

REI.com

Analysis and Recommendations

Drive-By Analysis

Caveats

- This analysis is built on heuristics alone, rather than interviews with users and/or REI
- “All one can do in a short time is to think what one already knows and to do as one has always done.” - *Peter Drucker*

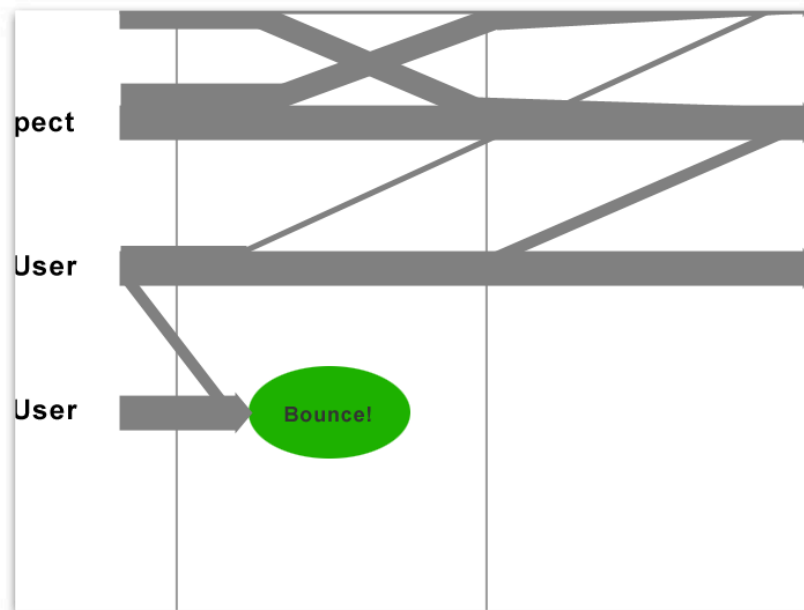
REI.com goals

- Maximize Return on Investment (ROI) by selling more often to customers
- Maximize ROI and build brand strength by creating return users
- Build REI brand by working hand-in-hand with other REI properties (virtual and real)

Assumptions: Shopping Modes

- **Known Item:** User knows exactly what he/she wants
- **Known Aspect:** User knows one or more aspects of what they want
- **Just Browsing:** User is not aiming at a specific item
- **Bounce User:** Looking for another REI company

(Borrowed loosely from)
Four Modes of Seeking Information and How to Design for Them
- Donna Maurer, BoxesandArrows.com



Understand: Customers change modes while shopping

Known Item Flow



Anniversary May 5-14
sale

FOR MEMBERS AND
THOSE JOINING TODAY

**20% OFF
ONE FULL-PRICE
ITEM**

Our Biggest Sale of the Year!
Score super savings on top-name clothing & gear.

[SHOP THE SALE!](#)

Provide coupon code
6ANNV at checkout
by 5/14/06.
[*See coupon details
and exclusions.](#)

Not a member yet?
[Take advantage of our
20% Off Member
Coupon—join REI today!](#)

Images of REI gear: sandals, backpack, tent, and headlamp.

Home Page Affordances for Known-Item Shoppers

“Where do I find [item]?”

- Good: Simple search (with included instructions)
- Bad: Search is not as findable as it could be
 - Wider, not in the ‘adspace’
<http://www.useit.com/alertbox/20020512.html>
- Bad: Category dissonance



[Carabiners & Hardware](#)
[Men's Climbing Clothing](#)
[Black Diamond](#)
[On Sale](#)


[Rope, Slings & Webbing](#)
[Women's Climbing Clothing](#)
[Petzl](#)
[Women's Gear](#)

[Harnesses & Helmets](#)
[Rock Climbing Shoes](#)
[Five Ten](#)
[Top Sellers](#)


[Climbing Protection](#)
[Mountaineering & Ice Boots](#)
[Mammut](#)
[Expert Advice](#)

[More Categories?](#)
[All Climbing Footwear](#)
[More Brands?](#)
[Shop All Climbing](#)


Anniversary May 5-14
sale Don't miss our biggest sale of the year!




