

DRIVE SITE REDESIGN SUCCESS

The Keys to Preventing Costly Site Failures and Achieving the ROI You Expect

Ali Towle, Director of Product Marketing, Tealeaf

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

If anything can go wrong, it will go wrong. That's Murphy's Law. It's also eerily familiar to many ebusiness executives who have been through a site redesign or two.

Today's sites have so much complexity that it is impossible—even with the most diligent testing and quality assurance—to ensure a flaw-free launch. Whether you inadvertently break existing functionality or introduce unexpected problems, the ugly truth about site redesigns is that many fail and even more only succeed after a prolonged period of poor user experience combined with unanticipated 'fire fighting' expenditures.

Of course, ebusinesses continue to invest in site redesign projects for one simple reason: when done right, they can drive huge improvements: higher conversion rates, incremental sales, lower customer service costs, and increased customer satisfaction. Yet the risk a redesign will create new problems that degrade your business are very real. The last thing you need is to launch a site that increases calls to the call center or drives customers to your competitors.

Savvy executives know that the first few weeks after a launch will be crazy—packed with lots of unexpected issues and problems. Instead of trying to do the impossible (launch a site with no issues at all)—which too often leads to budget overruns and project failure—they have focused on what is possible, to establish a system that finds problems quickly and makes the post-launch stabilization period as short as possible. However, the best ebusinesses have learned to focus not just on reactive post-launch problem resolution, but rather on proactive discovery and analysis of customer experience issues throughout the entire redesign process. Tealeaf can help you accomplish both goals.



Figure 1: Tealeaf Can Help You Conduct Proactive Discovery and Analysis of Customer Experience Issues
Throughout the Entire Site Redesign Lifecycle.

As the market-leading Customer Experience Management solution provider, Tealeaf affords unprecedented visibility into your customers' online behavior—valuable information that helps you identify and resolve issues quickly, make more informed site optimization decisions and, as a result, dramatically reduce the risks involved with any site change. In this white paper, we will explain specifically how Tealeaf is used to shorten the period of post-launch turmoil. Further, we will describe how companies integrate Tealeaf across the redesign lifecycle—in doing so, they save money and make better site decisions now and in the future.

If you are currently in the midst of a site redesign project, you may think that you don't have the time or resources to employ Tealeaf right now. However, this is the exact time when you can ill afford to operate without the critical data Tealeaf provides. You should know that Tealeaf requires only a minimal resource investment to implement (there's no time-consuming page tagging required) and often shows value within a few days. Ask any Tealeaf customer and they will tell you that Tealeaf is a 'must-have' solution to drive site redesign success.

SITE REDESIGN PROJECTS: HIGH STAKES FOR HIGH RETURNS

Ebusinesses have continued to invest in site redesign projects in 2009 for one simple reason: when done right, they can offer very high return on investment (ROI). Projects that improve web usability or add new online capabilities can drive higher conversion rates and new sales. Further, they can significantly reduce sales and service costs by shifting more transactions to the site. For example, Forrester Research¹ calculates a 331% ROI for a \$500,000 site redesign project that shifts just one percent of phone orders and five percent of service calls to the web.

While many site redesign projects offer clear benefits, the stakes are equally high. In a Forrester Research survey² of organizations with annual revenues of \$200 million or more, 54% of respondents spent more than \$500,000 on their site redesign projects; 28% spent over \$1 million. With such large budgets on the line, the consequences for redesign missteps are great. And anyone who has ever launched a web site knows, even with the most diligent testing and quality assurance, it is inevitable that some things will go wrong.

In fact, a 2008 Harris Interactive® poll³ on customer behavior illustrates an alarming rate of web site issues—with almost nine out of 10 consumers (87%) experiencing difficulties online. It also shows that consumers do not tolerate these difficulties for long—41% of online adults reported that they abandon their transaction or switch sites after experiencing online issues. This represents \$57 billion in lost revenue for the retail industry alone, and that's just the tip of the iceberg.⁴ Furthermore, more than half of online adults (56%) said that if they experienced a problem conducting a transaction online, they would be less likely to buy from the same company offline. It's clear that the consequences of site redesign failure extend not just to your online presence but to your entire business.

