



WHITE PAPER



CROSS-CATEGORY MERCHANDISING

Comparing Merchandising Channels

June 13, 2008

Version 2.0



1 Overview

Cross-category merchandising allows you to compare the relative effectiveness of multiple product categories, as shown in the following questions.

1. Which product categories have the highest/lowest conversion?
2. Does a specific product sell better under one category versus another?

Cross-category merchandising is possible by enabling additional features on existing eVars.

1.1 Examples

Consider a retailer web site which is segmented into multiple product categories. The retailer is interested in knowing whether a specific Leather Jacket converts better under the Sales category than under the Jackets category.

Figure 1-A: Merchandising by Category

Details						
Products by Merchandising Category		Revenue	Orders	Conversion		
1.	<u>Leather Jacket</u>	\$60,019	1,935	3.22%		
1.	<u>Jackets</u>	\$21,410 35.7%	1,307 67.5%	6.10%		
2.	<u>Sports Wear</u>	\$19,083 31.8%	272 14.1%	1.51%		
3.	<u>Leather Goods</u>	\$18,006 30.0%	155 8.0%	0.81%		
4.	<u>Accessories</u>	\$1,204 2.0%	106 5.5%	8.80%		
5.	<u>Sales</u>	\$316 0.5%	60 3.1%	18.98%		

Additionally, the retailer has positioned promotions for the Leather Jacket in multiple premium locations throughout the site and would like to know which placement converts best.

Figure 1-B: Merchandising by Premium Location

Details						
Products by Premium Pages		Revenue	Orders	Conversion		
1.	<u>Leather Jacket</u>	\$32,410	862	2.66%		
1.	<u>Home Page</u>	\$11,315 34.9%	105 12.2%	1.25%		
2.	<u>Jackets Dept Page</u>	\$8,402 25.9%	14 1.6%	1.16%		
3.	<u>Jones Leather Page</u>	\$7,276 22.4%	201 23.3%	4.77%		
4.	<u>Jackets Email</u>	\$4,213 13.0%	121 14.0%	1.07%		
5.	<u>Winter Closeout Promo</u>	\$1,204 3.7%	421 48.8%	5.79%		

2 Implementation Steps

The following sections outline the steps to implement cross-category merchandising in SiteCatalyst.

2.1 Step 1: Enable Merchandising

Omniure Live Support can enable cross-category merchandising on any of your purchased Conversion Custom Insight variables (eVars).

2.2 Step 2: Configure Merchandising Settings

Once merchandising has been enabled by Omniure Live Support, configuration options, which are found in the SiteCatalyst Admin Console, will be available for your Conversion Custom Insight variables.

 **Warning: The Merchandising setting affects the syntax required by developers to collect merchandising data.**

Figure 2-A: Merchandising Settings

The following table outlines the merchandising configuration settings in SiteCatalyst.

Table 2-A: Merchandising Configuration Settings

Setting	Description
Name	Report name displayed in SiteCatalyst
Type	<u>Text String</u> – Any text label <u>Counter</u> – Used to count the number of times an action is performed by a user
Expire After	Determines how long the merchandising category should persist
Allocation	<u>First Seen</u> – Persist the first category in which a product is viewed. <u>Most Recent</u> – Persist the most recent category in which a product is viewed.
Merchandising	<u>Product Syntax</u> – Declare merchandising category within s.products. <u>Conversion Variable Syntax</u> – Declare merchandising category in the designated merchandising s.eVar.

Setting	Description
Merchandising Binding Event	<p>Indicates when a product should be tied to the current merchandising category. Multiple events may be selected by holding down Ctrl and clicking on multiple items in the list.</p> <p>NOTE: When "Product Syntax" is selected, you will not be able to choose an event (it is disabled, but not grayed out). You will be able to select an event when the "Conversion Variable Syntax" option is checked.</p>

2.3 Step 3: Set the Required JavaScript Merchandising Variables

Cross-category merchandising requires the populating of specific JavaScript variables throughout the conversion checkout process. There are two syntax options described below. The syntax option is dependent on the Merchandising setting above.

2.3.1 Product Syntax

When Product Syntax is enabled (as shown in Figure 2-A), the merchandising category is populated within the products variable. This allows a different merchandising category to be tied to each product within the products variable.



