

SHOP BY [top designers](#)

SHOP BY [all designers](#)

SHOP BY [category](#)

**NO WEB**

[Jewelry](#)

**SKIRTS**

[Skirts](#)

**Dresses**

[Dresses - Fancy](#)

[Dresses - Fun](#)

**Pants**

[Denim](#)

[Jumpsuits](#)

[Shorts](#)

[Skirts](#)

[Sweatpants](#)

[Swimwear](#)

[Tights & Leggings](#)

[Trousers](#)

[Twill & Cord](#)



# ShopVerucaSalt.com

## Heuristic Evaluation

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# Executive Summary

This document provides a Heuristic evaluation, performed by Team 1 on the ShopVerucaSalt.com website. The evaluation took place between May 10<sup>th</sup> and May 15<sup>th</sup> of 2010. This document provides the findings of the evaluation and recommendations for improvement.

The review was conducted based on User Interface Heuristics for the Web (adapted by partners of Adaptive Path from Jakob Nielsen's Heuristic Principles)

## Discoverability

1. Recognition rather than recall
2. Match between system and the real world
3. Consistency and standards

## Feedback

7. Visibility of system status

## Context

8. You are here
9. Flexibility and efficiency of use
10. Minimalist design

## Recoverability

4. Error prevention
5. Emergency exits
6. Help users recognize, diagnose, and recover from errors

## Executive Summary (continued)

This evaluation included the entire ShopVerucaSalt.com website. A total of 12 recommendations are included, with severity ratings ranging from Low to High. Positive findings are also included.

### **Assumptions**

Users of the site are familiar with the standards being used by other e-commerce websites. The primary tasks for users on ShopVerucaSalt.com are browsing for products, purchasing products and finding store information.

# Positive Finding – Engaging Imagery & Content

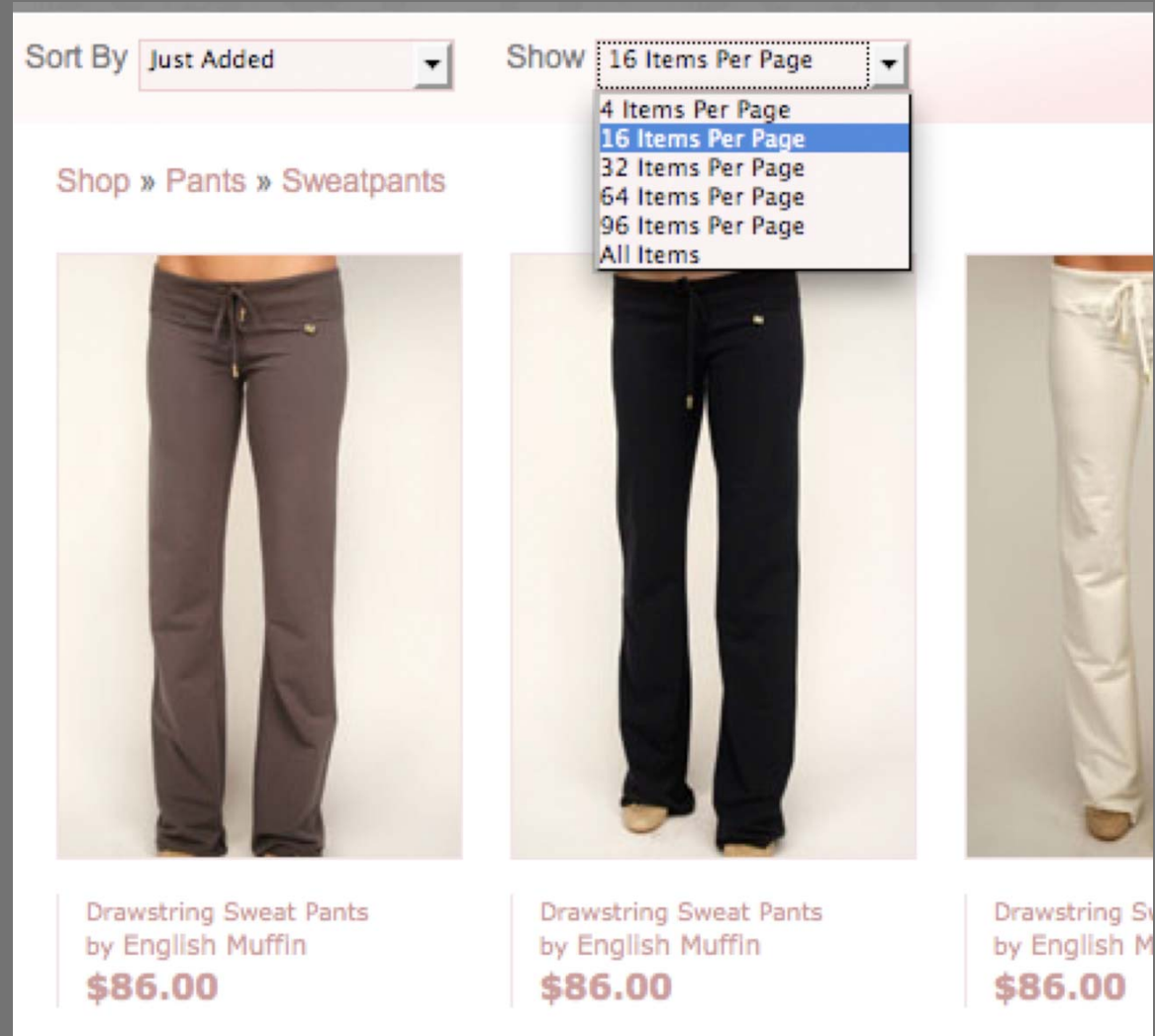
The homepage uses engaging imagery to showcase designers and featured content.