[Shop All Anniversary Sale Climbing Gear](#)



[25% Off All Metolius Ultralight Cams!](#)



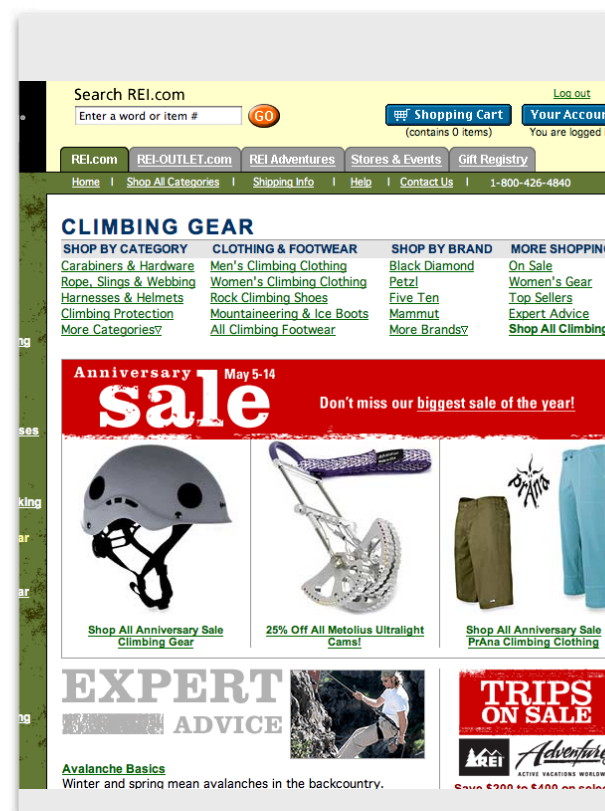
[Shop All Anniversary Sale PrAna Climbing Clothing](#)

EXPERT  **TRIPS ON SALE**

Category Page Affordances for Known-Item Shoppers

“Am I on the right trail?”

- Very Good: Search box still available
- Good: Listed by categories, brand
- Bad: Emphasis on Sale items when user is not in ‘seducible moment’



1. Color/Size Info:
--Choose your Color/Size--

2. Choose quantity:

3. [Add to Shopping Cart](#)

Save 5% when you buy 5 or more full-price pieces of pro!*

Product Info: Metolius Ultralight Range Finder Power Cams

[See specs below](#)










Ultralight pro for free, alpine or aid routes--these versatile quad power cams feature Direct Axle Technology™ for lightweight performance.

- Direct Axle Technology allows greater placement options in shallow, narrow or bottoming rock features
- Also makes tricky placements easier due to better cam lobe visibility, especially in the smaller sizes
- New Ranger Finder™ markings eliminate guess work: Green Zone for go, Yellow Zone for caution or trade up sizes and Red Zone

SIZE 6 [Click for larger view.](#)

Product Photos (click to view)

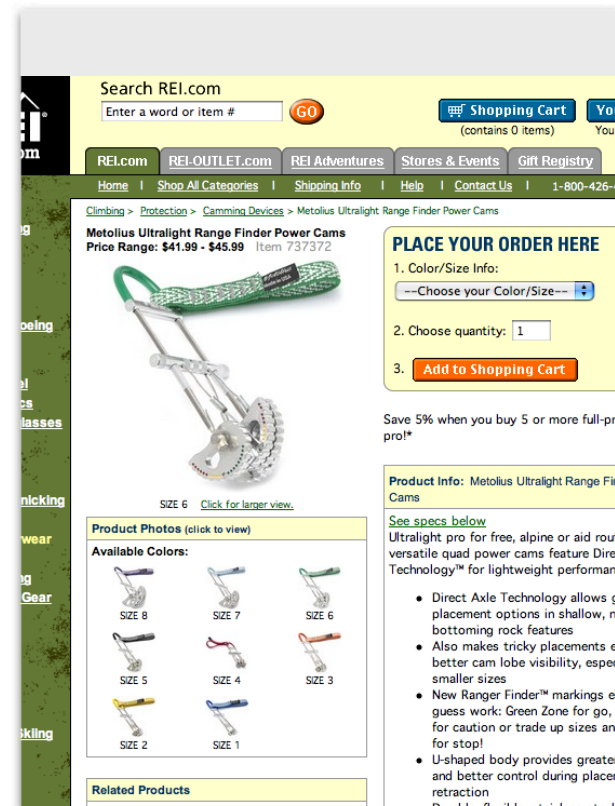
Available Colors:

 SIZE 8	 SIZE 7	 SIZE 6
 SIZE 5	 SIZE 4	 SIZE 3
 SIZE 8	 SIZE 7	 SIZE 6

Item Page Affordances for Known-Item Shoppers

“Do I want to buy this?”

- Excellent: Page center is dedicated to item
- Good: Extensive list of product details
- Not so good: A great deal of page space is dedicated to other modes (category, bounce)



Known Aspect Flow



Anniversary May 5-14
sale

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Coupon—join REI today!](#)

4

Images of outdoor gear: sandals, a backpack, a tent, and a watch.

Home Page Affordances for Known Aspect Shoppers




“I want [category]”

- Good and Bad: Multiple Categories
- Bad: Category Dissonance
 - User can not form a reliable mental model
- Bad: “Expert Advice” is buried




Carabiners & Hardware	Men's Climbing Clothing	Black Diamond	Site Sale
Rope, Slings & Webbing	Women's Climbing Clothing	Petzl	Women's Gear
Harnesses & Helmets	Rock Climbing Shoes	Five Ten	Top Sellers
Climbing Protection	Mountaineering & Ice Boots	Mammut	Expert Advice
More Categories?	All Climbing Footwear	More Brands?	Shop All Climbing

Anniversary May 5-14
sale Don't miss our biggest sale of the year!

 Shop All Anniversary Sale Climbing Gear	 25% Off All Metolius Ultralight Cams!	 Shop All Anniversary Sale PrAna Climbing Clothing
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EXPERT
ADVICE

