

DIGITAL SHELF OPTIMIZATION

THE GUIDE TO CREATING GREAT PRODUCT
EXPERIENCES ON 100+ CHANNELS



WHAT YOU'LL LEARN:

- What products should you start optimizing first?
- How running Out-Of-Stock affects digital shelf performances
- Why price monitoring is useful
- Some important elements of buy box algorithms
- Guidelines on how to optimize the elements of product detail pages, including ratings & reviews
- How you can improve your products' search rankings

Brands and manufacturers are increasingly implementing a multi-channel sales approach. Selling via indirect sales channels affects the level of brand control. Winning the digital shelf requires **great product visibility and presentation, staying ahead of the competition, and maximizing conversion.**

Data-driven optimization is the magic word. Gather product data from all your online sales channels and translate it into useful insights. Then turn insights into actions and actions into results.

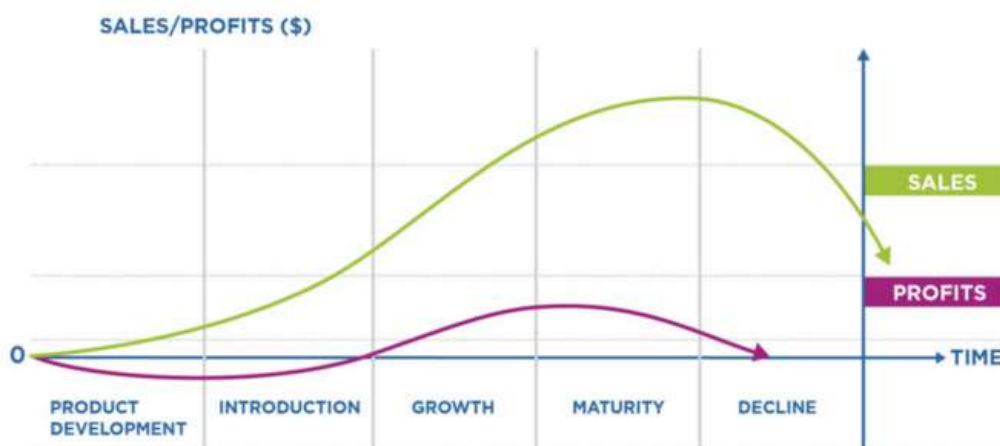


WHICH ITEMS ARE YOU GOING TO IMPROVE FIRST?

As a brand manufacturer, you have hundreds or perhaps thousands of products in your assortment, listed on multiple online sales channels; it may be difficult to figure out where to start. Each Product Detail Page (PDP) can be improved, but more interesting is: what can you achieve the most impact with?

BRAND/MANUFACTURER LEVEL

Make a selection based on the product lifecycle stage: New product introductions and products in the growth stage of their lifecycle are most interesting to begin optimizing.



Then select the so-called stars and question marks with high market growth opportunities.

MARKETPLACES/RETAILER LEVEL

Analyze per sales channel the page traffic and conversions. Start with products with **high page traffic and low conversions**. Focus on optimizing product content, price optimization, and possibly winning (back) the buy button. Focus on optimizing search rankings for products with **low page traffic and high conversions**.

CHECK IF PRODUCTS ARE LISTED WHERE THEY SHOULD BE

Once you've set up (retailer-specific) portfolio lists that you want to start optimizing, analyze the **product coverage**.

A product that shoppers can't find online will not sell

In eCommerce, products go missing all the time. More than 30% of products disappear or never show up on the digital shelves because they:

- Are not listed
- Run out of stock
- Rank low in search results
- Lose the buy button

“ Thanks to SiteLucent, we discovered reseller web shops with only 30 percent of the total portfolio listed.

Stephanie Meijer - Digital Content & Campaign Manager

CORAM

Digital shelf monitoring tools such as SiteLucent can help you identify missing products on each channel. Monitoring tools simplify the necessary yet time-consuming job of checking manually if the agreed-upon products are listed.

Reach out to your reseller to clarify why products are not listed on their sites and increase your brands' **share-of-shelf**.

PRODUCT AVAILABILITY

The consequences of running Out-Of-Stock and how to prevent it

Today's consumers often bounce between channels seamlessly, always searching for the best products, the best service, and the best price. Keeping your brand's presence consistent on the channels where consumers are shopping is vital to converting them to purchase. Running Out-Of-Stock (OOS) has negative consequences for your brand in the short and long run.