The screenshot displays a grid of promotional tiles on a website homepage:

- Top Left:** A large image of a woman in a black dress posing among white balloons. The text "susana monaco" is overlaid at the bottom.
- Top Right:** A woman in a pink and black dress. The text "fancy > featured designer" is at the bottom.
- Middle Right:** A woman in denim jeans lying on a green surface. The text "JAMES JEANS" is at the top, and "denim > featured designer" is at the bottom.
- Bottom Left:** A "deals & events" section with an "enter email address" input field and a "SUBSCRIBE" button. Below it is a "gift cards" section with the text "one size > fits all" and an image of a gift box.
- Bottom Middle:** A video thumbnail showing a woman wearing a colorful scarf. The text "how to > scarf lesson 101" is at the bottom.
- Bottom Right:** A video thumbnail showing a woman in a white top and pink scarf. The text "LIVE" is in the top left, "AROUND TOWN Veruca Salt Boutique" is in the bottom left, and "veruca.ondemand > watch it" is at the bottom.


# Positive Finding – Flexibility of Product Results

On a product results page users are given multiple options on how to sort the products as well as how many items to view per page. This provides flexibility for users to more efficiently find what they are looking for.





# Positive Finding – Required Fields on Forms

When users enter information on form pages, required fields are clearly defined with a pink icon. This will help users know which fields to fill out and prevent errors.


**NOTE:** Items with a  are required.

### Add Shipping Information


First Name  


Last Name  


Company


Address  


Address 2


City  

State  

Zip Code  

Country  

Phone    
(xxx-xxx-xxxx)

Fax    
(xxx-xxx-xxxx)

**Commercial Address**  Check the box if your shipping destination is a commercial address.

# Issue #1 – Product Navigation

Type: Discoverability – Consistency & Standards

Severity: **High**

## VERUCASALT

[my account](#) [customer service](#) [my cart](#)

[NEW](#) | [SALE](#) | [TOPS](#) | [PANTS](#) | [DRESSES](#) | [ACCESSORIES](#) | **[SHOES](#)** |

[ABOUT VERUCASALT](#) | [CONTACT US](#) | [EVENTS](#)

SHOP BY [top designers](#)

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[Sweatpants](#)

[Swimwear](#)

[Tights & Leggings](#)

[Trousers](#)

[Twill & Cords](#)

**Tops**

[Jackets](#)

[Outerwear & Coats](#)

[Shirts & Blouses](#)

The navigation to product categories is duplicated on both the top and left navigation. Many of the categories link to a no results page indicating there are no items available.

