

## 2007 Holiday Impact Study

Industry Study Series from Keynote Competitive Research

Study Abstract

# Keynote Competitive Research

## Research Objectives

The Keynote Holiday Impact Study is part of a competitive intelligence program for understanding and improving customer service and service levels of leading Web businesses. Keynote's mission is to improve eBusiness performance worldwide by providing metrics and insights for customer experience, application service levels and competitive strategies.

## Study Participants

For the study of Online Retail sites, Keynote collected over 6000 data points per site. For the purpose of measuring "Holiday Impact", the measurements were taken from November 22<sup>nd</sup> through December 25<sup>th</sup>, 2007. The Peak Period used for calculation is defined as: Daily 8:00AM to Midnight EST.

The sites tested were:

- Amazon
- Barnes and Noble
- Bass Pro
- Best Buy
- Borders
- Buy
- Cabelas
- Circuit City
- Costco
- Crate and Barrel
- Dell
- Home Depot
- Lowe's
- Neiman Marcus
- Office Depot
- Office Max
- Overstock
- REI
- Sears
- Staples
- Target
- Toys R Us
- Victoria's Secret
- Wal-Mart
- Williams-Sonoma
- Zappos

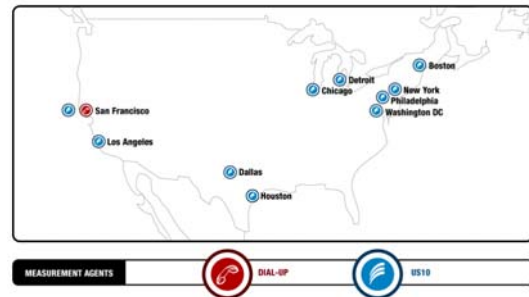
## Methodology Overview

### Measuring Service Levels

To gather data on the operational excellence of sites in a study, Keynote uses its Transaction Perspective automated testing agents to mimic the actions of a consumer using the Internet Explorer browser to interact with sites.

The agents are deployed through out Keynote's Global Network, and will perform these tasks at least hourly during the study period. The agents track more than 35 performance metrics and collect over 6000 data points to rank the sites in the study on each of seven key performance factors.

### Measurement Locations



## Transaction Compared

The transactions used in the study are based on similar activities that can be performed across sites within the study group. Path differentiation within the individual sites is examined and custom scripted to achieve accurate results. For the Holiday Study, the overall transaction included the following:

1) Home Page



2) Search / Category



3) Product Details



4) Cart / Checkout



# Keynote Competitive Research

## Specific areas of Success

Using Extensive measurement data and analysis, Keynote benchmarked leading online retail sites in two major categories:

**Reliability** – Measures a site’s ability to service its customers without errors or outages. Reliability is based on detailed measurements focused on two Key Factors:

- Availability
- Outages.

Rank	Reliability
1	Cabelas
2	Barnes and Noble
3	Best Buy

**Responsiveness** – Measures a site’s ability to provide highly responsive and consistent page downloads. To obtain the overall Responsiveness Ranking, Keynote evaluates and compares the sites according to their performance on five Key Factors:

- High Speed Response
- Dial-up Response
- Response Time Consistency
- Geographic Uniformity
- Load Handling

Rank	Responsiveness
1	Victoria’s Secret
2	Circuit City
3	Cabelas

## Industry Insights

Very few sites struggled with Load Handling throughout the entire holiday period

- Does not mean that on peak days there were not issues
- It does mean that overall the sites planned appropriately for the period load
- Only 3 of the 26 sites had any significant issue with this metric

Availability was mixed

- Top 10 sites better than 98.5%
- Top 7 above 99.0%
- Best Buy, Barnes and Noble and Cabelas above 99.5% for the entire period (Stellar!)
- 8 sites under 97%

Outages showed similar mixed results

- Cabelas and Barnes and Noble did not report a single hour of outage
- 3 sites reported over 20 hours of peak period downtime

Dial-Up users would have had a rough season

- Keynote captured sites with Home Pages taking over 100s (one taking over 300s)
- However, once users were past Home Page and Search Results most sites provided an acceptable experience for dial-up users (24s per page on average)

Broadband performance showed similar “divide”

- Best sites averaged less than 1s per page while the bottom performers averaged over 3.5s
- Search, Home Page and Product Details were generally the slower areas of the site

## Study Available Now

This abstract highlights findings from the Keynote Holiday Impact Study Research Report. The full report contains hundreds of data points including specific detail about why the sites ranked where they did. Armed with this intelligence, site managers and developers can tune specific aspects of their application to provide better performance to customers than their competition.

## Custom Comparisons

Not included in the study? Need to see where you rate against the top site? Keynote’s researchers can create an expansion study to collect the same metrics on your site, and profile your results against the sites in this study. Conducting a study is a straightforward process:

## About Keynote Competitive Research

Keynote Systems, Inc., the Mobile and Internet Performance Authority is the worldwide leader in eBusiness performance management services. Over 2100 corporations and 19,000 individual subscribers rely on Keynote’s growing range of measurement, monitoring and customer experience management services to improve eBusiness performance by reducing costs, improving customer satisfaction and increasing profitability. Keynote’s products provide enterprises with the tools to align IT and Business goals. To learn more about Keynote’s Competitive Research studies, please visit:

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