Home Page Design

Report of Findings from Benchmarking Study

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Executive Summary: Home Page Benchmarking

About the test:
•A benchmarking study was conducted to assess the **Home Page** design of Sears.com and 3 variations of Kmart.com in **March and April of 2012**.
•A total of **1200 users** (300 per test) completed a self-directed shopping task on a live site, then rated their impressions of the Home Page.
•The **primary research goals** included:
> •Do users **notice** the Home Page content during their visit?
> •Do users choose to **navigate** via the promo content on the Home Page when shopping for a product?
> •What are users' impressions of **branding attributes** based on the Home Page?

Key Findings
Overall Comparison: Though differences in the four versions were often very slight, the **Sears Dynamic page** emerged as the strongest experience. It was also, however, the source of the most intense accusations of clutter.

How did they navigate?
> •Users demonstrated **similar navigation patterns** on all versions, with the majority of users clicking into the global navigation menu or search.
> •The **Sears Dynamic** version saw the **most** first-clicks in promotional regions compared to all other versions. The **Kmart (No Slide)** page saw the **least** first-clicks in promotional regions.
> •The **Sears Dynamic** version also had the highest rate of users mentioning promos that were **located below the fold**.

What did they notice?
> •Despite navigation path choices, **over half** of the users in each test **remembered something** related to the Home Page promos after leaving the site.
> •Users who saw the **Kmart (No Slide) version** were more likely to **remember multiple promos,** even though they had the fewest first-clicks into them. They also had the highest mentions of **content below the fold**.

What were their brand impressions?
> •Overall, users gave **strong ratings** to branding aspects of each version. For every attribute, all versions had **strikingly similar ratings** (falling within the margin of error).
> •Though the metrics are all very close, **Sears Dynamic** ranked first or tied for first in an attribute category **2-4 times more often** than the others.
> •The lowest ratings (all versions) were for **Clutter** and **Impressiveness**, but the highest rating (all versions) was for **Home Page Reflecting the Brand Image**. This could suggest users have **somewhat low expectations for the brands**.

What would they change?
> •**40-50%** of the users made **positive or neutral** comments when asked what they would change about the Home Pages.
> •The issue of **clutter/overload** was the most prevalent complaint for each version. This complaint was made most often by of visitors to the **Sears Dynamic** page **(28%)**, and least often by **Kmart (Slide)** visitors **(14%).**
> •3-4% of users consistently noted that they found the **text difficult to read** on the navigation menu as well as on promotional copy.
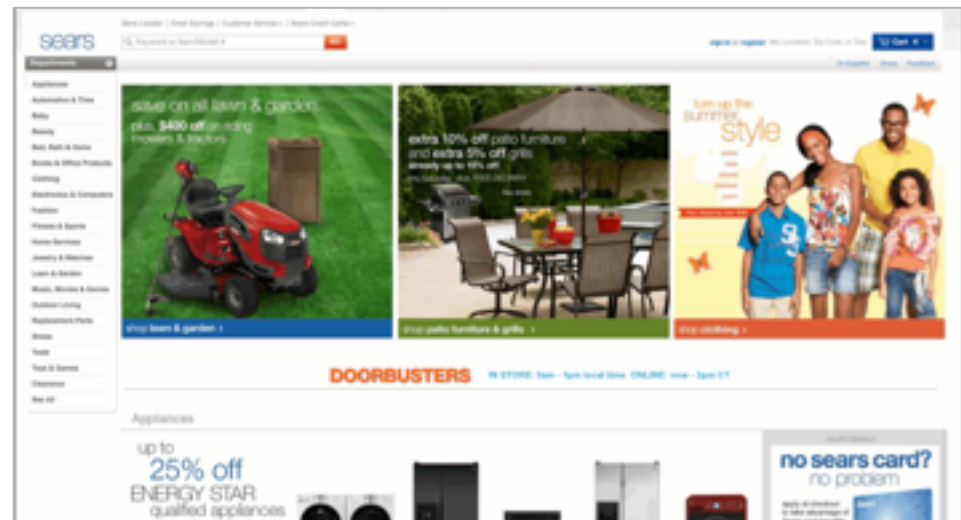
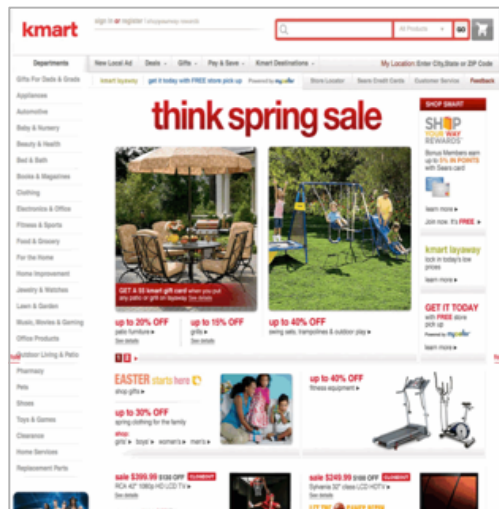sears

About the Test

Design Variations Tested

Four design variations were tested:
- **Sears Dynamic**: 3 primary static promos, lazy-load of content below to reveal extensive list of products
- **Kmart** (**Original)**: 2-image slide show, multiple text promos in right rail
- **Kmart (No Slide)**: 4 primary static promos
- **Kmart (Slide)**: slide show that rotated: 1 large primary promo, 2 small right rail promos

Sears- Dynamic

Kmart- Original

Kmart- No Slide

Kmart- Slide

Task Progression

Each design variation was tested by **300 participants** using the following sequence:

	Sears or Kmart Website	**UserZoom Survey Site**
Pre-Task	NA	**Pre-Task Discussion** (written response)
Task 1	**Shop for Item Described in Pre-task** (self-directed)	**What do you remember about Home Page?** (written response)
Task 2	**Revisit & Review Home Page** (self-directed)	**Brand Attribute Ratings** (semantic differential scale, written response)

See Appendix for full protocol.

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Findings:
Where did they click?

Topic: Where did they click?

Users were given an open-ended shopping task: "*Describe something you're interested in buying in real life. Use this website to find one you like.*"

This is how they **chose to begin shopping**.

- All versions showed similar patterns of first-clicks, with the majority in the **Level 1 global menu** and the **Search** box.
- The Sears Dynamic page showed the greatest number of clicks on **non-navigational elements** (e.g. promos in the center of the page).
- While each version had clicks below the fold on non-navigational elements, the Sears Dynamic page showed the **deepest penetration down the page**.
- *Note: Clickmaps cannot differentiate between clicks on a promo vs. a click on a menu link on the flyout covering a promo*

Sears

Kmart – Original
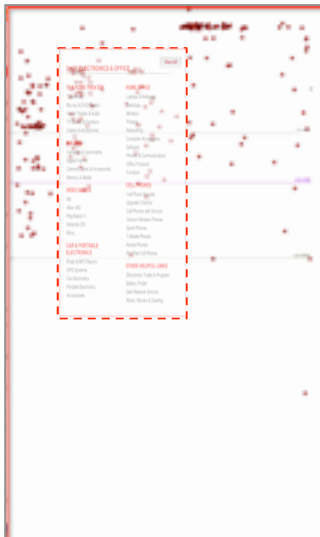
Kmart - Slide

Kmart – No Slide

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Topic: Where did they click? - **Sears Dynamic**

•The clicks on **non-navigation elements** are concentrated on the upper regions, toward the left side, near appliances and TVs.

•A small number of clicks continued about **halfway down** the page, then dropped off.

•One click appeared at the **very bottom** of the page.

•Note: Clickmaps cannot differentiate between clicks on a promo vs. a click on a menu link on the flyout covering a promo
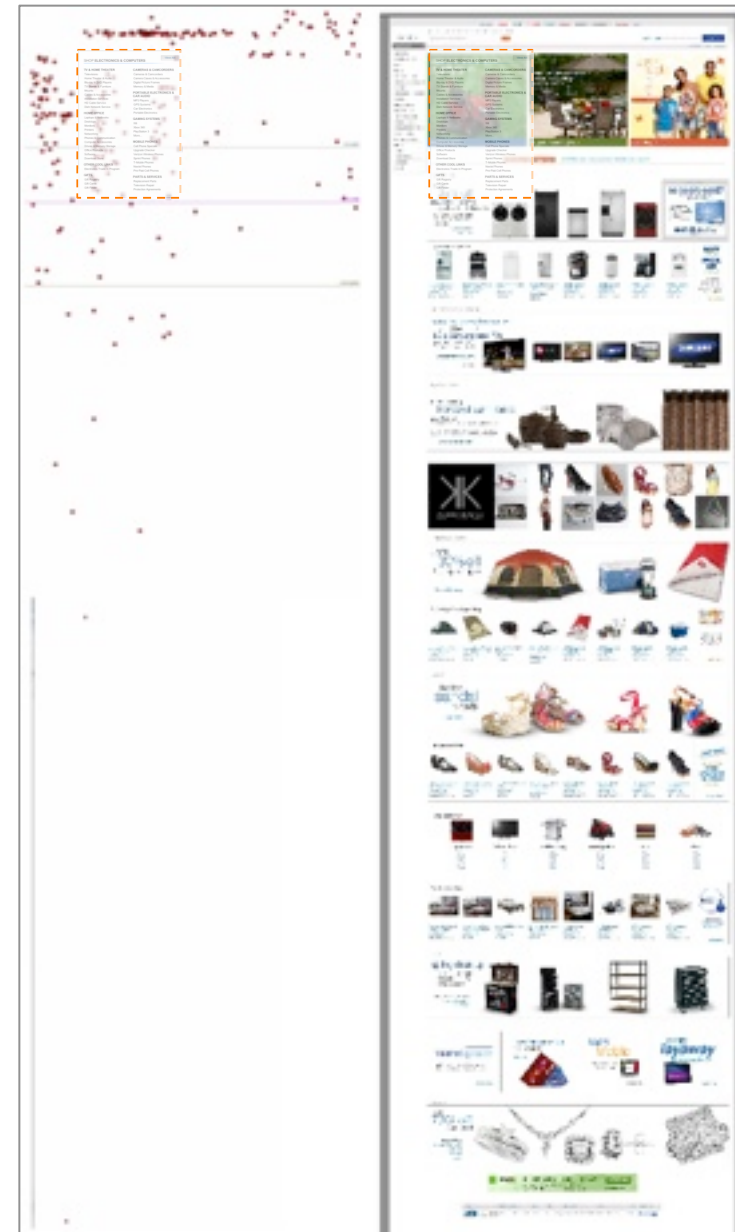
Topic: Where did they click? - **Kmart Original**

•The clicks on **non-navigation elements** are concentrated primarily above the fold.

