ECT 455 E-Commerce Web Site Engineering
Web Site Analysis Assignment
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As part of this website analysis, I wanted to look at companies who manufacture and sell power tools. Specifically, I wanted to understand how these companies categorize their tools so consumers can easily navigate their website and find the tool they are looking for. I also wanted to understand what information should be included in product description and how to best implement a ratings & reviews system.

The company that I chose to benchmark my analysis with is Bosch Power Tools (www.boschtools.com)

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<th>Section</th>
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**Value proposition.**

Similar to many other manufacturer’s websites, the value proposition of [boschtools.com](http://www.boschtools.com) is to provide complete information for all the products they manufacture, including specifications, manuals and support. While Bosch’s website does not sell finished products directly to consumers, they help site visitors find an outlet closest of them and purchase Bosch products from their partners and dealers. They do, however, sell spare parts and accessories on their website. Bosch’s website also creates a resource for customers who already own one of Bosch’s tools and want to register their product, service their tools or address any questions about warranty or application.

Bosch’s website is designed primarily for end-users and serves as a B2C e-commerce platform. I imagine some businesses might find value in using this website and might even purchase in bulk through the dealer extranet, however this website is not designed for B2B commerce.

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<th>Competitors.</th>
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Primary competitors of Bosch are:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>URL</th>
<th>Revenue Model</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ridgid</td>
<td><a href="http://www.ridgid.com">www.ridgid.com</a></td>
<td>Similar to Bosch, Ridgid is using a catalog revenue model. Customers can use the website to obtain information about products and</td>
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<tr>
<td>Company</td>
<td>Website</td>
<td>Description</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hitachi</td>
<td><a href="http://www.hitachipowertools.com">www.hitachipowertools.com</a></td>
<td>Hitachi is using a catalog revenue model. After a user navigates to a specific product, they can purchase the product online either through one of discount retailers listed on the website, or CPO Hitachi – Hitachi’s own online retail portal operated though CPO.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Milwaukee</td>
<td><a href="http://www.milwaukeetool.com">www.milwaukeetool.com</a></td>
<td>Milwaukee Tools is using a catalog revenue model, listing all of their products and accessories and instructing visitors to find a retailer in their area using their retail finder to finalize the purchase process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DeWalt</td>
<td><a href="http://www.dewalt.com">www.dewalt.com</a></td>
<td>This is another website that uses catalog revenue model that lists pictures and descriptions of products, but takes visitors offsite to one of their retail partners for the final checkout.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hilti</td>
<td><a href="http://www.us.hilti.com">www.us.hilti.com</a></td>
<td>Also a catalog revenue model site, however Hilti has a shopping cart on their website that allows users to pay for their purchases and ship product to their door instead of directing them to a retailer with a physical location.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Makita</td>
<td><a href="http://www.makita.com">www.makita.com</a></td>
<td>Catalog revenue model. Cannot purchase things from the website, but Makita shows a list of online and physical retailers where the product can be purchased.</td>
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**Channel integration.**

Bosch does not have any physical retail stores, so it relies heavily on its retail partners such as Home Depot, Lowe’s, Menards, Ace and other home retail stores and discount retailers to sell their product. Bosch also has a number of online retailers such as Amazon.com, Tyler Tool, Grainger, Acme Tools, International Tool and other who list Bosch products on their websites. Bosch does not sell products on its website and does not offer visitors a shopping cart. Instead, the site directs visitors using “Buy Now” button adjacent to product descriptions to purchase from one of its online retailers or input their zip code to find a physical retailer where product can be purchased. Bosch integrates their website by using “Where to Buy” store locator with their physical presence.
Bosch also offers a full digital and print catalog of their products on the website, integrating their catalog with web. They also integrate direct mail by offer to sign up for a Bosch e-newsletter to receive announcements, industry news and special offers through email. Bosch integrates event marketing including physical shows and events into their website with a portion of the site dedicated to announcing and having people sign up for a Bosch training or marketing event. Finally, Bosch does a great job incorporating customer service into their website. “Chat Now” option is available on their site allowing visitors to live chat with a customer support representative who can help them find the right product as well as market other products to them. They have created a large FAQ sheet, online manuals, product registration and product warranty information sections that while aren’t considered a value-added channel, they do ultimately help save money by diverting traffic from call-centers and increase customer service satisfaction rates.

Note: Bosch use to sell products on its website, however they experiences channel conflict with their retailers due to the fact that online sales were cannibalizing retail store sales. Bosch decided to stop selling online and direct traffic online. Without having any physical presence and having to rely on retail stores to get the products on the shelves, they have little bargaining power.

Customer Demographics.