TWO WEAPONS FOR AVOIDING SITE REDESIGN FAILURE: AWARENESS AND VISIBILITY

Over the last decade, the web landscape has been littered with site redesign failures, with serious consequences for the companies involved and even the people. But, savvy executives have avoided these catastrophes by arming themselves with two key weapons: awareness and visibility.

BE AWARE: THINGS CAN GO WRONG AND DO GO WRONG

No ebusiness has ever launched a site redesign project that was 100% flaw-free. Today's sites have so much complexity that it is impossible to test for every possible user scenario. Depending on the type of site redesign project you are undertaking, you may inadvertently break existing functionality, introduce unexpected usability problems or both. Common problems include:

- Site rebranding (look-and-feel changes) projects that introduce broken links and/or orphan pages, in addition to potential navigation problems.
- Many sites that enhance core applications with new technologies such as Ajax or Adobe® Flash® find that it's all to easy to break existing functionality. In one recent case, a new Ajax-based shopping cart worked fine except for those shoppers who tried to add more than five items to it.

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¹ "Need to Cut Costs? Improve the Web Site Experience," Forrester Research, Inc., December 1, 2008

² "The ROI Of Web Redesigns Made Simple," Forrester Research, Inc., March 17, 2006

³ "2008 Tealeaf Online Transactions Survey;" Harris Interactive, September 2008

⁴ Calculation based on data from the U.S. Census Bureau, The Harris Poll, and the 2008 Tealeaf Online Transactions survey

- Adding a new feature or product offering to the site, such as online returns or new Health Savings
 Accounts, can be fraught with challenges caused by new processes, unexpected user behavior or
 simply the amount of new code that is introduced into the environment.
- Finally, back-end or platform changes can introduce data feed problems, server configuration issues, and much more.

With all of this complexity, it's not realistic to think that you can roll out a perfect site on day one. The real question is: How big will the problems be and how long will they last? Ebusinesses that do not plan for these problems—by putting a system in place to find and stabilize site issues as quickly as possible—often end up with significant unbudgeted expenses, delays, or even a failed project.

VISIBILITY IS THE KEY TO STABLIZING YOUR NEW SITE

It's quite challenging to understand the online experience you are delivering when your 'storefront' or marketplace is in the one place you cannot see—the browser of your customer. One of the chief reasons companies invest in Tealeaf is to have a solution that provides this level of visibility. As the market-leading Customer Experience Management solution provider, Tealeaf uniquely captures and records what each customer is doing and seeing in real-time on every page and across all site visits. Tealeaf's visual replay capabilities are what enable you to take a deep, first-hand look into the experience your site is delivering. This is what takes you past just knowing there is a customer experience problem to understanding exactly what that problem is so you can resolve it as quickly as possible.

Tealeaf also provides the quantitative data (e.g. conversion rates, etc.) necessary to understand the business impact site obstacles are having on your business. Proactively monitoring these Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), coupled with visual experience reviews, allows you to make more informed site optimization decisions.

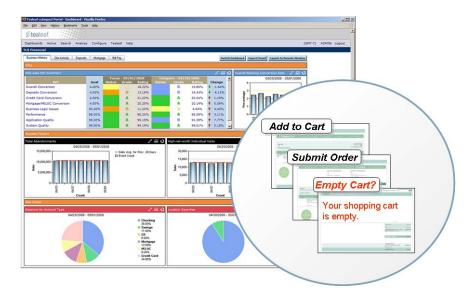


Figure 2: Tealeaf Provides Quantitative, Aggregate Metrics about Your Online Business, as well as the Ability to Replay Actual Customer Site Visits—Qualitative Data of the Real User Experience.

With Tealeaf, organizations have the qualitative and quantitative data that is essential to mitigating the risks involved with any site change and to improving the end results for every redesign project. For the majority of Tealeaf customers this data is most critical post-launch (or, for more fortunate companies, during the soft launch or stabilization period). During this time, Tealeaf provides the fastest means available to find and resolve a wide range of problems before they can degrade customer success on your site.

