zen·agency

WooCommerce Case Study
United Chemical Technologies
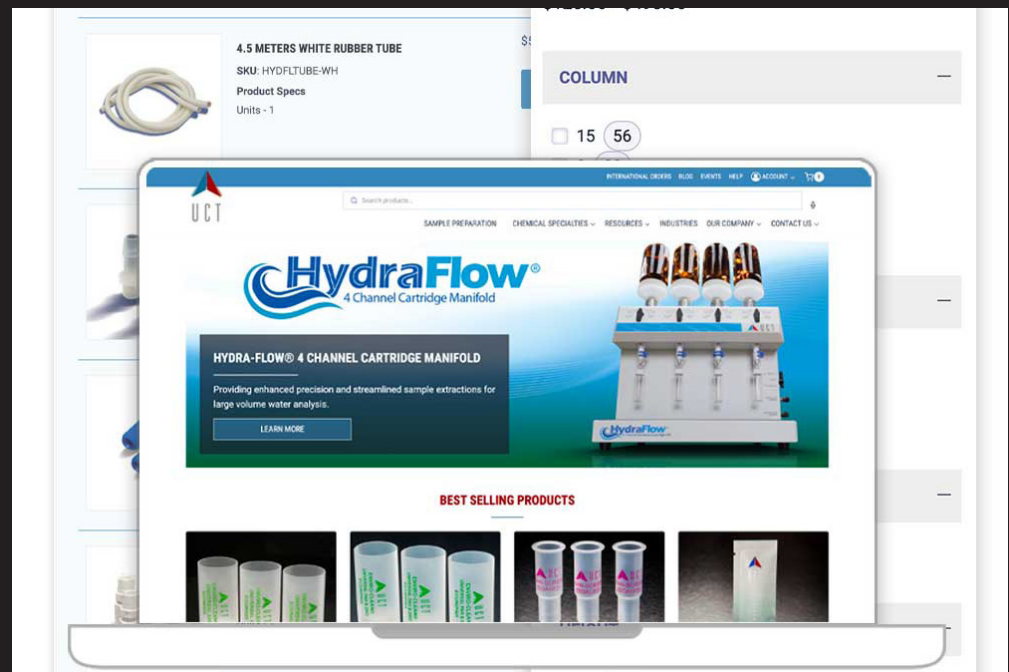
at a glance.

At a glance

United Chemical Technologies has become a leader in the specialty chemical market for organosilicon products through its service, pricing, and quality. They have thousands of highly technical products and serve a range of industries including but not limited to pharmaceuticals, cannabis, food, forensics, clinical, and environmental.

Industry

- E-commerce
- B to B
- Manufacturing
- Chemical

Our Role

- E-commerce UX Analysis & Assessment
- UI/UX Strategy & Design
- Creative Direction
- WooCommerce Website Development
- Conversion Rate Optimization

obstacles + objectives.

Obstacles + Objectives

Before working with Zen, United Chemical worked with a developer with less than optimal development practices. For instance....

• Plugins were modified that kept them from being updated.

• Functionality hard-coded into the theme frequently created bugs whenever WordPress, WooCommerce, or the 75 plugins used on the site were updated.

• There were multiple search tools used depending on the location search box, and each had wildly different search results, with none of them being very relevant.

These were all technical issues, but some serious design issues also needed to be addressed. For instance, United Chemical has a lot of products, which require a lot of nested categories and subcategories for them to be organized, but only simple dropdown menus.

The combined result was a site that was extremely hard to find products. Search results were irrelevant, so you had to click through several layers of sub-categories to get to products, all while dealing with bugs and slow load times.

The primary objective of this project was to alleviate these issues by:

• Creating a bug-free user experience

• Improving page speed

• Decrease the time needed to find relevant products

Page Speed Results

GTmetrix Grade ?

Grade ?	Performance ?	Structure ?
F	23%	73%

Web Vitals ?

Largest Contentful Paint ?	Total Blocking Time ?	Cumulative Layout Shift ?
4.4s	543ms	1.06

Top Issues
These audits are identified as the top issues impacting your performance

High-Med Impact	Reduce initial server response time	Root document took 1,820 ms	⌄
Medium Impact	Avoid enormous network payloads	Total size was 5,061 KiB	⌄
Medium Impact	Avoid an excessive DOM size	3,317 elements	⌄

Note:

Before the Zen Team worked their magic, the website scored a GTmetrix Grade F.

strategy + solution.

