



Q4 2009 Bug Battle Report:

Battle of the E-Tailers

Bug Battle Basics

The uTest Bug Battle is a quarterly software testing competition where testers from around the world compete to find bugs in today's most popular applications. We kicked things off with **Web Browsers** back in Q4 of 2008, then moved on to **Social Networking Sites**, **Twitter Applications** and **Search Engines** in the first three quarters of 2009.

For the Q409 competition, testers were challenged to find bugs in three of the most popular online retailers ('tis the season, after all). Testers were given one week to report the most interesting and severe bugs, and to rank these e-tailers based on usability, product search, price comparison and other feature sets - with nearly \$4,000 in prize (or shopping) money on the line.

The E-Tailers

The bigger, the better – that was our criteria for selecting e-tailers for this quarter's competition. It should, therefore, come as little surprise that these online retail giants made the final cut:



The Rules

Participating testers were challenged to search these sites for bugs, performing a combination of exploratory, functional and usability testing. When the competition ended, participants filled out a detailed survey in which they ranked each site based on a wide-range of criteria. After carefully reviewing each bug and survey response, uTest then awarded roughly \$4,000 in prize money based on the quality of bugs and feedback.

The Results

In all, nearly 600 testers from 20+ countries took part in the week-long competition in late November, reporting more than 500 bugs. Overall, Target had the most reported bugs, followed by Walmart and then Amazon. While Amazon ranked highest in almost every category (see top of next page for details), Walmart scored highest for its product search capabilities and price competitiveness. Target ranked lowest among the three e-tailers across all criteria.

When asked which is the most important criteria in selecting an e-tailer, there was no clear frontrunner; however, nearly 70% chose something other than "lowest prices". This was surprising given the current economic climate, but it indicates that **the e-tailer website matters a great deal when shoppers decide where to buy**. Only 1 in 3 chose the *lowest prices* option, while *ease of use* (20%), *search capabilities* (20%), *user-generated reviews/ratings* (16%), and *product comparison tools* (11%) received the remaining votes.

Overall, Amazon came out on top in this Bug Battle with the fewest bugs and the best usability feedback. Just as importantly, nearly 75% of all survey respondents said they trust Amazon *most* for their holiday shopping. Complete results are available at www.utest.com/bugbattle.



E-Tailer Top-Two Box Scores (those rating it as “excellent” or “good”):

	Amazon	Walmart	Target
Price Competitive	66%	65%	29%
Ease of Use	72%	56%	41%
Product Search Capability	71%	74%	46%
User Reviews & Ratings	76%	40%	34%
Product Comparison Tools	62%	50%	25%



Amazon.com

Amazon continues to lead the pack. Whenever “online retailer” is mentioned, an Amazon reference usually isn’t far behind – the site ranked #1 in nearly every category. Only 94 bugs were reported – a mere 19% of the bugs reported in this competition.

Among the bugs reported, 11% were showstoppers (bugs in need of immediate attention), 43% were classified as high priority, and 47% as either medium or low priority. As for the types of bugs found, 67% of the bugs reported were classified as functional, with technical (21%) and GUI (12%) bugs rounding out the totals.

Common positive feedback from the testing community:

- “Amazing range of features and functionality – great for the savvy net shopper or the newbie.”
- “Amazon’s UI is, by far, the best. The text is highly legible, the font style is reasonable and the alignment of top navigation links, list items and input controls are as close to errorless as they come. Great site!”

Common negative feedback from the testing community:

- “Not able to customize the view of results into any other format.”
- “I was surprised by the lack of filtering options on some lists of items.”

Featured Amazon Feedback:

“With Amazon, you have a complete overview of features in one page: price, availability, shipping, reviews, and related products. This makes life a lot easier when you are shopping on these sites. One more thing: Amazon is the only website in this Bug Battle which is user friendly to older people. Whenever a website is designed, it should be kept in mind that it will be used by everyone. A website should be simple, yet have everything in it, like Amazon.”



Walmart.com

Despite receiving high marks for search capabilities and pricing, Walmart.com finished a distant second in ease of use, reviews & ratings and product comparison tools. Testers found 150 bugs total. Of those, 54% were classified as functional, with 23% technical and 23% GUI. 50% were deemed as either high priority or as a “showstopper.”