REDUCE POST-LAUNCH TURMOIL WITH TEALEAF

When your customers (and your executives) first land on your site to see a new look-and-feel or a new set of functionality, their expectations are high. Yet, at the same time the probability that they will encounter a usability issue or unexpected error is at its highest. While it is very hard to release a site that's 100% flaw-free, Tealeaf provides the crucial support you need to stabilize a launch as quickly as possible. More importantly, it reduces risks: risks of lost business, risks of higher customer support costs, and risks of higher site development costs. Tealeaf is even more essential in situations where a soft launch is not possible and every site error has wider impact.

Many of the errors or issues that crop up post-launch are either too infrequent to have been caught during testing and QA, involve user scenarios that the development team did not anticipate, or only occur in a production environment. As a result, they can be difficult to reproduce and fix without Tealeaf's unique visual replay capabilities. Without Tealeaf, ebusinesses may find themselves pouring investments into the site, (trying to fix elusive problems) before they truly understand the root causes.

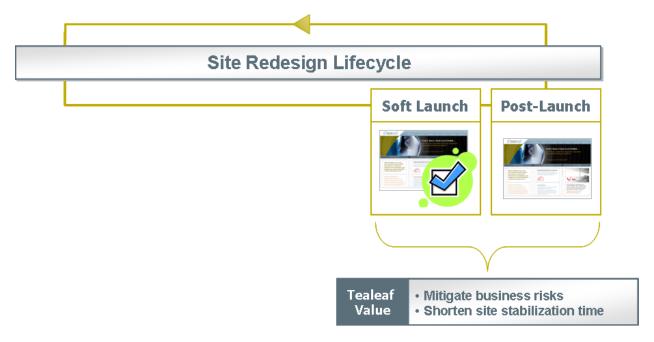


Figure 3: Customer Experience Management Data is Critical to Reduce Soft Launch or Post-Launch Turmoil

TEALEAF USE CASE: EFFICIENTLY IDENTIFY AND RESOLVE POST-LAUNCH PROBLEMS

Customers have found that Tealeaf dramatically reduces the time required to research, reproduce and resolve site issues. This is because Tealeaf not only captures the page-by-page, browser-level recording of each customer session, but also offers one-click access to the supporting HTTPS request and response code. This makes any site problem instantly reproducible. In fact, Forrester Research⁵ reports that Tealeaf customers reduce their "find and fix" time by at least 60%.

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⁵ "The Total Economic ImpactTM of Tealeaf cxDatastore and cxImpact," Forrester Research, Inc., April 2007

Case Study: International Airline

A major international airline employs "Remember Me" cookies upon login so frequent site users don't have to re-enter their credentials every time they book online. After a recent release, customers began reporting via the call center, email, and the site's feedback form that the site was no longer remembering them and they were forced to login every time. The product team immediately began to investigate the complaints but they were unable to reproduce the scenario.

Using Tealeaf, the airline was able to search for users who were logging in more than once during the same session on the site. After replaying and analyzing the sessions from this customer segment, the airline was able to pinpoint the problem. As it turned out, on the new site, if a customer changed their default country or language, then that action overwrote the previous cookie and the new cookie no longer contained the customer's user ID. Roughly, 5% of the airline's international customers were being frustrated by this issue.

Without Tealeaf, the airline would have had to invest significant resources to uncover the problem with no guarantee the investment would lead to resolution.

TEALEAF USE CASE: CUT SITE STABILIZATION TIMES THROUGH ISSUE PRIORITIZATION

Although a luxury for many companies, a planned "stabilization phase" as part of a site redesign can minimize the business impact of issues; but only if those issues can be found, prioritized, and resolved before the full site launch. Yet, every business has limited time and budget, and often times these "soft launches" generate a laundry list of issues causing development teams to wonder where they should start.

With Tealeaf, companies are able to quickly uncover the root cause of issues, but also quantify the business impact of each issue—how many customers have been affected, how much business is being lost every day because of this issue, etc. This information is vital if you want to prioritize the most important issues or even avoid addressing some issues at all. With the insight you gain with the help of Tealeaf, you can invest your resources where they will make the biggest improvements and dramatically reduce the time required for site stabilization as a result.

