

PET WORLD Animal Supplies, Inc. (Case Study)

Background: PET WORLD Animal Supplies, Inc.

PET WORLD Animal Supplies, Inc. is a leading specialty retailer in the pet food and supply category. PET WORLD opened the doors of its first retail store in 1969, and has since expanded its reach to almost 700 stores nation wide. In the late 1990s, PET WORLD .com was created as an E-business website to promote and raise awareness of PET WORLD 's mission statement, commitment to the community, and store locations. At this time, PET WORLD was an investor in a strictly E-commerce pet supplier, Petopia. A link to the Petopia website was included on the PET WORLD website to meet the needs of online consumers.

Strategies and Planning

In 2000, PET WORLD revised its strategic partnership plan and purchased the PetsRus website. The strategic plan was to combine the E-business and E-commerce websites to create a website that completely meet the needs of PET WORLD consumers looking for information and online supplies. PET WORLD experienced increased business from this broadened consumer base and increased revenue from the online consumer. Further, PET WORLD capitalized on the ability to market its products and services in an ever-changing retail environment. As the traffic and popularity of the PET WORLD .com website increased, PET WORLD was able to analyze the shopping habits of its consumers, and adapt its marketing strategies to appeal to it target markets. This analysis included traffic, sales, conversion, and registered users.

Implementation

The initial step in the development of the PET WORLD .com website conversion was to hire new PET WORLD associates and establish an E-commerce department. Due to the purchase of the Petopia website, PET WORLD was able to covert the "backbone" of the website design to fit the needs of the developers at a very low cost. Also, bringing the website and E-commerce department in-house has given PET WORLD the ability to use the website for more than E-business and E-commerce; it has created an integrated marketing tool that PET WORLD can use to grow the business as a whole. One example is the PET WORLD National Chihuahua Races. Pre-registration was available on PET WORLD .com.

As with any organization, creative departments do not always see eye to eye with the technical departments. PET WORLD is not an exception. But it has been the experience of PET WORLD 's E-commerce department that the technical associates are not as concerned with the appearance of the website, but focused on the proper functions and defects in software coding. The E-commerce team has a budget with which to operate

and the PET WORLD senior management empowers them to make decisions based on their expertise as long as they stay within the budget.

Return on Investment (ROI)

PET WORLD .com has more than 4,000 purchases daily and requires constant updates and support. Though exact figures were proprietary, the E-commerce department consists of 18 full-time associates, who each contribute valuable talents to the various roles of the department. A recent visual re-design took six months and five full-time associates to achieve. The labor and time was due to the vast selection of products available for online purchase. Though the website is labor intensive, the benefits of the E-commerce website has been profitable for PET WORLD and convenient for pet parents with a busy schedule.

Recommendations

The PET WORLD .com website is visually busy with categories that are difficult to locate. Information is located on a white background, which can be difficult to read. Some of the art files are low resolution and the product descriptions use industry terminology instead of pet friendly text. A few recommendations include friendly and create pictures that create a warm and fuzzy feeling for the consumers.

This paper introduced PET WORLD and its business to consumer (B2C) website. The goal of the website is to incorporate both E-business and E-commerce to fulfill the needs of anyone visiting the website. Though the design of the website could be more visually appealing, it is user friendly with many click options that lead the user to a more detailed and informative web page. The user is also given the option to receive email notices with coupons and company newsletters that include helpful hints on raising happy and healthy pets. It is obvious PET WORLD spends many hours ensuring their consumers visit to the PET WORLD .com website will be enjoyable.