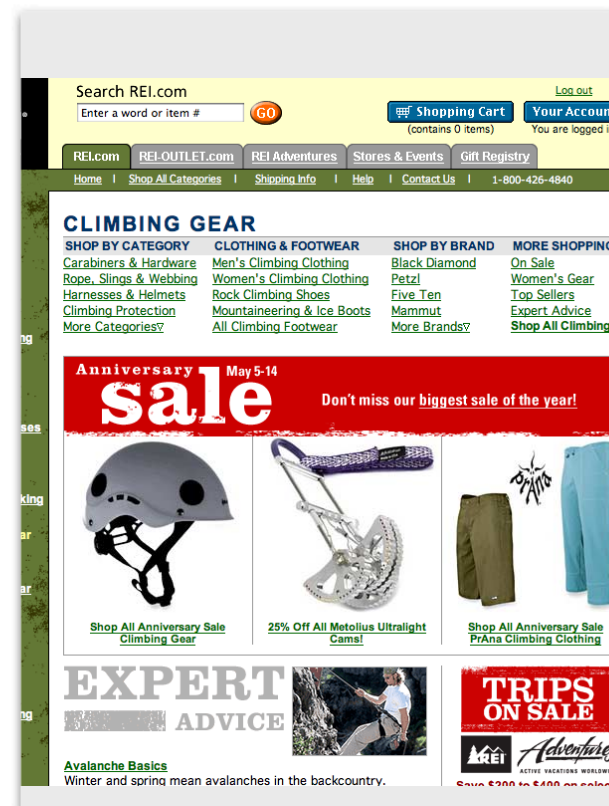


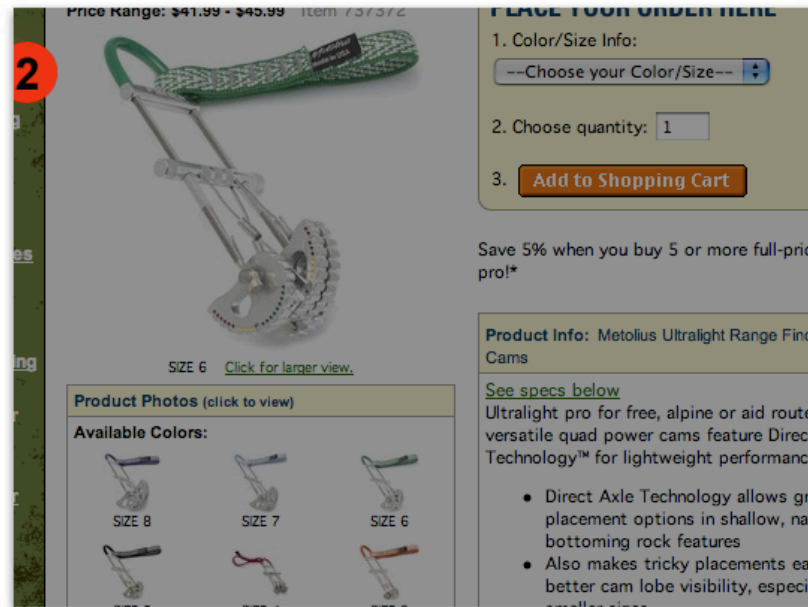
TRIPS
ON SALE

Category Page Affordances for Known Aspect Shoppers

“Is [item] in this category?”

- Excellent: Extensive subcategory lists
- Bad: Emphasis on unrelated sales can, at best, derail a category search
- Expert advice is visible, but not emphasized

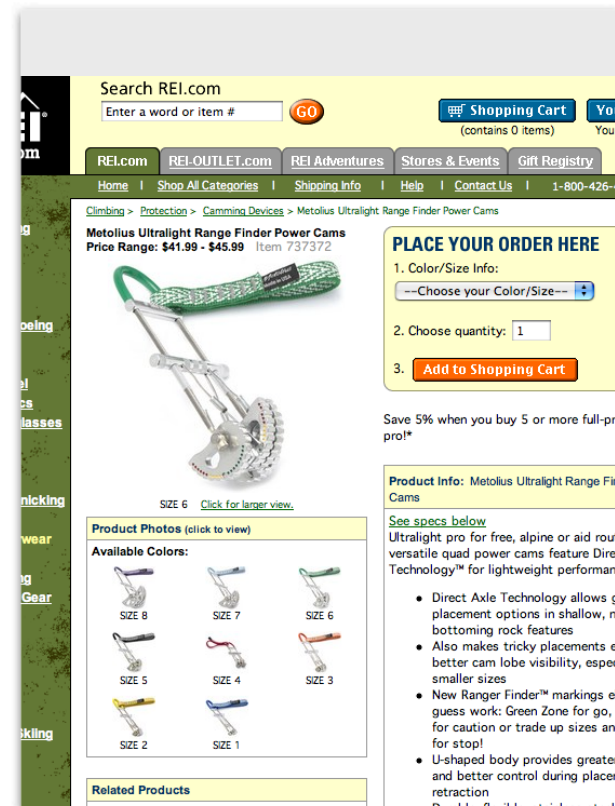




Item Page Affordances for Known Aspect Shoppers

“Is this the right one?”

- Good: Breadcrumbs available in case item is incorrect
- Bad: No comparison tools or ‘explore similar’
- Bad: No expert advice
- Bad: No user ratings



Just Browsing Flow



Anniversary May 5-14

sale

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Provide coupon code
6ANNV at checkout
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[*See coupon details
and exclusions.](#)

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Coupon—join REI today!](#)

Images of outdoor gear: sandals, backpack, tent, and headlamp.

Home Page Affordances for Just Browsing Shoppers

Home Page Affordances for Just Browsing Shoppers




“Hey, a sale!”