Case Study: Bluefly



Bluefly recently completed a platform migration, from the Blue Martini e-commerce platform to the ATG platform. Once complete, the site stabilization period began. Bluefly had many tools and monitoring systems at its disposal during the stabilization period: from shell scripts to Catci, Nagios, Webmetrics and Tealeaf. During this period, the Bluefly ebusiness team reported that Tealeaf provided the most accurate information to quantify and prioritize the site issues that did crop up. Tealeaf was instrumental in enabling Bluefly to reduce the stabilization period from a planned four weeks to just two weeks.

TEALEAF USE CASE: VALIDATE A/B TEST RESULTS

Tealeaf customers have also found it valuable to use Tealeaf as a means to investigate A/B test results of new site features during the soft launch phase. Traditional A/B testing has only considered one question: did the variable perform well or not? Using Tealeaf, you can conduct deeper analysis that might lead you to find unexpected behavior or unplanned results.

For example, if a site has redesigned its shopping cart, it may not be enough to know that people using the new shopping cart ("Test A") converted 2% more often than those using the old one ("Test B"). Using Tealeaf, you might discover a glitch that was forcing 20% of the "Test A" users to abandon, which once resolved, would actually improve the results of the new cart even more. Tealeaf enables you to look not only at which variable performed best, but also ask why a particular variable worked well or poorly. The insight you gain may lead to last-minute changes or resolutions that make your launch more successful.

Case Study: Insurance Price Comparison Site

In the UK, the leading insurance price comparison site deployed Tealeaf during a site redesign which involved migrating from a Java-based platform to an Ajax platform. The company conducted a soft launch, during which it used Tealeaf to validate their A/B test. The company used Tealeaf to detail all visitor behavior on the old Java site (the "A" test), as well as on the new Ajax site (the "B" test) where some visitors were redirected. The information gleaned through this testing was critical to validate the new Ajax functionality and to ensure that the new site created minimal business disruption when fully launched.

TEALEAF USE CASE: PROACTIVE, ONGOING MONITORING

The best ebusinesses have learned to focus not just on reactive problem resolution but on proactive discovery and analysis of customer experience issues. Tealeaf supports proactive monitoring with alerting capabilities for a variety of conditions and errors that lead to poor customer experience, such as "Sorry, Page Not Found" errors and events that you define yourself for your business. When one of these errors occurs, the development team finds out about the problem immediately and has a way to investigate exactly what triggered it. The faster you can find and resolve issues, the less impact they will have on customer success and on your business, as measured by sales, call volumes to the contact center, etc.

Case Study: Prominent Electronics Retailer

A well-known electronics retailer was considering a Tealeaf investment and was conducting a short "proof of value" (POV) before formally purchasing. On the last day of the Tealeaf POV, the retailer happened to be rolling out a new release of its site. Coincidentally, the launch was on a Friday the 13th.

During the POV, Tealeaf had worked with the retailer to create a number of alerts for common site issues, such as 404 and SQL errors. Three minutes after the launch, the web team received an email alert from Tealeaf—error messages were skyrocketing! What had happened?

Tealeaf was the first system to notify the web team that there was a problem, and it also provided the visibility needed to get to an answer quickly. The web team rolled back the new site and used Tealeaf to review select customer sessions that ended in error messages. They found a minor problem with the payment page in the checkout process. In record time, the team was able to resolve the problem and relaunch the site. Needless to say, the company quickly became a Tealeaf customer.

TEALEAF FULLY INTEGRATED INTO THE REDESIGN LIFECYCLE

Besides the critical post-launch period, many organizations have found Tealeaf valuable throughout the site redesign lifecycle—whether in the planning phase, during development, or while conducting testing and quality assurance. The unique insights that only Tealeaf provides deliver significant benefits in each phase.

