CASE STUDY

Rural King

Leveraging Customer Engagement to Increase Conversions:

CLIENT
Rural King

LOCATION
Matoon, IL

INDUSTRY
E-Commerce / Farming Supply / Home Company

PROJECT
www.ruralking.com

CHALLENGE

In e-commerce, it’s imperative to know what’s grabbing the attention of your visitors and how to deliver a relevant and engaging online experience for today’s savvy customer. The desktop experience has reached a level of maturity that can make it difficult to stand out in the competitive world of digital commerce.

Intelligent product recommendations, user generated content, and reviews have become the norm and consumers expect online merchants to personalize the experience. Consumers also tend to gravitate toward products that other people have purchased, and are more apt to express a positive reaction, such as a good review or a social share.

People buy what is hot and trending. Bestseller, top reviews, and “most popular item” filter and sort features are can be used to identify products that are trending upward in popularity, but do not tell the whole story. The challenge is harnessing and leveraging data related to consumer behavior—both on the website and on social platforms—to deliver a unique merchandising experience.

PROBLEM

Online shoppers are influenced by trends and product reviews

Capturing product reviews is relatively easy and works particularly well for items that have a high amount of positive feedback. There’s a direct correlation between the number of product reviews, the average rating, and revenue. But what about newer products that have just been added to the site that people are viewing, adding to the shopping cart, and purchasing?

How do online merchandisers, highlight the “trending” products that people are clearly interested in (based on their behavior), but the product reviews haven’t yet come in?
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Online shoppers vote with their “likes” and “shares”
Very few shoppers make a purchase on their first visit to a site. They spend time reading product reviews, sharing what they like on social channels, such as Facebook, Pinterest, Twitter, and talking with their friends.
How can digital marketers leverage the social activity of their website visitors to raise awareness about the products shoppers are paying attention to during their online experience to influence purchasing behavior?

Merchandisers lack real-time behavioral information
Time and resources are limited. There’s never enough time to wade through a mountain of data and interpret shopper behavior to make decisions about marketing, merchandising, and product development quickly.
In addition to the need for real-time browse, add to cart, and purchase behavior, today’s merchandiser also needs access to the social engagement information at a product level in order to understand what is resonating with consumers and to expose top trending products to shoppers in real time.
How do online merchandisers gain access to real-time on and off-site consumer behavior without hiring an army of analysts?

SOLUTION

Rural King, one of the largest farm and home companies in the US, launched its e-commerce presence in 1997 in order to offer products to customers in areas where there may not be a physical retail location. The website is fully stocked with a wide variety of items, including livestock feed, farm equipment, agricultural parts, fashion clothing, housewares, and toys.
As an organization they are constantly striving to add value to their online shoppers and the aforementioned are problems they wanted to solve.
They found the solution to be Site Vibes, a social engagement platform that captures shopping and social activity about the products on the website and helps extend the social reach and improve the customer experience.
Rural King saw immediate traction and engagement with the Site Vibes Trending Now page and their customers love it.
“One of the real benefits of Site Vibes is the value it brings to customers,” explained Dan Carey, Online Marketing Manager for Rural King. “Our customers love seeing what other people find interesting and the Trending Now section exposes great products that otherwise might not have much visibility.”

Site Vibes tracks shopper activity:
• Add to cart
• View product detail
• Facebook likes
• Tweets
• Pinterest pins
• Product reviews and sales
Site Vibes uses this data to calculate which products are trending on a website. Each of the activities has a different value that when rolled together give e-merchandisers and marketers insight into what is most important to your customers and followers right now.

Top Trending Pages
The top trending products are displayed together on a unique “Trending Now” page which features each product with an image, price, and a colorful symbol, such as the Facebook or Twitter logo. Each product image links back to the detail page.

Trend Peek
Add trending badges and notifications directly into product lists, which let customers know the hottest products and latest sharing trends anywhere that products are displayed.

Analytics Dashboard
The analytics dashboard tracks traffic and for products featured on the “Trending Now” page and traffic to your website from the social broadcast campaigns. This data provides you with great insight that can be used to:
• Improve website e-merchandising in real time by featuring popular products
• Increase social engagement
• Identify opportunities for new products
• Expose opportunities for pricing adjustments

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