The Consequences of Running OOS



How to Prevent Online Stockouts?

- Lost sales: You miss an occasional purchase or multiple repeat sales;
 - Search ranking can go down;
 - You might lose the buy button on marketplaces;
 - Your brand jeopardizes customer loyalty - Bad customer experiences can damage your brands' reputation;
 - Shoppers may choose an alternative product, get disappointed, and return their product.
- Be sure to keep products with the best profit margins in stock at all times;
 - Keep a close eye on seasonal products and try to forecast peaks;
 - Daily track the availability of your products at your key sales channels using monitoring tools;
 - Track the length and timing of each product's stock out and easily anticipate potential supply issues in the future.



WHY PRICE TRACKING IS HELPFUL FOR BRANDS

PROTECT YOUR BRANDS' PROFITABILITY

Retailer and marketplaces repricing algorithms constantly monitor the prices of competing sellers and sites. Then they adjust their price to win more sales. This way, a race-to-the-bottom dynamic is created that brings margins and brand profitability into risk.

Focus on protecting your brand by monitoring online price movements of your products, 3P sellers, retailers, and competitors, on all eCommerce channels. Keeping prices stable and avoiding price wars is an overall indicator of success on 'the digital shelf.'

Enforce a **Minimum Advertising Policy (MAP)** (in countries where they are used) to prevent other sellers on and off the platform from undercutting your prices. If they do, warn these sellers about their violation.



Setting up **alerts** on product prices saves yourself and your team time and effort, and you can identify who dropped a price first. For instance, set up an email or notification for your brands' sales department whenever a price drops, and let them take appropriate action.

PRICE WARS ON MARKETPLACES

A marketplace is an ideal channel to generate turnover, but profitability is not self-evident. **Price wars on Marketplaces** can lead to losing product listings, becoming "ineligible" for advertising, and losing buy box placement and eligibility.

If possible, switch to a selective distribution model (for at least some products) to cut off supply to unauthorized sellers who are not within your brands' selection of distributors and resellers. Use eCommerce monitoring software to monitor threats from 3P sellers constantly.

NEGOTIATE WITH RESELLERS

As a brand, your goal is to cover your costs, stay competitive, create a value perception for customers, and ultimately profit. When discussing margins with resellers, you better be prepared. To back you up in meetings, analyze daily online selling prices of the previous three months.

CHECK ANNUAL RETAIL PROMOTIONS

If your annual promotional calendar is ready for all retailers, you can use price tracking software to check if resellers are honoring agreed promotions. 'Have promotions started on the correct date, and are they quoting the right prices?'

KEEP AN EYE ON YOUR COMPETITORS

Benchmarking competitors' prices is especially helpful if your brand has a competitor-based pricing strategy. Determine a price for your (new) products concerning where you think they stand amongst the competition and identify areas for improvements.