BETTER REDESIGN PLANNING

Virtually every business is facing significant time and budget constraints today. If you are tackling a site redesign now, you need to be sure that you are addressing the most important problems, that you are creating the best solutions, and that you have a full picture of the results once the new site goes live. Tealeaf serves two important purposes during the planning phase: giving you real-world data you can use as you conduct research about your site and benchmarking your current site.

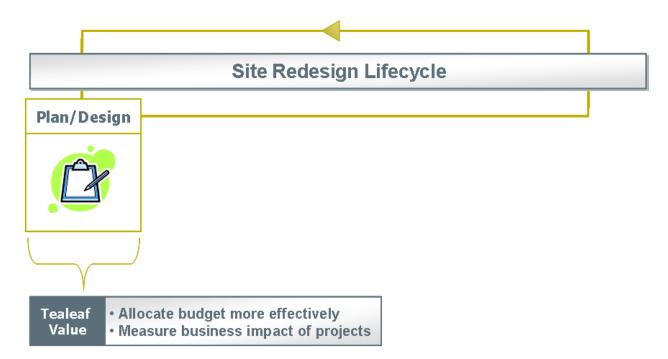


Figure 4: Customer Experience Data Will Afford Better Redesign Planning

TEALEAF USE CASE: CAPTURE REAL-WORLD CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE DATA FOR RESEARCH

There is no better way to understand the challenges that your customers face than by actually watching them use your site. Tealeaf makes it possible to put into practice the type of regular experience review that has worked so well in the offline world: direct customer observation.

Using Tealeaf, you can capture a complete set of real-world data about how people use your site—a focus group of all of your customers. This qualitative data gives you critical insights without the bias inherent in focus groups and usability testing; namely, people tend to behave differently in a lab environment. You also get valuable quantitative data on the business impact of each problem. What percentage of people experiencing a problem actually abandoned their purchases? Is a problem experienced by one-third of users decreasing sales by 33% or by 1%? Tealeaf can also be used as a complement to usability testing, quantifying the data you capture in the lab. Armed with all of this information, you will be able to drive features into the site redesign that have the greatest top- and bottom-line impact.

In fact, using Tealeaf during the planning phase could actually reduce the overall costs of a redesign. By knowing what the business impact is of each customer experience issue, you can focus your efforts on the parts of your site that really need fixing. You may find that you can make incremental improvements that will drive bigger improvements in your business than a major site redesign would. And in this case, the savings from avoiding costly design and development cycles will more than offset the cost of implementing Tealeaf.

Case Study: Insurance Provider

A prominent insurance company conducted usability testing on its new "premium payment" process—the new application passed without incident. However, once live, the company experienced a lower than expected conversion rate. Using Tealeaf, a group of online stakeholders gathered together to examine abandoned user sessions which led to an interesting finding: many real customers were not seeing the "Make Payment" button placed at the bottom of the page, but instead were clicking on the "Payment" tab in the site's top navigation. On a daily basis, approximately 65 customers were clicking the wrong button and ending up in a frustrating endless loop. With Tealeaf, the company was able to see why the navigation was confusing to customers and take the necessary steps to redesign the page to resolve this customer experience flaw.

TEALEAF USE CASE: THOROUGHLY BENCHMARK YOUR OLD SITE

Because Tealeaf captures all of the data about what's happening on your site, you can use it to establish a comprehensive, accurate set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). In addition to conversion rates and task success metrics, some common KPIs that Tealeaf customers use include:

- "Bad behaviors" such as multiple attempts of key processes without success or multiple attempts to submit a form without success
- *'Bad experiences'*' that can be tracked:
 - O Technical issues such as slow page performance, global error pages, or unexpected error messages such as "SQL exception."
 - O Business issues: These vary depending on the type of site and industry but could include seeing an out-of-stock message on a retail site, having an itinerary re-priced on a travel site, or having account qualification issues on a financial services site.
 - O Customer issues: Actual customer behavior that indicates a bad experience such as going to the customer feedback form or help page.

These KPIs may be necessary to build a business case for your site redesign and they can prioritize where to invest. Further, once the redesign goes live, these KPIs give you a baseline for benchmarking the new site.