Overcoming Obstacles

Ultimately, it was clear to all parties that this site would need to be rebuilt with a custom theme and fewer plugins, but we needed a shorter-term solution to stop the bleeding.
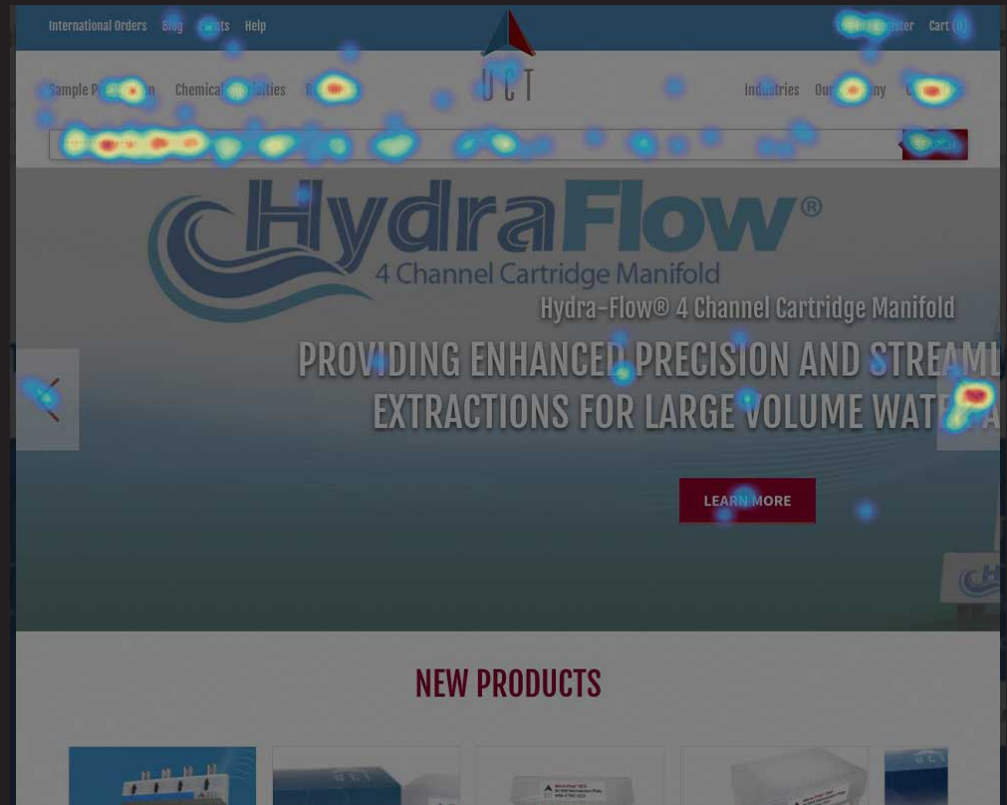
strategy + solution.

Data-driven Recommendations

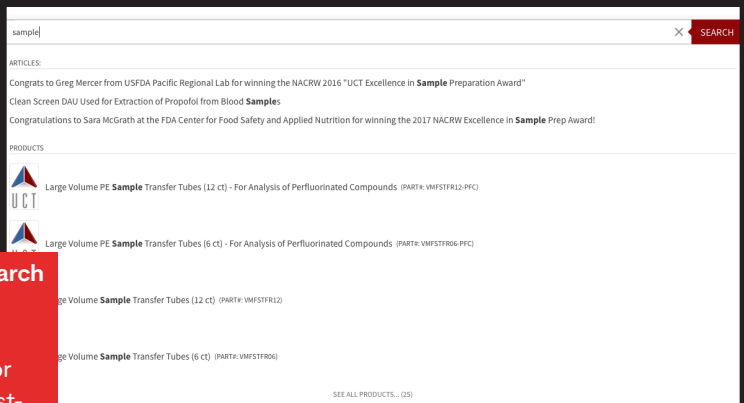The following recommendations were implemented to address the obstacles:

01 Fixed Site Errors
An initial debugging of the site to remove any errors causing a bad user experience or slow load times.

Opportunities

OPPORTUNITIES	ESTIMATED SAVINGS
1 Eliminate render-blocking resources	7.32 s
2 Efficiently encode images	6.75 s
3 Reduce initial server response time	2.3 s
4 Serve images in next-gen formats	12.45 s
5 Reduce unused CSS	0.9 s

02 More Powerful Web Hosting
Migration of the site onto Zen Agency's Managed WooCommerce hosting stack, fine-tuned for busy WooCommerce shops.

