detail Pages Attract And Convert Shoppers

To ensure that customers who land on a page can find exactly what they're looking for, a strong home page with key features like clear product categories and helpful onsite search is essential. Product detail pages that feature extensive information will ensure that shoppers can add items to their web carts and — ultimately — check out successfully.

Familiar Checkout Features Are Essential To Strong Sales

Simple checkouts that mimic successful eCommerce sites are often the most effective because consumers will frequently abandon unfamiliar experiences.

Investments In Areas Like Customer Service Are Also Critical

It's now table stakes to provide shoppers with creative value-added ways to receive their products, to service customers' needs effectively and promptly, and to provide social tools that encourage shoppers to share their experiences. Website investments are essential, but eCommerce also involves well-executed fulfillment and re-engagement.

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Related Research Documents

[The Art And Science Of Retail eCommerce](#)

[The Five Key Success Factors Of Every Digital Business](#)

[The State Of Retailing Online 2019: Omnichannel, Marketing, And Personalization](#)



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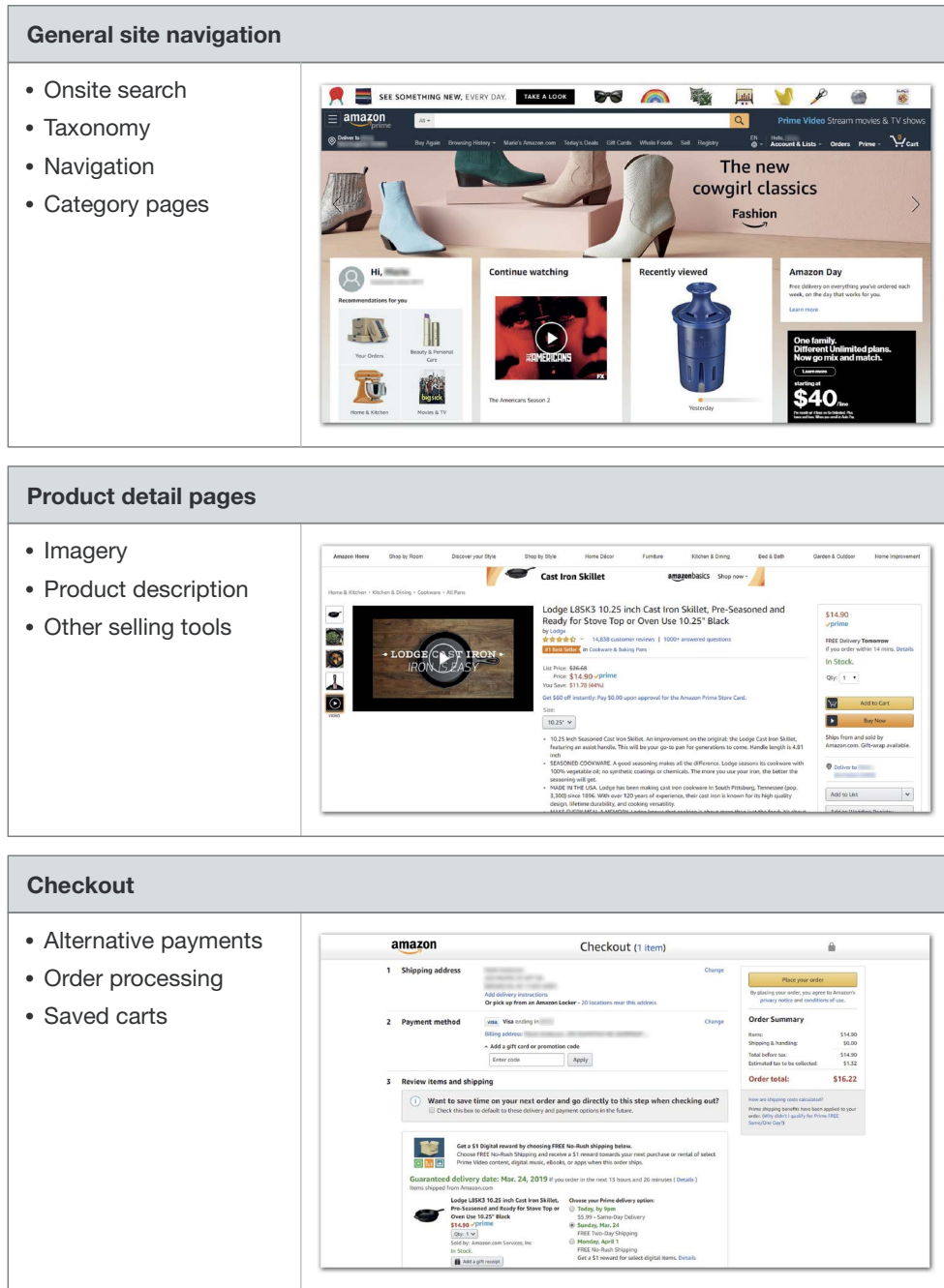
Key Commerce Features Have Percolated To The Top Over Time

Best practices form the foundation for eCommerce success. The eCommerce industry has a well-established standard of time-tested and widely adopted online features. By reading online news and industry publications and attending events such as those at Shop.org, digital business professionals quickly learn from the successes and failures of their peers and then adopt what works.