One of the biggest advantages of using Tealeaf for benchmarking is that it does not require you to add tags to your old site, 'throw away' work that is very time consuming. In addition, you can benchmark any number of customer experience factors without deciding in advance what needs to be tagged. All too often, it is the things that aren't being tracked—that you haven't anticipated in advance—that are the most likely to go wrong.

Case Study: Top U. S. Grocer

A leading grocer in the United States implemented Tealeaf in order to benchmark its old site and drive the new feature set for an upcoming redesign. The company wanted to better understand customer behavior on its current site so that it could build the new site more effectively in the context of two key goals: increasing conversion rates and decreasing customer complaints. The company considered using a web analytics vendor for the benchmarking work, but it estimated that it would have to spend 12 weeks on page tagging. The time and cost of this work would have put the project at risk.

Because Tealeaf was able to provide both quantitative and qualitative data with no page tagging at all, the company knew only Tealeaf could help it truly understand customer behavior on the current site. With Tealeaf, the grocer was able to document the current site's key metrics—conversion rates and complaint incidence—but also other KPIs that provided a fuller picture of the current online experience and greatly informed subsequent redesign decisions.

FASTER AND MORE EFFECTIVE DEVELOPMENT AND QA

Time is money when it comes to site redesign projects. The more efficiently you can get through development, testing, and quality assurance (QA), the faster you realize the benefits of the redesign and the faster your site team can move on to new projects. Just like during the post-launch period, many companies use Tealeaf to reduce the time required to research, reproduce, and resolve issues reported on their development and staging sites. Further, Tealeaf has helped companies create better test scripts and make User Acceptance Testing (UAT) far more efficient.

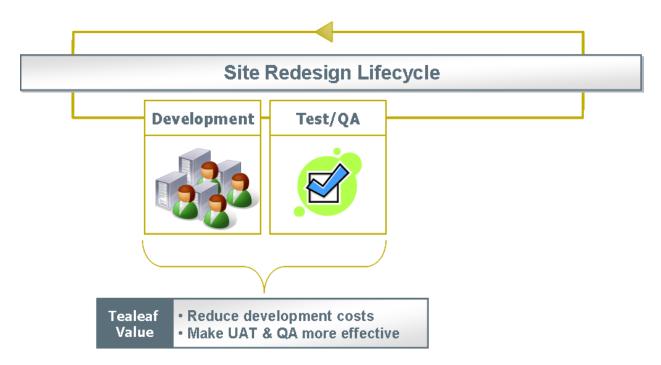


Figure 5: Faster and More Effective Development and QA with Customer Experience Management Data

TEALEAF USE CASE: IMPROVE QUALITY ASSURANCE WITH BETTER TEST SCRIPTS

Most QA processes depend on test scripts that are written based on predicted user behavior. However, today's sites are so complex and so dynamic that it's rare for a development team to be able to predict every possible path through the site. Because Tealeaf captures actual behavior, it enables you to capture scenarios that would otherwise be unpredictable and unobservable. Many Tealeaf customers take these real customer sessions and convert them into future test scenarios for better and more proactive quality assurance.

Case Study: Online Travel Provider

With changing flight numbers, schedules, pricing and more, this online travel provider has an extremely dynamic web environment. The company routinely tests the site for as many user scenarios as possible but knows it will always be missing some subset of its customer experiences. However, with Tealeaf, the company is getting closer. After each site release, the company uses Tealeaf to uncover new and unexpected user scenarios. The company then converts the click-paths from these real customer sessions into new scripts that it will leverage for testing during the next release.

TEALEAF USE CASE: MAKE USER ACCEPTANCE TESTING (UAT) MORE EFFECTIVE

For many organizations, the User Acceptance Testing process is quite informal. Testers (often recruited from other departments) are asked to perform certain activities on the site and then are supposed to report back any problems that they encounter. Just as with real customers, testers often have trouble reporting the exact details of the problem they experienced. Too often, the issues that they report go unreproduced and unresolved.

Organizations that deploy Tealeaf always have a way to reproduce issues—with visual replay of the actual session. Every issue reported by a tester can be examined in detail and resolved before the site goes live.