03 Implementation Of A New Search
New research by Baymard Institute shows that autocomplete features are now offered on 96% of major e-commerce sites. This means it's a must-have for any online business that can't afford to lose customers.

strategy + solution.

Data-driven Recommendations (cont.)

The following recommendations were implemented to address the obstacles:

04 **Filterable Category Table Layout**
Added a list formatted category page layout that displays filterable and sortable products by attribution.

05 **Mega Menu Implementation**
Added mega menus so users could get deeper into the site with fewer clicks.

meeting objectives.

Meeting Objectives

As this work was completed it was launched and then monitored through a combination of Hot Jar and Google Analytics. Takeaways from analytics, heat maps, and recordings of customers using the site as it was being updated and optimized led to significant results.

By providing a more relevant search with product suggestions, customers could get to the right products quickly. The mega menus allowed them to get to relevant categories with less page load. Once on those category pages, they could sort and filter the products to narrow them down to just the most relevant ones, and because they now had access to attribute data on the category page, they could make a buying decision right then and there; no need to go to the product page to add to cart.

Fewer pages to load, less time on site, but with a huge increase in the number of sessions leading to a placed order, and more products in that order – Everyone wins!

61%
Increased Conversion Rate

19%
Lower Session Duration

52%
Increased Revenue

23%
Decreased Bounce Rate

broadening horizons.

Broadening Horizons

Now that we have overcome some major hurdles with our short-term solution, we are looking to make even greater strides with a full rebuild coming in 2022. This new build will benefit from an even more improved search, powered by our custom Algolia implementation. Users will also be able to have access to more attribute data on the category page, and even add accessory items from a more condensed, more functional, and informative, optimized category page.

This effort will include a light and fast custom theme, with half the number of plugins used in the original build. As with the last project, we will provide ongoing monitoring and conversion rate optimization as these updates are rolled out.
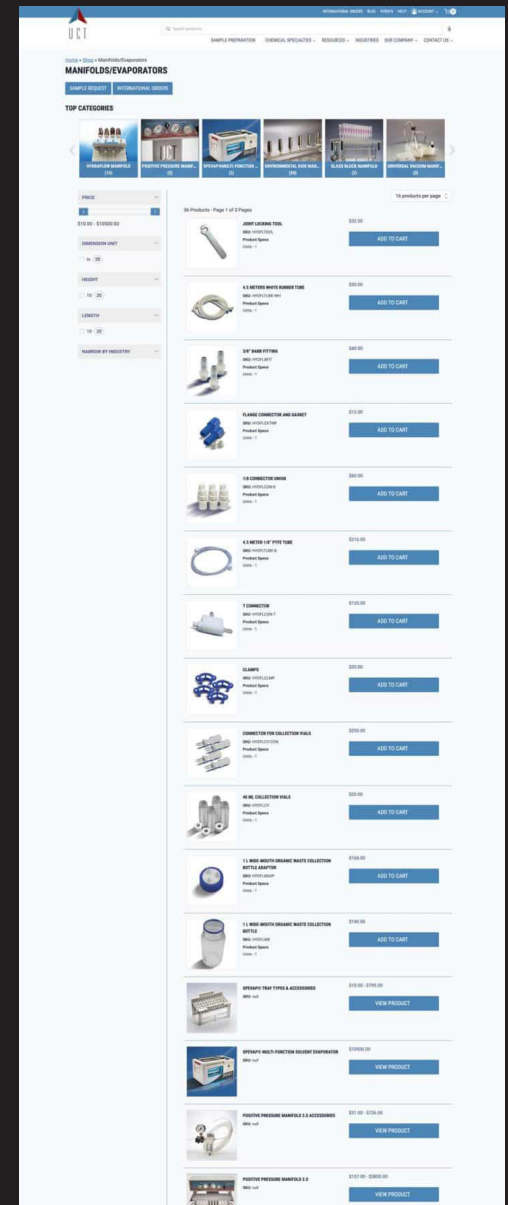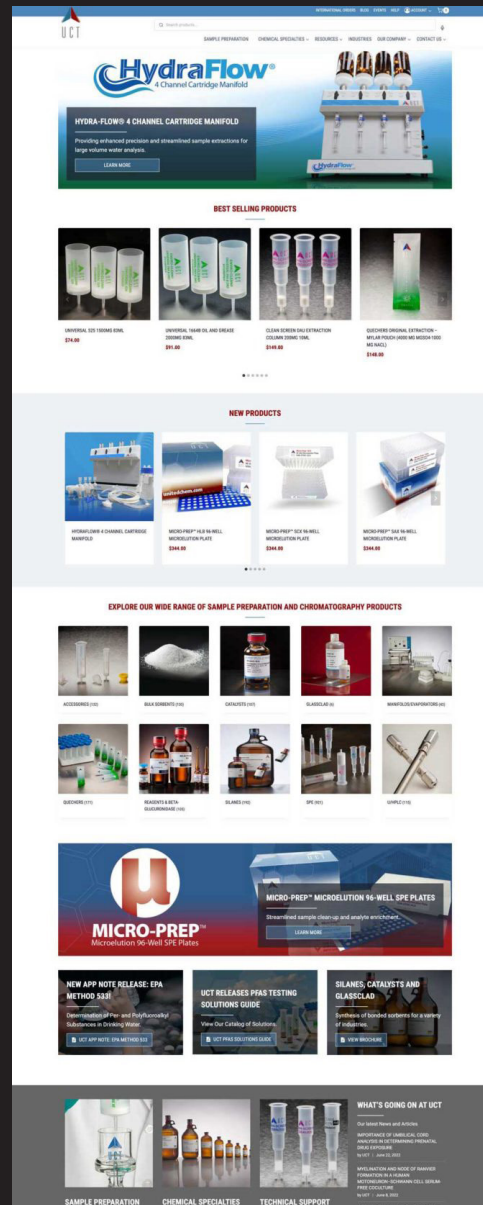
The website is super easy to use and I found what I was looking for. No improvements necessary.

