

Campmor increases online revenue through comprehensive search solution.

Overview

■ Challenge

Increasing numbers of customers were unable to find the products they needed and were abandoning search sessions

■ Why IBM?

IBM delivered a plug-and-play solution that understands users' intent and provides a navigational experience that adapts to their queries

■ Solution

IBM Commerce Module for OmniFind™ Discovery Edition simplifies customer navigation and provides targeted, cross-sell and up-sell merchandising opportunities

■ Key Benefits

64% increase in online revenue; 9% increase in orders initiated from customer Web site searches (search order); average search order size 14% larger than non-search orders; click-through rate increase from 16% to 25%



IBM Commerce Module for OmniFind Discovery Edition empowers merchandising managers to monitor and enhance the online shopping experience to increase conversion rates, improve cross-sell and up-sell offers, and enhance the overall merchandise mix.

Campmor, an outdoor specialty equipment retailer established in 1978 and based in Paramus, New Jersey, is known for its wide selection of outdoor clothing and camping, backpacking, bicycling and water sports equipment. Campmor established a Web presence in 1995, providing brochure-like information to customers to augment the company's booming mail order business. As the company pursued growing sales opportunities on the Web, it expanded the site's functionality to support online ordering, and currently derives more than 70 percent of its sales from its Web site.

“Campmor increased revenue derived from online searches by 64% in the first six months after implementing Commerce Module for OmniFind Discovery Edition. The click-through rate has risen from 16% to 25%, and the average order size for search orders is 14% higher than orders which are not initiated by a search – a 9% increase since implementation.”

– Erich Eyley, CTO, Campmor, Inc.

Improving customer loyalty and increasing conversions



Commerce Module for OmniFind Discovery Edition makes it easier to convert browsers to buyers by shrinking the gap between information need and purchase decision.

Online sales steady but not increasing

Campmor engaged with Tachyon Solutions, a custom technology consultancy based in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to redesign the site and fully realize its potential as a sales channel. When Tachyon evaluated the performance of Campmor's Web site, it noted some significant trends. First, while traffic had increased steadily from 1998 to 2002, growth had begun to slow, with approximately 75 percent of the site's visitors coming back only once per month. Second, although order size and customer visit-to-sales conversion rates had increased steadily, they were trending towards flat. The analysis showed that customers were abandoning their sessions after executing product searches.

It was clear to the Tachyon team that the Campmor site needed a comprehensive search solution that would improve customer service, increase conversion rates and enhance overall sales.

The company required a search solution that could easily integrate with the IBM WebSphere Commerce platform, the technical foundation of the site. And given the specialized nature of the products sold by Campmor, the solution would need to provide specific and focused results to customer queries, culled from the company's massive catalog of tents, clothing and outdoor gear.

Commerce Module for OmniFind Discovery Edition solution wins proof of concept

After careful consideration and a targeted review of the marketplace, Tachyon decided to find an existing product to implement rather than build a custom solution for Campmor. For its evaluation, Tachyon brought in several vendors to provide a proof of concept. From this group, the team selected IBM Commerce Module for OmniFind Discovery Edition solution to power the search function on the site. In addition to the patented search and interaction server, the commerce solution set consists of:

- *The Management Console for business user tuning*
- *Ad hoc reporting powered by MicroStrategy*
- *A packaged integration to WebSphere Commerce Suite*
- *A prepackaged Information Accelerator with commerce application user interfaces and best-practice configurations*

Using IBM's ontology for the apparel industry, the system was preconfigured with a vocabulary of terms specific to Campmor's vertical. Applying this vocabulary, the team was able to provide high out-of-the-box accuracy and a system that understood the user's intent, despite Campmor's complex base of inventory. And with the Management Console administration user interface, Campmor's merchandising managers are able to fine-tune the search results to meet their changing needs.

"IBM Commerce Module for OmniFind Discovery Edition delivers the best end-user experience by synthesizing the seeker's request, translating it into an effective response and organizing the information returned in a manner that makes it easy for our customers to act," says Campmor CEO Daniel Jarashow.

Core capabilities meet customers' needs

The Commerce Module helps optimize sales by guiding customers to pertinent and relevant product information based on a contextual understanding of the customer's unique needs. The contextual understanding capability combines a real-time interpretation of user intent and application context to optimize the relevance of information that is delivered—regardless of the customer's spelling and grammar.

Moreover, by presenting the product catalog via the Commerce Module's adaptive presentation capabilities, the Web site helps shoppers find the products that meet their needs by dynamically analyzing the underlying catalog structure, including options such as brand, pricing, style and descriptive merchandising copy. This ability helps to deliver relevant products—and presents intuitive hints to guide related shopping searches.

To accelerate time to value, the Commerce Module also provides packaged solutions that support deep integration with WebSphere Commerce Suite. The flexible architecture helps support the diverse and complex commerce needs of retailers.

Improved Web site delivers results

The new and improved Campmor site went live in July 2004 and is delivering considerable results. Overall the company has seen a dramatic ROI in several ways. "Campmor increased revenue derived from online searches by 64 percent in the first six months after implementing IBM Commerce Module for OmniFind Discovery Edition," says Erich Eyler, Campmor CTO. "The click-through rate has risen from 16 percent to 25 percent, we've seen a 9 percent increase in orders initiated from customer Web site searches, and the average order size for search orders is 14 percent higher than orders which are not initiated by a search—a 9 percent increase since implementation."

Key Components

Software

- IBM Commerce Module for OmniFind™ Discovery Edition
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—Daniel Jarashow, CEO, Campmor, Inc.

The deployment of the Commerce Module at Campmor was a virtually seamless process. Tachyon attended IBM training sessions, allowing the team to be technically self-sufficient and require little assistance from the IBM professional services organization throughout the rapid solution installation.

Enhancing responsiveness to customers

With the Commerce Module powering the site and providing in-depth category specification features, visitors can now easily search by brand, category, keyword or item number, as well as against detailed feature-level information, such as color or price.

And, because the navigation is tailored to each product, customers are now able to refine their results based on specific, case-by-case attributes. For example, if a customer is interested in purchasing a backpack, she can narrow down the choices from selections of backpacks for a day hike, overnight hike or weeklong expedition.

Another significant site improvement is the addition of merchandising capabilities driven by the Commerce Module. For example, customers looking to purchase a new tent may also be prompted to look at the latest line of sleeping bags, kayaks or other camping accessories. This feature can help to upsell customers based on their precise interests at a particular moment in time, and is easily controlled by business users through the Management Console.

Campmor and Tachyon are extremely pleased with the implementation and the ensuing positive results. In fact, in light of the positive synergy between Tachyon and IBM, the two have formed a strategic partnership to jointly deliver search capabilities for companies looking to improve their online business.

"IBM Commerce Module for OmniFind Discovery Edition offers unique capabilities at an extremely low cost of ownership," says Tachyon Solutions CEO Marion Lewis. "By wrapping our services around these offerings we provide companies with best-in-class search solutions to improve bottom-line results by interacting more effectively with their customers."

For more information

Please contact your IBM sales representative or IBM Business Partner.

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For more information about Campmor, visit:
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