- Good: Sale right up front
- Good: Pictures and short descriptions
- Bad: No apparent personalization




Carabiners & Hardware	Men's Climbing Clothing	Black Diamond	On Sale	3
Rope, Slings & Webbing	Women's Climbing Clothing	Petzl	Women's Gear	
Harnesses & Helmets	Rock Climbing Shoes	Five Ten	Top Sellers	
Climbing Protection	Mountaineering & Ice Boots	Mammut	Expert Advice	
More Categories?	All Climbing Footwear	More Brands?	Shop All Climbing	

Anniversary May 5-14
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 Shop All Anniversary Sale Climbing Gear	 25% Off All Metolius Ultralight Cams!	 Shop All Anniversary Sale PrAna Climbing Clothing
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EXPERT
ADVICE

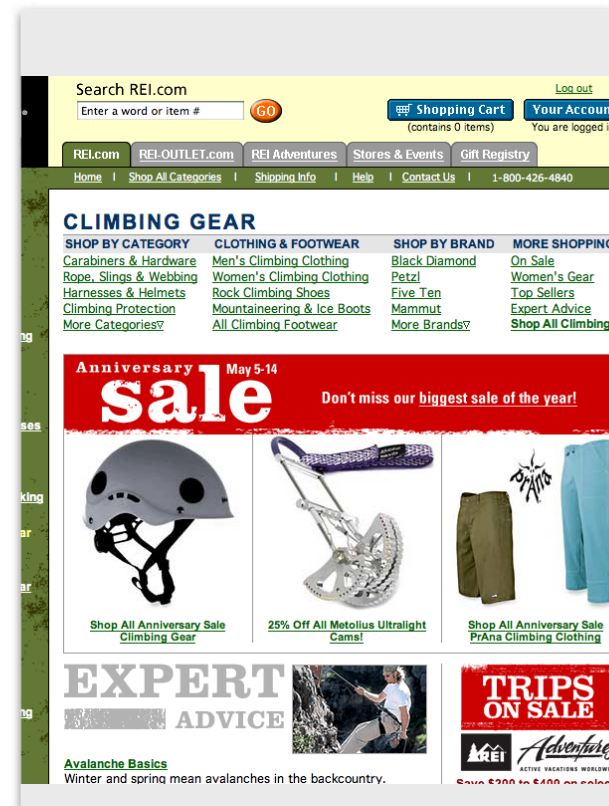


TRIPS
ON SALE

Category Page Affordances for Just Browsing Shoppers

“Petzl? What’s a Petzl?”

- Good: Large sales items
- Good: Categories listed for transition to category search
- Bad: Expert advice, which can guide a browser, is not emphasized



Things that work well with this item:

 [Metolius Cam Maintenance Kit](#)
\$14.95

Other items like this:

 [Metolius Ultralight Range Finder](#)
[TCU Cams](#) \$36.99

You might also like...

 [Metolius Super Chalk-O-Lot Chalk Sock](#) \$4.00

 [Metolius Grip Saver Plus](#) \$17.95

 [Black Diamond Half Dome Helmet](#)
\$44.99

 [Edelweiss Axis 10.3mm x 60m Dry Rope](#) \$109.99

- Durable, flexible, stainless-steel cable body with long-wearing trigger slides are lightweight, strong and allow easy placement
- Split-wire triggers with knurled trigger bars allow you to use one, two or three fingers--or even gloved hands
- Features four wide CNC machined cams of super-durable 7075-T6 aluminum
- Machined cam stops and radiused teeth increase cam durability and holding power; optimized cam angle applies more outward force
- Lightweight Dyneema nylon slings are color-coded for quick, easy identification and less bulky than standard nylon slings
- *Discount will be applied when you check out. Offer not valid for sale-price items ending in \$...3 or \$...9

Individual specifications listed below for size / range / strength / weight / color:

- Size 00 / 8.5-14.0mm / 6.35kN / 45g / gray
- Size 0 / 10.0-15.5mm / 6.35kN / 48g / purple
- Size 1 / 12.5-19.5mm / 8.16kN / 54g / blue
- Size 2 / 15.5-24.5mm / 12kN / 64g / yellow
- Size 3 / 18.5-29.0mm / 12kN / 68g / orange
- Size 4 / 23.5-35.5mm / 12kN / 77g / red
- Size 5 / 28.0-41.5mm / 12kN / 86g / black
- Size 6 / 32.5-50.0mm / 12kN / 98g / green

Metolius

Item Page Affordances for Just Browsing Shoppers

“What else you got?”

