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Sean Mayo
Senior Software Engineer



ABOUT GOOGLE SITE SEARCH

Google Site Search is a hosted website search solution, powered by Google.com. Google Site Search leverages the relevancy and sub-second response times of Google.com to improve your website experience. As a Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) solution, you can setup Google Site Search in just minutes; customize the look and feel of search results; apply refinement labels; enjoy reporting features; obtain email and phone support; and turn off the ads on your search results.

For more information, visit
www.google.com/sitesearch

Company

ToolHawker provides tools, equipment and supplies – hand tools, power tools, safety equipment, and more – for the professional technician. ToolHawker also carries automotive mechanic tools from hydraulic lifts to socket sets. The company prides itself on providing great deals and exceptional service.

Approach

Senior Software Engineer Sean Mayo built the custom e-commerce store from the ground up. With more than 6,000 products in the company’s catalog, searching became a problem. Performing queries on the database to find any relevant products was slow and not always accurate. “Google’s search algorithms and speed have always WOWed me, so I decided to give Google Site Search a try,” says Mayo.

Google Site Search replaced the company’s former database search technology and added good technology. Mayo and his team were able to use the XML stream model to deliver fast search results directly from Google and completely customize the appearance to match the ToolHawker site.

Results

Mayo reports that the XML was easy to implement and all of the documentation was straightforward and easy to understand. Most pages were already indexed with Google so the search worked just like Google.com. Mayo appreciates that Google gives him so many options in how he can implement Google Site Search on his site. He chose to use the more advanced XML option, but notes that even novice programmers can easily implement a plug-and-play option.

There are a lot of technological reasons Mayo likes Google Site Search, but from a business standpoint it has really helped with the speed of the site and with customer retention. “We want buyers to find what they’re looking for – and fast, or else they’ll look elsewhere,” Mayo says. “The overall impact has been excellent. Along with better and more relevant search results and greater speeds, we’ve seen our average customer ‘pages per visit’ increase 25 percent.”



Figure 1: Relevant results with subscribed links of popular items on the right.