— Anonymous Satisfied UCT Customer

you + zen.

Your project team.

All team members fulfilling the deliverables of your project have at least 10 years experience specifically in eCommerce, some with over 20 years dating back to the start of the eCommerce industry.

You

Account Manager
Your advocate within Zen. Responsible for ensuring your expectations are met, you are being properly supported, and your project progressing.

Project Manager
Your primary point of contact throughout the project, and provides constant coordination and communication to get your project to the finish line.

Designer
Using UX best practices, designs and revises each page included in the deliverables while adhering to the brand standards.

Front-end Developer
Translates the mockups created by the designer into a functional WordPress theme.

Back-end Developer
Using the mockups where necessary, and functional specifications, creates custom functionality and/or integrations with third party systems.

Site Administator
In charge of setting up WordPress, WooCommerce, and plugins, as well as testing, training, and support throughout the go live process.

communication.

teamwork.

High touch—
full transparency.

After our kickoff we will setup your project plan in Teamwork, a robust project management system. Included will be tasks, for both your team and ours, with both timelines, and milestones. You will be provided an account, and through communications in Teamwork, emails, and regularly scheduled calls throughout the project, you will know exactly where we are at, what we are working on, and what is needed from you in order to keep the project progressing.
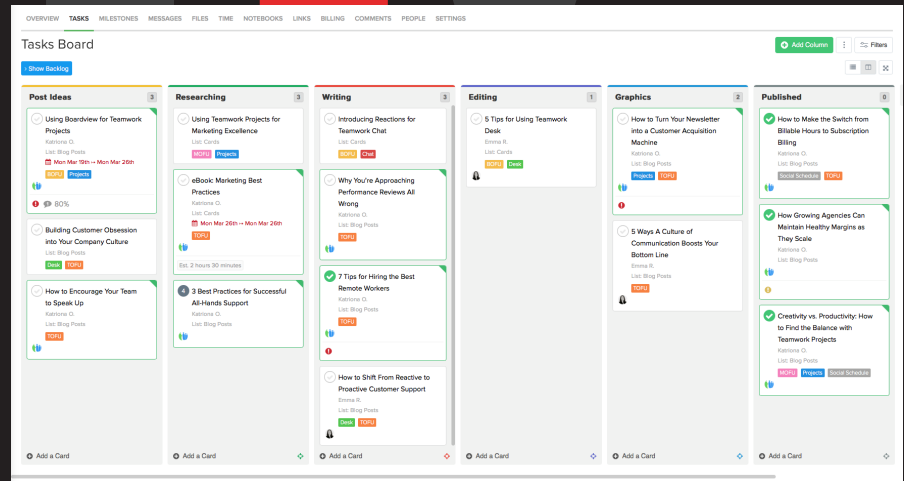
look + see.

Trusted by all these brands.

For nearly two decades we've helped brands, merchants, and service providers launch their first site, transition the site from other platforms, and improve their sites performance and capabilities through best in class WooCommerce development.

We eagerly look forward to working with your team, and helping you achieve the goals of your organization.

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Thank you.

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