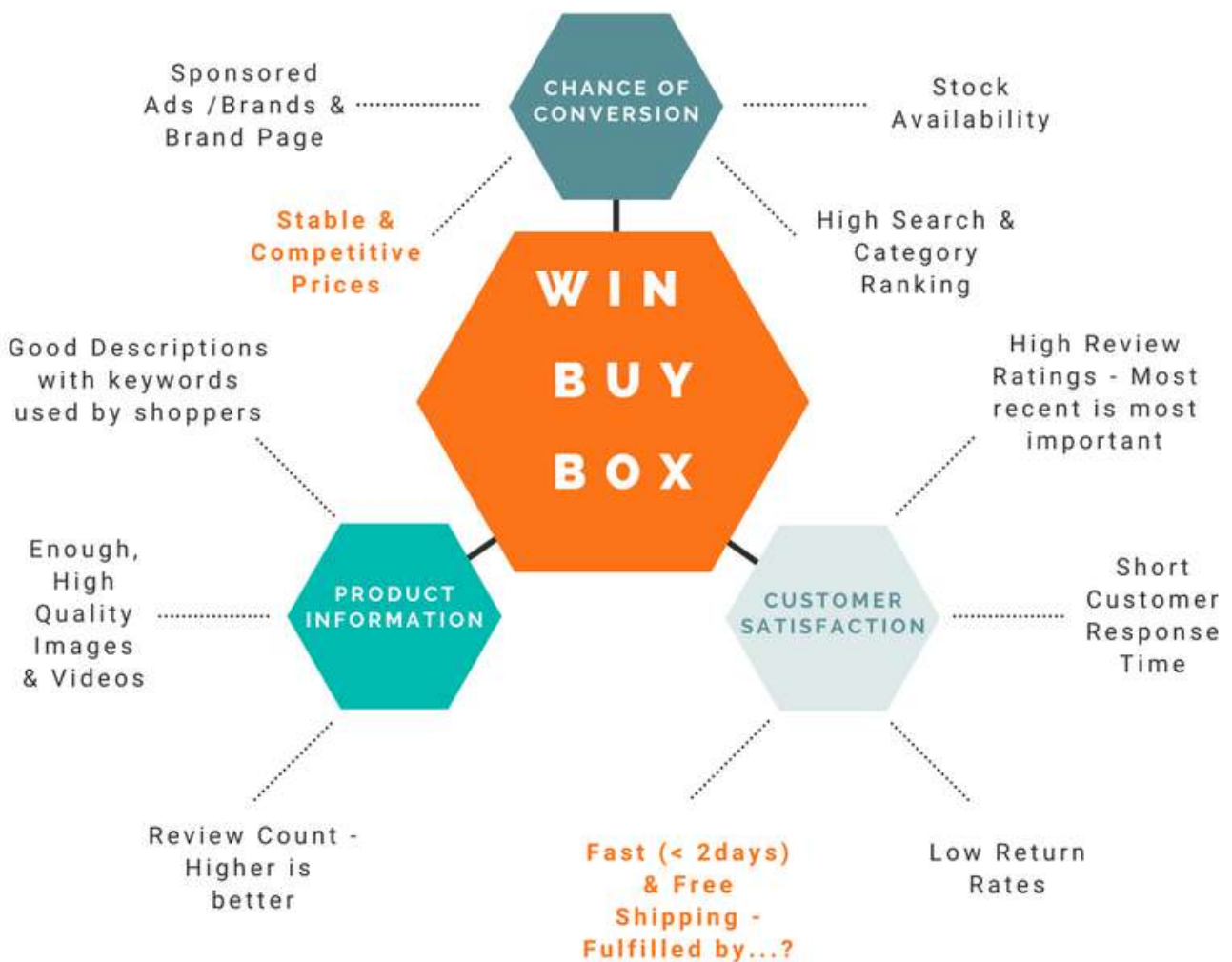
Understand how prices evolve in a competitive environment. If competitors lower prices during the growth stage of your product's life cycle, you might need to drop your prices and adopt a competitive pricing strategy. During the decline stage, (competitor) price tracking can be helpful to decide if you want to discontinue the product or keep producing and selling it.

BUY BOX ALGORITHMS

THE VARIABLES THAT AFFECT THE BUY BOX WIN

Whenever a seller is 'Buy Box-eligible,' most marketplaces algorithms look for 'the best offer' –the seller with a combination of **great chances of conversion, product information, and customer satisfaction**. This way, marketplaces guarantee their customers that you are a reliable seller providing high-quality products and top-notch customer service.

If the Buy Box suggests your competitors over you, you're probably missing out on a great deal of money. As a brand or manufacturer, it is not self-evident that you win and keep the buy box.



Read more about the above variables in the blog on [how brands can prevent losing the buy box](#).

OPTIMIZE PRODUCT CONTENT

Before you start optimizing content, we recommend you map (platform-specific) content standards, monitor, and analyze PDPs, and identify fields for growth.

MAP RETAILER CONTENT REQUIREMENTS

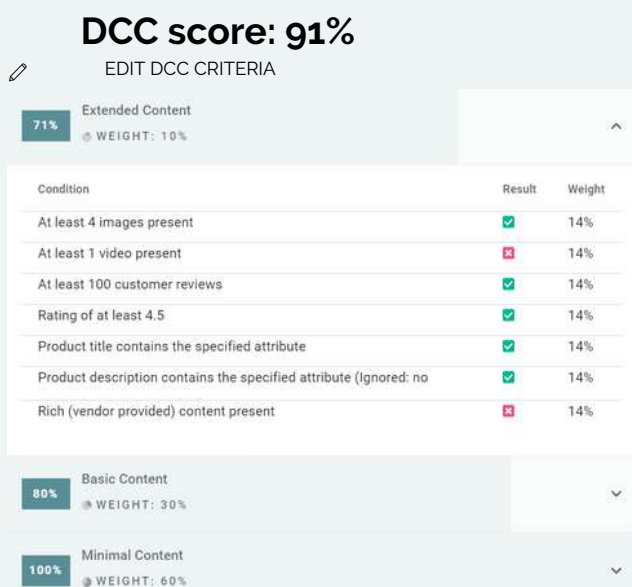
What is required or works on one retailer site may not always be the best fit for another. A growing number of retailers have their content standards and guidelines in place for you to follow. Failure to match a retailers' site guidelines can result in a product's rejection or lousy digital shelf performances.

