

## eBay

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*John McDonald, Director of Home & Garden, eBay*

### Impact Highlights:

- Determined customer motivations and identified the issues and frustrations encountered while on the site.
- Revealed that a high percentage of activity comes from the first page of search results, indicating that eBay must get the most relevant results to users sooner.
- Discovered shoppers wanted more and better-quality photos, prompting the company to proactively address the issue.

### About eBay

eBay is The World’s Online Marketplace®. Founded in 1995, eBay created a powerful platform for the sale of goods and services by a passionate community of individuals and businesses. On any given day, there are millions of items across thousands of categories for sale on eBay. One of the company’s newest marketplaces is eBay Home & Garden, which attracts more unique visitors than any other home-related site on the Internet. There are 900,000 listings at any given time and 160,000 new listings on any given day on eBay Home & Garden.

### eBay’s Challenge

eBay had many theories about who was coming to its newly launched home decor category and how easily these visitors were finding—or not finding—the products they wanted. But it had no hard data to back up these hypotheses. eBay needed to determine the

motivations of its customers—were they typically shopping for gifts, home remodeling projects or simply browsing for fun? Moreover, it needed to identify the issues and frustrations these buyers encounter while on the Home & Garden site.

“We wondered if it was difficult for buyers to get to the right products in this category,” says Jeannie Reeth, Senior Category Manager of Home & Garden at eBay. “We wanted to see how people were using our search tools and moving through the site and in order to determine where exactly they were running into problems. The idea was to understand why some people were successful and others weren’t so we could apply the right recipe to everyone.”

### The Keynote Solution

The eBay evaluation involved intercepting users on the eBay Home & Garden site, tracking their behavior as they completed their intended tasks and gathering detailed feedback directly from users while they interacted with the site. Keynote then conducted deep analysis and segmentation on users’ clickstreams, mapping their



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behaviors (what they did) to their feedback (what they said) in order to understand what behaviors lead to bidding and buying on the site.

The study targeted a specific set of customers: namely, those who were at or near the beginning of their shopping experience and who were hunting for home furnishing and décor items. These customers were instructed to go about their normal shopping, but were intermittently asked a number of questions about their satisfaction, potential frustrations, and why, ultimately, they chose to bid or buy. The intercept approach gave eBay a rich foundation for understanding visitors because it returned quantitative data that revealed the customer's satisfaction ratings of eBay, qualitative data that articulated the impressions and attitudes of customers in their own words, and behavioral data that showed what customers actually did—or did not do—on the site.

### **The Keynote Impact**

The Keynote study helped confirm many of eBay's original theories, but it also uncovered insights that made the company think twice about key aspects of the site. For instance, the study revealed that a high percentage of bidding activity on eBay Home comes from products listed on the first page of search results, and that the majority of consumers do not browse the full set of pages of listed products. The Keynote findings indicated that eBay must encourage users to refine their product searches sooner to ensure that the most relevant items fall within the first few pages.

To that end, eBay Home is now rolling out an increased number of dynamic landing pages, or interim pages that encourage users to further refine searches before any results are listed. For instance,

users who enter the words “Laura Ashley” will be shown specific subcategories, such as Bedding and Bath, so they can find their desired products earlier in the searching process. The study also revealed that people who know the brand names of products they seek have a better allround experience on the site than customers who do not know specific brands. This confirmed the need to provide additional search and browse tools, such as product finders, to help users who do not have a brand in mind. The Keynote data helped eBay determine what attributes should be included in the product finders, thereby allowing users to base their searches not just on brand, but on the size, condition and color of particular products.

The Keynote study also found that a number of shoppers on eBay Home & Garden would like to see higher quality photographs and more photos on the site. Armed with this information, eBay is now aggressively reaching out to its sellers and encouraging them to improve the backdrops of their photos as well as include more images and close-ups of product details.

“At the very highest level, we are working to increase the action and activity around our home furnishings category,” says John McDonald, Director of Home & Garden at eBay. “But first we needed to understand the needs of our buyers and how they shop in order to better merchandise to them. If buyers can navigate the site more effectively and find exactly what they are looking for, we will be able to significantly drive conversion rates in the days and months ahead. Keynote is playing a critical role in helping us reach that goal.”

## 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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