•A small number of clicks were gathered by the right rail's promo for **SYWR**, **Sears Credit Card**, and **Layaway**.

•A small number of clicks continued **below the fold**, then dropped off.

•One click appeared at the **very bottom** of the page.

•*Note: Clickmaps cannot differentiate between clicks on a promo vs. a click on a menu link on the flyout covering a promo*
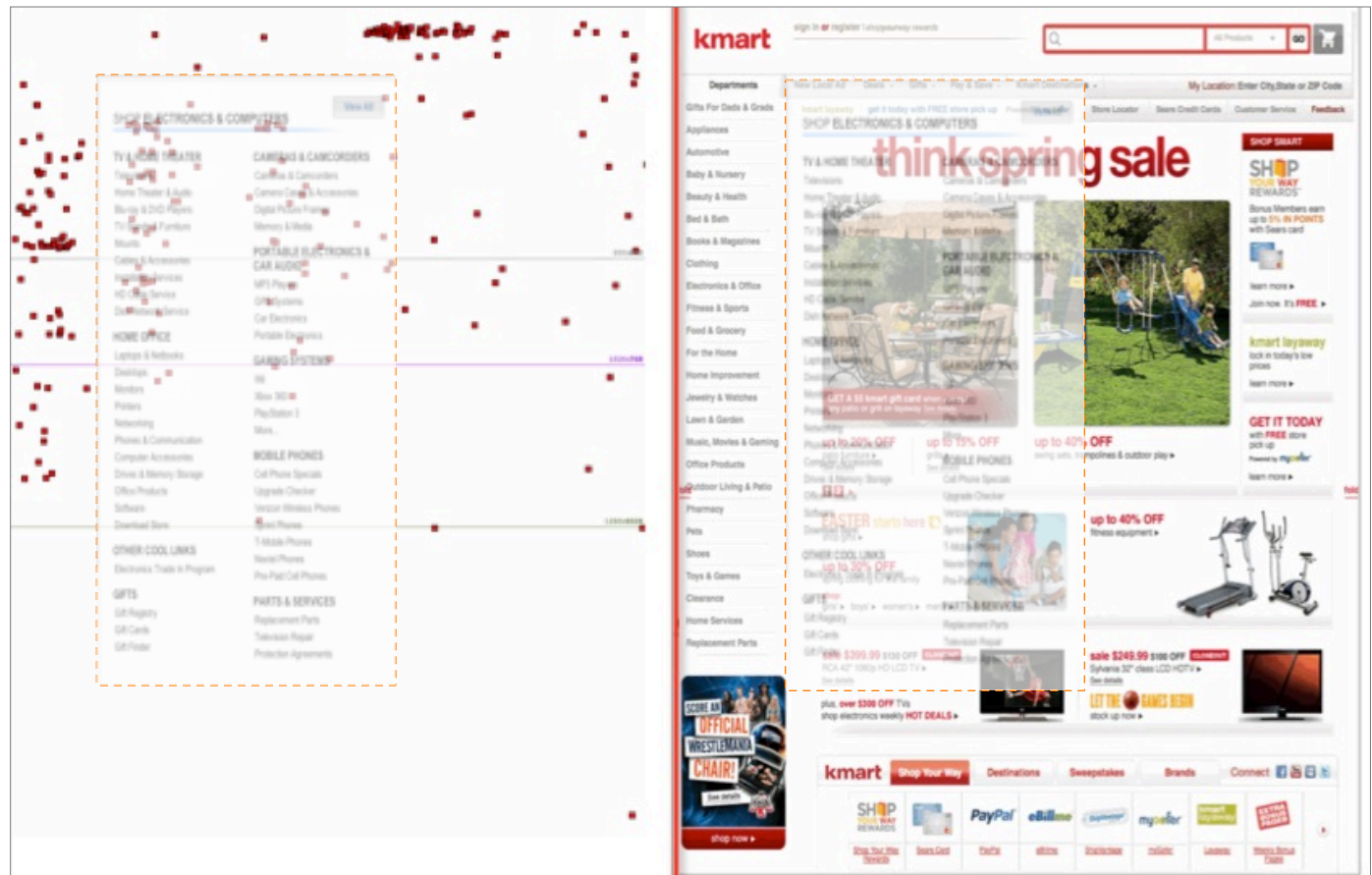
Topic: Where did they click? - **Kmart (No Slide)**

•The No Slide version of the Kmart page appeared to have the fewest clicks on **non-navigation elements.**

•Few clicks continued **below the fold**, and there were none below mid-page.

•**Note**: while users may not have been clicking on promos, this version had a noticeable increase in the number of non-navigation elements **remembered** by users after their initial visit.
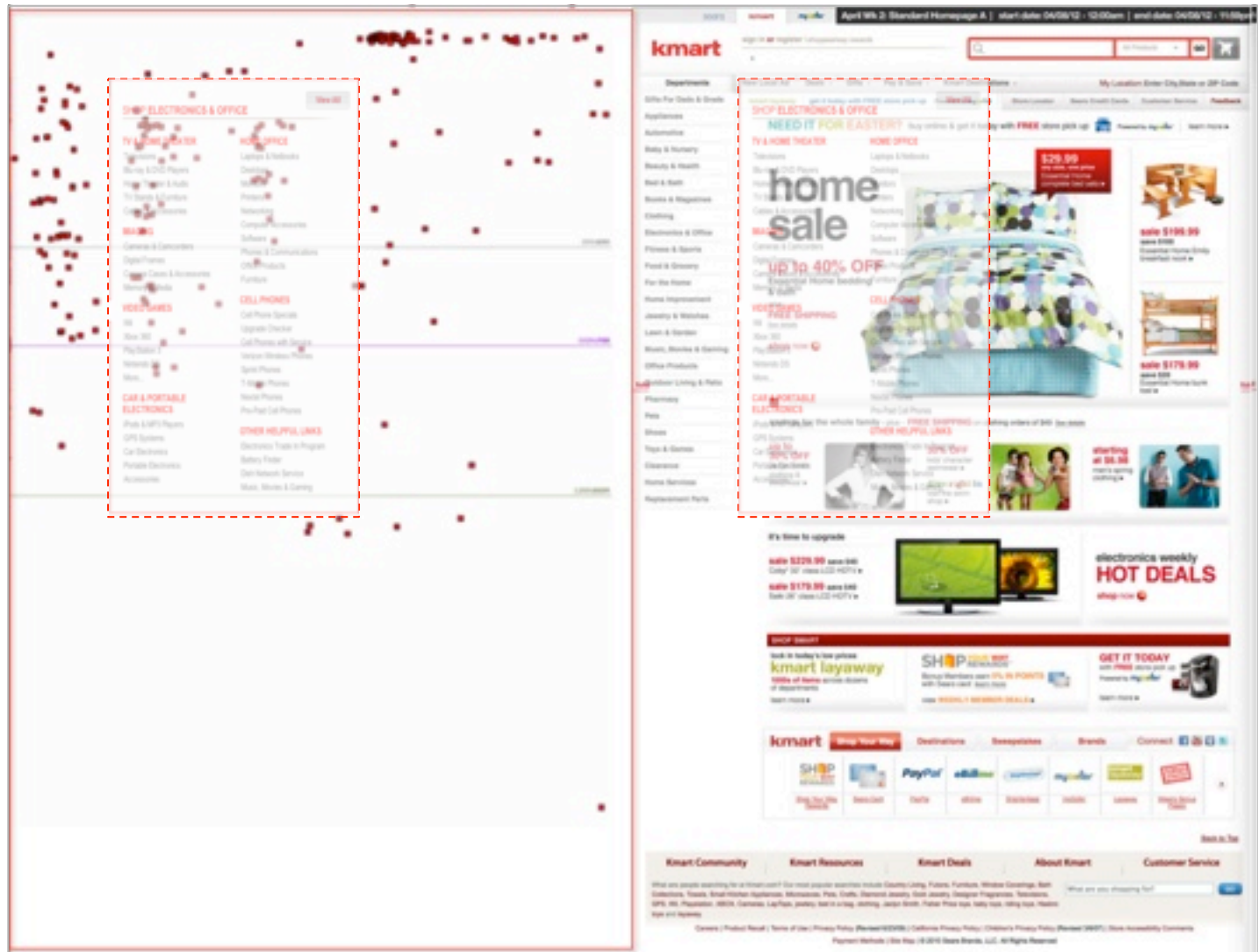
Topic: Where did they click? - **Kmart (Slide)**

• The Slide version of the Kmart page a moderate amount of clicks on **non-navigation elements.**

• The **main promo** appeared to have a fair number of clicks, but users rarely clicked on the smaller right rail promos.

• A small number of clicks continued **below the fold**, and there was only one below mid-page.

Findings:
What did they notice?

Topic: What did they notice on the Home Page?

After users completed a self-directed shopping task, they answered a few questions on a survey page. Users were asked **what if anything they remembered about the Home Page**.

- Over half of the users on each version were able to **remember a non-navigational element** after leaving the page.

- The **Kmart (Slide)** version had the **highest** percentage of users who described something.

- Visitors to the **Kmart (No Slide)** version were also frequently able to **name multiple promos**. Users commonly **described 3-5 promos**, as opposed to other versions where users usually described 1-2 promos.

- Users that did not remember promo content often explained that they **prefer to focus on navigation or searching**.

