



CASE STUDY: DEBENHAMS

Freedom to switch: TagMan and Logan Tod & Co have Omniture SiteCatalyst ready for launch on retailer's site in six weeks.

Overview

Department store group Debenhams was eager to replace its legacy web analytics provider HBX with Omniture SiteCatalyst.

But, with site infrastructure supplied and hosted by its IT systems partner IBM, making any code changes to its website meant long delays.

So, in order to make the move – and all future marketing implementations and changes - quicker and more straightforward, Debenhams turned to TagMan, the smart container tag and tag management system.

Together, online performance optimisation consultancy Logan Tod and TagMan implemented TagMan on the Debenhams site and – through the system – had SiteCatalyst ready to go live in six weeks.

With TagMan implemented, Logan Tod is helping Debenhams to explore the full potential of SiteCatalyst and Debenhams now has complete freedom to implement any new online marketing technologies, without changing the code on the site. For example, Logan Tod has since made enhancements to the affiliate reward scheme for Debenhams within days that, previously, would have taken months.

Background

Debenhams is one of the UK's leading department store groups. Operating 161 stores across the UK and Ireland, the company also runs a significant online retail arm, selling across its entire product range, from clothing to electricals and furniture.

To gain more informed tracking on the way its customers interacted with its website, Debenhams wanted to move to a new web analytics supplier, choosing Omniture's SiteCatalyst system.

However, the site was built and hosted by IT systems partner IBM to provide integration with company back-end infrastructure. This meant that making any code changes to the web site was a painful and delayed process. In such conditions, Debenhams used the move to a new analytics provider as an opportunity to consider how it could make – not just this – but any future marketing technology implementations much more straightforward.

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DEBENHAMS

Alison Smith
Senior Implementation Specialist, Logan Tod & Co

The company secured budget to invest in a system to enable much greater freedom to choose and use new technologies and then turned to TagMan, the smart container tag and tag management system. TagMan uses a single container tag to replace all the on-site tags used to manage and track online marketing technologies. The third-party tags are instead housed in the TagMan system from where any changes can be made immediately using a browser-based interface and without affecting the code on the website. This allows existing technologies to be managed and tracked much more effectively and new technologies to be installed instantly.

Working with Debenhams' online performance optimisation consultancy Logan Tod, TagMan and Debenhams set out to install TagMan and Omniture SiteCatalyst on the Debenhams site and gain future freedom to implement, manage and track any online marketing technology.

Strategy

With IBM hosting the site infrastructure, making any changes to the Debenhams website meant awkward workarounds. Any data required by technologies on the site – including web analytics – would have to be picked up by IBM and passed to providers' systems.

TagMan would have to be installed in the same way but, once done, future changes could be managed through the TagMan system, without site code changes and with complete control and security.

Logan Tod was charged with the project and worked closely with TagMan to install the system on the site and – at the same time – implement SiteCatalyst.

The first phase of the project was to install TagMan and track in SiteCatalyst the same data tracked using the legacy analytics system (HBX). IBM was therefore asked to pass the values previously passed into HBX, into the TagMan system, inside which Omniture SiteCatalyst was housed.

Once in place, Logan Tod and Debenhams would then begin to make more use of SiteCatalyst functionality to gain greater insight into the ways customers used its site.

Implementation

Logan Tod and TagMan worked on a plan to break the site up into groups of pages according to the amount and complexity of data that needed to be collected on the page. Straightforward pages that contained little functionality such as basic product information would fall in one group, while complex pages with variables such as basket size, product orders and so on would fall in another. Each group would require a different level of container tag, depending on their complexity. In the end 12 groups of page were decided upon, meaning the development and installation of 12 basic types of container tag on the site.

TagMan supplied generic container tag code to be implemented on the site by IBM and then – through Logan Tod – worked with IBM to establish the values from each page that needed to be passed into each container.

Alison Smith, Senior Implementation Specialist at Logan Tod & Co says: “IBM understood where the data came from on the site, we understood the business and marketing requirements of Debenhams, and TagMan understood how the data could be passed from system to system. Working together we were able to work out the best way of doing things.”

Outcomes

► Ready for live in 6 weeks

The project to implement TagMan and Omniture SiteCatalyst began in mid-June 2010. By the end of July, the system was ready to go live. Full testing began in September and was put live on October 1st 2010.

Smith says: “We tell people that implementing TagMan properly is a similar scale project to a full analytics implementation. But, once done, we and our clients are able to make changes much more quickly. Problems that we previously would have needed to go through IBM to get addressed, which could sometimes take months, can now be corrected ourselves. In terms of fixing bugs and adding enhancements, it has made an enormous difference.”

► New affiliate strategy

One of the many enhancements Logan Tod has introduced for Debenhams has been a new affiliate strategy to reward different levels of commission to affiliates for different product types. This requires tracking that shows which affiliate has delivered precisely which sale, including data on products and order value, and that contains inside it the set levels of commission.

Using TagMan, Logan Tod set the required tracking in place in under a week. Smith says: “It was all done by us, through TagMan, in a few days. We fixed it in the background and were able to do full end-to-end testing without affecting the site or changing the code. If we were working with the legacy infrastructure, it certainly would have taken a few weeks, or possibly months, to put in place.”

► Next steps

With SiteCatalyst delivering the same reporting as the previous analytics system, phase 1 of the project was complete. The next phase is to enhance the tracking of the Debenhams site considerably and begin to make full use of SiteCatalyst’s capabilities.

Logan Tod and Debenhams are using TagMan to help SiteCatalyst collect all manner of new information from the site to drive greater insight into the way its online customers behave and improve the experience to drive sales.

TagMan is being used for all online tracking on an ongoing basis.



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