Site Search, Navigation, Recommendations, Merchandising, SEO & Mobile Solutions for

The E-commerce Baby Boom

Create an exceptional online shopping experience for parents of babies and toddlers

SLI SYSTEMS
E-COMMERCE ACCELERATED

What once was considered a niche market is now a booming billion-dollar industry. Savvy parents are ready to spend a pretty penny to give their bundles of joy the best start in life. Despite declining birth rates in many countries, the global baby care market is growing at a CAGR of 7% and is expected to reach $66.8 billion by 2017, according to Transparency Research (2014).

You don't have to have a dedicated site for baby products to win these valuable customers. Many health and pharmacy retailers are catering more to the "parent and baby" demographic. Even lifestyle and outdoor retailers are adding infant and toddler items to their product offerings.

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Grow Your Online Sales with Learning Search™

Reports from retail industry monitors IBISWorld and Euromonitor show that total U.S. spending on baby products, including toys, grooming, formula and durable goods like cribs, was at least $23 billion in 2013. But EMEA actually leads the global market for baby and toddler spending, followed by Asia-Pacific, with Latin America expected to grow the fastest (Transparency Research).

Make it easy for parents to find what they need online

For the industry, e-commerce in particular is the gift that keeps on giving. Sleep-deprived new parents increasingly stock up online, making the online baby-products business one of the most successful segments in the retail landscape (IBISWorld). Since 2008, online sales of everything from baby clothes and furniture to strollers, toys and diapers has grown at an annual rate of 14.5% to $5.6 billion in 2013. Increased options for same-day and next-day shipping or store pickup have made online shopping a valuable resource for parents buying "need it now" items.

Here are 14 ways that any online retailer with baby or toddler products can gain a greater share of parents' and grand-parents' spending.

Make Room for Baby

The growing market of baby products is not limited to dedicated baby stores. If you already offer baby items, showcase them on your site with a dedicated category for infants and toddlers.

Focus on Mobile

Browsing the Internet with both hands free is considered a luxury for new parents. Swaying back and forth with a tiny infant in arms and a smartphone in hand is a much more common scene. Consider your site new-parent ready if the desperately sleep deprived can find what they are looking for while only using their thumbs. You'll want to enhance the real estate of smaller screens while delivering relevant results with speed.

Showcase baby items with a dedicated category for infants and toddlers
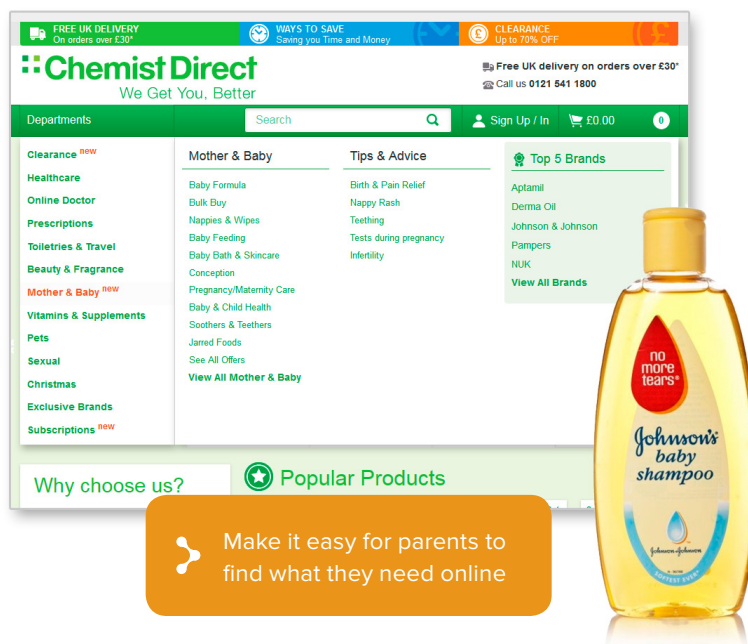
In addition, think about how best to streamline the purchase process for mobile shoppers. The fewer clicks, the better. Make sure shoppers have the option to save payment and shipping information so they only have to enter it once.
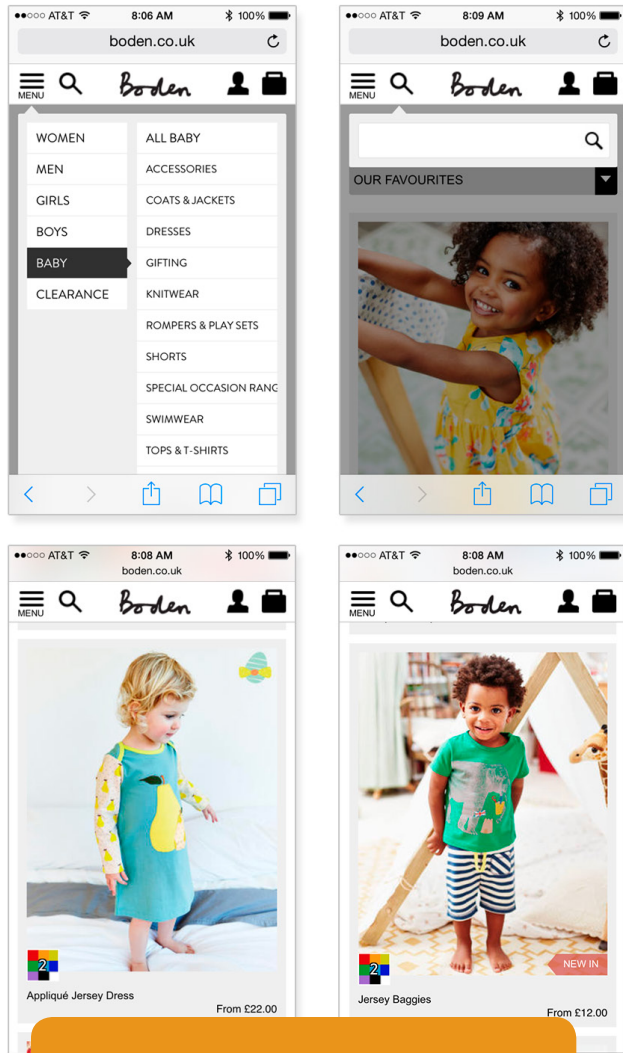
> Make the most of mobile's small screens with easy-to-use navigation and search