% of Users that remembered something on Home Page other than Navigation:

Kmart - Original	53.49%
Kmart - Slide	59.53%
Kmart - No Slide	58.33%
Sears	57.23%
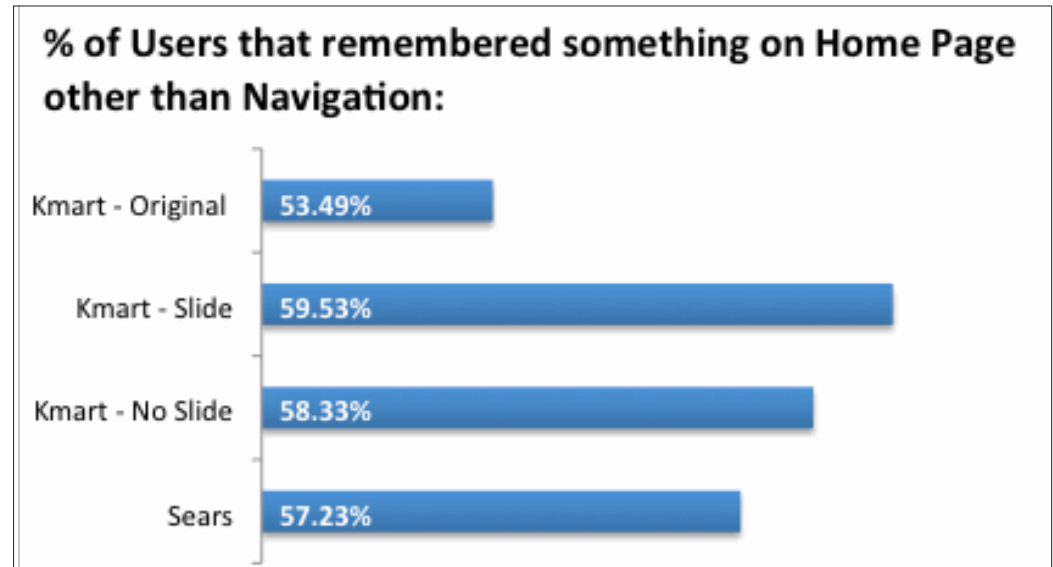
" ...home sale, spring sale discount offers; free shipping on clothing and hot deals section..." (from Kmart (No Slide))

" I only remember looking at the search bar. I tend to "tune out" advertisements because they irritate me." (from Kmart (No Slide))

Topic: What did they notice on the Home Page?

•The **main promo** on all versions was remembered fairly evenly across versions (22-30%)

•The second set of promos for versions with **slide shows** was remembered by 11-15% of users

•Users remembered **secondary promos at or below the fold** 1-8% of the time.

•The **Kmart (No Slide)** version's promos for **Electronics** and **Apparel** had noticeably higher percentages that the other versions.

Kmart Slide

Sears Dynamic

Kmart Original

Kmart No Slide

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Topic: What did they notice on the Home Page? - **Sears Dynamic**

- The most frequently cited non-navigation element was the first main promo, the **riding lawn tractor (21%)**.
- **Outdoor Living (6.4%)** was the next highest percentage for a specific promo.
- **Appliances**, **Clothing**, and **TV**'s had a small number (3-5%) of references.
- The **Local Availability pane** was mentioned by 3% and most were negative comments.
- Similarly, 1.3% noted seeing **Kardashian** products.

Non-Navigation	%
Total	**57%**
Lawn Tractor	22%
General 'sales'	11%
Outdoor Living	13%
Appliances	5%
Local Availability pane	3%
Clothing	5%
TV's	3%
Specific % discounts	2%
Free Shipping	2%
Kardashians	1%

" ... Ads for lawn equipment, summer clothing, and outdoor furniture. Picture of African American family in summer clothing ad...."

Topic: What did they notice on the Home Page?   **Kmart (No Slide)**

• Users who saw the No Slide version of the Kmart page were **more likely to remember multiple promos**. Users commonly named up to 3-5 topics, compared with 1-2 on other versions.
• The **Home/Bedding** sale was the most frequently cited.
• The **Outdoor** products were spotted by 17% of visitors. (Many references were for 'patio furniture' while others only said 'outdoor' products, which could apply to both ODL items.)
• This version also had the highest percentages of mentions for **promos below the fold** (7-8%).

Non-Navigation Reference	%
Total	**58%**
Bedding/Home	29%
Outdoor Living / Spring	17%
Furniture	10%
General ad reference	9%
Clothing / Swim	8%
TV's / Electronics	7%
Free Shipping	3%
Local Availability Pane	2%
Mother's Day	1%

" I really didn't look at the offers. I only shopped for the item I really wanted in the department column on the left side of the page. I did see something about the Kmart rewards points as I am a member."

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Topic: What did they notice on the Home Page?
Kmart (Slide)

- Visitors to the Slide version of the Kmart page could recall a **non-navigation element** 60% of the time.
- The **first main promo slide** (Home Sale = 30%) had twice the mentions as the second slide (Outdoor Living = 15%).
- The **Clothing** and **Electronics** sections were mentioned by fewer users than on the No Slide version, even though they were in similar positions and did not rotate.

Non-Navigation Reference	%
Total	**60%**
Bedding/Home	30%
Outdoor Living / Spring	15%
General ad reference	12%
TV's / Electronics	4%
Clothing / Swim	4%
Free Shipping	3%
Local Availability Pane	1%
Mother's Day	1%
Furniture	1%

" .... A stupid small pop up that followed me as I went from page that page that I tried to ignore."

Topic: What did they notice on the Home Page? - Kmart (Original)

• The most frequently cited non-navigation element was the first main slide (**Outdoor / Spring** = 28%).
• 11% cited the **Bed/Chair/Home** items on the second slide.
• **Layaway** was mentioned by 1% of users.
• **SYWR** gather a couple of mentions, but remains <1%.

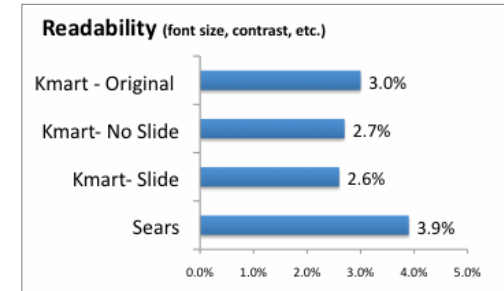| Non-Navigation Reference	%
Total	**54%**
Outdoor Living / Spring	28%
Bed / Chair / Home	11%
General 'sales'	10%
Clothing	5%
TV's	3%
Local Availability pane	3%
Layaway	1%
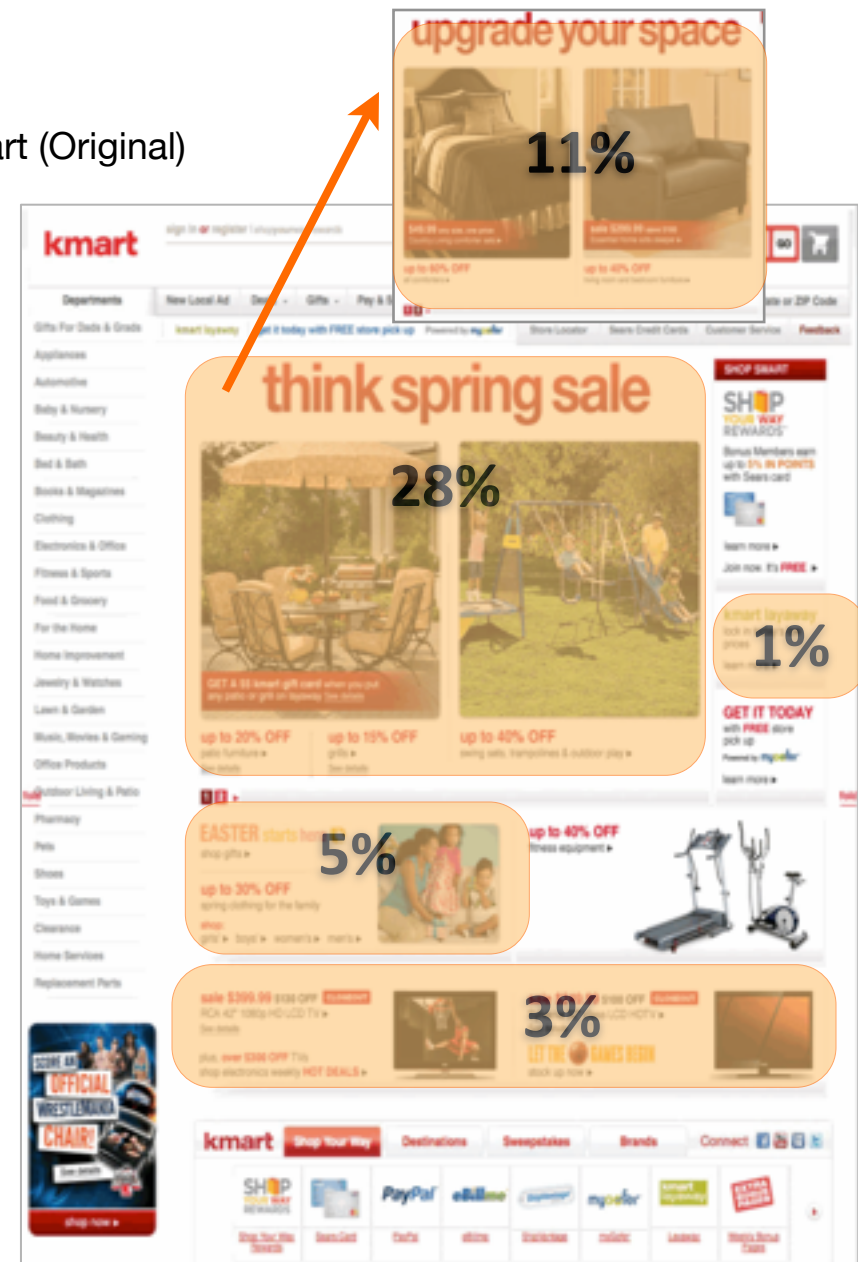
Findings:
What would they change?

Topic: What they change about the Home Page?

After the tasks, participants were asked what they would **change about the Home Page**.

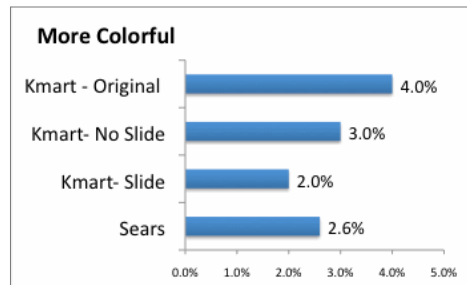•In each version, large percentages of users made **positive or neutral comments** when asked what they would change about the Home page to make their shopping easier or more pleasant.

•The **Slide** and **No Slide** versions had the most positive/neutral comments.

•**Sears** had the lowest percentage of positive/neutral comments.

