

BrightEdge Industry Focus: Retail Marketing and SEO

Retail is currently going through a cosmic shift in retail marketing strategies, focused heavily on digital business transformation. However, as an industry, retail companies are inexplicably lagging behind all other industries. According to a recent Gartner Digital Business Survey, as few as 3% of retailers are delivering clear results from their digital marketing initiatives. The survey further finds that there is a lack of clarity by retail marketers concerning their objectives.

Specifically, they tend to struggle to define goals for the retail channel that are separate from e-commerce initiatives. This begs the question, "how can the remaining 97% of retailers gain clarity and results towards their retail marketing initiatives?" The answer is to listen to the voice of the customer and align retail marketing initiatives with the new digital customer journey.

In order to understand the retail buying experience it is important to evaluate the following trends that are affecting the retail customer journey.

Top 9 Industry Trends for Retail Marketing:

1. We now live in a new world of "omnishoppers" where 81% of shoppers first learn about a product online before they buy in-store. It is vital to support this new hybrid (online and in-store) shopper with easy access to all the information they need at the moment they need it. While the customer journey clearly begins online it has been reported that up to 88% of online shoppers will continue to make the purchase in-store after making the buying decision online. In order to drive results, marketers in the retail industry should focus on omnichannel marketing strategies.
2. Voice search is on the rise and is predicted to reach as much as 50% of the search queries by 2020 according to Comscore, so it could be as large of a growth factor in search as mobile was between 2012 and 2017. This is good news for the retail industry if companies build valuable content that reaches the shopper at this crucial moment. While some shoppers may buy certain consumables through voice search it is unlikely that they will make an entire buying decision for common retail items, such as electronics, fashion, and home goods. However, retailers can influence their decision at this moment.

3. Artificial Intelligence (AI) is on the rise in retail marketing. In a recent survey to over 500 marketers, BrightEdge found that 26% of marketers believe AI is the next big thing in marketing, yet only 4% of them have actually implementing AI into their marketing strategies. This represents a great opportunity for savvy retail marketers to implement AI in their initiatives. AI can help increase your online visibility through clear insights that accelerate the time to results and ROI. Imagine reviewing a prioritized optimization plan put together by an AI-powered virtual data analyst in the morning, and getting your team to work on the most important tasks before lunch.
4. Retail Marketers must win the local search results. With digital experiences varying according to location, you can get a skewed view of how your customers experience search locally if you confine your analysis of organic demand (search volume) and content performance (organic ranking) to a single location. You may fail to see the variances in search volume between a metropolitan area and a small nearby town. And using a single-location view of organic performance can hide the fluctuations in ranking across multiple geographies. Learn more about how BrightEdge can help your local optimization efforts [here](#).
5. Shoppers have instant access to reviews. For example, Yelp allows customers to leave their impressions and experiences with various businesses, and with over 70 million unique monthly visitors on mobile and 74 million unique monthly visitors on a desktop, the potential impact of this site on consumer behavior is significant. By and large, these reviews have a positive impact on buying decisions and displaying these ads next to a product can increase conversions by 270%.
6. Personalization that drives customer loyalty and rewards shopping behaviors is increasingly expected by today's consumer. Retailers have understood the importance of customer loyalty for many years, in fact, Customer Relationship Management (CRM) tools have been used by stores for over 30 years to better understand their customer's buying habits. While this strategy has been executed for a long time new technologies, such as marketing automation have allowed personalization between the store and the buyer to be automated and highly personalized. From emails to the website experience all the way to the in-store customer experience there is a high expectation of personalization that should be incorporated into the overall retail marketing plan.
7. Social Media sharing drives quality inbound links as well as traffic, leads, and revenue, making it an important trend for retail marketing. Search engines are increasingly using social media activity such as Likes, Tweets, Shares, and +1s to determine which pages are most relevant for keyword searches, and to provide a personalized search experience. This offers an enormous opportunity for marketers to leverage social media to directly impact content performance, improve search rankings, and increase revenue generated through organic search.
8. Retail shoppers turn to mobile devices more frequently than desktop to research. Successful retail marketing includes strategies to deliver an exceptional mobile experience. In order to optimize the shoppers experience on mobile the retail website

needs to load quickly. Crawl your mobile domain or main domain (if responsive) with ContentIQ to uncover site errors, such as slow response time or noindex tags. In addition, recent BrightEdge research confirms the first page that ranks for a search query is different on mobile vs. desktop SERPs 35% of the time.

