



Step2.com

Date launched
2002

2006 unique visitors (monthly)
150,000

2006 web-based sales
NA

Vendor relationships

Site design

ShortCreek Strategy, Walking Stick Communications, In-house

E-commerce platform

ShortCreek Strategy

Web hosting

GCIS, Expedient

Site search

ShortCreek Strategy

Content management

ShortCreek Strategy, In-house

Order management

In-house

Payment processor

PayPal

Fulfillment

In-house

Affiliate marketing management

NA

Search engine management

ClearSaleing, Optiem

E-mail marketing

Optiem

CRM

RightNow Technologies

Customer Service

In-house, RightNow, ShortCreek Strategy

Site security certification



Web analytics

ClickTracks

Content delivery network

Easy2 Technologies



Rich media

Easy2 Technologies, Mulberry Marketing

Site performance monitoring

In-house

Site performance

Performance data measured by Gomez Inc.

Availability

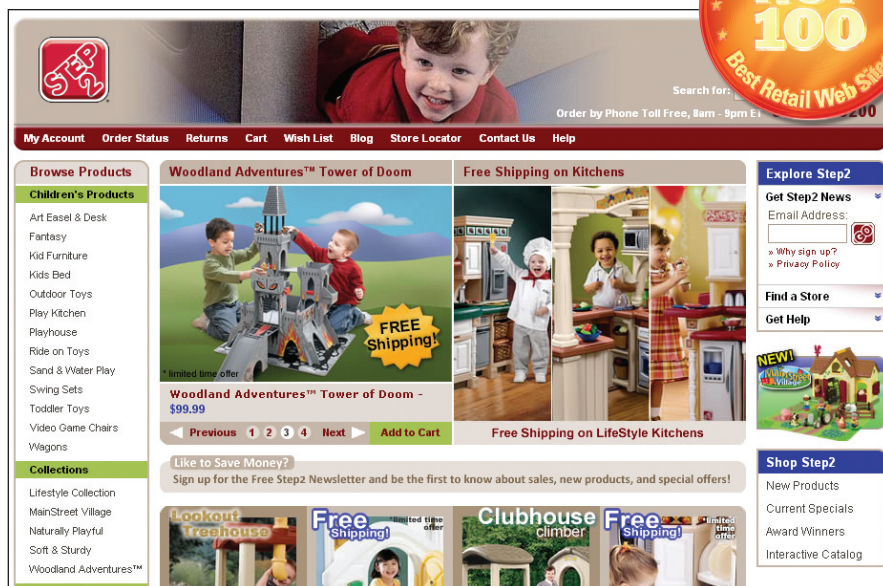
99.74%

Response time

3.407 seconds

Consistency score

Good



Out of the box

As anyone with a child on his gift list knows, few things light up a kid's eyes like a really cool toy. And few gifts turn those sparkles to tears faster than a toy that comes out of the box with nasty surprises—it's far smaller than the image on the box indicates, for instance, or the assembly instructions are too confusing for even the craftiest mom-and-dad construction team.

The Step2 Co. knows these challenges well. And the Streetsboro, Ohio-based manufacturer and retailer this year launched a redesigned e-commerce site that brings toy shopping to a new level.

The new site shows Step2 is mindful of the limitations shoppers have online as well as in stores when considering all of a toy's characteristics before deciding on a purchase. To counter limitations, Step2.com goes above and beyond and displays a wealth of information on a single page: Images that put toys into size context in play scenes, including some video and 3-D demonstrations; information on shipping times and costs; views of complementary toys; and detailed assembly instructions.

"We provide an out-of-the-box shopping experience, and our conversion rates have improved as we've added features that help people through the purchase process," says Robert MacKay, vice president of marketing and sales and head of e-commerce.

Doing its best to educate shoppers, Step2 provides consistent page layouts for each product, providing a familiar, easy-to-follow format throughout the site. One shortcoming, though, says Nikki Baird, managing partner with consultants RSR Research, is that listings of product categories don't always indicate the appropriate child size or age.

But much of this information is provided in customer reviews, which offer valuable insights into how toys go with particular age groups or fit in living rooms, MacKay notes. Indeed, reviews are presented with brief lists of key points making it easy to get to the heart of each review, Baird says.

"Our first responsibility is to provide comprehensive information about our products to our customers," MacKay says. As Step2 shows, doing that well is more than child's play.