Gather all retailer requirements such as recommended number of characters in product titles and descriptions, image quality, and the option to deliver rich content such as videos, decision guides, or HTML content. Additionally, look at how your competitors and best-sellers on a particular platform present their products.

MONITOR WHAT PRODUCTS ARE UNDERPERFORMING

Once you have mapped out content criteria, you can start monitoring which product detail pages are underperforming. Use **content scorecards** to determine if PDPs meet your criteria and if product content elements have been published correctly on your key sales channels.

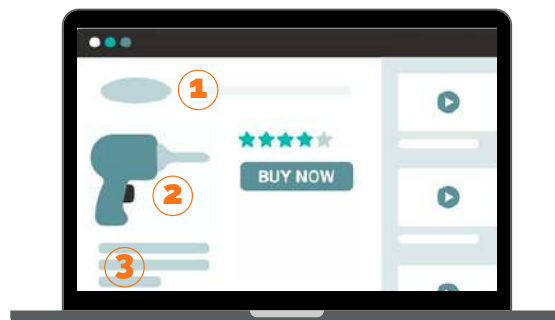
DIGITAL CONTENT COMPLETENESS (DCC) SCORE - BRAND X



- The SiteLucent team created the DCC score to measure content compliance on all channels.
- Fully customize (retailer-specific) content criteria and their weights.
- The three layers - Minimal, Basic, and Extended, help you prioritize what to optimize first and bring product content towards perfection level.

THE ELEMENTS OF A PRODUCT DETAIL PAGE

Basic content elements are indispensable to win on the digital shelf. Begin with optimizing what a shopper sees when they first land on your product page. Commonly, this includes:



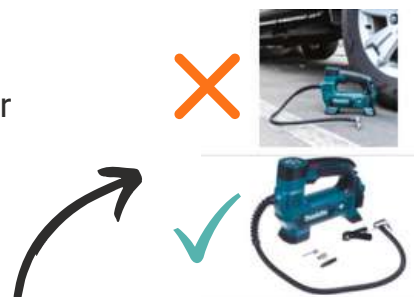
1 Product title

Use up to 100 characters and write clear product-identifying keywords at the beginning of your title, which is **legible on all devices**. The product title ideally contains the following elements:

- Brand name
- Serial name
- Product type
- Specs/distinguishing characteristics, e.g. size, color
- Search keywords

2 Product image(s)

- Display as hero image an image of the item itself. Straight from the front or clear side view and as filling as possible.
- Provide a white, neutral background with no shadow visible.
- Do not show any logo, (promotional) text, icons, or watermarks in the image.
- Use clear and sharp images (min. 500 x 500 pixels, max. 6000 x 6000 pixels, and no larger than 16 MB).



3 Product description

- Keep it simple and scannable - bulleted features, subtitles, and white spaces.
- Trigger emotions and capture your ideal customers' imagination.
- Tie benefits to your products' features.

To create product descriptions that sell, you need to know your product and the ideal buyer by heart.

PREMIUM PRODUCT CONTENT

Once your basic product content is correct, complete, and optimized for perfection, it is time to focus on premium content - Enhanced Manufacturer Content or A+ content (Amazon). At SiteLucent, we recommend you to:

1 Add videos to PDPs

Shoppers can use videos to:

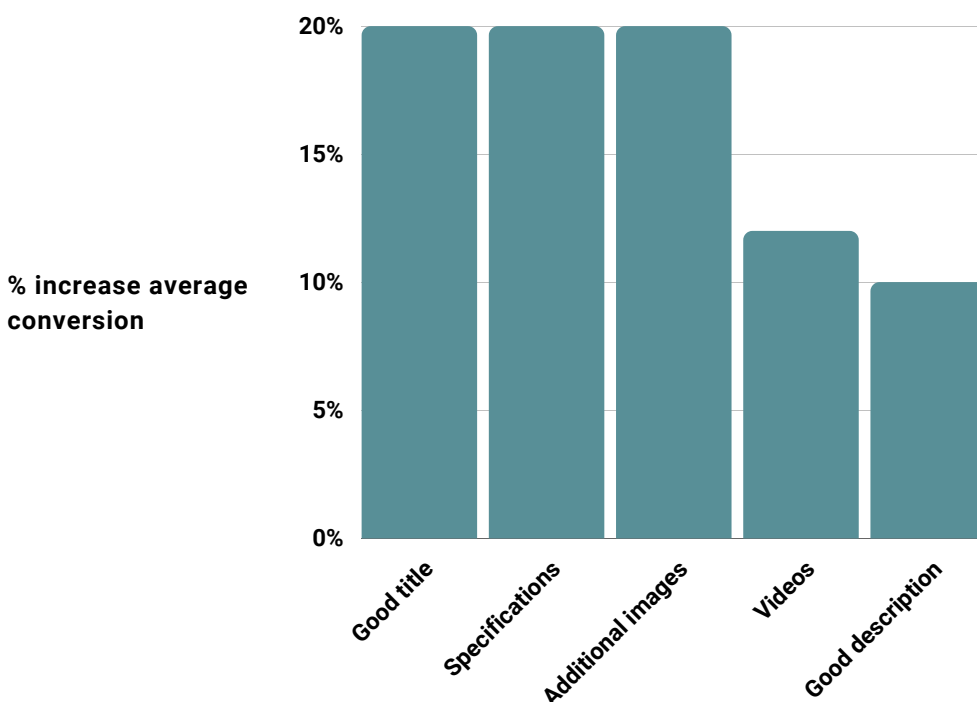
- Better understand the usage or the intent of your product.
- Learn how to unbox and assemble.
- Discover your story.
- Get to know about customer experiences.

2 Increase the number of images on PDPs

The more images, the better!

- Add atmospheric images to give your item more character and possibly clarify it.
- Show (where necessary) the item from different positions so that you correctly map the relevant product properties and extras.
- Clarify the size of your product by showing it next to a familiar object.

3 Increase the word count and quality of product descriptions



Source:
bol.com
Content richtlijnen DIY
March 17 2021



RATINGS & REVIEWS

7 reasons why it's important to track what people are saying about your products online constantly:

1 CUSTOMER REVIEWS HAVE A PROFOUND IMPACT ON CUSTOMER'S SHOPPING BEHAVIOR AND **BRAND LOYALTY**.

CUSTOMERS ARE INCREASINGLY SEEKING OUT THE **OPINIONS** OF OTHER CONSUMERS BY READING PRODUCT REVIEWS.

2

3 REVIEWS GIVE YOU THE CHANCE TO MAKE YOUR PRODUCTS AND PRODUCT CONTENT BETTER AND SHOW PERFECT **CUSTOMER SERVICE** TO YOUR CUSTOMERS.

AFTER CUSTOMERS PLACE REVIEWS, IT IS GOOD TO WRITE A SIMPLE 'THANK YOU MESSAGE' TO **MAKE CUSTOMERS FEEL HEARD**. SHOPPERS SEE THAT YOU SHOW COMMITMENT, WHICH MAKES YOU MORE RELIABLE.

4

5 YOU CAN **PROMISE IMPROVEMENT** AND COME WITH AN ALLOWANCE FOR DISSATISFIED CUSTOMERS AND NEGATIVE REVIEWS.

RATINGS AND REVIEWS ARE ESSENTIAL CRITERIA TO IMPROVE **VISIBILITY, FINDABILITY**, AND WIN THE BUY BOX.

6

7 YOU CAN SPOT UNDERPERFORMING PRODUCTS AND INITIATE **TARGETED REVIEW CAMPAIGNS** TO GAIN MORE REVIEWS.

“ **SiteLucent makes it very easy for me to identify, zoom in, and take action on portfolio with low numbers of reviews and low star ratings.**