Neutral / Positive Comments

Kmart - Original	43.5
Kmart- No Slide	51.7
Kmart- Slide	50.5
Sears	39.7
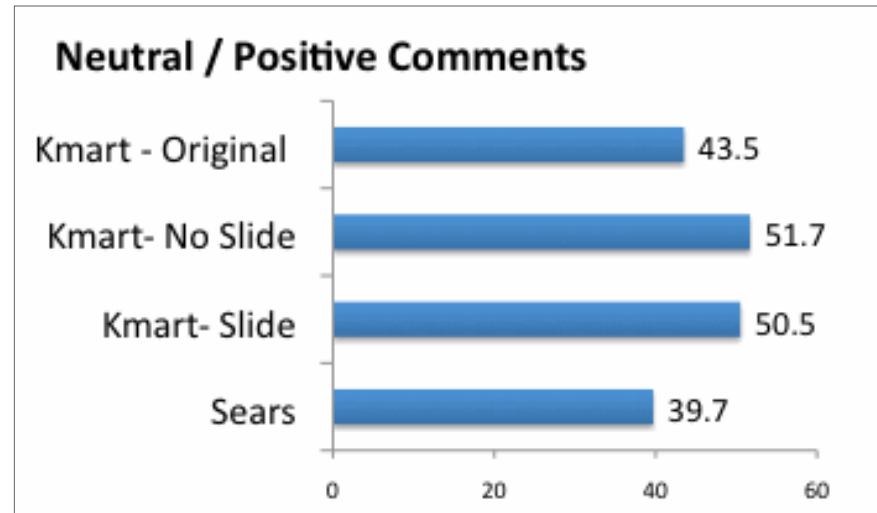
" i thought the home page was good gave you the departments on the side and let you know immediately the promotions" (user on Sears Dynamic)

"can't really think of any. actually not bad. I don't normally shop at sears but based on the web page I think I could get basic stuff." (user on Sears Dynamic)

Topic: What they change about the Home Page?

After the tasks, participants were asked what they would **change about the Home Page**.

•The issue of **clutter/overload** was the most prevalent complaint for each version and was also reflected in attribute ratings.

•The **Slide** and **No Slide** versions for Kmart had significantly smaller groups complaining of clutter.

•The **Sears Dynamic** users were often **pleased with the large main promos** at the top of the page, but they were also the most vocal about their dissatisfaction, citing a number of aspects:
  •**density** of the products
  •overall **length** of the page
  •**load/lag time** for images to load
  •too much **detailed information** for products

Clutter / Overload

Kmart - Original	21.6%
Kmart- No Slide	17.0%
Kmart- Slide	14.1%
Sears	27.9%
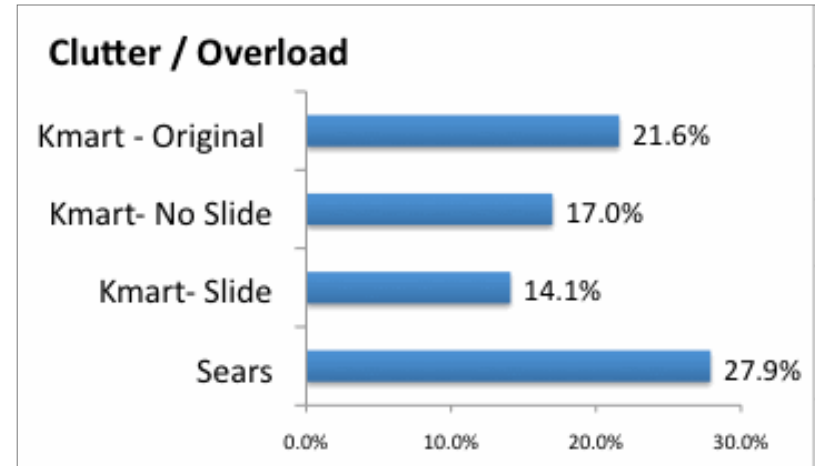
" It seemed like the front page was never going to end."
(user on Sears Dynamic)

"Don't put so much stuff on one page; OMG, there's just too much, and it looks so cheap!"(user on Sears Dynamic)

" It seems almost like an ad flyer. If all the visual links were there, but not so much information, it might help in the clarity of the site." (user on Sears Dynamic)

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Topic: What they change about the Home Page?

After the tasks, participants were asked what they would **change about the Home Page**.

• Some users wanted a consolidated place to **scan 'everything on sale'** in a more concise way. Some also wanted better **deals** and **coupons**.

Sales (Better deals, easier to scan, etc.)

Kmart - Original	8.0%
Kmart- No Slide	6.7%
Kmart- Slide	8.9%
Sears	8.5%

0.0% 2.0% 4.0% 6.0% 8.0% 10.0%
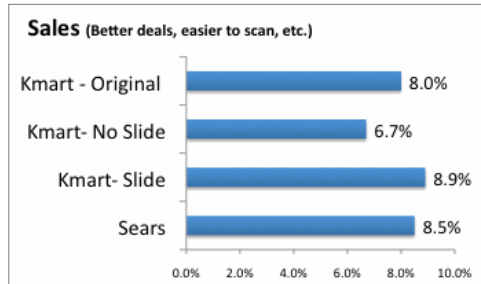
• Users had **difficulty reading the small font** used in the navigation and in the promo/ product details on the Home Page.

Readability (font size, contrast, etc.)

Kmart - Original	3.0%
Kmart- No Slide	2.7%
Kmart- Slide	2.6%
Sears	3.9%

0.0% 1.0% 2.0% 3.0% 4.0% 5.0%

• Users frequently suggested that they would enjoy more **color** in the design. For instance, users cited the **large, colorful images used for the main promo** on the Sears Dynamic page.

More Colorful

Kmart - Original	4.0%
Kmart- No Slide	3.0%
Kmart- Slide	2.0%
Sears	2.6%

0.0% 1.0% 2.0% 3.0% 4.0% 5.0%

• Some users liked entering their ZIP for **Local Availability**, but many were highly annoyed that it **'wouldn't go away'** as they moved around the site.

Local Availability Pop-up

Kmart - Original	1.7%
Kmart- No Slide	1.7%
Kmart- Slide	2.3%
Sears	1.0%

0.0% 0.5% 1.0% 1.5% 2.0% 2.5%
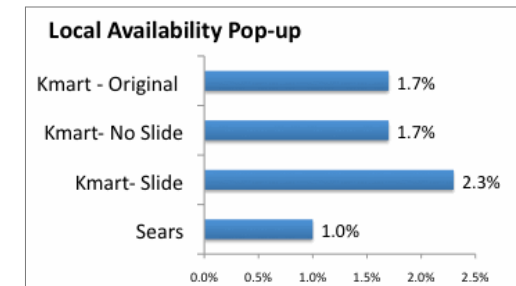
• For users that visited a version with a slide show, a small percentage felt the **images rotated** too fast and/or were distracting.

Slideshow (distracting, too fast, etc.)

Kmart - Original	3.7%
Kmart- No Slide	0.0%
Kmart- Slide	4.6%
Sears	0.0%

0.0% 1.0% 2.0% 3.0% 4.0% 5.0%

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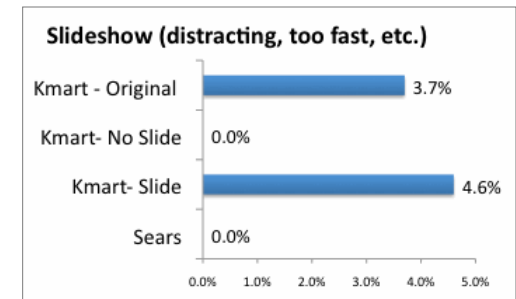
Findings:
What were their Brand Impressions?

Topic: What were their brand impressions?

For Task 2, users were asked to review all of the content on the Home Page and then choose **ratings** for a number of **branding attributes**.

- Ratings were **strikingly consistent across all 12 attributes** for all versions tested. Though some variance surfaced, they are all **within the margin of error**. There is never more than a .2 point gap between ratings in any category between the highest and lowest rating.

- Overall, the **ratings are fairly strong**, the lowest of which still falls within the positive range of the scale (e.g. 4 was 'neutral' on the 7-point scale.)
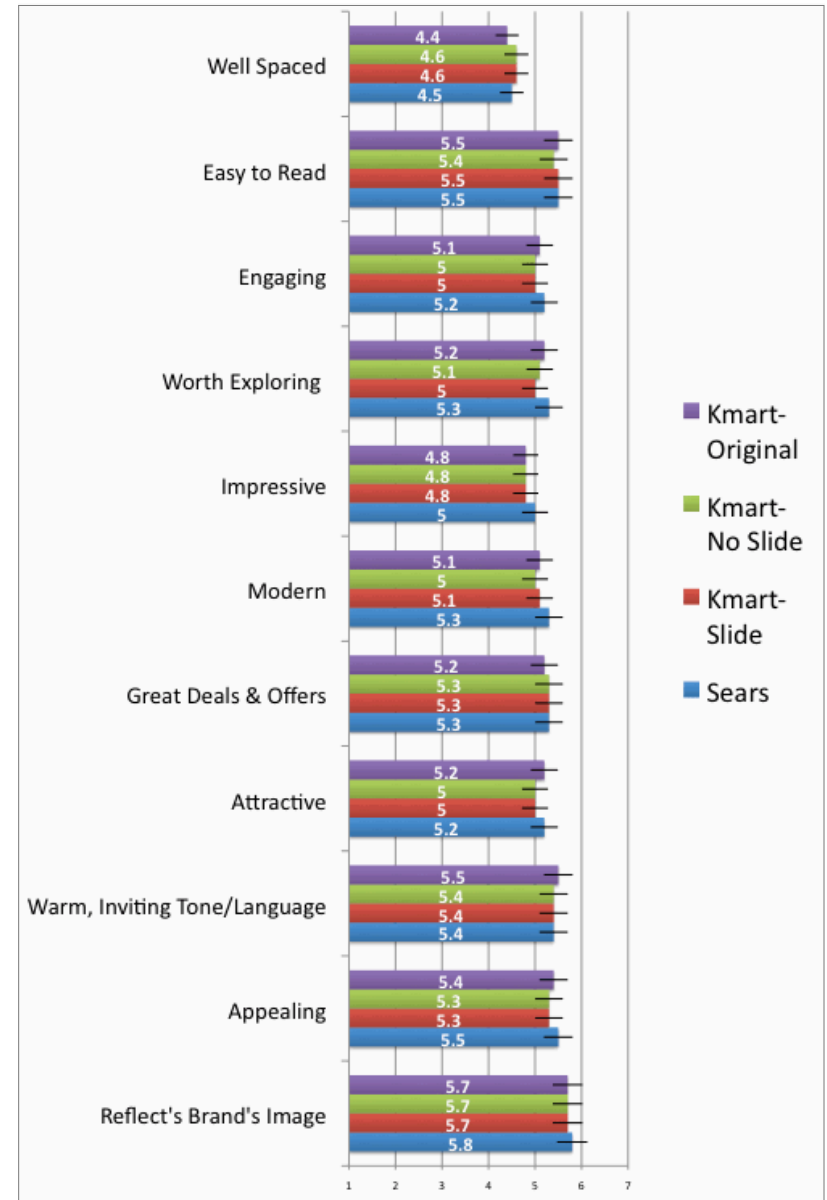
sears

Topic: What were their brand impressions?

