

SITE EVALUATION:  
<http://samplewebsite.com>

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PREPARED FOR:  
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### WHAT DO THE RATINGS MEAN?

The site evaluation is two parts – the site rating is more subjective, and the recommendations are more objective. The site rating reflects the reviewer’s impressions of your site based on best practices developed by KTD Communications. It’s like a personality test showing how your target audience might perceive your site. We use your business goals as a reference point whenever possible.

#### SITE RATINGS

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##### Priorities

The home page reflects your brand.

Sequence & structure reflect priorities.

The tone fits the primary audience.

##### Alignment

Groupings are logical and consistent.

Segments are drawn throughout the site.

Labeling helps to segment audiences.

##### Targeting

It’s easy to discover targeted info.

Info is increasingly targeted to segments.

It has appropriate breadth and depth.

##### Acquisition

There are clear calls to action.

There are many opportunities to interact.

Site messaging reduces confusion.

##### Conversion

Offers are appropriate to the segment.

Few obstacles to conversion exist.

The experience encourages loyalty.

##### Visual Design

It effectively supports the brand.

It’s appropriate for the audience.

It supports and enhances the content.

Overall Rating

#### WHAT MAKES A SITE EFFECTIVE?

Five factors determine the effectiveness of web sites. Each adds to the other, forming a chain of experience.

1. Site real estate reflects business priorities
2. Market segments align themselves to content
3. Every click sharpens the targeted message
4. Every stop has a clear call to action for acquisition
5. Every acquisition leads to a conversion

The table at left measures how effectively your current web site uses these factors. Optimize the chain and you’ll increase your conversion with strong returns on your investment. We measure these factors against your goals:

#### YOU WANTED TO...

Sell products, generate leads, and build brand awareness. You would like to highlight new product features or releases. Web site properties important to you are general ease of use, information design, e-commerce, customer and product support, and sales channel support.

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## SUMMARY

This site effectively positions Sample as a source for purchasing web-related security and backup software. The site has a clean, uncluttered design and makes it easy to find information about the products that Sample offers. It is simple to purchase products online or to download trial versions. Based on site design and content, we deduce the primary target audience to be IT managers and directors for small to medium-sized businesses with mission-critical web sites. Secondary audiences are Internet service providers and potential resellers. The site does a good job of using product reviews and customer testimonials to build credibility. However, the site's visual design has inconsistencies and quirks that may undercut Sample's message. In addition, the site focuses on first purchase and provides little content that would compel loyalty.

## SOME KEY RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Your positioning statement and tagline effectively orients visitors to the purpose of the site (and your company). The page loads quickly, and uses graphics judiciously to position the products. Site navigation presents the options clearly. Generally, site usability is strong, but it can be improved. We recommend re-evaluating the information architecture to make it more intuitive to the visitor. Some items belong more likely under other sections. The current placement has its own logic, but consider where your targets expect to find specific content. This is critical if you want to serve multiple targets.
- The home page real estate gives the most area to the products themselves, which we would recommend. However, their placement at the bottom of the visible window reduces their focus. For products, testimonials and reviews are excellent sales tools. However, the placement of the news section in the center of the page gives news more focus. Since the latest eye-tracking studies show visitors start by looking at the center of the screen, we recommend moving the reviews there.
- Some pages do not present headers to indicate where the page fits in the structure. Other pages are inconsistent with header placement. Also, the layout template varies. This makes the visitor focus more time orienting themselves than they spend focused on the content. We recommend revising page templates for consistency, but more importantly to provide opportunities to cross-promote content and products throughout the site. For example, promoting products on the reviews page would improve sales.
- Where simple design is important, sometimes it can give the impression that the company lacks resources or is less experienced. The layout inconsistencies and variations in element styles such as tables and headers lend to this impression. We recommend reviewing design elements and using style sheets to enforce uniform design across the site. This will reinforce your credibility with clients.

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## SOME KEY RECOMMENDATIONS (CONT.):

- The Downloads pages are great lead opportunities. It would help to entice users to give their lead info. Would a visitor dropped directly to one of these pages have enough reason to give their contact info? When creating calls to action for lead generating offers, consider your segments. Some will be in early phases of a purchase decision; some will be in advanced stages. What content would support each type? What cross-promotions would help them?
- Establish messaging that works for your customer base. We would suggest refining the current messages to be more compelling. There is a tendency in technology to talk about 'technology' versus the value or benefit for a customer. In addition, Sample wants to rise above the competition and one way to do this is to separate from the pack in your messaging.
- Your web site does an excellent job of elevating value messaging. The demos speak to various target segments, and there are consistent calls to action throughout the site. The site could best be improved through architecture adjustments. Some changes in grouping, labeling, and organization would elevate usability. Currently, there are many demands on the home page for the visitor's attention. While it is easy for a current user to get to the content they need, it may be difficult for a prospect to find what they are looking for. For example, do they need to look at a free trial, a free web seminar, download evaluation tools, or look at services? Very often lead forms immediately block these paths. While this is the ultimate goal, the site may be rushing new prospects.
- One way to mature your channels through your reseller and agents program would be to create an integrated awareness campaign. One concern that continually comes up for channel participants is the accuracy of the marketing to their targets. The complaint is usually that the vendor repurposes general content that doesn't address the unique value of the channel. When you can show how well Sample supports their channels, before requesting a lead, you can increase participation. You can do this by creating targeted landing pages for the campaigns that highlight the channel content. Additionally, you can make sure your marketing content is more targeted through web-based tools that allow you to blend Sample marketing content with the resellers content.

## NOTES FOR THE WEB TEAM:

- When clicking on a link that pops up another window, if a Flash demo window is already open, the content will load in that window and the user will not be able to scroll or resize the window to see the contents.
- On the Flash demo, when briefly mousing over the navigation in the lower-left corner (without highlighting a menu item), the menu box will grow but not show contents. The 'grow box' routine is being activated but because the navigation has not come up, the 'shrink box' routine is not called when mousing off the box. This will occur most often with accidental mousing where the user is moving the mouse to another area and brushes past the navigation area.