- Good: “You might also like...”
- Bad: Expert advise is at bottom of page
- Good: At this point, browsers are likely direct searchers, so any distractive affordance should be minimized to turn a

The screenshot shows a product page for Metolius camming devices. At the top, there is a grid of nine images showing different sizes of cams, labeled SIZE 1 through SIZE 8. Below this is a 'Related Products' section with three items: 'Metolius Cam Maintenance Kit \$14.95', 'Metolius Ultralight Range Finder TCUs \$36.99', and 'Metolius Super Chalk-O-Lot Chalk Sock \$4.00'. There are also 'Other items like this:' and 'You might also like...' sections with more product recommendations. The Metolius logo is prominently displayed in the center, with a link to 'View all Metolius products'. At the bottom, there is a 'Useful Links' section with links for 'Shipping Charges', 'Delivery Date Finder', 'Ordering Help/FAQs', 'Contact Us', 'Sizing Info', and '100% Guarantee'. On the right side of the page, there is a list of individual specifications for various cam sizes, including diameter, strength, and weight. A vertical navigation bar on the left side of the page includes links for 'Biking', 'Gear', 'Shop', 'Pages', 'Member', 'Visa®', and 'Affiliate'.

placement options in shallow, no bottoming rock features

- Also makes tricky placements easier with better cam lobe visibility, especially in smaller sizes
- New Ranger Finder™ markings eliminate guess work: Green Zone for go, Yellow for caution or trade up sizes and Red for stop!
- U-shaped body provides greater control and better control during placement and retraction
- Durable, flexible, stainless-steel with long-wearing trigger slides for lightweight, strong and allow easy placement
- Split-wire triggers with knurled texture allow you to use one, two or three even gloved hands
- Features four wide CNC machined super-durable 7075-T6 aluminum cam stops and radiuses to increase cam durability and hold. optimized cam angle applies more force
- Lightweight Dyneema nylon slings coded for quick, easy identification. bulkier than standard nylon slings
- *Discount will be applied when you buy out. Offer not valid for sale-price ending in \$_.3 or \$_.9

Individual specifications listed below / range / strength / weight / color

- Size 00 / 8.5-14.0mm / 6.35kN
- Size 0 / 10.0-15.5mm / 6.35kN purple
- Size 1 / 12.5-19.5mm / 8.16kN
- Size 2 / 15.5-24.5mm / 12kN / orange
- Size 3 / 18.5-29.0mm / 12kN / orange
- Size 4 / 23.5-35.5mm / 12kN / purple
- Size 5 / 28.0-41.5mm / 12kN / blue
- Size 6 / 32.5-50.0mm / 12kN / blue
- Size 7 / 40.0-61.0mm / 12kN / blue
- Size 8 / 48.5-74.0mm / 12kN / purple

Made in USA.

Bounce Flow

Anniversary May 5-14

sale

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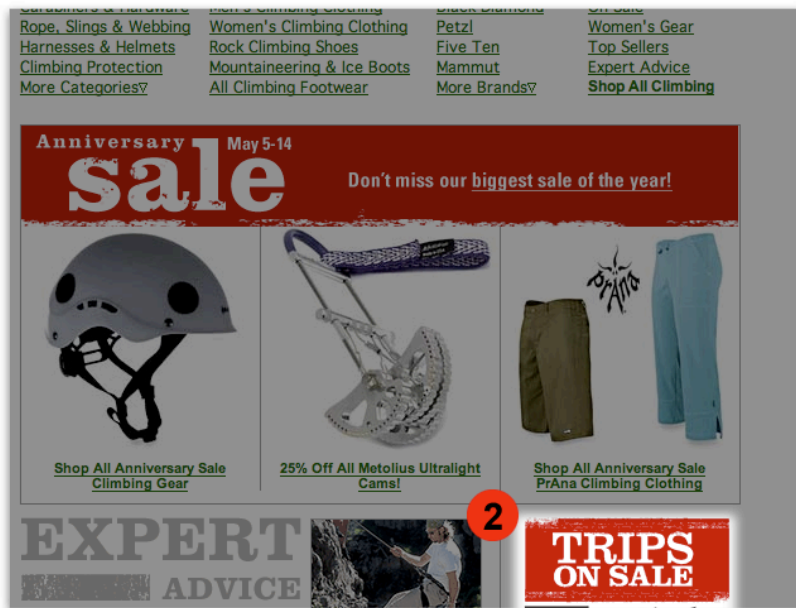
Sandal, Backpack, Sock, Belt

Home Page Affordances for Bounce User

“Where’s the nearest store?”

