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Project 7 Unified Summary: Competition

Sites Reviewed: [BrylaneHome.com](http://BrylaneHome.com), [PamperedChef.com](http://PamperedChef.com), [chefdepot.com](http://chefdepot.com), [CutleryandMore.com](http://CutleryandMore.com), [Cooking.com](http://Cooking.com), [Gourmet.org](http://Gourmet.org).

Though all the sites reviewed as competition for Le Gourmet Chef had slightly different target audiences, the audiences could be seen to overlap because they dealt with similar products and brands, thus it is important for the client to review such sites to see how they are attracting the consumer. In addition, the sites were found relatively easy using keywords similar to those found in the meta tags of Le Gourmet Chef.

Most of the sites provided shopping promotions through newsletters and shipping deals. They allowed the visitors to either request more information or view the information online. It should be noted that it would probably be most beneficial to give the visitor as much information online, because that is why they are visiting the website.

Design wise the sites stuck to small banners with subdued colors, and white background. They each had a search engine that was more or less effective if their navigation got confusing. The buttons and words links were informative to the viewer telling them what they were going to see. Some sites promoted their image better by making sure their design was consistent on each page to prevent viewer confusion.

While a few of the sites had similar concepts Le Gourmet Chef should note that easy navigation and consistency was the key to user friendliness. For example, most of the sites make sure to display their best deals first and their links most used by customers as another set of links for the user to use. Visitors that return often are likely to go to both what they believe are the best deals and what they are familiar with first.

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## Sites

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### **Sarah Sandusky**

LeGourmetChef.com

Competition Report

Search Engine: Google

Search Terms: gourmet cooking products, professional bakeware, kitchen gadget shopping

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Site: **BrylaneHome.com**

Company: RedcatsUSA

Basic Info: Brylane Home is a catalog/web-based shopping venture owned by RedcatsUSA, and is one of a number of sites in their shopping family. Similar to LeGourmetChef, Brylane Home offers a number of “As Seen on TV” products as well as numerous private brand ones. While LeGourmetChef caters specifically to cooking, baking, and entertaining, Brylane Home adds other home-related products such as bedding, bath products, art, and décor.

### **Type of products:**

Home Décor

Bakeware

Cookware

Small Appliances

Bed & Bath

### **Communication Techniques:**

E-Mail (once registered)

Banner Advertising

### **Content Organization:**

Fairly simple site layout, with tabs to specific areas and special promotions/deals on the front page. Some products are difficult to find as they may be listed in a different area. For instance, not all “bath rugs” are listed as such, some are listed under “towels”.

### **Unique Services:**

Member-only promotions (such as % off products, free shipping)

Deferred Billing; buy now and don't pay for 90 days.

One registration links to the whole family of sites, which include Women's and Men's clothing.

### **Good News for LeGourmetChef:**

Because of the integration of the Redcats family of sites, one order from one site leads to receiving numerous catalogs in the mail, and nearly as many e-mails.

Some products are not of very high quality (Personal Experience; \$19.99 for a stovetop griddle that rusted in the dishwasher even though it was labeled as dishwasher safe).

**Site 2: PamperedChef.com**

Company: Pampered Chef, Ltd.

Basic Info: The Pampered Chef is a widely renowned company for their exclusive products. It is the only site in its family, with the only real outside source being Pampered Chef consultants. This is probably one of the closest related sites that could be competition for LeGourmetChef, since their primary audiences are very similar, as well as the types of products offered.

**Type of products:**

- Bakeware
- Cookware
- Kitchenware
- Serveware
- Home Entertaining-related items

**Communication Techniques:**

- E-Mail (once registered)
- Banner Advertising
- “Cooking Shows”
- Word of Mouth

**Content Organization:**

This site is simply laid out, and is available in several languages. The front page contains links to the online catalog, as well as information on how to become a consultant and host “cooking shows.” The site echoes the products; professional but very functional.

**Unique Services:**

- Pampered Chef outlet store
- “Cooking Shows” – similar to something-ware shows once touted by single moms
- Online exclusive products

**Good News for LeGourmetChef:**

The Pampered Chef sells many similar items to LeGourmetChef, with the main difference being brand. Pampered chef products are a bit on the pricy side.

Examples (comparable products used, of course):

- Double-Burner Griddle
  - LeGourmetChef: \$49.99 + s&h
  - Pampered Chef: \$115.00 + s&h
- Salad Chopper
  - LeGourmetChef: \$19.99 + s&h
  - Pampered Chef: \$25.00 + s&h
- Apple Corer
  - LeGourmetChef: \$3.99 + s&h
  - Pampered Chef: \$10.25 + s&h

**Rachel Rodriguez**  
LeGourmetChef.com  
Competition Report

**Key words used:** Le Gourmet Chef As Seen On TV, party chef products bakeware gifts.  
**Search engine:** Ask.com

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**Site One:** The Chef Depot <http://www.chefdepot.com/>  
**Company:** Chef Depot Inc

**Basic Info:**

The site is for chefs, though anyone may buy their products. They have over 50,000 products, specializing in chef tools and gourmet items for the kitchen.

