## SALSIFY

# Data Report
# The Sales Impact of Optimized Product Content

As digital product content has become an increasingly critical part of consumer and business buying journeys, there has been a presumption that improved product content leads to higher sales. But there has never been reliable data to support that presumption.

To fill that gap, Salsify has run a slate of statistical analyses to quantify the sales growth realized by brand manufacturers that invest in robust and actively optimized product content. This included examining the actual sales impact of product content amongst Salsify customers. With modern brands selling hundreds or thousands of different products online, the research makes it clear that in order to lead a product category, brands must adopt an artificial-intelligence supported method to repeatedly manage and optimize product experiences in market.

A deep, broad examination of more than half a million Amazon search results demonstrated that product pages with richer content more frequently outrank their competitors with less

content. These more premium organic placements on a search page result in more purchases for those products.

Further driving this home, research amongst Salsify's brand manufacturer customers showed that products with better Amazon sales ranks and a higher sales share in their category had significantly more images on average than more poorly-performing products. These products were also substantially more likely to have increased image and bullet counts over the past year. Simply put, the data shows that an ongoing investment in content optimization drives a measurable competitive advantage and increased market share.

## A Note on Methodology

There are three separate methodologies employed within this report.

- **Methodology 1:** an aggregate analysis of Amazon search results page results and subsequent conversions
- **Methodology 2:** an aggregate analysis of Salsify customer performance on Amazon based on sales rank
- **Methodology 3:** case study analysis of individual Salsify customer performance on Amazon.

Each of these methodologies is outlined prior to its respective section.

# Chapter 1

*Amazon Search Result Analysis:*
**More content = higher search ranking and more conversions**
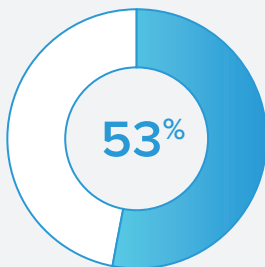
### Methodology

- **Scale:** Products on the first page of results across more than 500,000 Amazon searches
- **Measurement:** Search rank and subsequent clicks to a product page
- **Data:** Bullets, images, and review count on each product page

Members of the Salsify's analytics team analyzed the Amazon search results from more than 500,000 separate queries. Products listed next to each other on the first page of results were compared based on the number of bullets, images, and reviews.
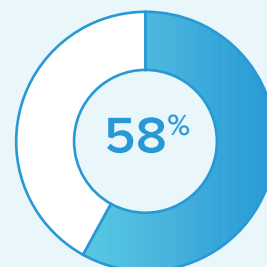
The result - the product listing with more content outranked and out-converted their closest competitor on a given search, with a product's review count and image count making the biggest difference.
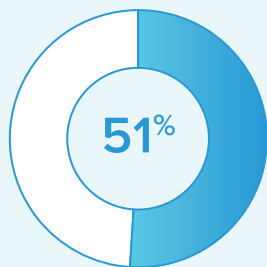
| 51% | 53% | 58% |
|-----|-----|-----|
| **51% of the time**, a listing with more bullets will convert at a higher rate and outrank its top competitor | **53% of the time**, a listing with more images will convert at a higher rate and outrank its top competitor | **58% of the time**, a listing with more reviews will convert at a higher rate and outrank its top competitor |

To summarize, more product content is what wins on Amazon. The cumulative effect of beating out a competitor on a key search term even just an additional 1-8% of the time has tremendous potential revenue attached to it.

Savvy competitors, including digitally native upstart brands, are making their product pages more robust every day to convert more buyers and subsequently move up in search results. Brands that don't take the same tactic inevitably will be left behind, with lost sales as a result. Additionally, as Amazon-style algorithms become integrated across more retailers, these practices become even more important to a business' overall health.

The conversion impact of product content is further driven home by a long-term analysis of Salsify customer performance.