- Good: Affiliated companies are right up top
- Is this the largest or most important audience?
- Bad: ‘Find a Store’ is likely need

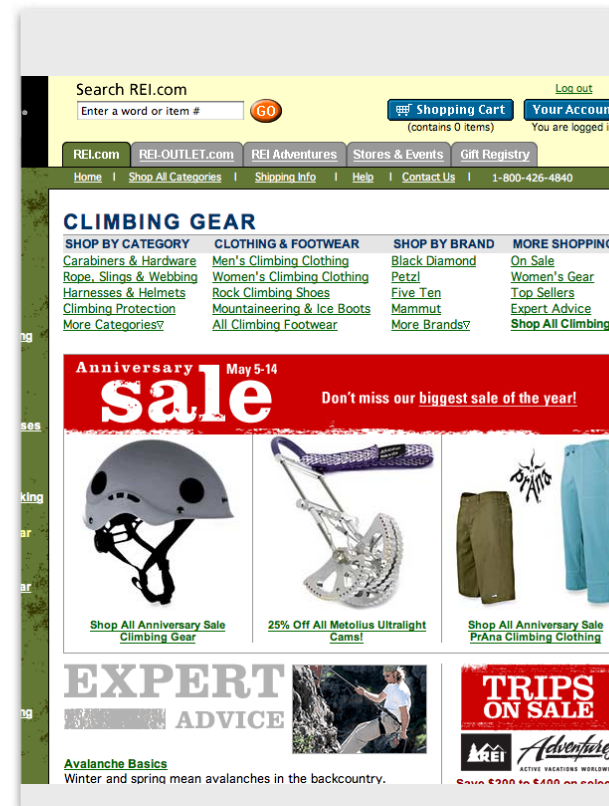




Category Page Affordances for Bounce User

“Where can I climb after I get my gear?”

- Good: Bounce links stay in place
- Good: A number of diversions to keep users on rei.com
- Bad: Strategically, the emphasis on bounce links is misplaced



Very Preliminary Conclusions

- Known Item users are very well served
 - Search and categories take care of their needs
- Known Aspect users are less well served
 - Would benefit from better category organization
 - Would benefit from Expert Advice

Very Preliminary Conclusions

- Browse Shoppers are well served on the home page
- Browse Shoppers are over served on the category pages
- Browse Shoppers could use more 'similar items' on detail pages
- Bounce users are over served with the navigation bar at top on every page

Very Preliminary Conclusions

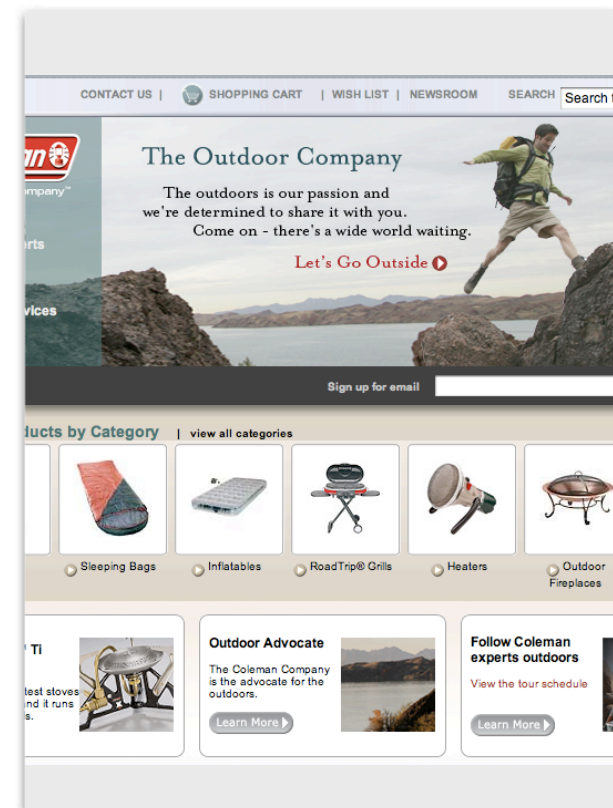
- No apparent personalization or any other
- No 'Find Store Near You' on the home page
- Expert advice can be better utilized to serve the category and browse users
- Personal Observation: Branding is not as strong as it should be on the website