Core elements of retail eCommerce sites that are critical to success include: 1) site navigation, particularly the components of the home page, category pages, internal search results pages, and the top and bottom navigation bars; 2) product detail pages; and 3) checkout pages (see Figure 1). Within each large bucket, numerous features and functions create superior user experiences that boost a site's stickiness, profitability, and customer engagement. We explore a more extensive list of site features in "[The State Of Retailing Online 2018: Store Investments, Business Objectives, And Mobile](#)," but we include a synthesis of the most effective features for retailers here.

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FIGURE 1 Site Navigation, Product Detail, And Checkout Are The Pillars Of Strong Retail eCommerce Websites



- Onsite search
- Taxonomy
- Navigation
- Category pages

- Imagery
- Product description
- Other selling tools

- Alternative payments
- Order processing
- Saved carts

Source: Amazon website

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Strong Navigation Experiences Steer Shoppers Through Large Product Catalogs

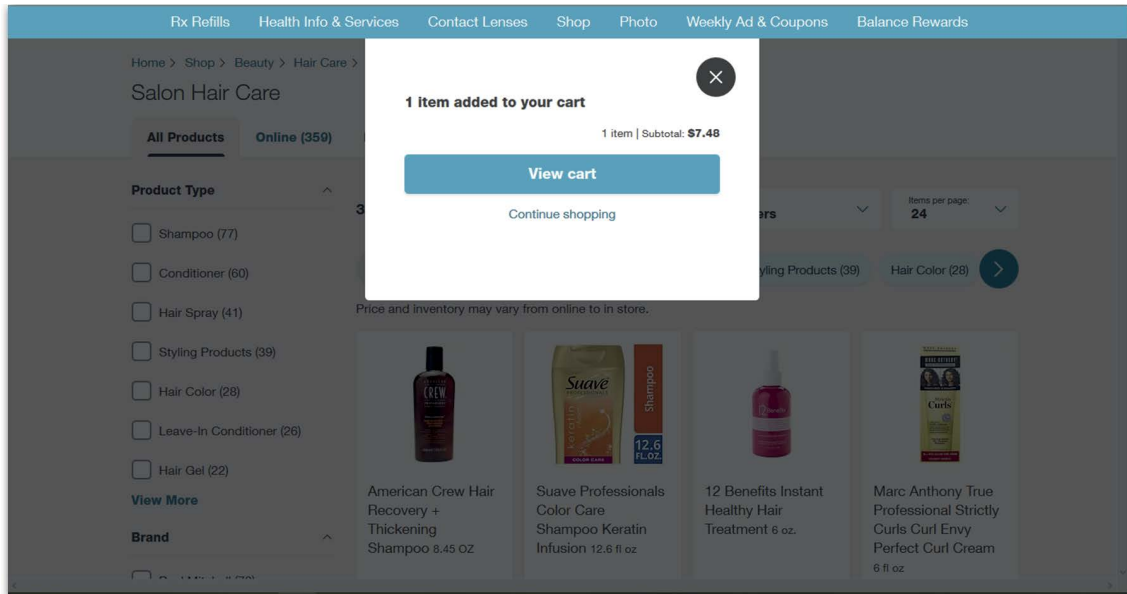
The way in which retailers execute the home page and other core pages is important because eCommerce sites often have large product assortments and a small amount of visible inventory. Some elements have become industry standards — such as vertical scroll, a left navigation bar on the product detail page to refine search, and top navigation bars with universal information like a shopping cart, site search box, and category links. How retailers execute these pages varies, of course. To optimize this experience for customers, retailers must:

- › **Support search.** Amazon recognizes that users compare products on search results listing pages, so it shows pertinent information there, such as average product rating, color options, and estimated arrival date.¹ Offering site search is an industry standard, but the way you lay out your search results pages has a significant impact on sales. For example, 79% of US online adults agree that it's important for retailers to offer advanced site search features, such as the ability to refine search results by price, brand, style, or other product attribute.² In fact, transactional eCommerce sites using site search have succeeded in delivering contextual commerce experiences.³ Walgreens displays “add to cart” buttons on its search results pages with the option to check out or continue shopping, which makes the shopping experience as functional as the customer wants (see Figure 2).
- › **Provide features that encourage discovery.** To display additional products, Amazon and Sephora use visual sliders and links to landing pages on their sites. Nordstrom uses vertical space to let customers discover products by scrolling down on desktop computers, and on its mobile site, it includes sliders for new arrivals and bestsellers. The goal is to engage shoppers through discovery and serendipity. Neiman Marcus uses links in its top navigation bar for sale areas or “what’s new” sections to develop stickiness by giving customers an incentive to return. And Expedia provides daily new products, frequent special deals, and timed availability, creating an incentive to check in regularly (see Figure 3).

