



From Discount Marketplace to Daily Destination: How Overstock.com Established Affinity among eCommerce Shoppers and Proved ROI of Content Marketing

Setting the Scene

Overstock.com is not the only eCommerce site offering discount-hungry consumers competitive prices on everything from music to coffee tables to clothing. Building loyalty with this audience takes more than search-optimized product pages—it requires a brand experience that stands out among e-Retailers and focuses on the needs of the audience. At the time, O.info, the brand's off-site content destination, was hosted on a Wiki platform. This allowed for quick content creation by multiple users but did not enable Overstock.com to tell a distinct and compelling brand story. The marketing team recognized that in order to build relationships with customers, it needed to change its approach to content.

For Judd Bagley, director of communications, directing traffic to the brand from search was not enough. “The key to success is making sure that people come back regularly,” he said.

To become a more recognizable and coveted brand, and build loyalty among a discount-savvy customer base, it needed to help and inspire customers on a daily basis. To do this, Overstock.com turned to Skyword.

Breaking Through

The Skyword team led Overstock.com through a process that empowered the brand to understand its audience on a deeper level and position itself as a top lifestyle brand.

- 1. Understand the Audience:** Through research, social listening, and conversations with the Overstock.com marketing team, Skyword identified three high-opportunity audience segments that the content strategy would serve: trendy moms, young female professionals, and retired baby boomers. The team looked beyond purchase habits and considered the desires, fears, and life stages of each persona. By thinking of the audience in a holistic way, Overstock.com could craft relatable, relevant stories that would motivate customers to return.
- 2. Optimize the Content Experience:** Skyword worked with Overstock.com to shape and manage the different components of its content marketing initiative:
 - a. Developing Stories that Matter:** The Skyword team identified the topics that met the needs of its identified



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audience and related to the brand's product offerings such as art, electronics, entertainment, fashion, health, and travel. Then, it created story concepts that adapted those topics for each audience. For the young female professional, topics included easy recipes to try after a long workday, as well as casual-chic outfit combinations. For the trendy mom, the brand would publish exercise routines to do at home, in between client meetings and soccer practice drop-offs. For the baby boomers, it created stories such as the top spots to retire abroad. Topics would evolve over time and touch upon the challenges and opportunities relevant to each life stage.

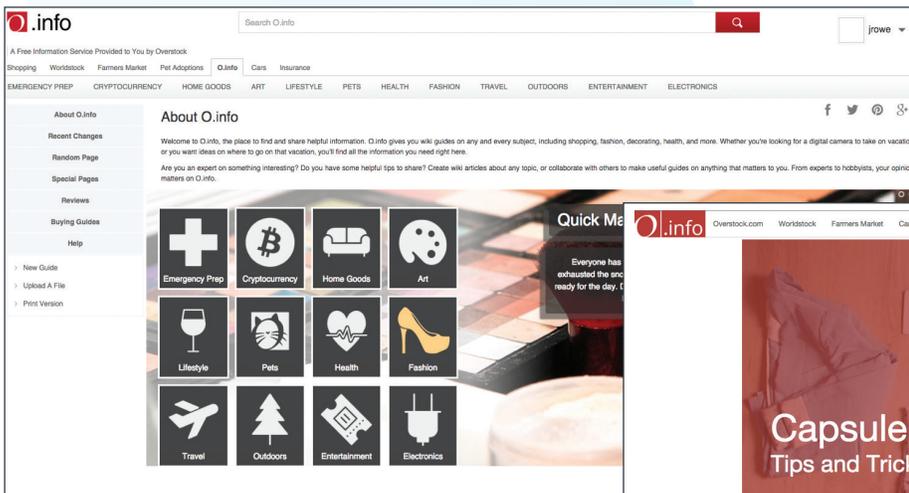
- b. Ensuring the Visual Experience Matches:** In order for the stories to reach full potential, the Web destination needed to have a top-notch user experience. Overstock prioritized a redesigned site experience to launch just six months after initially engaging with Skyword. The new O.info features compelling images, a welcoming color palette, and navigation tools that draw people in and invite them to stay. Previously, O.info's content calendar had little organization, and the front-end homepage could not host multimedia content formats like video, which is crucial for engaging modern Web users.
- c. Forming the Team and Process to Make it Happen:** With massive amounts of content published online every day, it is difficult to develop stories that cut through

the clutter. Skyword helped Overstock.com recruit and onboard writers who knew how to capture interest and ensured that each story aligned with the brand truth. Overstock.com also used the Skyword Platform to manage key aspects of the production process such as pitching ideas, editing and revising content, gaining approval from stakeholders, and checking for grammar and search optimization. Skyword customized the workflow and made sure that the team always followed through on important steps and remained on the same page.

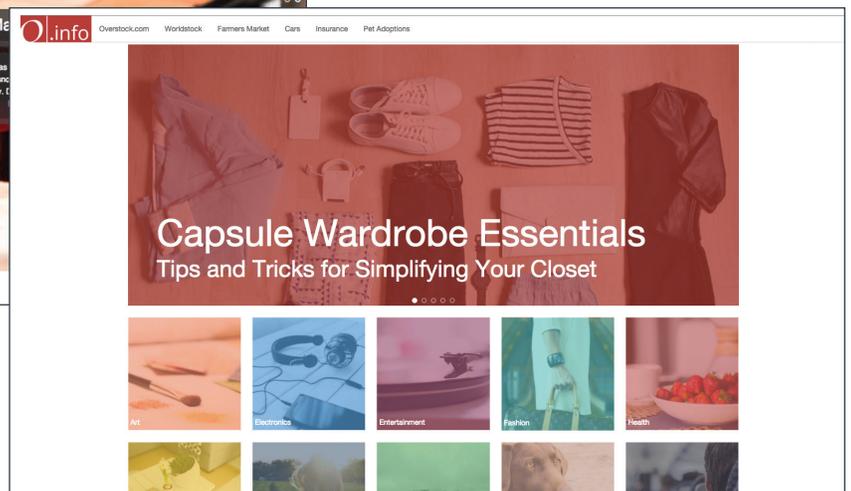
- 3. Determine Content Marketing ROI:** In order to report on the value of O.info, Overstock.com needed a way to track audience behavior. The brand's advanced analytics allowed the team to see which story individuals found first and assess the path they took in making a final purchase.

Connections Made

Since Overstock.com relaunched O.info, Judd Bagley, director of communications at Overstock.com, confirmed that the new approach to brand storytelling has paid for itself. As of December 2015, approximately 70 percent of site visitors move from the digital publication to the retail site, and between 5 and 6 percent of those visitors convert within the next 30 days.



O.info before



O.info after