The category “No Web” is confusing and users will not know what to expect from clicking on it.

Shop » Shoes

Sorry we did not find any products that match your criteria

### Recommendations:

Remove duplicate links in product navigation. Create categorization which provides groupings that will always have products available.

## Issue #2 – Shop By Designer

Type: Context — Minimalist Design

Severity: Low

Navigation to Shop by Top Designers and Shop all Designers is available as a great alternative way to browse for products. There is a lot of overlap between the 2 sections for Top Designers and All Designers since many of the designers are also shown in top designers.

### Recommendations:

Combine Top Designers and All designers navigation to one section which shows Top Designers initially and provide an option to see all designers.



## Issue #3 – Gift Card link broken

Type: Recoverability – Error Prevention

Severity: **Medium**

The Gift Card banner on the site homepage goes to a no products found page. This is frustrating for a user who wishes to purchase a gift card.



# VERUCASALT

[my account](#) [customer service](#) [my cart](#)

[NEW](#) | [SALE](#) | [TOPS](#) | [PANTS](#) | [DRESSES](#) | [ACCESSORIES](#) | [SHOES](#)

[GO](#)

[ABOUT VERUCASALT](#) | [CONTACT US](#) | [EVENTS](#)

SHOP BY [top designers](#)

SHOP BY [all designers](#)

SHOP BY [category](#)

[NO WEB](#)

[Shop](#) » Search Request (gift cards)

Sorry we did not find any products that match your criteria

### Recommendations:

Correct the link to go to the Gift Card item page. If Gift cards are not available remove the banner so that users do not think they are able to purchase a gift card.

## Issue #4 – Underlined Text

Type: Discoverability –  
Consistency & Standards

Severity: Low

In the Customer Service section underlined text is used for text formatting. Underlined text should be reserved for text links in website copy.

### Example 1

#### How To Send Back Returns

Very simple. To ship items back, please send an email to [returns@shopverucasalt.com](mailto:returns@shopverucasalt.com). Please list the following in the email:

- Customer Name
- Order Number
- Reason for Return

### Example 2

#### **In Store Pickup Returns:**

If you decide not to keep the item when you pick up, you may return directly at the store for STORE/WEB CREDIT only. For a full refund, see [How To Send Back Returns](#) below for instructions.

### Recommendations:

Use Bold text for section headers, such as the text in example 1. For text referring to another section of the page (example 2) use anchor links to link the text to to appropriate section of the page. A consistent link treatment should be used, if pink is the link color (shown in example 1 on the e-mail address) use this text treatment for the anchor links.

# Issue #5 – Store Information

Type: Discoverability –  
Match Between System & Real World

Severity: Low

Since Veruca Salt has 2 physical store locations, customers may be visiting the website to find store information. Right now store information is on the Contact Us page which may not be where users will look for this information.

## Recommendations:

Add a link to the header called Our Stores and make this information a separate section from the Contact page. This page could also provide a link to maps and directions to get to the stores.

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- Dresses - Fancy
- Dresses - Fun
- Pants**
- Denim
- Jumpsuits
- Shorts
- Skirts
- Sweatpants
- Swimwear

## Contact Veruca Salt

**Shopverucasalt.com**

Online Sales and Customer Support:  
Phone: 1-773-276-3888  
Email: [customerservice@shopverucasalt.com](mailto:customerservice@shopverucasalt.com)  
Hours: Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm (CST)

\*Closed on major holidays

**Veruca Salt – River North**

521 North Kingsbury  
Chicago, IL 60654

Phone: 1-773-276-3888  
Email: [retail@shopverucasalt.com](mailto:retail@shopverucasalt.com)

Store Hours:  
Monday - Saturday 11 am - 7 pm

### Online Contact Form

Name

Phone   
i.e. 555-555-1212

Email   
i.e. john@doe.com

Referred By

Reason For Contact

Comments/Question

## Issue #6 – Contact Form

The contact form contains a math problem which produces an error condition if not answered correctly. While this is a fun twist on filling out a form, it may confuse users and they will be frustrated if not answering the question correctly produces an error they have to correct.