The intended customer for this website is most likely male, with a medium-to advances level of knowledge about power tools. The price-point for Bosch products is slightly higher than average, but they pride themselves on better quality and durability. The website is targeted towards a construction professional or contractor who has been in the industry long-enough to appreciate quality products. Most visitors will be middle-ages males 25-64 years old. Household income is most likely between $50,000 and $150,000. Most site visitors will range between no college degree and some college. Average visitor will be Caucasian.

Marketing tactics.

Bosch’s website has a JavaScript image rotator on its landing page to direct visitors to various sections of its website and find special offers, new products, and specializes microsites. Aside from using the URL on its marketing material such as sales sheets, leave-behind brochures, product catalogs, event collateral and other printed material, they also host a blog and use social media to funnel potential customers to their website. The blog titles “Joe the Pro” consist of a number of articles that give construction professions tips on using tools, staying safe, promoting their businesses and other value-added information a contractor would find beneficial. They also seem to be running promotions and giveaways on the blog that attract people to the blog, which then employs advertising-supported revenue model and uses a number of banner ads, however all banners are for Bosch products. Social media channel includes Facebook, Twitter and YouTube and is used to post product videos, solicit feedback and share blog posts with the community, while inviting them to visit www.bosch.com and learn more about Bosch’s offerings.
### Attracting customers.

I don’t think Bosch’s website has a strategy for attracting impulsive buyers. There are several product call-out such as “NEW,” however once the user gets to product page, they will be looking at several tabs of detailed product information including benefits, specifications, support and others. A patient buyer may also find this site unsatisfactory as it does not offer a simple way to compare prices between various online retail outlets or compare several products side-by-side. On the other hand, I think that analytical buyer who is out doing research on the tools will find this website to be very useful. The website has ratings and reviews built in so that a visitor can read feedback on any particular product. They can also find full information on any product including specs and compatibility with other tools.

### Customer Experience.

Bosch’s website is very product-oriented and lacks in creating a meaningful customer experience. The site does offer to “Share” or “Like” certain pages using social media (i.e. Share this on Facebook), but these tools are provided through Facebook API and plug-ins and don’t offer value-added experience. Certain products open up in microsites (such as [www.boschfullforce.com](http://www.boschfullforce.com)) that allow users to watch product videos. Another Web 2.0 element the website uses is a Live Chat where visitors can talk to a customer service representative in real time. There is also a Dealer Network locator where customers can input their zip-code and find a map with a plotted list of local retail locations that carry Bosch products. Similarly, Service Network locator helps find local shops to service their tools.

### Placement and payment.

Because the website does not actually sell products on its website, but rather redirects visitors to their retailer’s websites to make the purchase and check out. For part ordering portal, the site required visitors to create an account log-in. After logging in, visitors can find part numbers and add the part to their shopping cart, then check out on the website and pay via credit card to have the part shipped from distribution center.

### Shipping and Returns.

I was not able to find any information on delivery and shipping returns information, because the site does not offer purchasing on the site.

### Customer Service and Support.

Bosch’s site has a “Service” section that includes service center locator, service and support programs, product registration, product warranty, manuals and parts, diagrams, replacement parts, product safety, contact us, and FAQ’s. They also sport a live chat option that help people talk to a live customer support agent and get help. Contact us section gives several option such as calling a hot-line, email Bosch, talk to representative or find an answer in FAQ’s.
Content.

Website’s content is easy to navigate and read. Site’s while background and dark text with large titles. The color scheme and websites element are consistent throughout the site. Dropdown spry navigation is helpful in finding the right pages in the site. Navigation bar always stays at the top of the page in the header while the drop down menu shows up at the top on the landing page, but shows up on the left on product pages. Product pages recommend similar products and parts that relate to page visitor is looking for. Visitor can also switch between tabs to find reviews, specification and line-drawings of products.

Shopping experience.

This website is designed for utilitarian shoppers who are interesting in rational information to help them make a purchase decision next time they are at a home-improvement store. There any many spec sheets, diagrams, comparison charts and other tools to help consumers analyze benefits of each product. Hedonic buys will find this site boring, with its minimalist graphics design, heavy use of text copy and product images rather than life-style shots, or entertaining content.

Customer loyalty improvements.

I think there are simple ways of improving customer loyalty when it comes to www.boschtools.com. One way is to create more interaction with the site such as dynamically updated content so that visitors have a reason to come back and visit the site again in the future. The site is missing hedonic customers, so creating a tool selector, having example of projects you can do with those tools or perhaps adding videos of tools being used on the job would create more interest and thus raise loyalty. The site should also address the needs on impulsive buyers, and make it easier to find a purchase a product. Putting a big “Shop” button on the landing page may be able to address this. I also felt that the website was very male-centric, and missed some opportunities to address female visitors who may be looking to purchase a gift for somebody or are perhaps looking to buy tools for themselves. Having a section that shows more lifestyle images and applications of the tool such as design and inspiration section that shows what home improvements can be done using these tools should create a better experience for site visitors.