

Criteria for Judging Ecommerce Sites (Original Source: REI)

Branding

- Does your website have a professional visual design, reflecting brand, clarity, visual hierarchy?
- Is your site's visual design consistent across different pages? A web application should have relatively the same look and feel across different pages, i.e., there should be no drastic changes in design from one page to the next.
- Is the content optimized for delivery? E.g. good use of headings and subheadings, short sentences, short paragraphs, facilitates scanning, etc.
- Do the various page components (content, links navigation etc) support the purpose of the page? i.e., the various page components should be relevant in allowing the user to complete their goals.
- Does the website have a good balance of white space and content? Users engage easier with content when there is a good balance of white space and content.

Customer Care

- Are useful contact details easily available? Users should not have to spend any time searching for the contact details of the organisation.
- Is there good help and support easily available? (Users should not struggle in finding the answers to any questions they may have).
- Returns policy present, clear and fair?
- Delivery times and costs clearly communicated early?
- Are the appropriate security measures (HTTPS) and their trust marks presented

Ecommerce Product

- Is it easy to find a product through navigation - are product categories intuitive, easy to browse.
- Is search box placed prominently at the top of the site?
- Does site search return relevant results using synonyms (e.g. hair straighteners versus hair tongs).
- Can products be easily filtered - e.g. choosing size, colour, brand
- Is product content well written (text), well presented (product images, videos) and persuasive? Is there sufficient product detail/specification?
- Is there a clear call to action to add to cart?
- Are shoppers who aren't ready to buy catered for? Save for later, adding to wishlist are good examples
- Is shopping cart persistent between visits?



Ecommerce Checkout

- Is checkout "enclosed"? Enclosing means to minimize distractions and focus on getting to confirm page.
- Is checkout unencumbered by account registration?
- Are forms laid out in the fewest number of steps and the minimum set of questions asked?
- Are forms flexible enough to be forgiving i.e. don't insist on specific addresses or data to be entered in specific formats? Example: phone numbers, addresses, postcodes.
- Are error messages clear, friendly and do they give clear instructions on how to recover from the error?
- Are trust marks (security, phone numbers, live help etc.) present through checkout?

Mobile

- Does the website have a mobile-specific design (dedicated mobile site or responsive)
- Does the design cater for multiple device sizes?

Social interactions

- Are forms of social media used from share buttons to deeper social integration
- Is there a good, relevant and frequent activity offsite on social media channels (if appropriate)

Local

- Is there a good cross-over to physical channel (if appropriate) includes location, click and collect etc.

Note: this document is based on the judging criteria for ecommerce sites issued by Retail Excellence Ireland in 2013.