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FIGURE 2 Walgreens Delivers Rapid Customer Convenience With “Add To Cart”



Source: Walgreens website

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FIGURE 3 Expedia Uses Item Scarcity To Incentivize Customers And Encourage Discovery

The screenshot displays the Expedia homepage with a search interface and several promotional banners. Below the search bar, there are four promotional banners: 'MEMBER PRICES' (Extra discounts on thousands of hotels and things to do), 'Add On Advantage' (Unlock up to 43% OFF select hotels*), and 'LAST MINUTE DEALS'. Below these are four travel deal cards for Orlando, Miami, Fort Lauderdale, and Manila, each showing flight and hotel options with prices. At the bottom, a 'Deal of the Day' is featured for Westgate Palace a Two Bedroom Condo Resort, including a 100% flight savings offer, a 4.0/5 rating, and a price of \$317 per person including flight and hotel. A scarcity indicator shows that 95% of the property was booked for the dates May 20-23.

Source: Expedia website

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Powerful Product Detail Pages Convert Browsers Into Buyers

The best product detail pages provide richer information than a shopper would find on her own by physically inspecting goods or talking to a sales associate. Product detail pages provide all the visual imagery, text, ratings and reviews, and specifications that shoppers need to make decisions about specific products. Amazon features sample pages or chapters and reviews on books' product detail pages. Retailers find that:

- › **You can never have too much detail on a product page.** Consumers — and the most successful retailers — tell us that more information always trumps less: 78% of US online adults agree it's important for a retailer's website to include product information.⁴ Rather than overloading shoppers with too much information and making pages too long, emphasize elements such as detailed product specs, ratings and reviews, sizing information, and related (cross-sell) products that encourage shoppers to complete a transaction.
- › **The more visual the tool is, the better.** The Home Depot mobile app provides features like augmented reality (AR), 360-degree views, and video buying guides to help customers shop. Why invest like this? Rich media, alternative images, zoom functionality, in-page accessories, audio, and video are critical to converting browsers to buyers — and can contribute to overall online sales growth. The Home Depot CEO Craig Menear notes that the “ . . . ongoing investment in our digital properties has increased traffic and conversion . . . online sales grew 22.7% in the fourth quarter and 24.1% in fiscal 2018, now representing 7.9% of our total sales.”⁵
- › **Personalizing the customer's experience increases purchasing.** Personalization engines use data from disparate sources to suggest relevant product options. These sources range from user-specific information — such as which product pages a user viewed the last time he visited the site — to general insights like popular products in the shopper's ZIP code. But there's a fine line between helpful and creepy, so digital business professionals should personalize selectively. Personalized content that adds value and simplifies product discovery will resonate with digitally sophisticated shoppers who are familiar with your brand. While 40% of US online adults agree that retailers should provide product recommendations based on their shopping or browsing history, that's even more true for US online adults ages 18 to 24 (49%) and 25 to 34 (54%).⁶ Digital business pros can borrow recommendation engine personalization techniques from Amazon's website and modify these concepts to fit their business goals (see Figure 4).

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FIGURE 4 Amazon's Personalization Options Validate The Recommendation Engine's Impact On Conversion

The screenshot shows an Amazon product page for a Lodge 10.25-inch Cast Iron Skillet. Five callout boxes on the right point to specific recommendation sections:

- 1 "Frequently bought together"**: Points to the top section showing the skillet with a spatula and a lid.
- 2 "Sponsored products related to this item"**: Points to the section below showing various other Lodge cookware items.
- 3 "Customers also shopped for"**: Points to the section showing a grid of similar cast iron products.
- 4 "Customers who bought this item also bought"**: Points to the section showing accessories like silicone holders and heat protectors.
- 5 "Your recently viewed items and featured recommendations"**: Points to the bottom section showing a mix of related products including other cookware and kitchen tools.