BEYOND LAUNCH: THE ONGOING BENEFITS OF TEALEAF

The benefits of using Tealeaf extend long past your site launch. After launch and on an ongoing basis, Tealeaf serves to mitigate risks, justify site redesign investments, and prioritize future enhancements. Tealeaf helps you invest your budget and resources where it will have the most impact on improving top- and bottom-line results.

TEALEAF USE CASE: BENCHMARK THE BUSINESS PERFORMANCE OF THE NEW SITE

According to customers, Tealeaf is the most accurate solution they have for tracking a full set of site metrics and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). These metrics are what have enabled them to justify their site redesign investments by proving that the enhancements they made have actually led to improvements in conversion rates, completed transactions, and more. Tealeaf captures a complete set of metrics and KPIs that are available immediately after site launch, and at no extra cost. In contrast, organizations that rely on tools requiring tagging, such as web analytics, may wait months to get any data at all.

Case Study: Top 5 Retailer in the United States

One of the five largest retailers in the United States came to Tealeaf when it was almost ready to launch its newly redesigned site. The company wanted to be sure that the new site would be more effective than the old one in converting shoppers into buyers. Furthermore, it wanted to avoid any possible disruptions from errors cropping up after site launch.

Tealeaf was able to accomplish both goals. With Tealeaf's dashboard and scorecard reports, the retailer was able to validate that the new site's conversion rate was higher than the previous site's. The company even uncovered a few 'surprises' along the way. For example, immediately following the site launch, Tealeaf uncovered a problem on the "Billing/Shipping" page—the server was inexplicably crashing on approximately 15 buyers per day. Since the typical conversion rate from this step to completed order is 40%, this glitch translated into six lost purchases per day. By resolving this single issue, Tealeaf helped the retailer recoup \$110,000 in otherwise lost revenue.

TEALEAF USE CASE: PRIORITIZE FUTURE PROJECTS ACCORDING TO BUSINESS IMPACT

Just as the insights provided by Tealeaf can help you to prioritize and focus as you plan your site redesign, Tealeaf also gives you the data you need to evaluate and rank future customer experience and usability improvement options. As the case studies throughout this white paper demonstrate, this data may not be available from any other source. Without it, ebusinesses tend to fall back on theories and conjecture when they make critical judgments about where to invest their limited resources. Or worse yet, they simply ignore suspected customer experience issues that they cannot explain and/or cannot quantify.

Organizations need a systematic way of knowing which problems to tackle and what the benefits will be. Tealeaf is essential to this process:

- Tealeaf gives you full visibility into the problems that you need to solve; and,
- Tealeaf gives you the quantitative data you need to calculate the true business impact of each problem.

Tealeaf can give you the answers.

DRIVE SITE REDESIGN SUCCESS WITH TEALEAF

Site redesign is rarely a single project; it's a continuous process. Site changes—whether big or small—occur all the time. Sometimes, even the smallest changes can create unexpected outcomes. But regardless of size, today's site redesign projects have little room for failure.

Tealeaf provides ebusinesses with critical customer experience information that helps them to make the right decisions and mitigate risks post-launch, as well as throughout the entire redesign process. Tealeaf provides the most efficient way to find, prioritize, and fix site problems—before they can have a negative impact on the business. As the most effective way to ensure that you prevent costly site redesign failures and get the returns you expect from your investments, Tealeaf is definitely a 'must-have' solution in today's economy.

ABOUT TEALEAF

Tealeaf provides online Customer Experience Management solutions and is the unchallenged leader in customer behavior analysis. Tealeaf's CEM solutions include both a customer behavior analysis suite and customer service optimization suite. For organizations that are making customer experience a top priority, these solutions provide unprecedented enterprise-wide visibility into every visitor's unique online interactions for ongoing analysis and web site optimization. Online executive stakeholders from ebusiness and IT to customer service and compliance are leveraging Tealeaf to build a customer experience management competency across the organization. Founded in 1999, Tealeaf is headquartered in San Francisco, California, and is privately held. For more information, visit www.tealeaf.com.

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