# Chapter 2

*Amazon Sales Rank Analysis:*
**Ongoing content optimization = better sales rank and competitive advantage**

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## Methodology

- **Scale:** 60,000 Salsify customer ASINs across 78 brands
- **Measurement:** Amazon sales rank data from 2017 through 2018
- **Data:** Bullets and image count from 2017 through 2018
- **Comparison:** 3,000 customer ASINs with top 100,000 Amazon sales rank vs. All others

To support our analytics capabilities, Salsify has been capturing product page data associated with millions of ASINs since late 2016 – both of customers and non-customers. We focused our analysis specifically on ASINs associated with customers who have been with us since at least January 1, 2017. Additionally, to make sure we were focusing on the products that drive significant revenues, we segmented out products with average 2018 Amazon sales ranks within their category of 100,000 or better.

These top-performing ASINs drove competitive advantage by adhering to the content guidelines either suggested by Salsify Account Managers or performance improvement workflow items surfaced by Salsify analytics reports. Machine learning recommendations are surfaced by reporting within the Salsify Insights capability, and are focused on SEO ranking, product page performance, and brand compliance. Both the human- and machine-generated advice was similar: make product page content robust, and continually work to keep it that way as competitive situations and retailer requirements change.

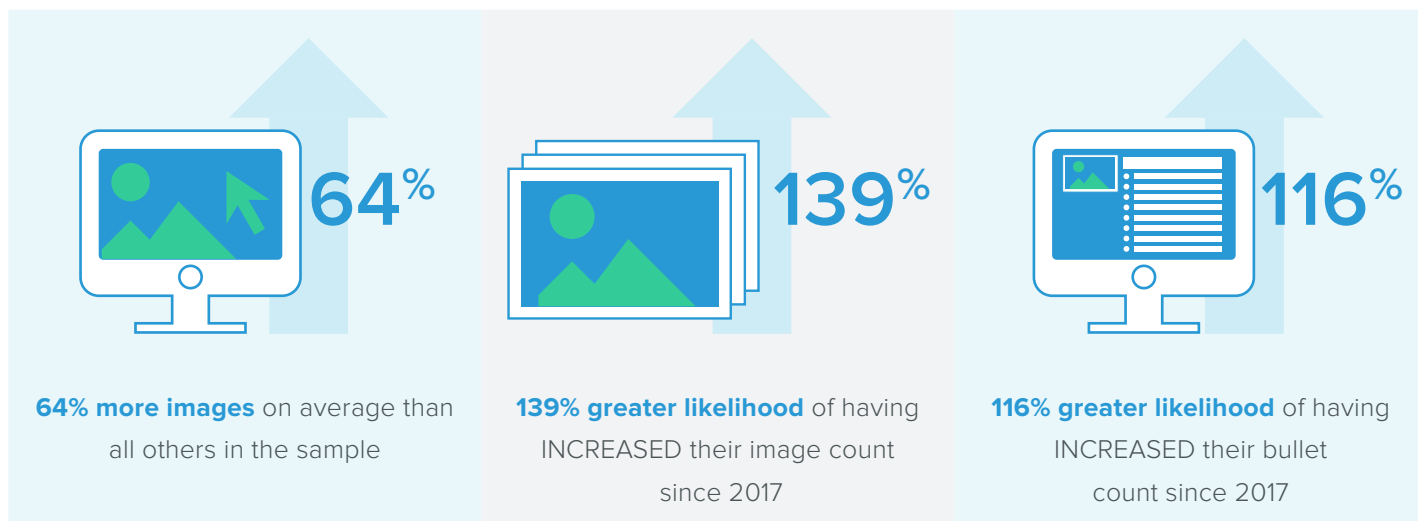## Customer ASINs in Top 100K in Amazon Sales Rank in 2018
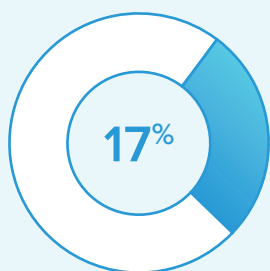