### Recommendations:

Remove the Math Problem to allow users to quickly provide contact information.

Type: Recoverability – Error Prevention

Severity: **Medium**

The screenshot shows a web form titled "Online Contact Form" with a red error banner at the top that reads "Your Answer To The Math Problem Is Incorrect!". The form fields include:

- Name:** A text input field containing "My Name".
- Phone:** An empty text input field with a placeholder example "i.e. 555-555-1212".
- Email:** A text input field containing "test@email.com" with a placeholder example "i.e. john@doe.com".
- Referred By:** A dropdown menu.
- Reason For Contact:** A dropdown menu.
- Comments/Question:** A large empty text area.
- Math Problem:** A text input field containing "40 + 11 =".

A "Submit" button is located at the bottom of the form.

## Issue #7 – Login page

When an unregistered user visits the Login page both the Username and Password fields are pre-filled. While the email address text provides useful information on what information should be entered, having the password field filled makes it look like the password has already been entered.

### Recommendations:

Change the label on the Username field to Email Address and remove the text from the input box. Remove the dots from the password box.

Type: Recoverability – Error Prevention

Severity: Low

The screenshot shows a login page titled "Wish List Login". It is divided into three sections: "New Customers", "Existing Customers", and "Forgot your Password?".

- New Customers:** Contains a "Create My Account" button and a link to "Set up a shopverucasalt.com 'My Account' history and more. With shopverucasalt.c".
- Existing Customers:** Contains the instruction "Log into your account using your email address and password". It features two input fields: "Username" (containing "email address") and "Password" (containing "\*\*\*\*\*"). A "Login" button is positioned below the password field.
- Forgot your Password?:** Contains the text "Don't worry, it happens to the best of us! Simply enter your e-mail address below and we'll send you your p". It includes an empty input field and a "Send Password" button.

## Issue #8 – Wishlist


Type: Recoverability – Error Prevention

Severity: **Medium**

When adding an item to your wishlist, the Select an Existing List option is selected even when no lists have been previously created. This may be confusing to users and produces an error if they click Add to List without changing the selection to Create a New List.

### Wish List

Please select a list or create a new one!

Image	Product	Sku
	Beaded Deep U-Neck by T-Bags	4587

Which list would you like to add this item to?

Select an existing list  Create a new list

Create A New List ----- > ▾

List Name

### Recommendations:

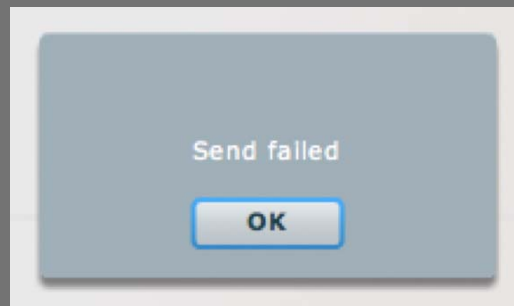
Do not show the Select an Existing List option unless there are already lists created. With no lists the default should be to create a new list. If there is an existing list the default should be to have the first existing list selected.

# Issue #9 – Checkout Data Error

Type: Recoverability – Error Recovery

Severity: **High**

On the Billing and Shipping information page an error message is appearing in the middle of the page where some data appears to be missing. Errors in checkout can make users less trusting and uncomfortable about making purchase.



## Recommendations:

If the information that is supposed to load in this section is not crucial information for checkout remove it. If the information is important correct the issues to remove the error message that is appearing.

### Check Out

**Billing Information**  
 Kristen Sienkiewicz  
 25 S. Alfred Ave.  
 Elgin, IL 60123

**Phone**  
 847-931-7288

[Edit Billing Info](#)

**Shipping Information**  
 Kristen Sienkiewicz  
 25 S. Alfred Ave.  
 Elgin, IL 60123

**Phone**  
 847-931-7288

**Commercial:** No

[Change Shipping Info](#)

**Your Order**

Quantity	Product	Price	Ext. Price
1	Ruched Tube Jumpsuit by July Kang SM - Multi (13182)	\$120.00	\$120.00
		<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>\$120.00</b>
		<b>Tax (IL)</b>	<b>\$12.30</b>
		<b>Shipping</b>	<b>\$5.95</b>
		<b>Total</b>	<b>\$138.25</b>