9. Google has implemented ongoing SERP type changes that can add a lot of value to your retail marketing. From Local 3-packs to Quick Answers there are a variety of optimization initiatives that can help capture more of your retail shoppers.

Channel Marketing Mix in Retail Industry

Using our proprietary data sets we have looked into the prevalence of Organic channel share vs. other marketing channels for the industry. Retail shows very high proportion of Paid traffic at 28% and therefore the SEO average traffic is on the low side at 43%.

Retail Industry SEO Click Curve

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Desktop	30.0%	12.6%	9.8%	7.4%	6.5%	3.4%	4.9%	2.6%	1.7%	1.4%	1.1%	2.5%	1.5%	1.4%
Mobile	17.4%	10.7%	6.9%	3.1%	2.3%	2.1%	1.6%	1.4%	1.0%	.54%	1.3%	2.1%	1.3%	1.6%

These click curves indicate the average performance in various search result positions. These numbers help understand and forecast the traffic the expected traffic from the organic search channel.

Retail Industry SEO – BrightEdge Benchmark Stats

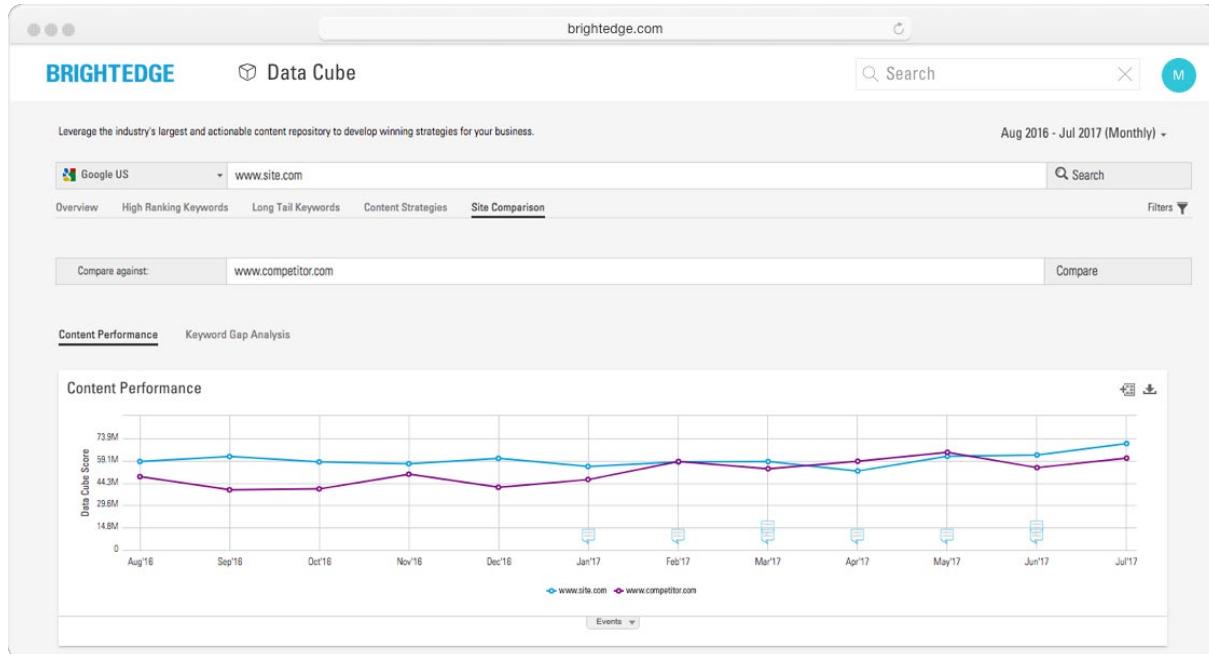
Universal search results refer to the results on a SERP that are not the standard direct links to websites. Examples of universal results include Images, Videos, News, Places, Carousel, Quick Answer, 3-Pack results, and Apps.