**17% of these ASINs** were new to the Top 100K in Amazon Sales Rank during 2018
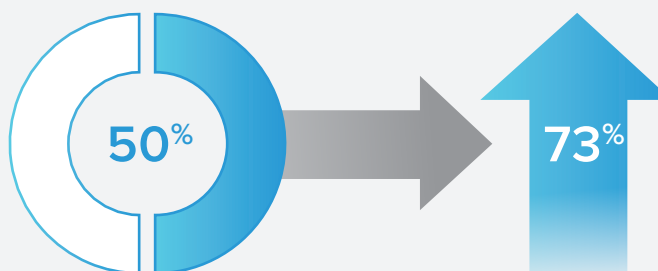
**50%** improved their average Amazon Sales Rank over 2017

**73% average sales** rank improvement achieved amongst these ASINs

## Customers Made their Top 100K ASINs Succeed by Keeping Product Content Robust

**64% more images** on average than all others in the sample

**139% greater likelihood** of having INCREASED their image count since 2017

**116% greater likelihood** of having INCREASED their bullet count since 2017

This analysis further emphasizes the important role of product content to drive sales on the digital shelf. Brands need to implement practices to constantly improve the content across the vast majority of their catalogs. Across entire portfolios, greater returns on every product are possible and measurable.

For brands selling hundreds or thousands of products, the idea of continually optimizing product content across an entire catalog can be overwhelming. Yet, with the help of artificial intelligence to actively highlight areas that need attention, these improvements can be prioritized for greatest impact and accomplished with current resources. Sales impact data from these efforts should provide the business case for dedicating more resources over time.

With artificial intelligence guiding teams to address new opportunities (e.g. new relevant keyword(s) with significant volume for their vertical) or alerting them to any issues (e.g. third-party seller updating their product page with off-brand content), the daily, tactical battles at the heart of continuous product content improvements can be much more easily won. On the following pages, we outline stories from Salsify customers who employ this approach.

# Chapter 3

## ShurTech

### Methodology

- **Scale:** 70 top-revenue products for ShurTech
- **Measurement:** Amazon sales rank data 4 months following Salsify Insights implementation
- **Data:** Bullets and images on each product page, and product content grades via Salsify's Product Content Grader

Shurtape Technologies, LLC (ShurTech), the industry-leading maker of brands like Duck® Tape and FrogTape® has used the Salsify Product Experience Management platform to help the team manage product information and content, and deliver that content to their direct-to-consumer site, retailer partners, and leverage it for sales enablement.

After developing a streamlined system for syndication, ShurTech wanted to take control of the next critical aspect of owning the digital shelf: continual optimization of published products across channels so that they could increase sales revenue.

In 2017 ShurTech added the Salsify Insights capability, which applies machine learning to data across the more than 30

million products in Salsify's SaaS database combined with deep retailer insights. Salsify Insights supplied the ShurTech team with actionable reports they used to improve their performance. These reports provide specific opportunities for improvement in SEO ranking, product page performance, and brand compliance. Salsify Insights quickly identified which of ShurTech's 700 products on Amazon were performing best. Insights also pinpointed the roughly 70 products that needed to be optimized.

To better demonstrate what content on those 70 products needed the most attention, Salsify's Product Content Grader gave each ASIN a content scorecard with scores ranging from A-F along various criteria that Insights data has proven impact discovery and search rank. From that analysis, optimization recommendations are generated. The ShurTech ecommerce team focused on taking the recommended steps to improve their target product pages from C, D, and F grades on the scorecard to A and B grades.

"Salsify Insights helped the ecommerce team encourage our departments to participate in updating content," Kelsey said. "We show the product marketers the Amazon content scorecard. Then, they would ask us how we can improve our ecommerce and when we can update it."