**Shipping**  
 Important shipping information click here...

UPS Ground \$5.95  
 UPS 2nd Day \$15.95  
 UPS Next Day \$32.95  
 FRBE In Store Pick-up (see return policy for in-store pickup) \$0.00

**Promotional Code**  
 Please enter your promotional code if you have one:

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Mission: \_\_\_\_\_



# Issue #10 – Checkout Error Messaging

Type: Recoverability –  
Error Recovery

Severity: **Medium**


On the Payment page of checkout users may get an error message if they do not fill out all of the necessary information. These messages appear as a browser alert and the user may not know where on the page the mistake occurred. When there are multiple errors on the page only one error is shown at a time and users may have to make corrections multiple times.

## Recommendations:

Display error messages on the page in the place where the error occurred. In this example the message relates to the checkbox at the bottom of the screen, so an error message should be shown above the checkbox. Use a red text treatment for errors that will make the error message stand out from the rest of the page design.

If there are multiple errors on the page, display all of the error messages so users can correct all errors at once.

Checkout Step Three | Shop | Shop Veruca Salt



The page at <http://www.shopverucasalt.com> says:  
You must authorize Veruca Salt to charge your credit card before proceeding!

OK

6011933388883444

Expiration Date  
1 2014

Credit Card Verification Number  
455 (What is this?)

VISA MasterCard DISCOVER

(No card type selection required)

SECURED BY  
**GeoTrust**  
click to verify  
15-May-10 21:06 GMT

### Your Order

Quantity	Product	Price
1	Ruched Tube Jumpsuit by July Kang SM - Multi (13182)	
		Donation

### Shipping Info

UPS Ground

I hereby authorize Shop Veruca Salt to charge my credit card in the amount of \$138.25

Complete Order Back

# Issue #11 – Checkout Security

Type: Feedback – Visibility of System Status

Severity: **High**

Although a Secured by GeoTrust graphic is displayed in the checkout process, the checkout pages do not appear to be on a secure server. This is typically indicated in the URL with the prefix https instead of http. The browser should also display a padlock icon to indicate a secure server but this does not appear in the checkout process. This lack of security confirmation may make users uncomfortable about entering their payment information.



Example: Firefox padlock that should show up in bottom right corner of browser on a secure website checkout page.

## Recommendations:

Implement a secure https server to make users more confident about using the checkout process. Make sure security certificates are recognized by web browsers.

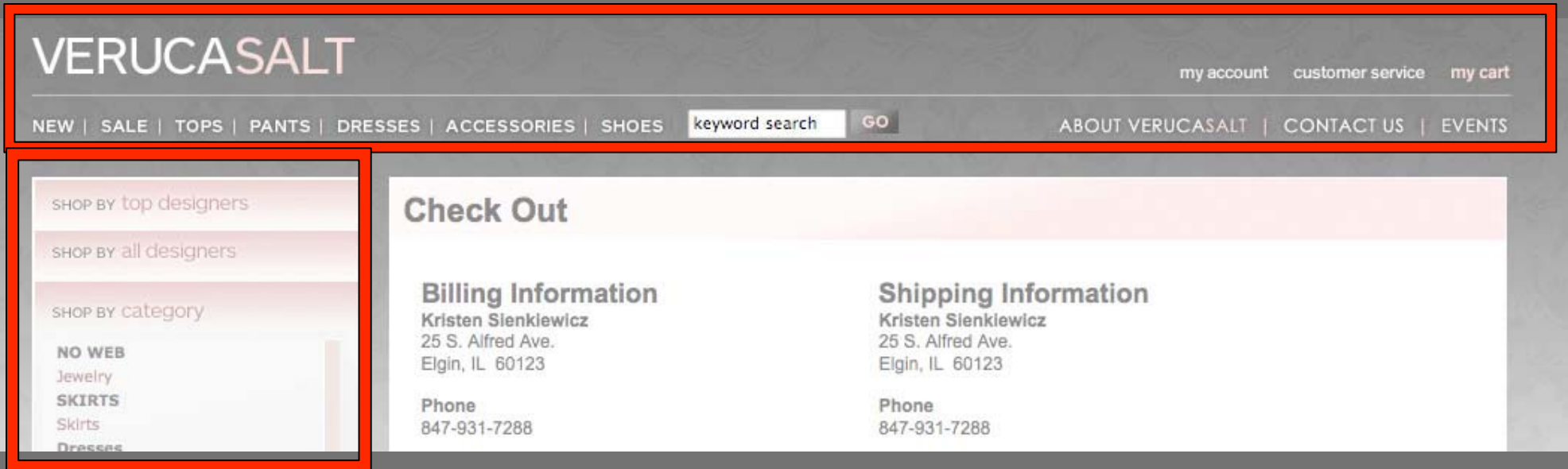
Consider adding other payment methods such as Paypal which allow users to make a payment without sharing their payment information with Veruca Salt.