**What can we ~~steal~~
learn from
competitors?**

Competitor

Coleman

- “Let’s Go Outside” is a great tagline and intro to shopping
- Big, enthusiast photo
- One third of screen dedicated to outdoor advice, which in turn is tied to products



Competitor

Campmor

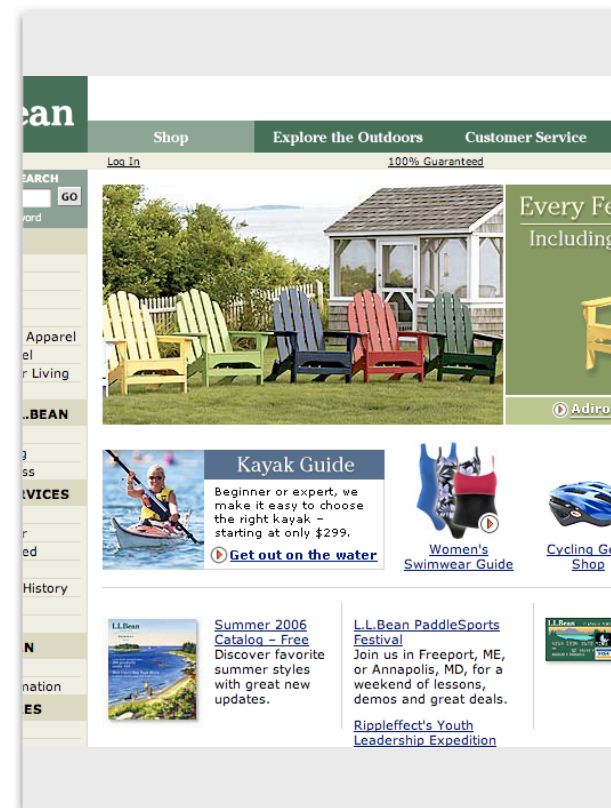
- Simple Category Headers and many subcategory words (assists in identifying correct category)
- Big, timely photos



Competitor

L.L. Bean

- Customer Service right up top
- Expert feature story is prominent on home page
- Browsing is supported on home page, but all other modes are emphasized on sub pages



Final Recommendations

Final Recommendations

- Make Search more visible
 - Avoid rectangles that can be mistaken for an advertisement
 - Move search across design grid line
 - Nielsen says 27 character width for search boxes tested best

Final Recommendations

- Organize categories - eliminate those that do not qualify as categories (e.g. Novara Bikes, REI Brand Gear)
- If a subcategory is broken out, separate it from the category nav (e.g. Snow Sports)
- Eliminate non-shopping categories on all pages other than the home page

Final Recommendations

- Minimize sales boxes on subpages.
Eliminate them entirely on item pages unless they pertain to the item viewed
- Change external links at top to badges on the home page
- No need to include them on pages below categories, but can be useful on Shopping Cart pages

Final Recommendations

- Emphasize Expert Advice
 - This will assist both Category and Browse shoppers
 - Make it more of an enthusiast site, which will bring back users
- As a corollary, institute personalization
 - This will allow targeted Browse recommendations that will increase sales

Long Term

Recommendations

- Consider moving categories across the top rather than the side
 - Side nav can be dedicated to transitory nav for bounce and browse users
- Redesign page so that page is semantically understandable so it can be displayed outside REI.com
- Build item page elements based on the idea they will be used elsewhere