



University of Wisconsin-Madison

***UW E-Business Consortium***

*Helping Industry Gain Competitive Advantage Through E-Commerce and E-Business™*

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Project Report

**Strategy for Enhancing Grainger's  
Online Customer Service Offerings**

**Project Sponsor  
Grainger**

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**Spring 2005**

## **Acknowledgements**

Our team would like to thank the following people for their support on this project:

*Project Manager:*

- *Robyn Miller – Contact Center Manager*

*Other members of the Project Team:*

- Jody Yeganeh – Director, ePublishing
- Lisa Richberg – NSC Project Consultant
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- Raj Veeramani – Professor
- Shawn Helwig – UW E-Business Consultant
- Christina Paschen – UW E-Business Coordinator

Thank you for all of your help.

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## Executive Summary

The main goal of this project was to assist Grainger with improving its online customer service by performing an analysis of how Grainger's online customer service offerings compare to those of competitor's offerings.

The project consisted of three components. First, we performed a competitive analysis of Grainger's customer service offerings compared to those of direct competitors. Second, we enacted multiple customer services scenarios through various customer service channels and compiled best practices from each scenario. Finally, we conducted interviews of University of Wisconsin E-Business Consortium (UWEBC) members to gain insight into their experiences with Live Chat and Self-Learning FAQ technologies.

Based on our analysis, we formulated recommendations into four major categories: Registration, Help/Customer Service Location, Quality of Order Help/Information, and Help Content. The main recommendations per section are listed below:

### Registration

- Prominent and clearly worded link for registration
- Include parameters or guidelines for fields the customer is required to fill in
- Show directions and information about ordering on completion of registration

### Help/Customer Service Location

- Place help links/sources at appropriate locations
- FAQ's to specific topic "pop-up" according to page being browsed
- Product support form on product description page
- "Ask an expert" help option for technical support on product description page

### Quality of Order Help/Information

- Link to carrier on Website homepage to track orders
- Direct links for order status on homepage
- Order history should reflect canceled and returned orders for all channels

### Help Content

- Tutorial of site or site online ordering guide
- Self-Learning FAQs with general search function for keywords
- Provide details on policy for modifications and cancellation of orders
- Provide thorough return instructions on Website

We hope that by implementing these recommendations, Grainger will further enhance its online customer service, and thereby encourage customers to utilize online channels as the primary source for customer service instead of email and telephone communication.

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