BrightEdge Data Cube Metrics	Avg for eCommerce
The average Data Cube score for the industry is:	255,455
The average number of position one listings is:	269
The average page 1 listings is:	3,458
The average total universal content results is:	534
The average number of images is:	359
The average number of Quick Answers is:	10

How Retailers Use BrightEdge

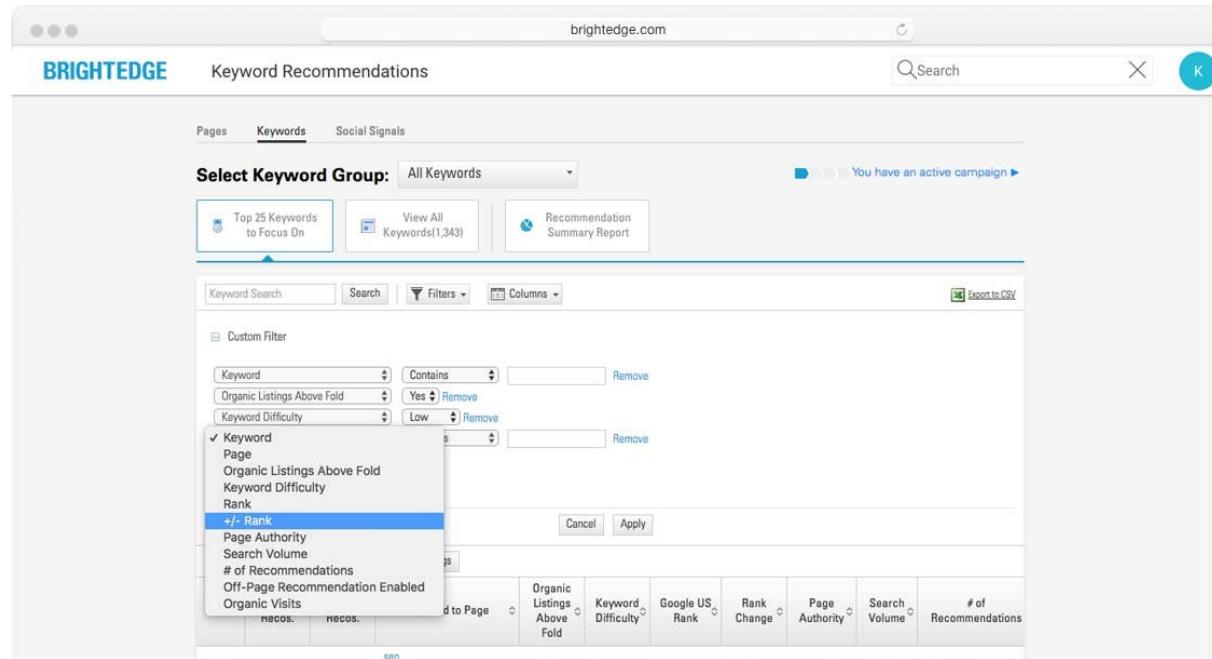
Data Cube

Data Cube combines multiple metrics—including search volume, expected click-through rates, and your organic ranking—to provide one score, the Data Cube Score, that demonstrates how well your site is optimized for search. The higher your domain's score is, the more optimized the domain is for search visibility.