Common positive feedback from the testing community:

- “Provides a clear indication of product availability in store or online.”
- “The best site in terms of product comparison, search and price.”



Common negative feedback from the testing community:

- “I found the changing ads on each page to be somewhat of a distraction. It seemed like I always needed to scroll down to get meaningful content.”
- “In my view, Walmart needs to modify their online strategy, especially in terms of look and feel. In many instances the product photos were not up to mark. The Flash pieces seemed rather unprofessional as well.”

Featured Walmart Feedback:

“Walmart.com is the best site of the three. Its UI is relatively simple and it has the best shopping cart, the best info for shipping options and delivery dates, and adequate search results. I’m not surprised. I feel this site is an example of how things can look when the company puts a lot of effort into creating a usable site.”

Target.com

True to its name, this mainstay of the online retail biz was indeed the *target* of our testing community – a total of 261 bugs were reported, more than half of the entire total. Of those, 56% were classified as functional, with 20% technical and 25% GUI. 49% were deemed as either high priority or as a “showstopper.” Common themes for Target.com were lack of usability and security, as numerous testers reported encountering GUI bugs in navigating the site and security-related vulnerabilities, leaving Target in last place for every category.

Common positive feedback from the testing community:

- “I was really impressed with the ‘shop by personality’ feature – very cool.”
- “The product search feature of Target was quite adaptable to end user preferences.”

Common negative feedback from the testing community:

- “From a user point of view, I would be likely to use Target.com for general shopping purposes, but I would skip the homepage as quickly as possible – too many GUI issues.”
- “There is way too much flash content on the site. It’s decent to have flash content on the home page, but not for every promotion in my opinion.”

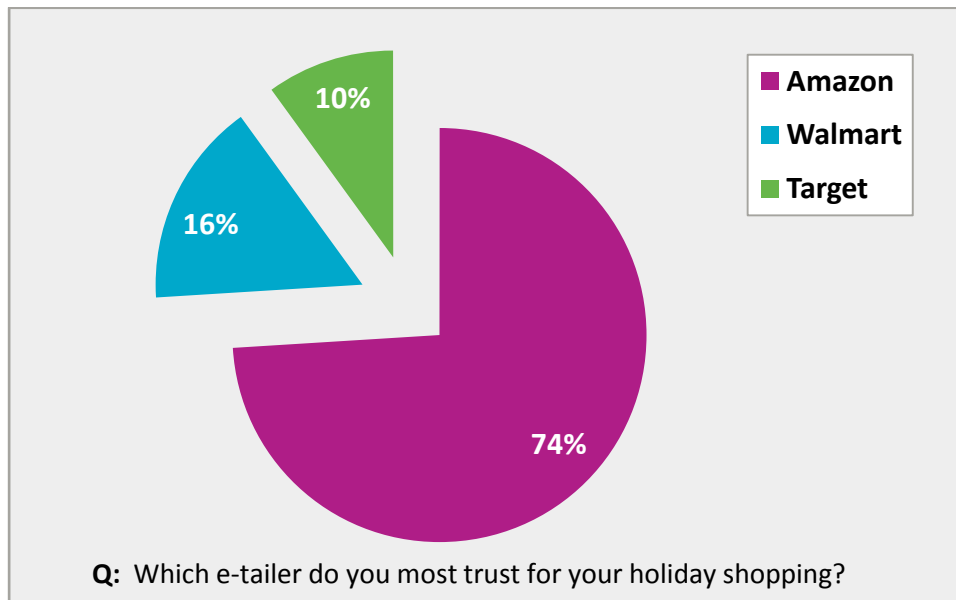


Featured Target Feedback:

“I love to shop at Target, but I was disappointed by their online purchase experience. While they have done a great job with custom product search capabilities and user reviews, I found their site to be needlessly confusing. In many cases prices were higher than the other two, and the check-out process was somewhat cumbersome.”



Which E-tailer Brand Is The Most Trusted?



About uTest

uTest is the world's largest marketplace for software testing services. The company provides real-world testing services through its community of 21,000+ professional testers from 159 countries around the world. More than 1,000 companies - from web startups to global software leaders - have signed up for the uTest marketplace to get their web, desktop and mobile applications tested.

More information can be found at www.utest.com or the company's Software Testing Blog at blog.utest.com.