Source: Amazon website

Fast Checkout Ensures That Retailers Close The Deal

Twenty-eight percent of retailers we surveyed reported that their online shopping cart abandonment increased in 2018, and another 55% said it stayed flat (i.e., it didn't improve).⁷ A rock-solid checkout is the hook that reels in the buyer, capitalizing on the earlier navigation and product information bait. Unfortunately, many digital retailers still rely on subpar checkout processes, which lead to high cart

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abandonment rates.⁸ As with site navigation and product detail pages, retailers should continuously test and optimize checkout. Make changes incrementally, with the goal of a checkout experience that's as simple as possible while remaining feature-rich. Key success factors for retail eCommerce checkout include:

- › **A fast, easy task flow.** Among US online adults, 18% said they abandoned an online transaction because shipping and handling costs appeared too late in the checkout process; 8% abandoned a purchase because the checkout process was too long or confusing.⁹ What works? Exposing shipping information on the first cart page or providing shipping calculators helps, as does crafting crystal-clear and highlighted error messages that show why a particular field was declined. Also effective is providing a status bar or breadcrumbs, letting the customer check a box to make shipping and billing information the same, and clearly communicating promotion details related to the order.
- › **Payment simplicity.** Use autofill fields so that customers can easily enter card credentials. For customers who do not store card information in their browser, focus on reducing unnecessary card data entry fields such as card-type checkboxes. Additionally, be strategic about offering alternative payment methods: For example, PayPal's nearly 267 million users make it a sure bet for most retailers, and our data shows that 39% of US online adults have used PayPal to buy products or services in the past three months.¹⁰ By contrast, consumer adoption and use of other alternative payment methods like Chase Pay and Masterpass by Mastercard are still low.¹¹
- › **Fulfillment options.** Free shipping still dominates shoppers' priority lists, but many shoppers are interested in experimenting with new ways to receive their purchased goods, including options for shipping, method, and time and place of delivery.¹² Options abound: shipping from a third party, buying online and picking up in-store, locker shipments, time- and handling-based delivery options to specific locations, multiple address information, split shipments, gift messaging, gift wrap, and more. Rather than blanketing the customer with all options, the checkout engine needs to selectively present these options based on what it understands about the customer and the purchase. Specific presentation methods such as collapsible lists and nested delivery can counteract customer confusion and ideally close the sale.

Best-In-Class Goes Beyond The Core Site Experience

Truly best-in-class retail eCommerce experiences extend beyond the website to offline and other digital media, so you need to execute these extensions flawlessly. Use methods such as standard benchmarks and heuristic evaluations to help you uncover site and delivery issues (see Figure 5).¹³ Think beyond the core site functionality: 49% of US online adults expect companies to have a mobile app, and 43% think that social media and tools are a great way to communicate with a brand.¹⁴ Retail digital business professionals should master:

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- › **Customer service.** In 2017, 47% of US online adults said that they were very likely to abandon an online purchase if they could not find a quick answer to a question.¹⁵ Shoppers' expectations for customer service were also high: 58% wanted to be able to move between customer service channels without having to re-explain their situation.¹⁶ Digital retailers such as Zappos (an Amazon subsidiary) lead their brick-and-mortar counterparts in Forrester's Customer Experience Index (CX Index™) by excelling at customer service and attracting and retaining legions of loyal followers.¹⁷ Multichannel retailer Costco improved five places in Forrester's "[The US Multichannel Retailers Customer Experience Index, 2018](#)" because of its strong product assortment, generous return policy, and recent investments in eCommerce, resulting in strong double-digit year-over-year growth in online sales.¹⁸ Strong customer service capabilities encompass elements of fulfillment, returns, delivery visibility, and order management systems, thereby constituting a critical component of an eCommerce experience.
- › **Community.** Nike has crafted successful social experiences by allowing shoppers to customize shoe designs through its service Nike By You, which has created sticky site experiences (see Figure 6). ASOS has its own fashionista stylists driving traffic with communities across Instagram, Pinterest, and Snapchat. Sephora's online Beauty Insider Community allows customers to ask questions, get recommendations, and find beauty inspirations via other customers. Community offerings such as Facebook pages translate to more site traffic by attracting brand enthusiasts and supporting search engine optimization. Retailers that connect with their customers on social media enhance the "discover," "explore," "ask," and "engage" stages of the customer life cycle.¹⁹
- › **Omnichannel service and insights.** Consumers want flexible delivery options: 27% of US online adults have used an omnichannel fulfillment method in the past three months.²⁰ As they increasingly use digital and analog retail touchpoints in concert, shoppers expect a retailer's website to be the source of truth for information they will need on their shopping journey: 71% of US online adults say that real-time, in-store inventory is an important feature for a retailer's website; 55% seek information about product availability online before purchasing offline; and 37% are less likely to visit a store if its in-store inventory is not available online.²¹ Omnichannel fulfillment options are table stakes for a strong eCommerce experience.²²
- › **Mobile website performance.** "Mobile site performance is the new sexy," says Christy Smith, director of product management at Nordstrom.²³ For Nordstrom, that means going after load speed improvements just as hard as new features and capabilities — and with good reason: 10% of US online adults blamed their last abandoned cart on slow load times or crashes.²⁴ Speedtest found that the mean US mobile download speed in 2018 was 28.50 Mbps — well behind leaders such as Norway (63.19 Mbps), Iceland (58.68 Mbps), Qatar (55.17 Mbps), and more (including China at 30.96 Mbps), so anticipate that many mobile visitors will struggle with slow data speed.²⁵ For example, reducing the size of images will minimize load times and thereby improve the mobile site as a reliable resource for shoppers who are on the go and need to access information quickly.

