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The site search checklist for a game-changing holiday season

In a year like no other, is your site search ready for the busiest Black Friday and Cyber Monday on record ?

HOLIDAY SEASON

With e-commerce holiday sales expected to <u>surge by 25-35%</u> this year, it's critical that no opportunity is left on the table—including search. Algolia has already powered <u>+1 trillion searches</u> this year alone, and some of our US customers have seen a <u>600% increase in search queries</u>. When <u>searchers spend 2.6x</u> more than those that don't, every query is vital. Make sure your search is ready for the holidays with our actionable, 20-point checklist.

Lay the groundwork

1 Offload your infrastructure
Don't lose searchers to downtime and make sure your infrastructure can handle a surge in search query load. Consider providers that offload your servers and provide a robust, reliable, secure and high-availability infrastructure so you can focus on optimizing your site search experience.

2 Enrich your Search UX
Make sure your <u>search UX</u> is rich, relevant, and enables browsing and navigation with intelligent filters and facets. <u>72% of e-commerce sites</u> completely fail site search expectations. Don't be one of them.

3 Equip business teams to manage site search tools
The <u>top 3 functions that own site search</u> are: marketing, product and omnichannel (engineering only 10%). Your merchandising and digital teams need the tools to optimize search results and relevance quickly, without the need for IT support.

4 **Make your search omnichannel-ready**
It's critical that you create a seamlessly advanced search experience across web, mobile web and mobile applications—in fact, omnichannel shoppers spend more and shop twice as often.

5 **Build a mobile-first search experience**
Make sure your search experience is consistent on your mobile website or app and optimized for small screen challenges. 66% of internet users use a mobile phone or tablet to make a purchase. Use mobile UX best practices to create a great search experience on mobile.

6 **Invest in voice search**
Successful voice search mimics the pace and style at which natural language conversations occur. And it's a worthwhile investment—71% of users prefer to search via voice versus a keyboard, and 40% of millennials research products through voice before purchasing.

7 **Keep inventory up to date**
Avoid the dreaded "item sold out" screen. Integrate your search to the POS or inventory management system to update the availability of each item in real time.

Leverage your search

8 **Anticipate shopper's needs with search analytics**
See what shoppers are searching for in preparation for the holidays. Use in-depth search analytics to adapt your catalog, plan deals and improve your advertising and SEO strategy.

9 A/B test your search results

Tune and test your search relevance so you can uncover your best-performing relevance strategies and implement them in time for—and during—the holiday rush.

10 Federate your search

Surface content, FAQs, user reviews, etc. alongside product pages in your search results to enrich the shopping experience. Federated search can increase cart size, reinforce your brand and show your expertise.

11 Shorten the path to buying

Give shoppers the option to save their searches and create search alerts so they can find and buy products quickly, which is especially important with shipping deadlines fast approaching.

12 Upgrade to advanced search features

It's not too late to implement advanced search features such as personalization and visual merchandising. Retailers investing in advanced search capabilities see 50% higher conversion rates.

13 Personalize your search results

Leverage all the intent signals of your traffic to create a tailored, connected experience. Personalization is so powerful that it can deliver 5-8x the ROI on marketing spend and lift sales 10% or more.

14 Merchandise your search results

Give merchandisers, product owners and marketers the ability to optimize search results based on business needs, campaigns and KPIs. Help them create a hyper-relevant shopping experience that drives sales well into the holiday season.

Peak season: stay a head of the curve

15 **Rank search results based on discount rate**
Since shoppers are looking for the best deals, make sure to use the discount rate when ranking your search results. Create scarcity by ranking products with limited sales time first.

16 **Add post-discount margins to your ranking logic**
Preserve your margins and configure your search's ranking logic according to what matters to both your shoppers and your business.

17 **Boost best-performing products**
Tweak your search results' ranking logic and leverage AI to promote the best-performing products for each query and capture more sales.

Maintain momentum: applying key insights

18 **Dive into your search analytics**
What worked? What didn't? Search analytics offer a trove of data to help you improve your offering and the way you surface it to your shopper.

19 Continue to innovate

Product search and discovery are the next battleground for the share of consumers' wallets. Wise retailers continue to innovate with every aspect of the user experience, and advanced applications of artificial intelligence. Make search a part of your long-term investments for your user experience.

20 Define search KPIs

Now that the rush is over, defining your search KPIs is critical to getting the most value out of your search strategy. 53% of retailers with advanced search capabilities have defined KPIs for site search versus only 13% of those with basic site search.

Now that you're equipped with an action plan, we have the insights to help you turn it into reality. Get the most of your search technology and stay competitive with all the resources of our Holiday Season kit, and get in touch with our experts to see how fast, engaging and relevant hosted search can capture more sales and maximize every touchpoint of your customers' holiday journey.

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WE WISH YOU A SUCCESSFUL HOLIDAY SEASON

About Algolia

Algolia enables e-commerce businesses to create fast, relevant and intuitive search and discovery experiences that increase conversions, engagement and customer loyalty. We deliver personalized shopper experiences and fuel your digital strategy with sophisticated search technologies like conversational search. More than 9,000 companies like Under Armour, Lacoste, Birchbox, Dior, L'Occitane En Provence and Bringmeister rely on Algolia.

To learn more, visit **https://resources.algolia.com/ecommerce**