



solo)wave
design

Company Profile
Outdoor living

Bazaarvoice Solutions
Bazaarvoice Conversations
Bazaarvoice Connections
Bazaarvoice Curations

Client Since
2014

About Solowave Design
Solowave Design is an innovative leader in the design and manufacturing of residential outdoor-living products. Under the Big Backyard, Cedar Summit Premium Play Sets and Yardistry brand names, Solowave delivers exceptional play and leisure structure options. Its products are sold to consumers through selected distributors in a convenient ready-to-assemble format.

Bazaarvoice Curations helps Solowave illustrate the joy of playing

It's a perpetual challenge for small, entrepreneurial companies everywhere: How do you make a big impact in the marketplace when you don't have big-company marketing resources? Maker of outdoor playsets Solowave found their answer in letting the customers spread the word – and not just in words, but also in compelling images.

The maker of Big Backyard and Cedar Summit outdoor playsets relies on Bazaarvoice Curations to share customers' enthusiasm about its products, especially through thousands of photos and videos of people enjoying them.

"People love to show how their families enjoy our playsets, especially how they use them to encourage their children to engage in physical activity and imaginative play," says Heather Stables, Director of Customer Experience, Solowave Design. "Bazaarvoice Curations makes it easy to share consumer content on social media, in retailer promotions and in other ways that expose our products to a wide audience of potential customers."

Solowave's customer advocates are now generating creative copy, images and video on the company's behalf – sparing the company the need for a stable of copywriters, photographers, and designers and providing more credible, engaging content in the process.

Using consumer-generated content to influence first-time purchases

Stables points out that consumer-generated content (CGC) is invaluable in marketing Solowave Design playsets because prospective customers give so much thought and care to this type of purchase.

"Buying a playset is likely to be a one-time purchase that will last a family a lifetime," Stables points out. "If you're considering this type of product, you're going to spend a lot more time doing research to decide what the best choice will be than you would for a pair of jeans or overalls."

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Share the Fun! #cedarsummitplay



According to Stables, a big part of that research includes learning about other families' experiences with products. That's why it's so important to show shoppers consumer reviews that include images of real children playing and having fun.

The brands have collected more than 2,000 pieces of curated content, which has yielded more than 200,000 interactions with that content (visitors scrolling through the images or clicking to view one in full-screen).

Making a Strong Case to Retailers

The use of consumer images has proven particularly effective in engaging people on retail sites. "We used to rely on traditional marketing images to promote sales of our products by retailers, but as soon as we switched to consumer content for that purpose, our numbers rose," says Stables.

The positive impact of consumer images has influenced retailers to use them whenever possible to promote Solowave products. "If a retailer is promoting one of our products and we can offer an image to illustrate consumers enjoying the product, the retailer is almost certainly going to use that image instead of just some standard marketing image," says Stables.

Customer photos are also more impactful on social media sites. A split-test showed that Facebook posts

using customer photos typically experience hundreds more interactions (Likes and Shares) than a similar post using a studio photo of a playset or outdoor structure.

Reviews collected on the brand sites are also syndicated across the Bazaarvoice network. This has resulted in more than 2,000 reviews on retail sites and an increase in sales in that channel.

CGC has also helped Solowave demonstrate the value of its products to retailers:

- In one case, after seeing questions about installation in customer reviews, Solowave improved its product installation instructions and created a helpful installation video. The company was then able to use these assets – as well as subsequent positive reviews – to successfully address retailer concerns about ease of product installation.
- In another case, Solowave's products were selling so well, one retailer was having trouble keeping up with demand – and threatened to find another manufacturer who could deliver more products more quickly. "We were able to use consumer reviews and images to demonstrate that people didn't mind waiting for our products, and that they were in fact often glad they waited," says Stables.

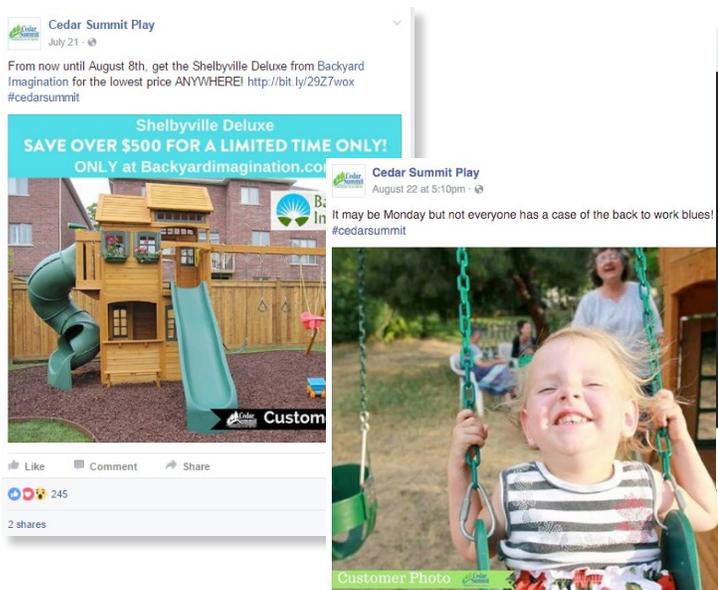
In addition to using Bazaarvoice Conversations and Bazaarvoice Curations as resources for CGC with retail partners, Solowave uses Bazaarvoice Connections to respond to consumer reviews on retail sites. This enables the company, who is in a better position to address consumer concerns, answer questions and respond to reviews directly on the retailer site.

Reviews also add an important component to Solowave's internal rewards program for customer service representatives (CSRs). Using Bazaarvoice Conversations, the company tracks when a customer encounter leads to a review and rewards the CSR with a gift card. CSRs are also encouraged to ask for reviews, which helps increase review volume and motivates CSRs to deliver the best possible service in anticipation of a positive review.

Shoring up internal resources with an expert team of curators

Solowave's visual content is curated by Bazaarvoice moderators before being published to its site. Reviewing images that come in, determining whether they're appropriate to share, and organizing how and where they're exposed: It's a big job, especially for a company whose size doesn't afford it the luxury of a dedicated marketing department to handle it all.

"For example, we have to be sure images don't show children playing in unsafe ways before we publish them," explains Stables. "We would never have time to undertake that kind of careful review without Bazaarvoice's expertise and deep engagement."



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“We incorporate all the user-generated content into everything we want to accomplish,” says Stables.

Sharing the joys of outdoor living

Beyond providing compelling images to retailers to use in their promotions, Solowave uses CGC to promote Big Backyard and Cedar Summit content in a variety of other ways.

“Our product videos are narrated by children, and they always end with the narration inviting people to see what our customers are saying,” says Stables.

Solowave also creates campaigns around CGC during special events to engage with customers and prospective customers.

“We did a full series for the Olympics that was very successful for us,” says Stables. “It featured ‘Future Olympians,’ such as a picture of a child on the monkey bars that was captioned ‘Future Gymnast,’ and an image of a child coming down a slide captioned ‘Future Bobsled Team Member.’”

“Our Olympics campaign is just another great example of Bazaarvoice Curations enabling us to use consumer content to be successful in social and other types of promotions – and compete with companies that have far greater resources to invest.”

Solution at a glance

Challenge

Overcome limited internal resources for creating marketing content.

Solution

Rely on happy customers to promote Solowave products, and use Bazaarvoice Curations to collect, manage and display consumer photos and other content.

Benefit

Give customers a way to share their experiences; provide useful content to consumers doing product research; and cultivate strong retailer relationships.

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