**Within four months of using Insights to address those products that needed extra attention, ShurTech's Amazon sales rank improved by an average of 15% across those same products. This aggregate sales rank improvement of those 70 products was driven by ShurTech improving the product page content to a substantial degree, as expressed via the content scorecard.**
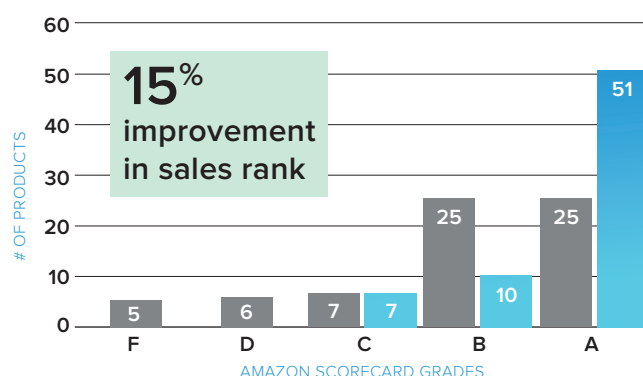


*Next up: find out how e-cloth improved sales*

# e-cloth

## Methodology

- **Scale:** 45 top-revenue products for e-cloth
- **Measurement:** Amazon sales rank data 3 months following Salsify Insights implementation
- **Data:** Bullets and images on each product page, and product content grades via Salsify's Product Content Grader
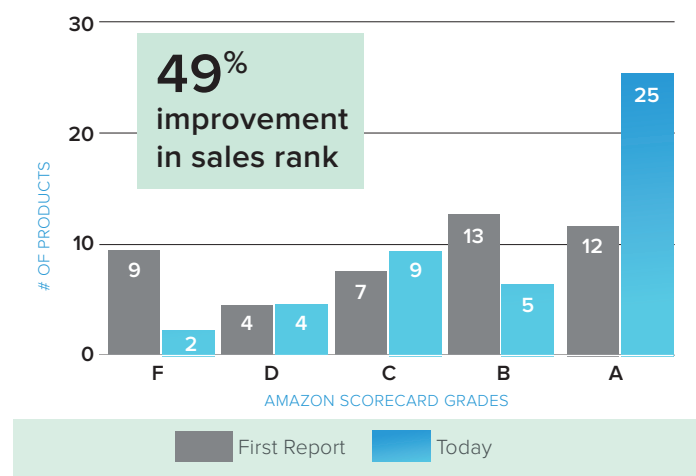
With more than 10X the fibers of traditional microfiber material, e-cloth enables chemical-free cleaning - a way to trap bacteria, water, dirt, or oils within the fibers itself using just water, and without the use of cleansers.

While the company can heavily detail its unique value proposition on its own site, selling on Amazon presented a challenge. The high quality manufacturing process means that e-cloth's products cost significantly more than traditional microfiber towels. The company is even competing with Amazon directly, with the retailer launching an Amazon Basics line of microfiber cleaning cloths.

To separate themselves from the pack on Amazon and make consumers understand the significant value of investing in an e-cloth product, the company needed to invest in content that drove these points home, across its large product catalog, and get that product content to all of its sales channels. The company's ecommerce team used Salsify with the Insights capability to improve their performance on Amazon.

e-cloth and its Salsify account management team identified 45 of its products on Amazon with an opportunity for product content improvement to drive sales growth. This substantial sales growth was driven by product content improvements, with the percentage of monitored e-cloth product pages with A or B grades rising from 56% to 67% over the same time period.



**49%** improvement in sales rank

| Amazon Scorecard Grades | First Report | Today |
|---|---|---|
| F | 9 | 2 |
| D | 4 | 4 |
| C | 7 | 9 |
| B | 13 | 5 |
| A | 12 | 25 |

Three months after starting to use Salsify Insights, the ecommerce team at e-cloth has closed critical product content gaps on Amazon, along with strengthening pages to significantly improve sales. Specifically, the Amazon sales rank across the 45 products improved by an average of 49%.

## Better Product Content = More Sales

More robust and more actively managed product content has a direct impact on growing sales and increasing market share. The array of analyses in this report make it clear how important it is for brands to make investments in digital product content, particularly with artificial-intelligence support to make management more scalable and efficient. These investments will not only bear fruit with shorter-term sales improvements, but will also better future-proof the organization for quickly and comprehensively addressing content challenges as the ecommerce landscape evolves over time.



## SALSIFY

**For an assessment of your brand's competitive landscape online, and what improvements you can make, schedule a guided demo with Salsify by visiting**
**https://www.salsify.com/schedule-demo**