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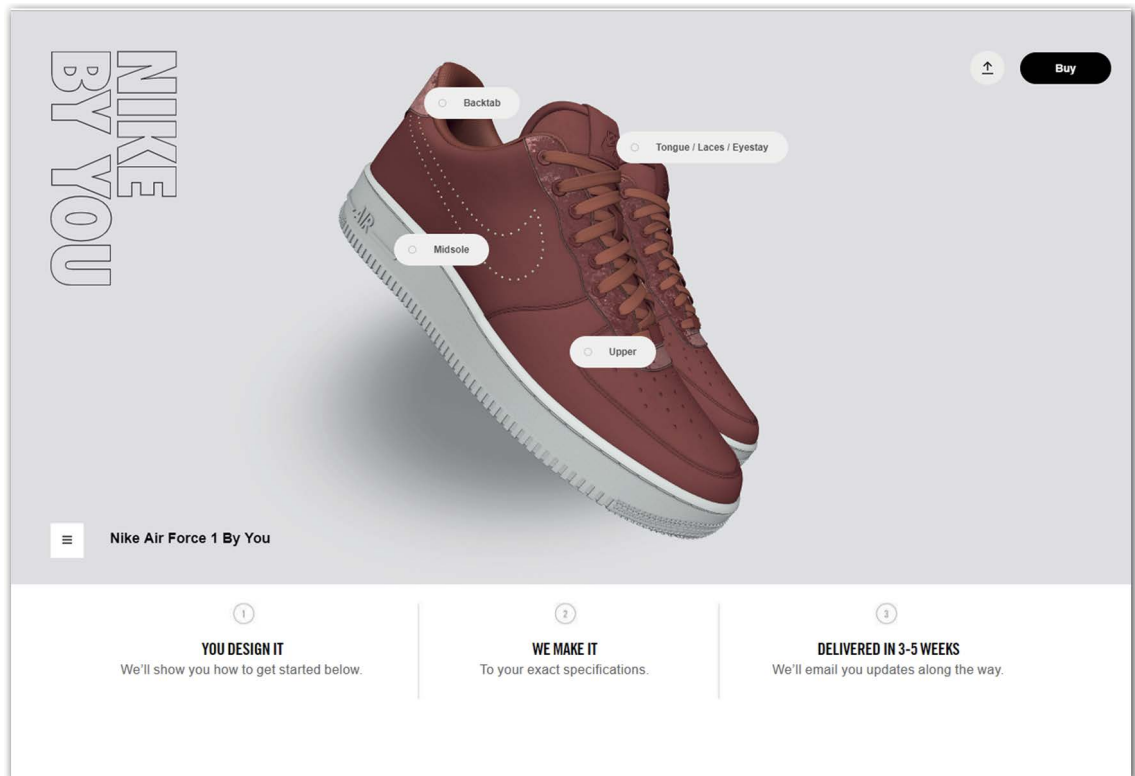
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FIGURE 5 Mapping The Digital Experience Can Reveal Website Inconsistencies And Issues

Type	Good for	Common pitfalls
Heuristic evaluation	Looking for research-backed issues using an expert reviewer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It depends on expert judgment. • It depends on specific goals/user scenarios.
Functionality review	Comparing a defined set of competitors	It only evaluates against common and expected functionality.
Web, app, and interaction analytics tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantifying usage and behavior of pages, screens, or interface elements • Identifying points of failure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional web and app analytics typically don't reveal enough information about the issues. • It's difficult to know how to solve the problems.
Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collecting users' perceptions over time • Collecting users' perceptions across touchpoints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response rates are low. • There is selection bias based on willingness to answer surveys. • Surveys are getting shorter, meaning responses are less detailed. • Users don't always tell the truth in surveys.
Opt-in customer feedback	Getting direct perspectives from customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Users frequently don't explain the issue in enough detail. • There is selection bias based on willingness to provide feedback. • Complaints frequently aren't about the website but about company policies or pricing.
A/B and multivariate testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quantifying the effects of changes • Determining the best change to create a given outcome (e.g., conversions) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You lack ideas about tests to perform. • You risk optimizing endlessly on a stagnant website. • Shifts in perception or downstream behaviors based on changes may take time to manifest (e.g., users' perceptions about ease of use, support calls about website problems).
Remote usability testing	Rapidly sourcing qualified customers to provide feedback in a close-to-realistic environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You can't see faces/body language as effectively as in usability labs. • Users can't always articulate why something is a problem and sometimes don't tell the truth.
Usability labs	Seeing in-person reactions to interfaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lab environments aren't a natural place for users and may not generate the same responses. • Users can't always articulate why something is a problem and sometimes don't tell the truth.