Recommendations

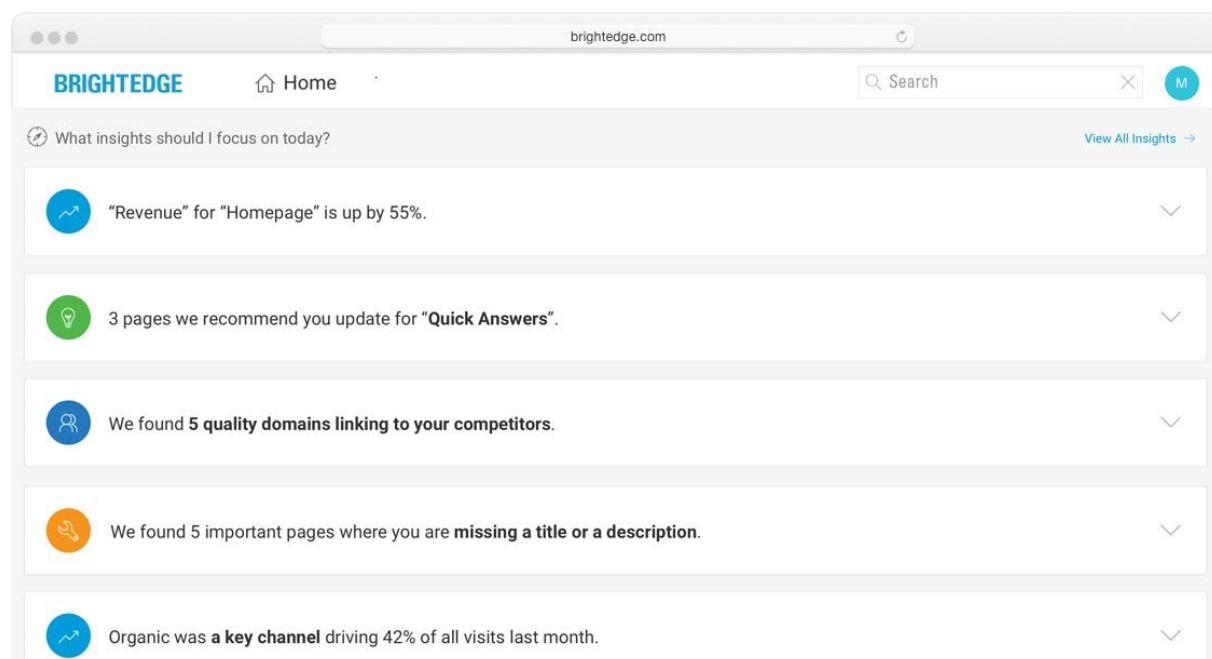
No need to feel overwhelmed if your initial keyword set is too large. BrightEdge has robust filters within Recommendations that will help you refine the keywords into smaller sets of high-value keywords. There are many conditions you can apply, such as “Keyword Contains,” “Search Volume,” and “Keyword Difficulty.”



The screenshot shows the BrightEdge Keyword Recommendations interface. At the top, there are tabs for 'Pages', 'Keywords' (which is selected), and 'Social Signals'. Below the tabs, a 'Select Keyword Group' dropdown is set to 'All Keywords'. A message 'You have an active campaign' is displayed. There are three buttons: 'Top 25 Keywords to Focus On', 'View All Keywords (1,343)', and 'Recommendation Summary Report'. Below these are search and filter controls, including a 'Keyword Search' input, a 'Search' button, a 'Filters' dropdown, and a 'Columns' dropdown. A 'Custom Filter' dialog is open, showing a list of conditions: 'Keyword Contains', 'Organic Listings Above Fold Yes', 'Keyword Difficulty Low', and '+/- Rank'. The '+/- Rank' condition is currently selected. The main table below the filters shows columns for 'Page', 'Organic Listings Above Fold', 'Keyword Difficulty', 'Google US Rank', 'Rank Change', 'Page Authority', 'Search Volume', and '# of Recommendations'. The table has two rows of data, with 'RECS.' and 'RECOVS.' headers.

Insights

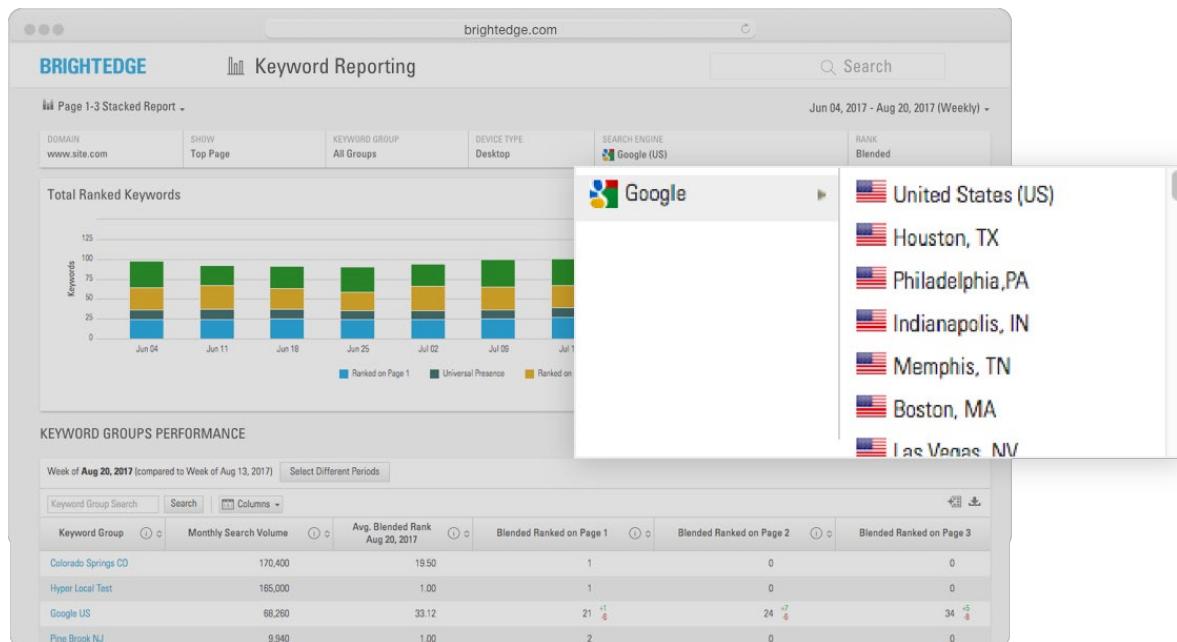
Easily build, launch, and optimize campaigns with easy-to-use landing page editors that adhere to SEO best practices. Streamline campaign creation with templates, forms, and CTAs, all accessible within the same interface. Boost campaign conversion rates with advanced targeting by CTA blocks, persona, keyword, geo, and more.