For Task 2, users were asked to review all of the content on the Home Page and then choose **ratings** for a number of **branding attributes**.

•The differences in the **overall combined means** are not statistically significant.

•Though the metrics are all very close, **Sears Dynamic** ranked first or tied for first in an attribute category **2-4 times more often** than the others.

Overal Combined Means

	Value
Kmart- Original MEAN	5.19
Kmart- No Slide MEAN	5.15
Kmart- Slide- MEAN	5.15
Sears- MEAN	5.27

(scale: 1.00 – 7.00)

Number of Measures Ranked (or Tied) for Highest

	Value
Kmart no slide	2
Kmart Slide	4
Kmart Original	3
Sears	9

(scale: 1 – 10)

sears
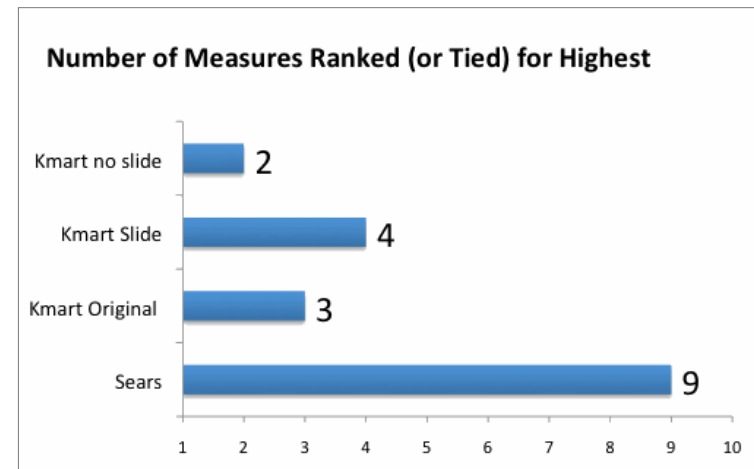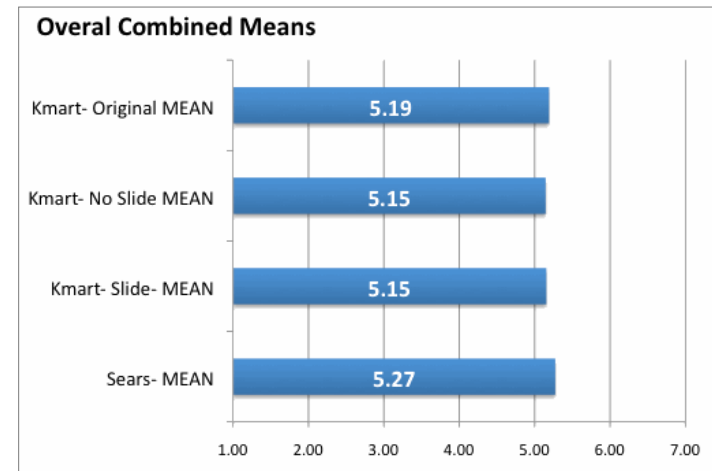
Topic: What were their brand impressions?

For Task 2, users were asked to review all of the content on the Home Page and then choose **ratings** for a number of **branding attributes**.

Comparing Highest to Lowest attributes:

For each version, users had the **weakest impressions** of
- Well Spaced vs. Cluttered/Crowded
- Impressive vs. Unimpressive

The most positive impressions were consistently related to whether the Home page matched their **impression of the retailer's image**.

This may suggest that users have **somewhat low expectations of the Sears and Kmart brands**.
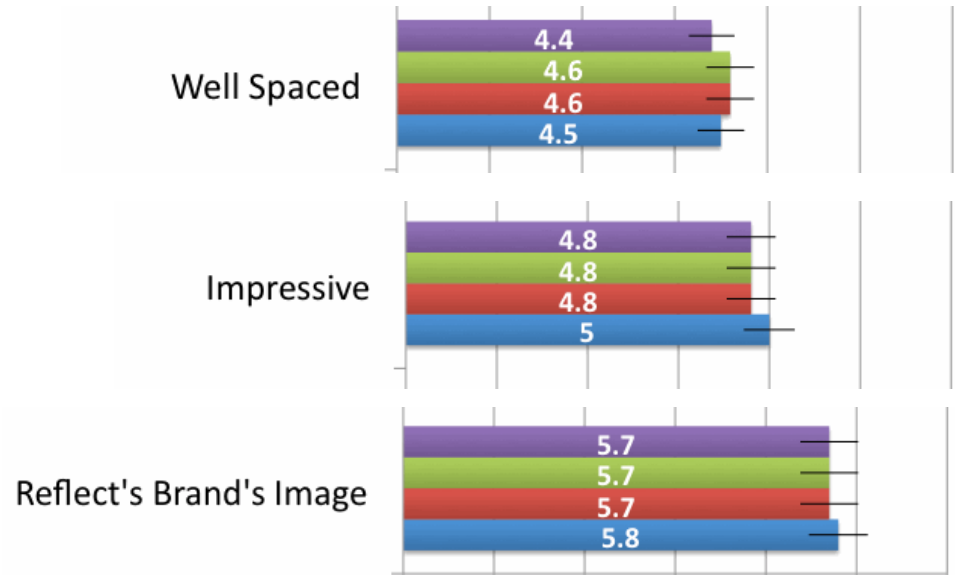
Home Page Variations

sears

Homepage Design: Sears Dynamic
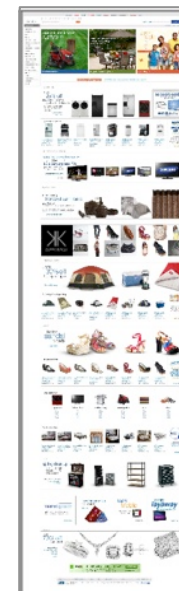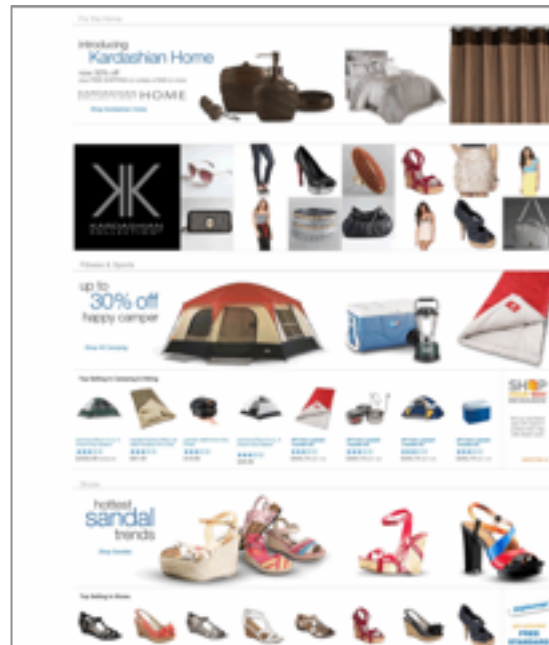
Homepage Design: Kmart Original
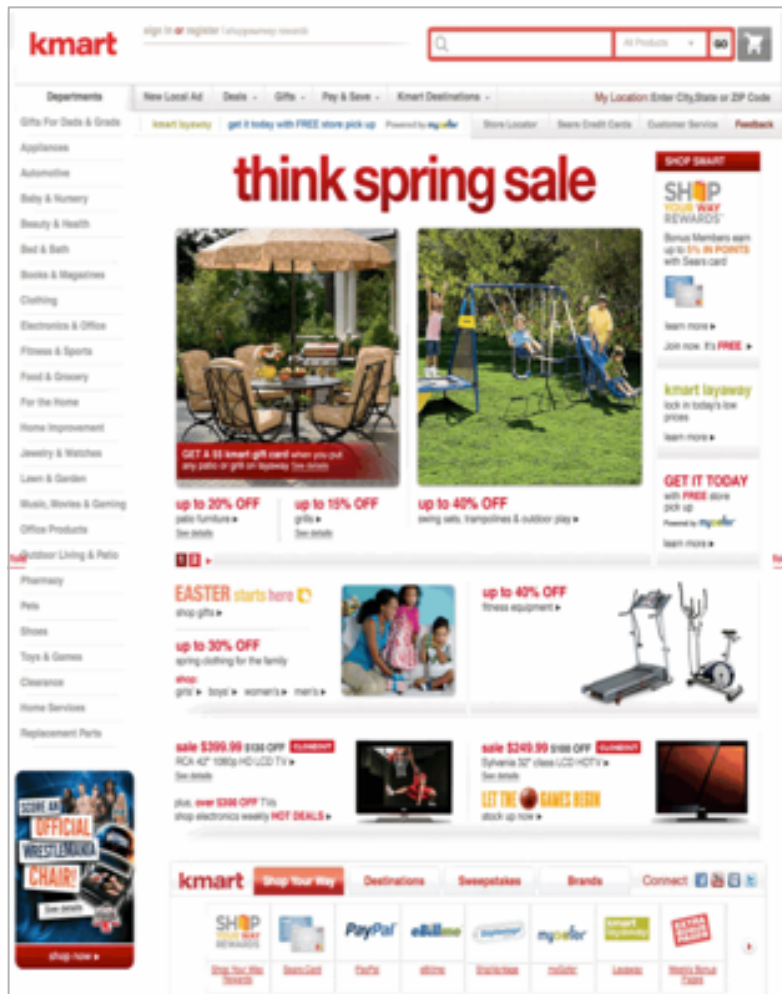
Homepage Design: Kmart No Slide
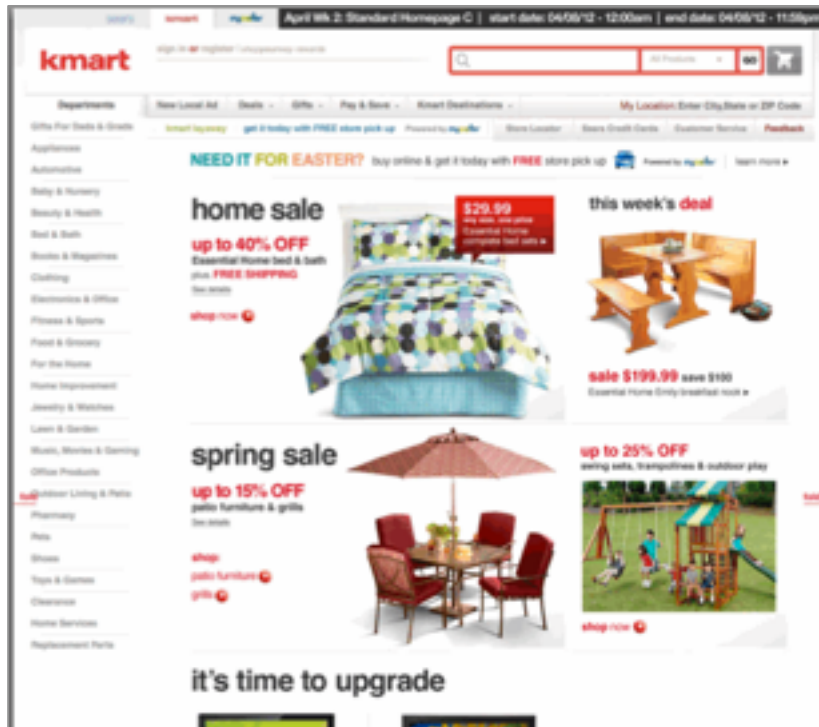
Homepage Design: Kmart Slide

