

Timberland

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*Jill Areson-Perkins,
Timberland Internet Marketing
Manager*

Impact Highlights:

- Ease of use increased from 30% to 75%.
- Satisfaction increased from 55% to 86%.
- Strong revenue growth for the site.

About Timberland

Timberland is a global leader in the design, engineering and marketing of premium footwear, apparel and accessories for consumers who value the outdoors and their time in it. Timberland® products offer quality craftsmanship and detailing and are built to withstand nature’s elements. The company’s products can be found in leading department and specialty stores, Timberland® retail stores around the world, and on the timberland.com website.

Timberland’s Challenge

Months after Timberland launched its first e-commerce site (May 2001), the company concluded that the site was underperforming against key metrics. Online surveys uncovered some initial problems, and consumer feedback filtered through the customer service group helped confirm the need for a major redesign.

The objectives of the project were clear: Make the site faster, simpler, and more intuitive. In particular, the redesign would focus on simplifying navigation, improving

the purchase process, and addressing performance issues. The business goals for the site were even clearer: Timberland aimed to grow its e-commerce sales and increase its conversion rate on a year-to-year basis. To help with this task, Timberland summoned the creativity of Fallon Worldwide and the e-commerce platform of Chelsea Interactive. At Fallon’s recommendation, Timberland also commissioned Keynote to ensure that the consumer was represented in the design process.

“Timberland values the importance of market research, and we carefully considered our options,” said Jill Areson-Perkins, Internet Marketing Manager for Timberland. “When we compared traditional lab-based usability against the opportunity to get feedback from hundreds of people across the U.S. and capture their behavior through back-end technology, it absolutely made sense to go with Keynote.”

The Keynote Solution

Keynote worked with Fallon and Timberland to develop a before-and-after benchmarking study. The program was to examine not only site design issues, but also consider the total experience on the site—including whether backend systems



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had been successfully and seamlessly integrated from the customers’ perspective. For the first evaluation, Keynote sent 200 active explorers and outdoor enthusiasts to timberland.com and tracked every click and comment, as users



viewed the home page, surfed the site, went through the shopping process. Following the redesign implementation, Keynote conducted a nearly identical evaluation with another 200 targeted panelists.

Keynote Impact

The first Keynote evaluation demonstrated that timberland.com was below retail industry averages for organization, effective communication of the site’s offering, and satisfaction. Timberland.com also had a higher frustration rating than industry averages (82% compared to the retail average of 49%).

Some of the findings—such as site slowness and error messages—confirmed Timberland’s initial hypotheses about the site’s weaknesses. Other findings—such as confusion over kids’ footwear sizes—were new areas Timberland focused on for the redesign. Both Fallon and Chelsea Interactive participated in the Keynote presentations to make sure their decisions reflected these takeaways. (Because of timing, site design was already underway when the first Keynote results became available. The teams used the latest

data to confirm and refine the design strategies.)

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Five months later, timberland.com unveiled its new design. One of the most noticeable changes was a complete redesign of the navigation. Previously, timberland.com had provided a variety of ways to shop: 1) using sub-brands (Timberland PRO™ and Mountain Athletics™), 2) all brands, and 3) demographics. This structure confused consumers and led them to underestimate the number of Timberland® products. When the redesign introduced a new site hierarchy, users were able to spend less time navigating and more time shopping.

The site redesign also focused on more specific trouble areas. The team simplified the purchase process and shifted to merchandise category names that were consumer-friendly. The search queries were refined to make products easier to access. Finally, the teams addressed site performance issues that had been problematic to many shoppers.

“Keynote brought an incredible amount of thoughtful analysis and industry insight to the table during this process,” said Areson-Perkins. “They were members of the team from the start—from scripting the study to participating in design reviews following the research—and their follow-through was instrumental in the success of Timberland’s site.”

The post-redesign scores quantified the value of the initiative. Keynote measurements recorded that ease of use increased from 30% to 75%, likelihood to purchase increased from 28% to 39%, and satisfaction increased from 55% to 86%. The redesign also contributed to double-digit growth in revenues for the site.

Timberland continues to implement some of the opportunities highlighted by panelists in the research evaluations. The company plans to grow its knowledge of its online customers by acknowledging the customer service group for its keen insight, attending industry events to keep updated on new trends, and commissioning future evaluations to take the pulse of target customers.

About Keynote

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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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