Rentamax is a company that rents out tools and equipment for various do it yourself projects for individuals or businesses. Rentamax.com provides users a simple way to browse inventory check rates and book rentals on various tools and equipment.

It is mainly focused on the B2C market but smaller businesses might also use the site if they’d like to rent specialty equipment that they may not own.

Rentamax’s main business model is the rental of various equipment and tools to customers. Their main customer bases are consumers that are looking to perform some tasks that requires specific equipment that is not traditionally owned by a do it yourself user. Thus, their primary competition is compiled of other companies that rent and sell the same type of equipment. These companies include most hardware stores like Home Depot and Menards, but also could include sites that allow users to post classified ads such as Craig’s List. To a lesser degree, they compete with the equipment retailers such as John Deere and Hitachi, but the actually sell this equipment and do not rent them.

Rentamax is uses a traditional Web catalog revenue model. The site is only set up to sell some new equipment and merchandise, although that is not their main line of revenue. Rentamax mainly benefits on the rental of their equipment and tools. On the site, they have a listing of the various tools, assorted by category. The listing displays information about the product including the pricing and rental information so that the users know what is available at one of their brick and mortar locations.

As mentioned above, their main channel is their brick and mortar locations. This is where customers who are looking to rent equipment and tools have to go in order to place the rental order and pickup/return the equipment. The site exists so that customers do not have to actually go to visit the store in order to check inventory and pricing. Customers can also book their equipment in advance to avoid a useless trip.

The main customers of the site are Professionals and DIY workers looking to complete a project which requires a certain piece of equipment. These customers do not have the means nor the need to purchase this equipment, mainly because of the high costs or low ongoing need to use the particular tool or equipment.

Rentamax has a limited marketing plan in terms of what they do to attract customers to the site. The business itself has locations around the greater Chicagoland area where the
customers have to go to pick up the equipment they rent. So, it is very dependent on customer’s willingness to drive to the brick and mortar location to pick up and return the rented equipment and tools.

Being a local business, Rentalmax has kept its marketing expense low, depending mostly on traditional marketing tactics like print advertisements and word of mouth from past customers. As far as their ecommerce marketing spend, they advertise in online phonebooks and also do some SEO and SEM on the major search platforms. This helps attract customers who type in search terms like “equipment rental Chicago” as their site displays high in the result set. On the site itself, Rentalmax has an enewsletter signup, which helps inform customers of promotions offerings from the business. Finally Rentalmax has a social media presence on facebook to help further attract customer to the site. They leverage facebook to promote general updates like equipment adds and changes and also push promotions to followers.

Impulse – To attract impulse purchases on the site, Rentalmax runs banner advertisements on the home page, promoting new equipment offerings. They also have a section for promotions where they list their current coupons and deals, hoping to drive a quick purchase. In various spots on the site Rentalmax displays top content to help educate the user on their offering.

Patient – For patient renters Rental max has different options that allow users browse the site. On the top nav and in the middle of the home page, users can browse by product category. This allows users to easily identify products that they may need for a project. For a quicker find, users can search by product to quickly get to a product detail page to learn more about a particular product. The site also offers a project calculator where users can identify how much material they need for a particular project.

Analytical – Rentalmax offers a listing of tools that include images, descriptions, attributes and details on lots of various tools and equipment. Analytical customers can use this information to research the offering before they reserve the rental. It also allows for customers to compare features on a few different options. On the detail page, there are also related tools pictured, which can easily identify other tools that are needed to perform a specific task.

The site does offer some dynamic aspects that make it more than just a “brochureware” type site. Users are able to search or navigate though categories for specific products to rent. They can also interact with the company through traditional webform submissions or they can get push advertising through the site enewsletter. There are also other features of the site which are more interactive including a store locator and a project calculator to assist them with their project needs.

The site can do some simple things to step further into 2.0 including introducing a social media aspect for user reviews of products. The site can also post user videos and instructions or “best practices” for particular tools to help renters use them correctly.

In order to reserve a tool for rental, users must visit a product detail page and specify the rental
period and the quantity they need to order. After that they are taken to a form where they have to fill out their information so that the quote may be submitted. There is not an actual transaction taking place at this period as the quote will have to be accepted by Rentalmax. Rentalmax will contact the customer via phone or email in order to confirm the reservation.

Once the quote has been processed, the site does allow for online payment of the rental deposit, and full rental payment, if the customer chooses to use that option. There is credit card and eCheck processed handled through the site.

The site itself does not handle any of the delivery, shipping, and returns. All of these aspects of the business are handled at one of their brick and mortar locations. After the quote from the user is processed via the site. The customer is responsible for picking up and returning all of the equipment themselves; and they are subject to a fine if they do not return it on time.

The majority of the customer support is not maintained on the website. Users are able to submit questions via the sites email form. For more involved questions, users are directed to call the main location, or their local location. Users are able to identify their local location through a map and get the site’s contact info.

The site’s layout and arrangement is very simple to use and user friendly. The content is not cluttered on the home page so users can easily identify and use the various functions of the site. The site is most likely set up this way to service those customers who are not tech savvy, which comprised a good amount of their core customer base.

Utilitarian - Users will be able to quickly identify tools for a particular job they are looking to complete, and then eventually rent or purchase that item. Right when they visit the site, the navigation and search is set up in such a way where users can identify their particular rental need and quickly place an order. Renters can also maintain their profile and submit payments online via some quick links at the top of the site.

Hedonic—The site will deploy features that allow users to browse the site and view information on the tools that are offered. Each product listed has information on specs on its use. This will allow the hedonic user to browse the site and find information on the inventory before potentially making a purchase. Users can also find general information on the homepage about various projects, tool additions, and even promotions that will appeal to the hedonic users and keep them coming back to the site, even if they aren’t looking to rent a particular tool at that time.

Overall I think the site is set up well to service their main customer base. However, I think the site can be enhanced to reach additional customers. First of all the site lacks information on particular tools, so those users who are not familiar with what they need for a given project, may become lost. Perhaps the introduction of user videos or instructions could help inform users on what a particular tool is used for. They can also introduce a “browse by need” option that may better serve the customer’s need.
Also, they could offer an option to better communicate with experts on the site, other than an email form or phone call. This could help build loyalty between the business and potential customers.

Another way to help build the business is to offer a delivery and pick up service, in lieu of the finite locations the company has to pickup equipment. If the customer lives outside of the Chicagoland area, they are less willing to drive to one of the stores to pickup and return the merchandise.