Yuri Ponjee - Key Account Manager bol.com



UTILIZE CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

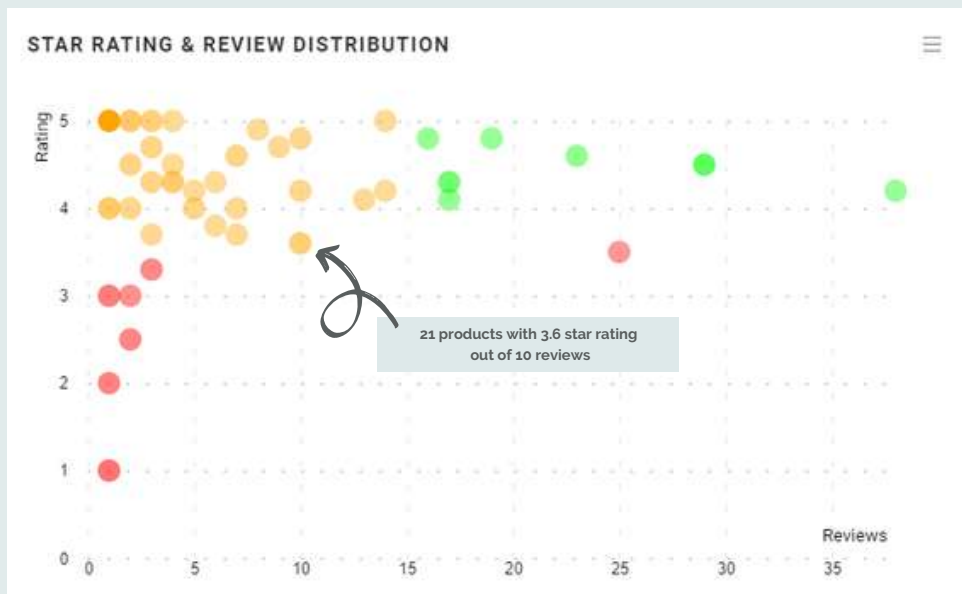
Assuming a shopper wants more social proof when dealing with a **high-involvement purchase decision**, it's helpful to start optimizing:

- Newly introduced products;
- Higher-priced products;
- Safety and health-related products.



IST & SOLL

Analyze the number of reviews and star ratings the selected products currently have. Review monitoring software such as SiteLucent can help you with this job. Then map the minimal number of reviews you aim for these products to have and the minimal star rating. According to PowerReviews, purchase probability peaks when a product's **average star rating is between 4.2 and 4.5**. Shoppers perceive a perfect 5 star as too good to be true.



SiteLucent's scatterplot showing products star rating & review distribution.

TIME TO TAKE ACTION!

Gather and analyze review texts and try to match your content with the language used by customers on a specific retailer. Respond to (negative) reviews, reach out to buyers to convince them to leave a review, and possibly reward them.

ECOMMERCE SEARCH KEYWORDS

DEFINE AND PLACE THE RIGHT KEYWORDS

If you understand your target group and how they search for your products, make a list with potential keywords and narrow down each keyword with benefits and features.

Use SEO tools or retailer data to map **search volumes, keyword difficulty, and longtail keywords**. Do not keyword-stuff your product content.

PLACE YOUR PRIMARY KEYWORDS:



Once in the page's URL



Once in the product title



Once or twice in the product description

Once in the ALT tag to tell search engines what an image is about



RETAIL SEARCH OPTIMIZATION

To make your products easily found online, it is not enough to choose the right keywords and smartly place them.

Each marketplace and eCommerce platform has its **search algorithm**, which ponders many factors. The following primary factors will most likely determine your products' search ranking on eCommerce platforms:

- Price and delivery (product price, delivery time, and delivery costs)
- Product performance (CTR)
- Relevant content - keyword usage
- Positive ratings and reviews
- Quality of the product page (speed and usability)

Read more about it in our eBook: '[How do eCommerce search engines work?](#)'



Ask our software specialists how SiteLucent can help optimize your brands' digital shelf performances.

FOR MORE INFORMATION:

send us a message: www.sitelucent.com/contact-us

or visit: www.sitelucent.com

Our software specialists are happy to give you more info!

ABOUT SITELUCENT

SiteLucent is a complete eCommerce Monitoring Software that gives you all the digital shelf analytics you need to drive eCommerce sales. Whether you want to improve visibility, be brand compliant on all online sales channels, avoid channel conflicts, or lower product return rates.

Get a helicopter view of your key online sales channels by daily monitoring product content, assortment, selling prices, Out-Of-Stocks, search rankings, and ratings & reviews.

The world's leading brand manufacturers trust SiteLucent's eCommerce data and analytics, including GSK, Signify, Trust, Samsung, and Bugaboo.