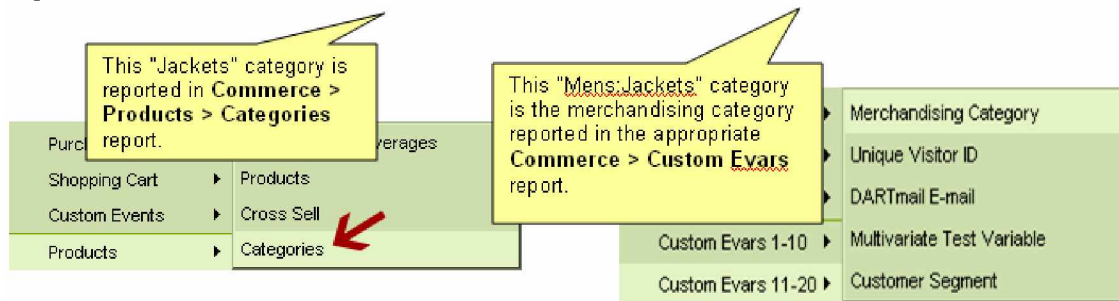
NOTE: When you list an eVar as part of the product variable string, the word "evar" must be all lowercase.

Syntax

```
s.events="prodView,event1"
s.products="category;product;;;evarN=merch_category|evarM=merch_category2"
```

Example 1

```
s.events="prodView,event1"
s.products="Jackets;Leather Jacket;;;evar1=Mens:Jackets"
```



In the example above, the product "Leather Jacket" is assigned to the merchandising category "Mens:Jackets." All subsequent success events (product adds, checkouts, purchases, etc.) for the product "Leather Jacket" will be credited to the merchandising category "Mens:Jackets."



NOTE: The semicolons are required as space holders. The full products variable syntax is shown below.

```
s.products=category;product;qty;price;event_inc;merch_category
```

Example 2

```
s.events="prodView,event1"
s.products="Jackets;Leather Jacket;;;evar1=Mens:Jackets|evar2=mens"
```

In this example, two eVars are separated by a pipe. This configuration is used to merchandise one product to multiple categories. Additional pipe-delimited eVars can be added.

2.3.2 Conversion Variable Syntax

The Conversion Variable Syntax should be used when you are not able to identify the merchandising value in the product string. This typically means that your page has no context of the merchandising channel or finding method. In these cases you should set the merchandising variable before you arrive at the product page. The persistent nature of eVars and the Conversion Variable Syntax provide this alternative for tracking.

The binding configuration setting is the key to knowing when the merchandising category will be tied to the product. For example, if only prodView is specified as a binding event the merchandising category will only be tied to the current product list at the time the event happens. It will take the current value of the eVar (or virtual value) and tie the two together. If non-binding event is triggered for the same product counts the event for both the product and the merchandising category and it will not allow the merchandising value to be updated. Only binding events can update a merchandising category that has already been assigned to a product.

NOTE: Most retail sites configure prodView (Product Views) and scAdd (Cart Additions) for binding events when using the Conversion Variable Syntax.



Warning: Due to the persistent nature of eVars, the merchandising category set on one page will persist and potentially bind to subsequent products a user views during their visit. This may result in products assigned to incorrect merchandising categories.

Syntax

```
s.events="prodView,event1"  
s.products="category;product"  
s.eVar1="merchandising_category"
```

Example

```
s.events="prodView,event1"  
s.products="Jackets;Leather Jacket"  
s.eVar1="Mens:Jackets"
```

In the example above, the product "Leather Jacket" is assigned to the merchandising category "Mens:Jackets". All subsequent success events (product adds, checkouts, purchases, etc.) for the product "Leather Jacket" will be credited to the merchandising category "Mens:Jackets".

Additionally, the merchandising category "Mens:Jackets" will persist until it expires (based on the eVar's "Expire After" setting described above). The merchandising category "Mens:Jackets" will tie to all subsequent products for the user until one of the following conditions is met:

1. eVar expires (based on the "Expire After" setting)
2. The merchandising category is overwritten with a new category.

3 Frequently Asked Questions

When setting a prodView event does the products variable need to include the quantity and price fields?

Product Syntax – No. However, all semi-colons are required as place holders (see syntax above).

Conversion Variable Syntax – No. Semi-colon place holders are not required.

Is there an additional cost for merchandising?

Merchandising can be enabled for any conversion variable at no additional cost. Additional cost may apply for changing variable expiration ("Expire After" setting). Please consult with Omniture Live Support for details.

Is there a limit to the number of merchandising variables that can be enabled?

The limit is based on the number of conversion variables in your service agreement. A maximum of 50 conversion variables are available.

What is the "event_inc" field in the s_products syntax?

The event_inc stands for event incrementors and is not required for merchandising. For more information on event incrementors, please review the SiteCatalyst Knowledge Base.

Why isn't the "Product Views" event available in the merchandising evar report?

The "Product Views" event is only applied to products. You may see Product Views by breaking down the Products report by the merchandising category report.



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