

Gomez finds leading online grocers deliver mixed bag when it comes to online performance

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Asda.com scores top spot; Sainsbury.co.uk customers wait 3 times longer

London, August 26 2008 – An online performance benchmark published by Gomez, Inc., a leading provider of web application experience management, has found that customers of the UK's leading online grocers are being delivered a mixed bag when it comes to the performance of their websites.

Over a seven day period, Gomez tested the leading online grocers' websites for response times (how quickly visitors can access content and perform tasks on the site) when accessed from a home broadband connection. They also measured availability (what percentage of the time the site is accessible).

The tests were via Gomez's worldwide panel of over 40,000 desktops located with different dial-up and broadband connections around the globe. This is known as the Last Mile peer community, and provides a real-world picture of what the customer is experiencing from wherever they are in the world, via different connection speeds and ISPs. The UK's Last Mile peer community was used for this benchmark.

Asda.com came top of the benchmark with an average response time of 7.754 seconds and it was closely followed by Tesco.com at 8.359 seconds and Sainsburys.com/grocers at 10.460 seconds. Marksandspencer.com and Ocado.com came fourth and fifth at 11.13 seconds and 12.241 seconds respectively, while Sainsbury.co.uk was just over 24 seconds.

David Flower, VP EMEA at Gomez, said: "I'm puzzled as to why some retailers have multiple entrances to its online store, especially when one of them performs so badly. You have to ask how many customers get fed up waiting for the main site to load and go to a competitors' site instead."

In addition to testing response times, Gomez also looked at availability (what percentage of the time the websites were accessible). These tests were also performed from a cluster of end-user PCs with Home Broadband connectivity, located across the UK.

The results showed that these retailers risk losing two weeks' or more revenue* per year simply because their sites are unavailable. For the worst performer in terms of availability, this meant risking a total of 13 days annual revenue. The others included in the benchmark had less to worry about, and all fell between a 3.1 and 1 day risk-range per year.

Waitrosedirect.com was the next highest at 3.6 days, followed by Marksandspencer.com at 3.1 days. Ocado.com's availability was the best of all, exposing it to a potential risk of only one day.

David Flower, VP EMEA at Gomez said: "A recent report from IMRG shows that online sales grew 38% year on year in the first six months of this year. Downtime and inconsistency doesn't just prevent purchasing; they can ruin customer experiences and create lasting harm. Making sure your website is tuned to give your customers the best online experience is simply drop-dead obvious."

Companies included in the benchmark were: Asda.com, Tesco.com, Sainsburys.com/groceries, MarksandSpencer.com, Ocado.com, WaitroseDirect.com and Sainsburys.co.uk.

* Equivalent days revenue lost were calculated by the following equation:
(average availability below 100%) x 3.65 – assumes that quoted availability applies over the course of a 365 day year:

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About Gomez

Gomez, Inc. is a leading provider of web application experience management which businesses use to test their web applications while in development and to monitor their web applications after deployment. More than 2000 customers use Gomez's on-demand services to improve the quality of the web experience in order to increase their revenue from web applications, reduce their operating costs, and extend their brand reputations. For more information, please visit www.gomez.com.

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