**Type of products:** Home Décor, Gourmet items, Bakeware, Cookware, and Small Appliances.

**Communication Techniques:** E-mail for more information, and small banners.

**Content Organization:** They have left hand navigation with top navigation. The top navigation seems to represent their most used links for user friendly use. Their search engine includes search by phrase, exact word, or any word. There is also a search by brand for an easier search experience. Yet, their site is more difficult to view as they use larger product images and the user has to scroll vertically to see each item.

**Design**

The site readjusts to the screen leaving no white space for 800 by 600 or larger. The three color design includes white, red and blue. They have a slightly larger banner than Le Gourmet Chef, but it is in a similar left hand position.

**Unique features**

They offer free shipping and tax free shopping for purchase over \$99. The site guarantees secure shopping and have an award from Yahoo for top service. The site also promotes their gifts for him or her, categorized in price ranges for quick and easy use. Their spices page and sportsman page for those looking for cooking items in those areas are unique.

**Good News for LeGourmetChef:**

The Chef Depot does not give a lot of information about the company, including something as simple as an 'about us' page, so despite assurances about security bulk purchasers may be wary of having to e-mail them for the information.

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**Site Two:** Cutlery and More <http://www.cutleryandmore.com/>  
**Company:** Cutlery and More.com

**Basic Info:**

The Cutlery and More is solely internet store dealing in kitchen items. They offer more than 70 different brands including Racheal Ray, Chef's Choice, and Emerilware.

**Type of products:**

Bakeware, Barware, Cook's Tools, Cookware, Kitchen Carts, Kitchen Knives, and Small Appliances.

**Communication Techniques:**

Small banners, extensive support center links, newsletter option, and sponsor advertising seen in ask.com.

**Content Organization:** They have left hand navigation with top navigation, with alternative top navigation that includes a clearance link. The navigation is organized by products and brands, which can be searched by a search engine.

**Design**

The site's size does not adjust for screens larger than 800 by 600 and is a little too big for those that are 800 by 600. It has a four color concept of red, blue, white, and tan. Their banner is in a similar position left hand and size to that of Le Gourmet Chef.

**Unique features**

The site offers free shipping for orders over \$59. They have been certified by Bizrate.com, which shows that the customers have paid attention to the good service they provide. They also allow the buyer to track their order.

**Good News for LeGourmetChef:**

Though they do have a lot of brand names that may attract the same audience as Le Gourmet Chef, it is a little overwhelming for those just looking for gifts or entertainment items. i.e. the user must scroll through pages of items. They also do not provide an 'about us' page concerning the business purpose and views

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**Michael Decker**

LeGourmetChef.com

Competition Report

Search Engine: Google

Search Terms: gourmet cookware, gourmet kitchen, gourmet cooking utensils

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Site: **Cooking.com**

Company: Cooks World, Inc.

**Basic Info:** Cooking.com is an online retailer of cookware and kitchen utensils featuring more than 90,000 products. In addition to being a retailer of these items, cooking.com has also

developed and managed the e-commerce websites for many of the countries largest cooking related brands such as Betty Crocker™, Starbucks Coffee® and The Food Network®.

**Type of products:**

- Cookware
- Bakeware
- Kitchen Furnishings
- Tableware
- Organizational Specialty Products
- Small Appliances

**Communication Techniques:**

- E-Mail Newsletter (Opt-in)
- Banner Advertising

**Content Organization:**

Very clean and well-organized site layout with categories listed to the left and tabs across the top to differentiate between major areas of the site. Products are clearly categorized and the site features a powerful and effective search function.

**Unique Services:**

- Email Newsletter
- Free Online Recipe Catalog
- Wedding and Gift Registry Functionality
- Online Buying Guides (Help you decide which product to purchase)
- Networked with independent retailers nationwide for in-store shopping.
- Community Forum

**Good News for LeGourmetChef:**

Cooking.com provides such a large selection of products that they are not able to easily establish themselves as a “gourmet” authority. They certainly carry all of the most respected gourmet brands, but these brands are lost in a sea of mediocrity.

Site: **Gourmet.org**

Company: The Gourmet Kitchen

Basic Info: Gourmet.org was started by a team that built and successfully ran a very large hotel reservation website before it was purchased by a larger investment firm. The attempt was initially to bring Gourmet cooking products to the web in an “easy to find” format, something that had not been done in 1996 when the site was originally launched. Today the site features a long list of high quality brands to choose from and has done well to keep the shopping experience organized and simple.

**Type of products:**

- Bakeware
- Barware

Cookware  
Cutlery  
Gift-Baskets  
Gourmet Food  
Small and Large Appliances  
Tableware

**Communication Techniques:**

E-Mail (opt-in)  
Banner Advertising  
“Cooking Shows”  
Word of Mouth

**Content Organization:**

The site is very well organized and elegantly displayed. The product categories are limited and presented in alphabetical order on the left side of the screen. The search feature is accurate and efficient. Shopping is also available by brand.

**Unique Services:**

Special Values (Discounted Products)  
Clearance Products  
Unique Recipe Library

**Good News for LeGourmetChef:**

The Gourmet.org website makes use of Google ads for its banner advertising. In doing so, their competitors ads are displayed on each page of their website. Although this could often be seen as transparency, it is likely to lead people away from making a purchase at Gourmet.org.