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FIGURE 6 Nike Drives Social Impact By Letting Users Share Custom Designs In A Photo Gallery

Source: Nike website

Recommendations**Cover Your Site Experience Bases**

Begin your site redesign by assessing your users and their goals — a process that we call scenario design.²⁶ Companies invest a tremendous amount of time and money when selecting the perfect eCommerce platform or when hiring specific digital talent, but the most critical determinants of success are ultimately the features and functionality that a site provides its customers during the key moments of research and purchase. To create this list, digital business professionals must:

- › **Prioritize function over features.** “From a digital standpoint, we’ll continue to innovate and design multichannel experiences that serve customer needs across our website, app, and other channels in ways that continue to improve the experience across online and physical shopping,” noted Best Buy CEO Huber Joly.²⁷ Many features that effectively improve conversion rates are commonplace,

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such as showing shipping charges on the first checkout page.²⁸ Amazon and eBay aren't aesthetically beautiful sites, but their internal quality assurance (QA) teams do continuous, rigorous testing to ensure they are highly functional and deliver on key customer goals.²⁹

- › **Design features specific to their industry or product.** Customers' needs that are specific to your industry or category define features to develop first. In the consumer electronics category, deferred billing programs and financing options at checkout are critical to convert more shoppers. Twelve percent of US online adults shopping for a new mobile phone service in 2016 and 2017 wanted the option to pay for their new phone in installments.³⁰ By contrast, on a grocery website, important features such as saved orders, order history, dynamic shopping carts, and one-click checkout are likely to generate better customer experiences and repeat orders over time.
- › **Avoid the big site reveal and instead use an incremental development approach.** Men's clothing subscription service Trunk Club used a launch/test/iterate development method to build a sign-up flow to lower its new customer acquisition costs, and it increased conversions by 133% by using Optimizely for A/B testing.³¹ Retailers must jettison old development practices and instead take an interactive approach to updating site features and functionality.
- › **Support a strong mobile experience.** Forrester estimates that smartphones alone impacted 34% (or \$1.3 trillion) of total US retail sales in 2018, so retailers must actively focus on the mobile experience.³² Mobile devices present different challenges from a design and development perspective, particularly for site navigation, landing pages, and checkout. For inspiration from the leaders in mobile apps for retail, read the following Forrester reports: "[The Forrester Retail Wave™: US Mobile App, Q1 2019](#)" and "[The Forrester Retail Wave™: European Mobile Web, Q4 2018](#)." Although nearly two-thirds of online sales still come from desktop devices, in 2017 retailers saw the majority of their online traffic via mobile browser and app.³³ Mobile design should anticipate mobile visitors who primarily want to look up product information, find store hours, and reach customer support, rather than immediate intent to transact.³⁴
- › **Prioritize data for results.** To pinpoint the data you really need to focus on, identify the customer moments that will have the greatest impact on business outcomes.³⁵ Too often, digital business pros attempt to use data because it's available, putting a proverbial square peg into a round hole. Not all data will drive toward business goals, and the most effective data shines a light on opportunities.

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Supplemental Material

Survey Methodology

The Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics® North American Online Benchmark Survey (Part 1), 2019, was fielded from October 2018 through December 2018. This online survey included 97,501 respondents in the US and 11,779 respondents in Canada between the ages of 18 and 88. For results based on a randomly chosen sample of this size, there is 95% confidence that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 0.3% of what they would be if the entire population of US online adults (defined as those online weekly or more often) had been surveyed and plus or minus 0.9% of what they would be if the entire population of Canadian online adults had been surveyed.

Forrester weighted the data by age, gender, income, region, and broadband adoption to demographically represent the US and Canadian online adult populations. The survey sample size, when weighted, was 97,324 in the US and 11,759 in Canada. (Note: Weighted sample sizes can be

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different from the actual number of respondents to account for individuals generally underrepresented in online panels.) The programming language herein reflects the survey respondent base for each question. Bases for specific questions have been changed in published data for increased clarity. Therefore, the base in published data may not match the base language in this document. Dynata fielded this survey on behalf of Forrester. Survey respondent incentives included points redeemable for gift certificates.

The Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics North American Retail And Travel Topic Insights 3 Survey, 2018, was fielded in July and August 2018. This online survey included 4,653 respondents in Canada and 4,658 respondents in the US. For results based on a randomly chosen sample of this size, there is 95% confidence that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 1.0% of what they would be if the entire population of online adults (defined as those online weekly or more often) in each country had been surveyed.