The screenshot shows the BrightEdge Home page. At the top, there is a search bar and a user icon. A message 'What insights should I focus on today?' is displayed. Below it, a 'View All Insights' link. The main area lists five insights, each with an icon and a brief description. 1. A blue arrow icon: "Revenue" for "Homepage" is up by 55%. 2. A lightbulb icon: 3 pages we recommend you update for "Quick Answers". 3. A person icon: We found 5 quality domains linking to your competitors. 4. A hand icon: We found 5 important pages where you are missing a title or a description. 5. A blue arrow icon: Organic was a key channel driving 42% of all visits last month. Each insight has a 'View' link to its details.

HyperLocal

Evaluate the searches conducted in the area surrounding your retail locations. Track how well your local listings show up for these local searches. Run side-by-side comparisons against local competitors and ideate content strategies to win share of voice on local SERPs.



BrightEdge SEO Case Studies



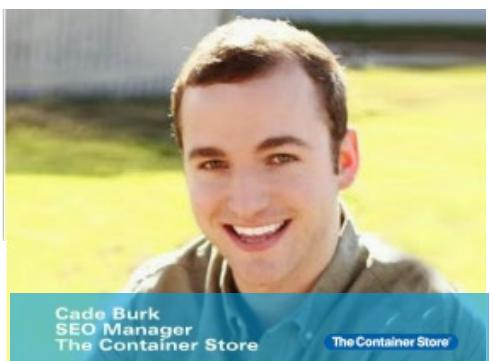
Cabela's leverages the BrightEdge platform to generate sales from keyword placements in SERP results.

"It allows me to understand not only the health of the business, but where we can go, and what things we shouldn't do. We've seen great success with BrightEdge....using BrightEdge allowed us to think outside of ourselves."



"BrightEdge increased organic search traffic to silverjeans.com by 26% quarter-over-quarter. Much of the net-new traffic came through the AMP pages that BrightEdge Content automatically created for our Smart Content."

"We love the automated topic research and discovery capabilities as well as the contextual SEO suggestions that help us activate new content quickly for untapped market demand."



Container Store increased organic revenue 96%, increased keywords in 1st rank position 39%, and sees a 68% increase in organic traffic conversion.

"BrightEdge is programmed to help with business SEO efforts at any level, know what kind of content is being searched, and enables us to create better-performing pages."



Hallmark used the BrightEdge Professional Services and an Ignite Analysis to strategically build their eCommerce website.

"When we started...our executives had no idea who our competition was. We're one year into building this eCommerce SEO system, from the ground up, and I don't know where we would be without BrightEdge at this point in time."

About BrightEdge

BrightEdge, the global leader in enterprise organic search and content performance, empowers marketers to transform online content into business results such as traffic, conversions, and revenue. The BrightEdge S3 platform is powered by a sophisticated deep learning engine and is the only company capable of web-wide, real-time measurement of content engagement across all digital channels, including search, social, and mobile. BrightEdge's 1,700+ customers include global brands, such as well as 57 of the Fortune 100. The company has eight offices worldwide and is headquartered in Foster City, California.