Protocol

Protocol

Of the things you just described, **choose one to shop for now**. When you arrive at the website, shop as if you were really pulling out your own credit card at the end. **Be realistic** about finding something you would actually buy: budget, style, features, etc.

TASK: Shop for the item of your choice until you find one you really like. Add the item to an order. Once it is in your shopping cart, you may move on to the next task. If you have spent 5 minutes looking but have not yet chosen an item, you may move to the next task.

Start task

Survey Powered By UserZoom

Did you **find the item** you wanted? **Describe** the item you chose or the reason you feel you were not able to find an item.

○ Yes

○ No

○ Sort of

Did you **interact with (e.g. click, type into)** any of the following while shopping?

	Yes	No	I'm not sure
Home Page advertisement, offer, or promotion	○	○	○
Search bar (entering key words to search)	○	○	○
Navigation menu	○	○	○
Ad, offer, or promotion somehwere other than on the Home page	○	○	○

Next

Survey Powered By UserZoom

During the last task, you started your shopping on the **Home Page of Kmart.com**. Please **list everything you remember** on that first page, including images, promotions or offers, featured products, titles/labels. (Please do not refer back to the page to answer this question.)

Next

Survey Powered By UserZoom

Return to the **Home Page** and spend a minute looking over all of the content of that page. When you have reviewed everything, move on to answer a few questions.

Start task

Survey Powered By UserZoom

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Protocol

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Topic: Calculating brand impressions

For Task 2, users were asked to review all of the content on the Home Page and then choose **ratings** for a number of **branding attributes**.

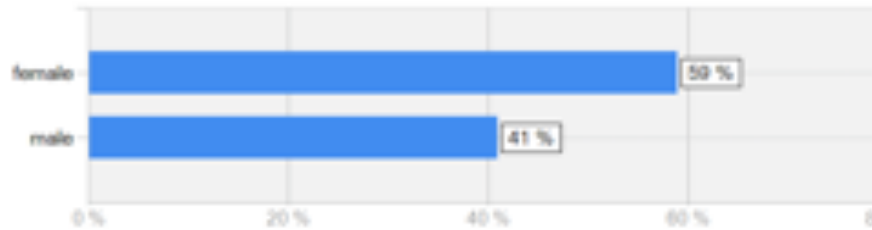Scores were calculated for each topic as follows:
- Ratings of 1-3 were considered '**negative**'
- 4 was "I'm **neutral**"
- 5-7 were considered **positive**
- Negative and positive scores were combined for a **total percentage**
- **Mean** scores were also calculated by topic

1. Choose a **rating** that reflects your opinion about the **Home Page**: (4 = "I'm neutral")

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
Very Unappealing	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Very Appealing

User Profiles

Report of Findings: Home Page Benchmarking Study

1. My gender:

Kmart Original

female	59 %
male	41 %

0 % — 20 % — 40 % — 60 %

Kmart No Slide

female	64 %
male	36 %

0 % — 20 % — 40 % — 60 %

Sears Dynamic

female	59 %
male	41 %

0 % — 20 % — 40 % — 60 %

Kmart Slide

female	59 %
male	41 %

0 % — 20 % — 40 % — 60 %

Report of Findings: Home Page Benchmarking Study
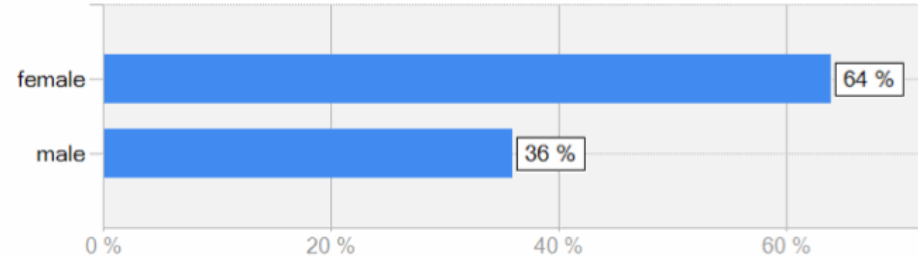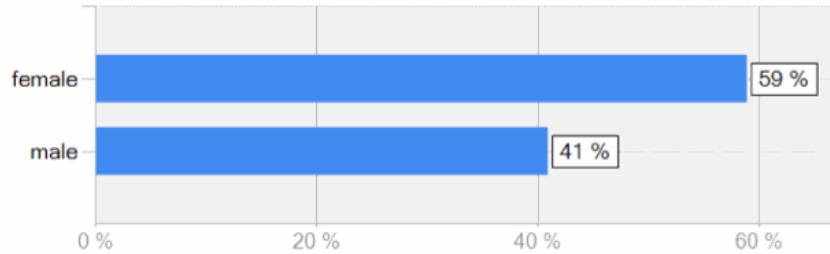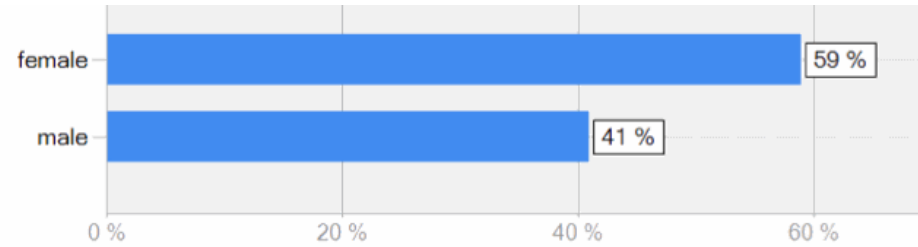
3. My household income is:

Kmart Original

Kmart No Slide

Sears Dynamic
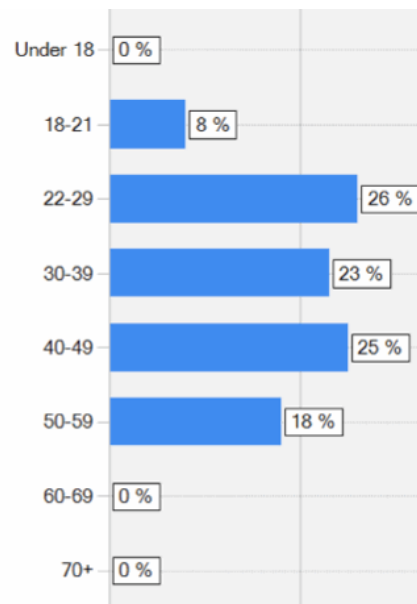

Kmart Slide
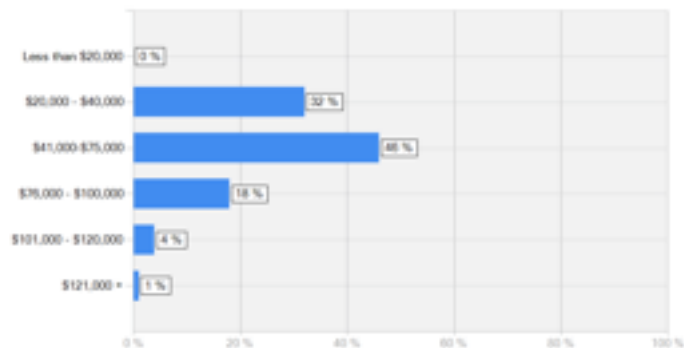
Report of Findings: Home Page Benchmarking Study
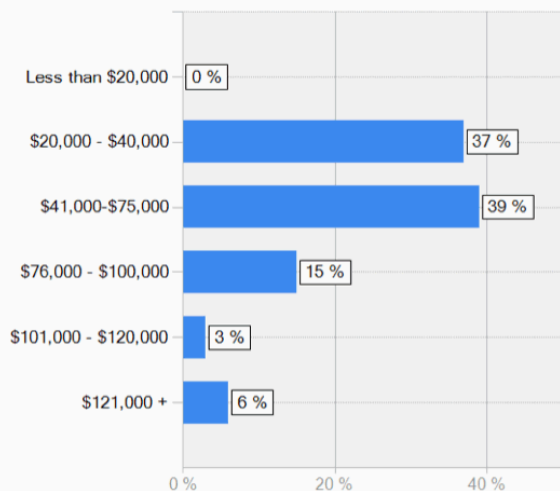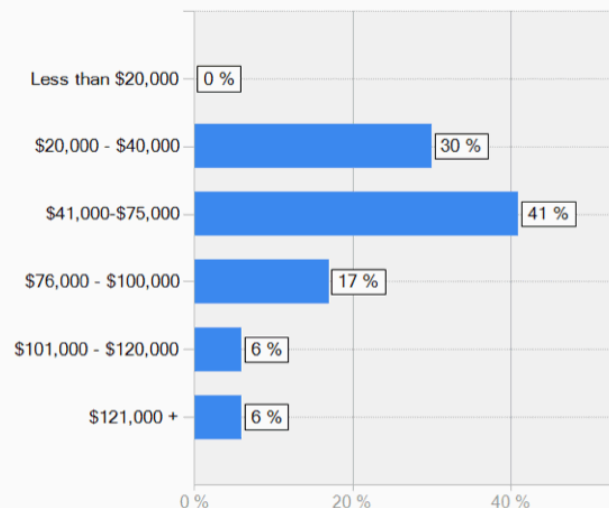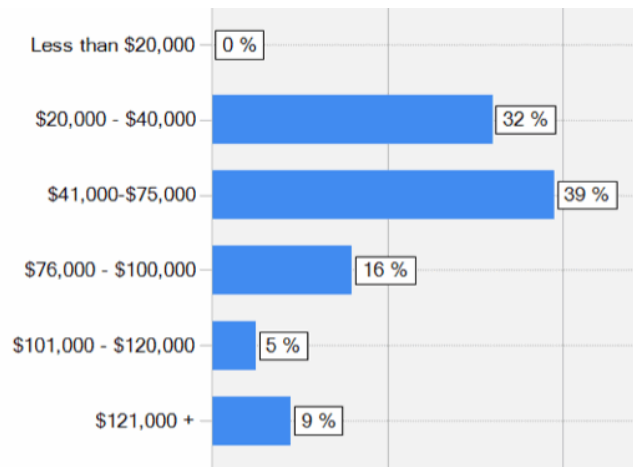
2. My age:
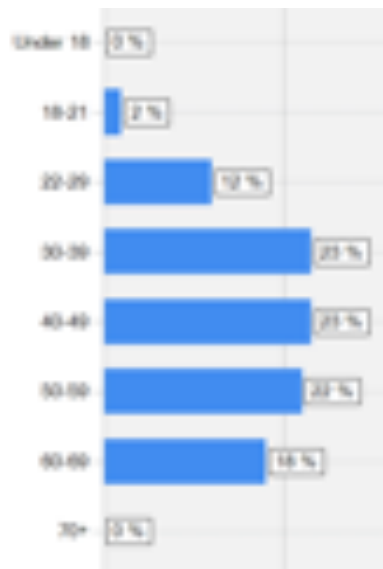
Kmart Original
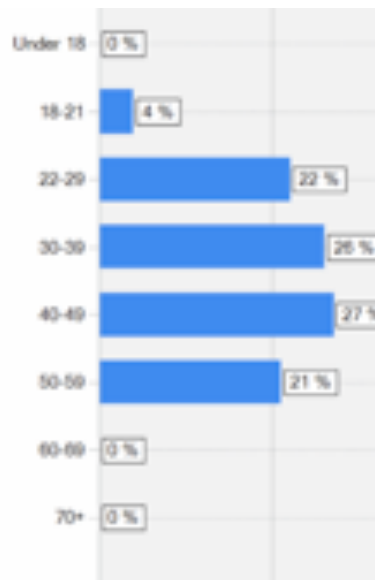
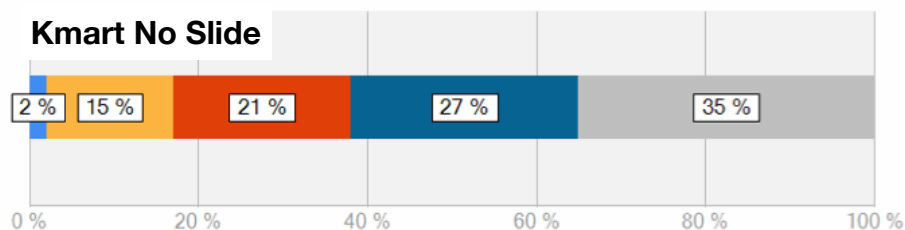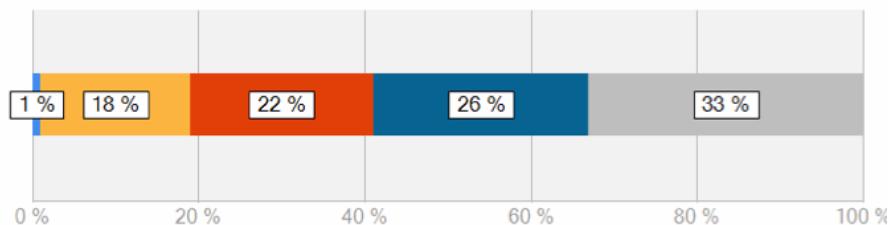**Sears Dynamic**

Kmart No Slide
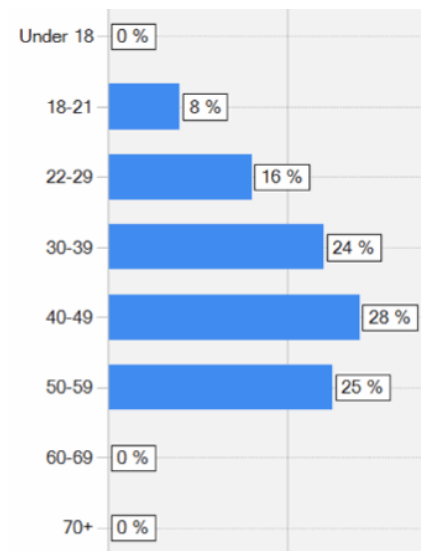
Kmart Slide

Report of Findings: Home Page Benchmarking Study

4. How often have you completed a purchase in a retail or department store in the past 6 months?

Kmart Original

| 4 % | 18 % | 21 % | 31 % | 27 % |

Sears Dynamic

| 5 % | 12 % | 20 % | 29 % | 35 % |

0 %   20 %   40 %   60 %   80 %   100 %

Legend:
- None
- 1-3 times total
- About once a month
- 2-3 times a month
- 4+ times a month

Kmart No Slide

| 2 % | 15 % | 21 % | 27 % | 35 % |

0 %   20 %   40 %   60 %   80 %   100 %

Kmart Slide

| 1 % | 18 % | 22 % | 26 % | 33 % |

0 %   20 %   40 %   60 %   80 %   100 %

sears

Report of Findings: Home Page Benchmarking Study
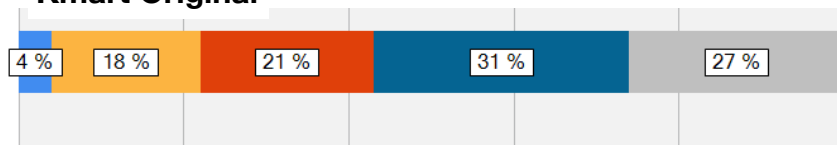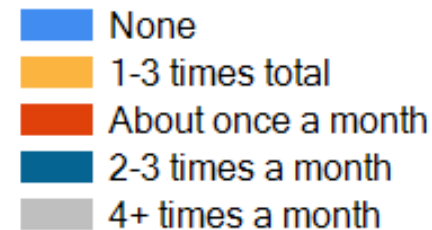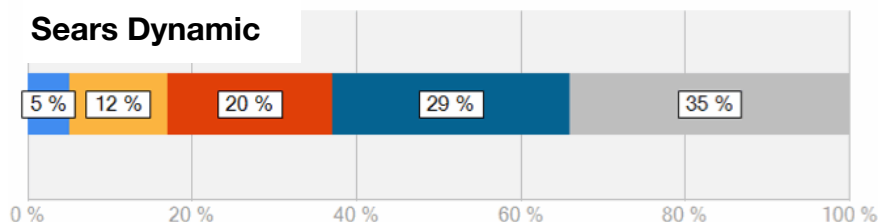
5. How often have you completed a purchase online (without assistance from others) in the past 6 months?

Kmart Original

None	1-3 times total	About once a month	2-3 times a month	4+ times a month

Kmart Original: 23 %, 28 %, 29 %, 21 %

Sears Dynamic: 21 %, 25 %, 28 %, 26 %

Kmart No Slide: 24 %, 31 %, 22 %, 22 %

Kmart Slide: 28 %, 27 %, 23 %, 22 %

Legend:
- None
- 1-3 times total
- About once a month
- 2-3 times a month
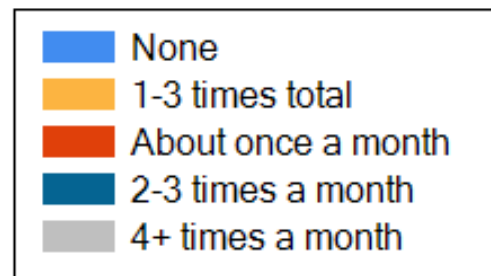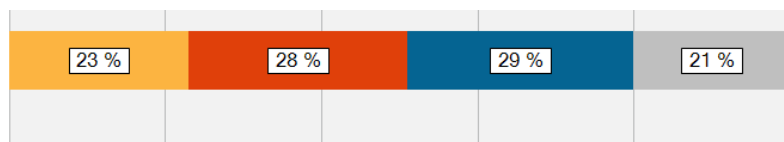- 4+ times a month

04/30/12

sears

41

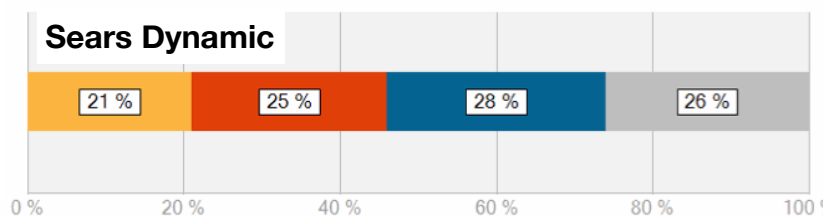Report of Findings: Home Page Benchmarking Study
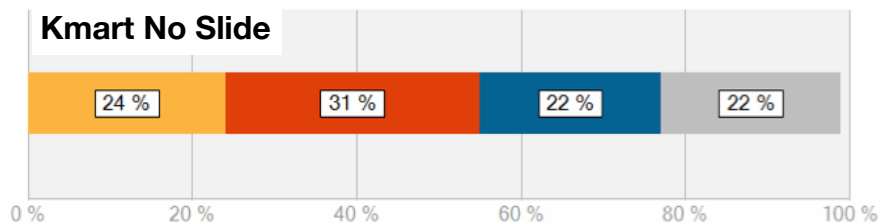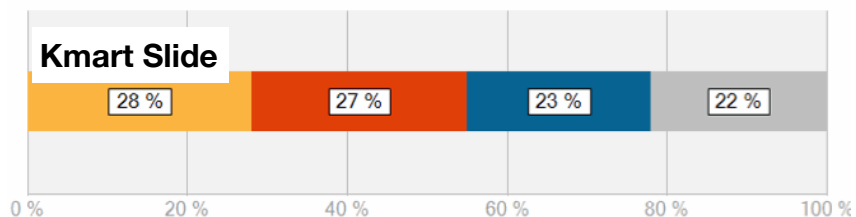
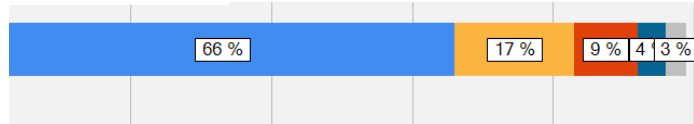## 6. How often have you completed a purchase on a mobile phone or tablet in the past 6 months?