Forrester weighted the data by age, gender, income, region, and broadband adoption to demographically represent the North American online adult populations. The survey sample size, when weighted, was 4,653 respondents in Canada and 4,658 respondents in the US. (Note: Weighted sample sizes can be different from the actual number of respondents to account for individuals generally underrepresented in online panels.) The programming language herein reflects the survey respondent base for each question. Bases for specific questions have been changed in published data for increased clarity. Therefore, the base in published data may not match the base language in this document. Research Now fielded this survey on behalf of Forrester. Survey respondent incentives included points redeemable for gift certificates.

The Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics North American Retail And Travel Survey, Q4 2017 (US) was fielded in November 2017. This online survey included 4,504 respondents in the US between the ages of 18 and 88. For results based on a randomly chosen sample of this size, there is 95% confidence that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 1.5% of what they would be if the entire population of US online adults (defined as those online weekly or more often) had been surveyed. The data was weighted by age, gender, income, broadband adoption, and region to demographically represent the US online adult population. The survey sample size, when weighted, was 4,504.

(Note: Weighted sample sizes can be different from the actual number of respondents to account for individuals generally underrepresented in online panels.) Please note that the programming language herein reflects the survey respondent base for each question. Bases for specific questions have been changed in published data for increased clarity. Therefore, the base in published data may not match the base language in this document. Ipsos Observer fielded these surveys on behalf of Forrester. Survey respondent incentives included points redeemable for gift certificates.

The Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics North American Retail And Travel Benchmark Recontact Survey 1, Q3 2017 (US) was fielded in July 2017. This online survey included 4,509 respondents in the US between the ages of 18 and 88. For results based on a randomly chosen sample

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of this size, there is 95% confidence that the results have a statistical precision of plus or minus 1.5% of what they would be if the entire population of US online adults (defined as those online weekly or more often) had been surveyed. The data was weighted by age, gender, income, broadband adoption, and region to demographically represent the US online adult population. The survey sample size, when weighted, was 4,509.

Endnotes

- ¹ See the Forrester report "[2018 Retail Best Practices: Mobile Web.](#)"
- ² Source: Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics North American Retail And Travel Topic Insights 3 Survey, 2018.
- ³ Site-search technologies are a key customer interaction point. Search supports contextual content delivery, customer self-service, content presentation, and navigation structures. For further information, see the Forrester report "[Six Things Brands Must Do Online To Improve Sales.](#)"
- ⁴ Source: Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics North American Retail And Travel Topic Insights 3 Survey, 2018.
Customers spend more money and choose brands more often when they're shown product information that's well written, includes inspired imagery, and features thoughtful comparisons with other products. For more information, see the Forrester report "[Six Things Brands Must Do Online To Improve Sales.](#)"
- ⁵ See the Forrester report "[The Forrester Retail Wave™: US Mobile Apps, Q1 2019.](#)"
Source: "Home Depot, Inc. (HD) CEO Craig Menear on Q4 2018 Results - Earnings Call Transcript," Seeking Alpha, February 26, 2019 (<https://seekingalpha.com/article/4244353-home-depot-inc-hd-ceo-craig-menear-q4-2018-results-earnings-call-transcript?part=single>).
- ⁶ Source: Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics North American Retail And Travel Topic Insights 3 Survey, 2018.
- ⁷ Source: "The State Of Retailing Online 2019," an NRF study conducted by Forrester Research.
- ⁸ In 2017, online retailers reported an average cart abandonment rate of 50%. See the Forrester report "[The State Of Retailing Online 2018: Store Investments, Business Objectives, And Mobile.](#)"
- ⁹ Source: Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics North American Retail And Travel Benchmark Recontact Survey 1, Q3 2017 (US).
- ¹⁰ Source: Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics North American Online Benchmark Survey (Part 1), 2019.
In addition, PayPal is the preferred online payment method for 20% of US online adults. Source: Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics North American Retail And Travel Topic Insights 3 Survey, 2018.
- ¹¹ Just 4% of US online adults have used Chase Pay in the past three months, and 2% have used Masterpass by Mastercard. Source: Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics North American Online Benchmark Survey (Part 1), 2019.
- ¹² "Expedited free shipping" was the third most common answer when we asked US online adults which factors are most influential in determining which retailer they shop with online, following "final price" and "free, no hassle returns"; 14% said that delivery/pickup capabilities were some of the most influential factors. Source: Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics North American Retail And Travel Topic Insights 3 Survey, 2018.

And in 2017, 67% of US online adults said they were willing to wait longer to receive their purchase if shipping was free. Source: Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics North American Retail And Travel Benchmark Recontact Survey 1, Q3 2017 (US).

