

## How Borders Redesigned its Website Using Voice Of Customer Input from E-Newsletters

### The Challenge: Retooling the Marketing Website to Support Store Sales

Borders is a leading international book, music and DVD superstore with more than 1,200 stores, a web presence and a driving mission to be a headquarters for knowledge and entertainment. Borders' online initiatives play a critical role in helping build community among its customer base while driving sales.

Kevin Ertell, Vice President of E-Business at Borders, needed to redesign the BordersStores.com site to help



Kevin Ertell, Vice President of E-Business at Borders, used data from his e-newsletter to improve satisfaction with the BordersStores.com website.

Borders compete with top customer satisfaction performers Amazon and Barnes & Noble, and to provide a basis for the company to launch a new Borders.com e-commerce site in 2008 when Borders will stop selling online through Amazon.com. Kevin's previous experience with ForeSee Results while at another e-retailer told


*"The combination of customer satisfaction measurement and the usability audit review gave Borders the data-driven customer insights we needed to take our website to the next level."*

—Kevin Ertell, Vice President of E-Business at Borders.

him that the scientific and predictive methodology of the American Customer Satisfaction Index (ACSI) would give him the "voice of customer" insights he could leverage to redesign BordersStores.com and the new Borders.com e-commerce website.

### Satisfaction Insight #1: Coupons Don't Trump Content

After an aggressive 18-month recruitment effort, the Borders Rewards loyalty program subscriber list totaled over 20 million customers. The Borders Weekly Shortlist e-newsletter is sent weekly to more than 15 million of these program members and has above-average open rates of 20 to 30%. This successful program drives millions of dollars in sales to the stores each



week from customers who are highly interested in the coupons offered in each newsletter. Analysis of the satisfaction data segmented customers into two groups: those who were most interested in the content and those whose primary interest was coupons.

An impressive four out of five subscribers said they visited a store because of a coupon or store promotion from the e-newsletter, while only two in five decided to visit a store based on an interview or book excerpt contained in the newsletter. Yet the “content seekers” were 31% more satisfied than “coupon seekers” and were 13% more likely to purchase in a store, making them the customer segment with significantly more bottom-line impact.

This data reinforced a strategic decision to make content more prominent in each newsletter, while maintaining the prominence of coupons. This input also guided Borders to emphasize product content and the store experience in the BordersStores.com site redesign, which served to reinforce its distinctive brand positioning.

## **Satisfaction Insight #2: Customers Need Help Finding Merchandise**

Prior to the launch of the new Stores site, Borders measured customer satisfaction with its existing stores site to identify areas of the site in need of attention. ForeSee Results showed Borders that its search needed improvement: 39% of site visitors had a hard time with search, and satisfaction for this high-priority aspect of the site experience was quite low. Satisfaction analysis also pointed to navigation and non-product-related content as key opportunities for improvement

that would have the greatest impact on overall satisfaction and on future purchase behavior, both online and offline. To delve deeper into the issues, Kevin retained leading usability auditing consultancy Red Spade (now part of ForeSee Results) to identify best practices that would take BordersStores.com beyond its formidable competitors. The usability audit identified specific “usability violations” and highlighted best practices to address them.

Guided by the powerful combination of customer satisfaction analysis and usability insights, Borders redesigned the BordersStores.com site (currently in beta) by incorporating fresh, exciting multi-media innovations to enhance site visitors’ love of books and music. Site visitors feel like they are entering a bookstore, one where they can customize online bookshelves with genres of interest to them. Customers can also customize the site to show store events by zip code, something that Borders learned was of interest from the newsletter measurement.

## **Results/Best Practices:**

While it’s too early to see the full impact of the BordersStores.com redesign, preliminary results are extremely positive.

Combining the quantitative credibility of ForeSee Results’ customer satisfaction analysis with usability best practices enabled Borders to forego expensive and time-consuming usability studies.

*To view our free webinar featuring this Borders case study, visit [www.ForeSeeResults.com/webinars.html](http://www.ForeSeeResults.com/webinars.html). For more information about ForeSee Results and ways you can harness online customer satisfaction to drive your business goals, contact us at (800) 621-2850, or visit [www.ForeSeeResults.com](http://www.ForeSeeResults.com).*