

Optimize your digital showroom

Tips for enriching your online product content to drive ecomm success

by Lloyd Wood



Growth
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Knowledge



\$26.7 trillion, according to **UN Economist**, with over 1 in 4 transactions occurring online.

For brands – including those in the electronics space – this acceleration to online buying had huge implications. The chances that someone would go to a store to view a product, and maybe even buy it there, dropped precipitously. Ecommerce SKU listings became the only window shoppers had onto the items they planned to buy, making this information even more crucial.

Many electronics brands devote substantial resources to developing online product content – but there are plenty of opportunities for doing better. And, as they have become more sophisticated about online shopping, consumers have come to expect more from product content. To succeed with today’s B2B and B2C shoppers, content needs to be robust, easy to find, answer shoppers’ questions, and leverage a responsive format to enable shopping on any device – from desktops and laptops to tablets to smartphones.

At the same time, leading marketplaces have increased required content to enable a better shopping experience and to win over buyers in their hypercompetitive marketplaces. Sites such as Amazon, NewEgg, Overstock, Rakuten, and Walmart insist on good search and attribution to gain customers.



It would be tough to overestimate the impact 2020 had on ecommerce. As in-store shopping became nothing short of dangerous, consumers began experimenting with and adopting a host of ecomm options – from “traditional” delivery to click-and-collect and other modes. Necessity became the mother of adaptation, forcing people out of their shells, and empowering them as savvy online shoppers.

Consider this – online sales accounted for all US-based sales increases last year – a jaw-dropping development. **Digital Commerce 360** estimates that, in 2020 alone, US online shopping increased about \$174 billion, to over \$861 billion. And globally, ecommerce sales are up to

How Brands Become Masters





So how can brands become masters of this newly demanding digital content space, growing ecomm revenue and setting themselves up for ongoing success?

1. Complete titles

Complete titles are the cornerstone of product content and should include the brand or Manufacturers Name, the Manufacturers Part Number (MPN), and applicable attribute values – size, color, and more – while making full use of character limits. Having titles that are normalized

also leads to a more consistent and optimized shopping experience. In addition, titles should be tailored for the intended audience; a B2B buyer expects a different title from a B2C buyer.

2. Bullet points

Online buying decisions are often made on bullet points and reviews alone. Shoppers expect that the main values and functionality will be defined in easy-to-consume bullets that are generally located immediately under the product title. The content of bullet points should change based on the category and in general be normalized within

a category. For example, the bullet points for TVs should contain screen size, resolution, screen type, mount type, supports standards, and any other features. Icons are often used to further communicate product features.

3. Images and rich content elements

Depicting your products with as much completeness and clarity as possible is a must. Images should include a leading main image (“hero image”), left, right, rear, and lifestyle images, plus “What’s in the box” and special features. Large images engage the buyer and

quickly tell the product's story; they must be at least 1,000 x 1,000 pixels at 72 DPI; however, 3,000 x 3,000-pixel images are preferred.

Many well-known ecomm platforms show 10 or more images, and leading brands fill them all. In addition, product videos are now mainstream and a key component to higher conversion rates. Videos can be series level or product specific and should be well produced, short, to the point, and shown in a responsive frame for viewing on any device. Having installation, family, series, and instruction manuals available for download also leads to an optimal shopping experience.

4. Optimized image resolution

It is imperative that images display quickly on websites; slow resolving can lead shoppers to look elsewhere. Image delivery times of 300 to 500 MS are generally accepted to be "instant" on shopping sites and can be achieved with global content delivery networks (CDN's). This technology uses cached images globally so that a server is close to any shopper, resulting in pictures quickly loading.

5. A+ or rich content

Brands and manufacturers have discovered that A+ or rich content increases conversion rates by 3% to 10%. This unstructured content tells a product's story in a concise, complete, on brand, and responsive way, delivering a more fully immersive experience that the brand can control on its channel partner sites.

A+ or rich content is most often delivered through web services, so the final product is consistent and reflects the brand's priorities. This feature also enables quick updates as a product goes through its lifecycle.



6. Normalized product attributes

With normalized content, the attribution is based on category-level templates and can vary from a few dozen to 100-plus for complex products, such as servers. Attribution is one element that drives search and is often used in product comparisons. Products that have normalized attribution across categories allow for comparisons in which all the product's specifications can be viewed against other products within the same category, regardless of brands. Product comparisons are a good way to engage buyers, leading to increased conversion rates.

Brands rely on data providers to create and update taxonomies that enable normalization. A leading taxonomy can have as many as 5 leaf levels to enable use of more relevant data values and avoid mashing together products into a single category. Taxonomies can change with technology; a healthy taxonomy should be dynamic as technology and use cases change.

7. Accessories

Leading data providers also include the options and accessories for products, which increases average cart values. Having the proper accessories – including warranties, service contracts, and seat licenses – is extremely important in B2B sales, where multiple components are often required for a working system.

8. Localization

As ecommerce grows, so do the audiences, which requires multiple languages and localization. This is another advantage of a data provider that delivers robust and multilevel taxonomies; they are more easily localized, which is becoming a requirement in the growing ecommerce world.

9. Product finders

Product finders enable a guided shopping experience based on a buyer's requirements and can increase the speed at which decisions are made. A buyer can quickly determine which product(s) meet their requirements by deciding on required features from dropdowns menus. Better finders also include price and availability to ensure an optimal experience and increased sales.

The art and science of online product content have been evolving over decades, and they are rising to meet the challenges of today's demanding shoppers. But brands need to understand and leverage the many content options available, and continue to update and innovate with their listings. Putting a product's best foot forward online has never been more

important, and the right syndication partner will bring you much closer to continued success in this highly competitive game.



Lloyd Wood is Senior Manager of Online Account Sales at GfK Etilize, the world's largest product content syndicator. He can be reached at lloyd.wood@gfk.com.

GfK Etilize has been the world's largest product content syndicator for over 20 years and provides leading global brands with content services that have led to increased sales and conversions for all sizes of brands. GfK Etilize has long been known for providing a multilevel taxonomy which includes thousands of categories and powers thousands of distributors, reseller, government, and industrial client's sites.

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Lloyd Wood: lloyd.wood@gfk.com