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- ¹³ Forrester released a new digital user experience review in May 2017. Like its predecessors, this heuristic evaluation relies on trained experts performing key customer scenarios. See the Forrester report [“The Forrester Digital UX Review.”](#)
- ¹⁴ Source: Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics North American Online Benchmark Survey (Part 1), 2019.
- ¹⁵ Source: Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics North American Retail And Travel Survey, Q4 2017 (US).
- ¹⁶ Source: Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics North American Retail And Travel Survey, Q4 2017 (US).
- ¹⁷ To see which retailers excel in Forrester’s CX Index ranking, see the Forrester report [“The US Traditional Retailers Customer Experience Index, 2017”](#) and see the Forrester report [“The US Digital-Only Retailers Customer Experience Index, 2017.”](#)
- ¹⁸ See the Forrester report [“The US Multichannel Retailers Customer Experience Index, 2018.”](#)
- ¹⁹ Forrester has adopted an in-depth customer life-cycle concept based on marketing transitions and entrance into the age of the customer. For further information, see the Forrester report [“The Customer-Obsessed Enterprise.”](#)
- ²⁰ Twenty-seven percent of US online adults said they used a retailer’s click-and-collect or “buy online, pick up in-store” option. Source: Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics North American Retail And Travel Topic Insights 3 Survey, 2018.
- ²¹ Source: Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics North American Retail And Travel Topic Insights 3 Survey, 2018.
- ²² For information on omnichannel fulfillment capabilities that customers expect, see the Forrester report [“Omnichannel Mastery: Optimize Fulfillment And Engagement.”](#)
- ²³ Source: Phone interview with Christy Smith, director of product management at Nordstrom, March 10, 2017. See the Forrester report [“The Five Fixes To Increase Mobile Checkout Conversion.”](#)
- ²⁴ Source: Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics North American Retail And Travel Benchmark Recontact Survey 1, Q3 2017 (US).
- ²⁵ Source: “Speedtest Global Index,” Speedtest, February 2019 (<https://www.speedtest.net/global-index>) and Isla Mcketta, “The World’s Internet in 2018: Faster, Modernizing and Always On,” Speedtest, December 10, 2018 (<https://www.speedtest.net/insights/blog/2018-internet-speeds-global/>).
- ²⁶ See the Forrester report [“Persona Pitfalls: Seven Missteps And How To Avoid Them”](#) and see the Forrester report [“Modernize Your Customer Research.”](#)
- ²⁷ Source: “Best Buy Co. (BBY) CEO Hubert Joly On Q4 2019 Results - Earnings Call Transcript,” Seeking Alpha, February 27, 2019 (<https://seekingalpha.com/article/4244802-best-buy-co-bby-ceo-hubert-joly-q4-2019-results-earnings-call-transcript?part=single>).
- ²⁸ For an evaluation of the omnichannel capabilities of retailers, see the Forrester report [“Retailers: Extend Omnichannel Capabilities To The Customer, Not Just Operations.”](#)
- ²⁹ In 2011, Amazon reported undergoing at least 30 to 40 major site changes daily based on testing algorithms and automated release of its website. Amazon’s continuous delivery pipelines and DevOps procedures enable developers to deliver 50 million deployments per year through microservices. This amounts to approximately 1.5 deployments per second. Source: “AWS re:Invent 2015: DevOps at Amazon: A Look at Our Tools and Processes (DVO202),” YouTube video, October 15, 2015 (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=esEFaY0FDKc>).
- ³⁰ Source: Forrester Analytics Consumer Technographics North American Technology, Media, And Telecom Benchmark Recontact 2 Survey, 2018 (US).

Must-Have eCommerce Features

Road Map: The Retail eCommerce Playbook

According to Synchrony Financial's fourth annual study on major consumer purchases, 75% of Synchrony Bank cardholders always seek promotional financing options when making a major purchase. Source: "Fourth Annual Major Purchase Consumer Study," Synchrony, November 20, 2015 (https://www.synchrony.com/2015%20Major%20Purchase%20Study%20White%20Paper%20Final%2011_20_15.pdf).

³¹ Trunk Club maintains a strong testing culture, and within this culture, it tested the introduction of a lengthy, six-step sign-up flow using A/B and multivariate testing tools, such as Optimizely, combined with front-end coding. Despite the inherent risks in lengthening the onboarding process, Trunk Club's customers responded well to the interactive and visual process. Source: "Trunk Club's Winning Optimization Strategy," Optimizely (<https://www.optimizely.com/customers/trunkclub-desktop/>).

³² Smartphone-impacted transactions are transactions that the user researched on a smartphone but purchased offline as well as sales made via the smartphone. Source: Forrester Analytics: Digital-Influenced Retail Sales Forecast, 2018 To 2023 (US).

³³ Source: "The State Of Retailing Online 2018," an NRF Shop.org study conducted by Forrester Research.

³⁴ Forrester partners with Shop.org annually to survey online retail executives on their adoption of various web-related technologies and the investment levels associated with those initiatives. See the Forrester report "[The State Of Retailing Online 2018: Store Investments, Business Objectives, And Mobile.](#)"

³⁵ See the Forrester report "[Combine Digital Measurements For Intelligent Engagement.](#)"

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