

## Understanding user needs leads to increased revenue

*"Smart people, clear thinkers, fun to work with, good listeners, genuinely experienced. Blue Latitude cut straight to the heart of the issue and offered a genuine solution"*  
Tim Patten, Marketing Director, **Early Learning Centre**

### Challenge

Christmas is the most important trading period for any toy retailer. In 2005, ELC's online growth plans for Christmas were aggressive and required a rethink of their interactive strategy.

The task was to reinvigorate the brand and help it achieve its core proposition - *help children be all they can be*.

Key business objectives for the Christmas period included:

- Achieve online sales targets of +25% YOY
- Achieve average transaction value by +2% YOY
- Acquire new, high-value customers
- Increase purchase frequency.

### Strategy

Online customers are more sophisticated than ever and we have witnessed a consumer migration towards sites that provide simple to use, clear navigation and labelling; richer product information; added-value services; clear paths to customer service and convenient and timely delivery options.

- Put the customer's needs at the centre of elc.co.uk and become more pro-active to them
- Talk to the customer in their language, not that of the business
- Reduce development risks by getting customer buy-in to design
- Interrogate non-core audience as well as core
- Understand the lifecycle of the customer
- Show, help and reassure all customers throughout the buying process and direct them to the channel that can most appropriately address their needs
- Use the right content for the right product type

### Implementation

The site features a variety of functional improvements on its predecessor:

- Age-based navigation to find relevant toys more easily
- Fewer clicks to product saves buyers' time
- Filtering options allow search results to be refined by price, age, category or development skill
- Toy images are bigger and bolder, with multiple images wherever available

*Continued overleaf*

- Richer product content to aid decision-making, such as Early Learning Icons, play-tips, size/safety information and toy reviews (e.g. <http://www.elc.co.uk/toy-34115>)
- Unobtrusive data capture by only asking for information when necessary and pre-populating fields wherever possible
- Intelligent cross-selling features such as *Accessories*, *Alternatives*, and *Little Treats* to promote up-sell at point of purchase
- New online Reward Scheme offering customer discounts to improve conversion and purchase frequency
- New *Big Birthday Club* area – a scheme that allows customers to receive offers in time for children's birthdays
- Reduced delivery times, plus options to include delivery instructions, add gift messages and choose express delivery.

## Results \*

- Online sales: +32% YOY, outstripping target by 7%
- Average transaction value: +8% YOY, outstripping target by 6%
- Visitor growth: +40% YOY
- Repeat visits per customer have also increased
- Number of orders: +30% YOY
- Repeat orders per customer have also increased
- Customers are viewing 21% more toys on the new [elc.co.uk](http://elc.co.uk) than on the old site
- Average selling price: +19% YOY, due to best-selling items being easier to find, and better product information encouraging customers to buy
- Redemption of reward vouchers is already at 4% within a 10-week period, resulting in incremental revenue for [elc.co.uk](http://elc.co.uk)

Source: Early Learning Centre Management Information

Performance data compares 10/10/05 – 16/12/05 compared to 10/10/04 – 16/12/04