Kmart Original

Sears Dynamic

Kmart No Slide

Kmart Slide

Legend:
- None
- 1-3 times total
- About once a month
- 2-3 times a month
- 4+ times a month

Report of Findings: Home Page Benchmarking Study
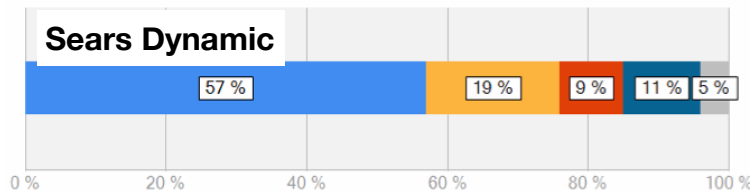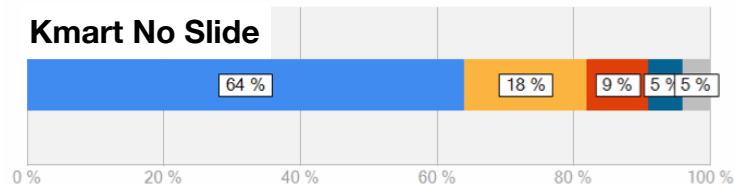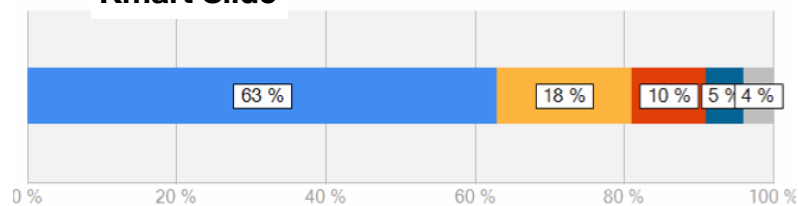
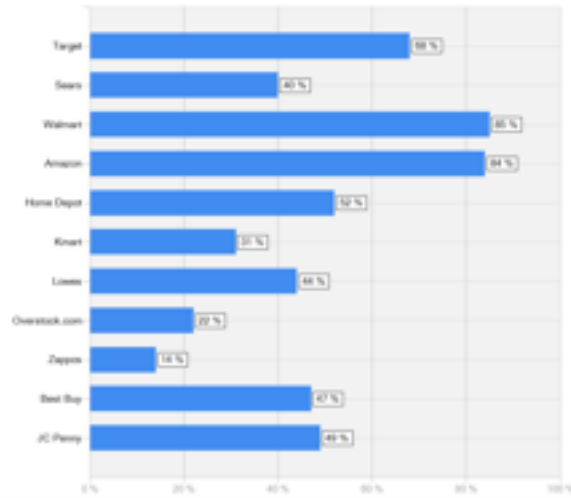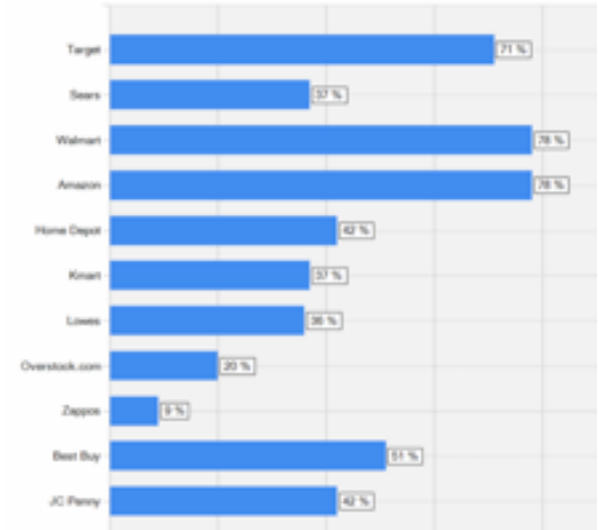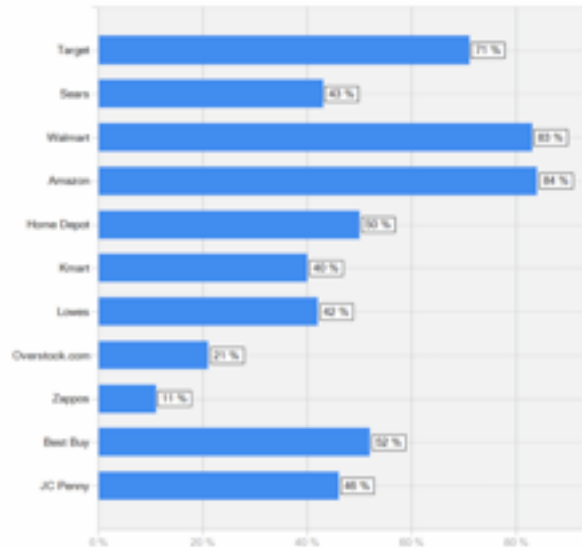**7. I have shopped at the following retailers in the past 6 months (retail, online or mobile):**

Kmart Original

Kmart No Slide

Sears Dynamic

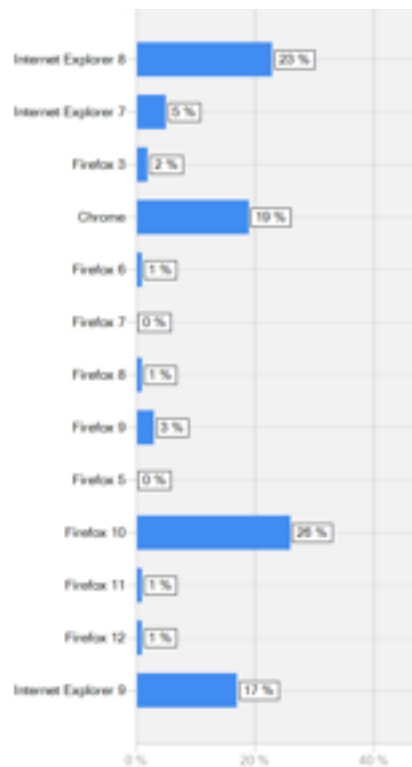Kmart Slide

Report of Findings: Home Page Benchmarking Study
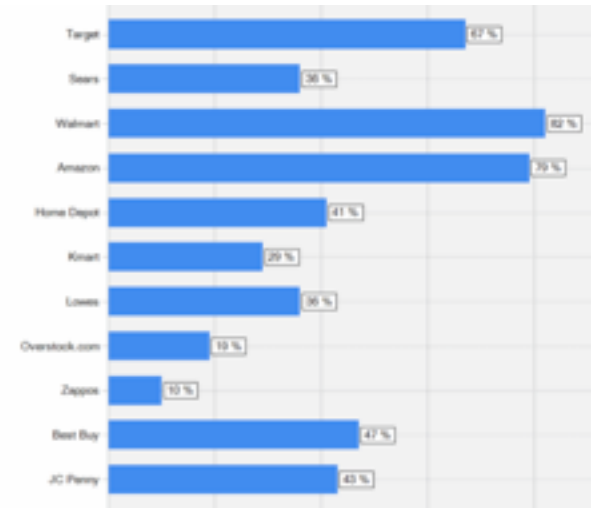
3. Browsers

Kmart Original

Browser	%
Internet Explorer 8	23 %
Internet Explorer 7	5 %
Firefox 3	2 %
Chrome	19 %
Firefox 6	1 %
Firefox 7	0 %
Firefox 8	1 %
Firefox 9	3 %
Firefox 5	0 %
Firefox 10	26 %
Firefox 11	1 %
Firefox 12	1 %
Internet Explorer 9	17 %

Sears Dynamic

Browser	%
Internet Explorer 8	18 %
Internet Explorer 7	4 %
Firefox 3	1 %
Chrome	23 %
Firefox 6	0 %
Firefox 8	0 %
Firefox 9	1 %
Firefox 10	3 %
Firefox 11	32 %
Firefox 12	1 %
Internet Explorer 9	17 %
Others	0 %

Kmart No Slide

Browser	%
Internet Explorer 8	12 %
Internet Explorer 7	3 %
Firefox 3	2 %
Chrome	24 %
Firefox 4	1 %
Firefox 7	1 %
Firefox 8	1 %
Firefox 9	0 %
Firefox 10	3 %
Firefox 11	29 %
Firefox 12	1 %
Internet Explorer 9	22 %

Kmart Slide

Browser	%
Internet Explorer 8	14 %
Internet Explorer 7	3 %
Firefox 3	3 %
Chrome	22 %
Firefox 4	1 %
Firefox 8	0 %
Firefox 9	0 %
Firefox 10	2 %
Firefox 11	30 %
Firefox 12	1 %
Internet Explorer 9	23 %

Report of Findings: Home Page Benchmarking Study

4. Screen Resolution

Kmart Original

Resolution	%
1366x768	22 %
1024x768	19 %
1280x800	14 %
1280x1024	8 %
1440x900	7 %
1920x1080	6 %
1600x900	5 %
1680x1050	4 %
1280x768	2 %
1360x768	2 %

Sears Dynamic

Resolution	%
1366x768	22 %
1024x768	20 %
1280x800	12 %
1440x900	6 %
1280x1024	6 %
1600x900	5 %
1920x1080	4 %
1680x1050	3 %
1280x720	3 %
1024x600	2 %

Kmart No Slide

Resolution	%
1366x768	24 %
1280x800	16 %
1024x768	16 %
1600x900	10 %
1280x1024	5 %
1440x900	5 %
1920x1080	4 %
1680x1050	3 %
1280x720	2 %
1024x600	2 %

Kmart Slide

Resolution	%
1366x768	24 %
1280x800	15 %
1024x768	14 %
1440x900	8 %
1600x900	8 %
1280x1024	7 %
1680x1050	4 %
1920x1080	4 %
1024x600	2 %
1280x768	1 %

For More Information

For more information, contact Kerry McAleer-Forte, UX Research and Analytics Manager: kmcalee@searshc.com

+   H   M   L   fyi   bug

sears