# Issue #12 – Checkout Navigation

Type: Context – Minimalist Design

Severity: Low

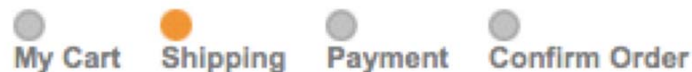
The full navigation for the website is used during the checkout process. Having too many navigation links during the checkout process may allow users exit points which take them out of checkout and distract them from completing a purchase. Additionally, there is no information provided on how many steps are in the checkout process.



## Recommendations:

Implement a checkout header and footer which only include necessary links such as the Shopping cart, privacy and policy links. Provide a status bar which indicates the steps in the checkout process to show users they will be able to complete a purchase quickly.

Example: Shopbop.com  
Checkout progress indicator



# Summary of Issues

## Severity Rating Scale

Severity	Description
High	Issues which severely impact a users ability to find products or information on the site.
Medium	Issues which negatively impact users but don't keep them from completing their tasks.
Low	Issues which have minimal impact to primary tasks.
Positive	Positive observations

Severity	Area of Site	Issue Found	Recommendation
High	Navigation	Duplicate Navigation, Broken & Confusing Links	Remove Duplicate Links, Redesign Categorization to provide groupings that will have products available.
High	Checkout	Error message is appearing on Shipping & Billing page	Fix the error by correcting or removing content in the section produces the error.
High	Checkout	Security of checkout is unclear because of lack of https in URL and no padlock in Firefox browser	Implement a secure server with an https prefix and make sure security certificates are recognized by web browsers.
Medium	Hompage	Gift Card link goes to no results	Fix link or remove banner for Gift Cards.
Medium	Contact Form	Math problem can cause confusion and errors	Remove Math Problem Field from Contact Form.
Medium	Wishlist	List is defaulted to existing list even when no wishlists have been created	Don't show "Select an existing list" unless wishlists have been created previously.
Medium	Checkout	Error messaging on Payment page is not shown in context	Show errors on the page next to the field or form element causing the error. If multiple errors occur show all errors together.
Low	Navigation	Shop by Designer navigation is provided through Top Designers and All Designers options which have a lot of the same links	Combine the 2 sections to show top designers with an optoin to see all desginers.
Low	Customer Service	Underlined Text used for non-linkable text	Use bold text for section headers. Use anchor links for text referring to other sections on the page.

# Summary of Issues (continued)

## Severity Rating Scale

Severity	Description
High	Issues which severely impact a users ability to find products or information on the site.
Medium	Issues which negatively impact users but don't keep them from completing their tasks.
Low	Issues which have minimal impact to primary tasks.
Positive	Positive observations

Severity	Area of Site	Issue Found	Recommendation
Low	Store Information	No clear link in header for finding store information	Add an Our Stores link to the site header.
Low	Login page	Existing Customers fields are populated and may confuse users or cause errors	Relable the Username field Email Address. Remove text from entry fields.
Low	Checkout	Displaying full navigation may give users too many exit points that prevent them from completing a purchase	Create a checkout specific header and footer to eliminate exit points.
Positive	Homepage	Engaging Imagery & Content	No change
Positive	Product Results	Flexibility of Product Results	No change
Positive	Form Entry	Clearly Defined Required Fields	No change