In line with industry best practices, SLI Mobile™ features prominent search box placement, mobile navigation, easy-to-use buttons and succinct product information like name, description, price and thumbnail image.

Make the Experience Highly Personal

A few months make a world of difference when it comes to what a baby needs and what parents want to buy. For example, moms and dads of newborns are searching for the perfect swaddle while parents of 6-month-olds are introducing solid foods and encouraging their babies to sit on their own.

When parents sign up to receive emails, gather the dates of birth, sex and names of their children. Tailor email campaigns and curate landing pages with products that match the baby's age and each exciting developmental stage. In other words, send emails specific to celebrating a baby's first birthday when the child turns 1, but avoid cluttering up your customers' inboxes with irrelevant messages about newborns when their baby is already a toddler.

Your clickthrough rate on emails will be higher when parents know you are giving them valuable information specific to their kids. Also, keep in mind that parents will open a majority of those emails on a smartphone or tablet, so make sure both the email and the landing pages are tailored for the mobile experience.

Be the Go-To Expert

New parents shop for more than products. They look for advice they can trust. Become the go-to expert by incorporating educational content, parent-to-parent reviews, videos, buying guides and registry lists. Customer reviews are especially important since new parents value the experience of other parents.


> Incorporate educational content to be the go-to expert for new parents

Give Relevant Recommendations

Parents trust other parents. Providing relevant recommendations, such as "Customers who bought this item also bought" and "Customers who viewed this item also viewed," lets shoppers explore products they may have otherwise missed. Also, adding "recently viewed" can be a great strategy for reminding shoppers where they left off.

SLI Learning Recommendations™ displays highly relevant product recommendations in different areas of your site. These contextually relevant recommendations, based on SLI learning technology, provide valuable cross-sell and up-sell opportunities that boost your results from each page.
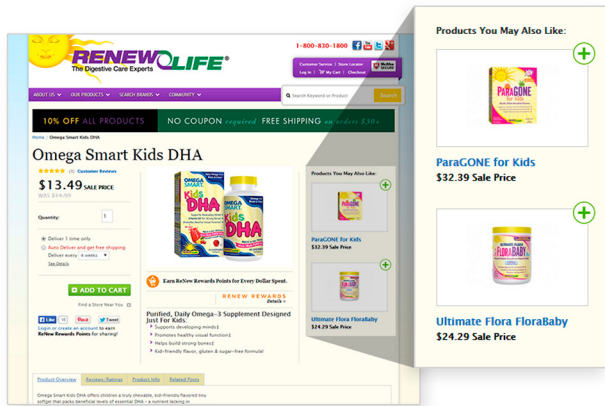

> Recommend relevant products based on search terms

Is it a Binky, Paci, Dummy, Soother or Comforter?

Does your site speak Baby? The pacifier alone has more than 100 pet names. SLI Learning Search™ allows you to account for synonyms and misspellings and helps you identify the terms your customers use when searching. Learning your customers' language means they will more likely find the products they had in mind. Alternatively, ignoring synonyms, misspellings and popular pet names could lead to search queries ending in a "no results" page by mistake.

Show Options Right Away

Bouncers, jumpers, walkers, rockers – they all sound the same to a newbie parent. But powerful features like SLI Rich Auto Complete™ can let shoppers know they are on the right path by automatically showing search terms and product suggestions as soon as they start typing letters into the search box. This will help shoppers save time and keep them on your site longer.
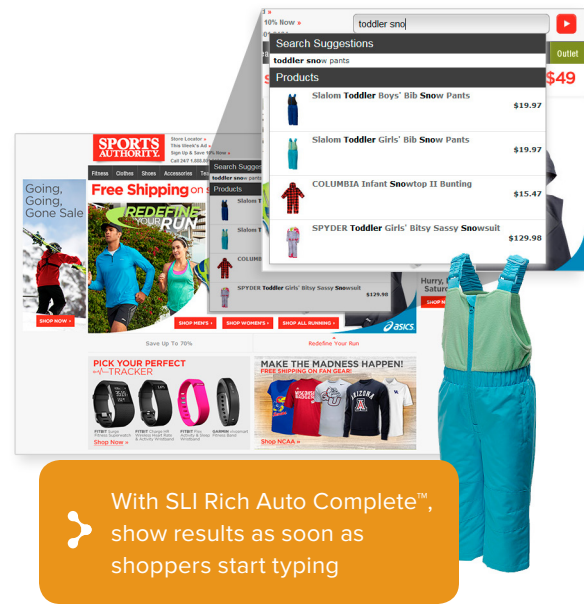
> With SLI Rich Auto Complete™, show results as soon as shoppers start typing

