

Nordstrom — where did the gift cards go?

3-slide taster (redacted) • CRO investigation + recommendations

THE PROBLEM

A sharp drop in gift card conversions triggered an investigation.

- A key sitewide driver (header promo CTA) disappeared for long stretches
- A new site design introduced multiple funnel-disrupting changes at once
- A new gift-card decision tree reduced CTAs and changed mental models
- Some platform performance regression was observed in speed testing

What made this tricky:

It wasn't one "bad screen." It was an ecosystem shift: nav, CTAs, layout, and intent signals.

The investigation

Not tactics — a process: test, instrument, hypothesize, do it, investigate

METHOD

1) Diagnose

Heuristic + technical analysis to find friction and regressions.



2) Measure

Web analytics + funnel trends to identify what changed and when.



3) Validate

Session recordings, surveys, and user testing to confirm behavior.

Key findings (high-level):

- Reduced visibility: gift card intent signals were less prominent
- More decision steps: the path to “buy a gift card” became less direct
- Smaller targets and inconsistent UI treatments created hesitation
- Multiple concurrent changes made attribution hard → required disciplined triangulation

The recommendations

Restore clarity first, then iterate with instrumentation

NEXT STEPS

Immediate stabilizers:

- Restore the primary gift card CTA in the header / sitewide driver
- Restore the gift card landing experience (larger hit areas, clearer CTAs)
- Improve gift card CTAs across the site and reduce “hidden link” behavior

Build a safer iteration loop:

- Add session recordings + tag manager to see real behavior and align tracking
- Consider trust signals (e.g., trust seal) to improve confidence at payment moments
- Reduce choice overload where appropriate (faceplates / denominations)
- Keep testing and iterating -avoid changing too many variables at once

Walkthrough available on request (full deck contains proprietary analysis + artifacts).