Categories and Faceted Search

Can new parents browse your site the same way they would your store? Offering clear categories, such as "car seats," "strollers," "bath," "feeding," "diapering" and "nursery," helps shoppers navigate to the right department. Once there, they should find options for drilling down their search with relevant facets. For example, customers shopping for strollers might want to search by type (umbrella, jogging, double, full size, travel system), brand, color, weight and price.

SLI Learning Navigation™ uses SLI learning technology to list products in order of popularity under relevant sections. It is an effective way to display online product catalogs and other content.

In addition, adding a compare feature can provide shoppers with the information they need to decide on a purchase.

Multiple Views

Let parents "feel" products before purchasing – show multiple images and an option to mouse-over for a close-up view. Sizing photos for mobile keeps shoppers from abandoning their search due to slow load times.
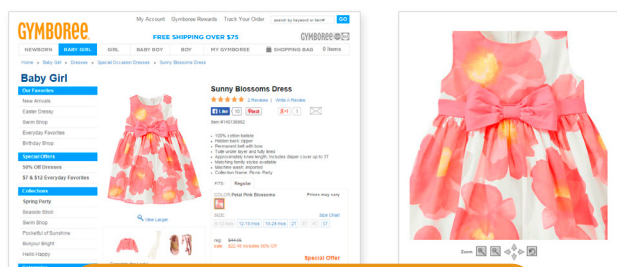
> Use Quick View windows to let parents "feel" products online

Be Easy to Find

Leverage your customers' search terms to improve your site's SEO. SLI Site Champion™ creates custom landing pages based on keywords that your site search visitors use. These user-generated pages are indexed and ranked by Internet search engines such as Google, Bing and Yahoo!, increasing page ranks and enhancing SEO efforts so that more of your products are found.

Show More Options

When visitors enter your site through a product page from an Internet search, show them more options in case the first item clicked on was not what a shopper had in mind. SLI Dynamic Product Banners™ reduces bounce rates by automatically generating banners featuring related products.

In-Store or Curbside Pick Up

Out of diapers and wipes? Need a humidifier for baby's first cold? Sometimes even overnight delivery isn't fast enough. If you are a retailer with brick-and-mortar locations, consider allowing customers to complete their purchases online and pick up products the same day at the store. Or even better, deliver their orders curbside to their cars. This will save parents time and keep them from having to wake a sleeping baby.

Cater to Moms

Babies aren't the only ones who need special care. Retailers can gain brand loyalty before the little one even arrives by helping moms-to-be navigate fertility issues, morning sickness, stretch marks and post-partum preparation. These categories are often labeled "conception," "pregnancy" and "maternity."
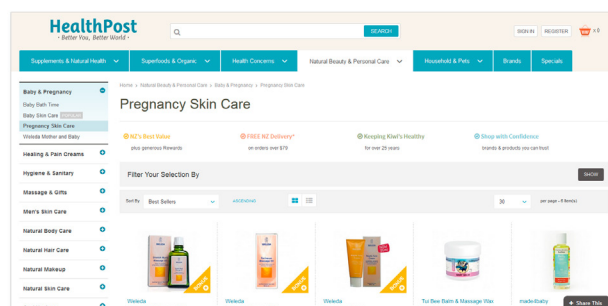
> Gain brand loyalty by catering to moms

Easy Returns

Make returns easy for parents by keeping track of items that were bought for them, even if they weren't on their baby registry. Parents will appreciate not having to track down where an item was purchased in order to exchange it for something else.

Deliver a Standout Shopping Experience

As you can see, there are many ways to win over parents and grandparents shopping for baby and toddler items. Whether your customers want the perfect pacifier, expert advice or a better mobile shopping experience, the e-commerce solutions mentioned above will build brand loyalty and ensure your site stands out from the rest. Contact SLI Systems to learn more about learning-based search, navigation, recommendations, merchandising, mobile and SEO solutions that contribute to the success of top baby sites around the world.

About SLI Systems

SLI Systems enables the world's leading e-commerce retailers to increase sales by connecting shoppers with the products they are most likely to buy. With proven search technology that learns from the activity of real site visitors, SLI delivers SaaS-based site search, navigation, merchandising, mobile, recommendations and SEO solutions that arm retailers with the tools they need for rapid growth.

To learn more visit **sli-systems.com**, **sli-systems.com.au** or **sli-systems.co.uk**.