



# CostumeBox

CostumeBox uses Searchspring to control product arrangement, schedule merchandising campaigns, and effortlessly update category pages to reflect upcoming holidays.

# CASE STUDY



**Platform:** Shopify Plus  
**Industry:** Party Supplies  
**Visit:** [costumebox.com.au](https://costumebox.com.au)

56%

of revenue attributed  
to search

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Vanessa Vumbaca, Content Supervisor, CostumeBox

# THE BRAND

CostumeBox is Australia's largest online retailer in the celebration market, offering a comprehensive range of fancy dress costumes, accessories, party supplies, party equipment, and gifts. Having launched in 2007 with just 400 costumes, the store now stocks over 30,000 items and has delivered millions of products to customers worldwide. While the business has an unlikely pair of founders – a trained archaeologist and a former manager of luxury hotels – their focus has been on customer service and experience since day one.

“We really listen to our customers and pay close attention to what’s trending to make sure we’re always providing the products that they’re looking for,” says Vanessa Vumbaca, Content Supervisor at CostumeBox. “Quality is a key differentiator for us, we’re very selective about the products we carry so our customers can be confident that they’ll look their best in our costumes.”

“We offer free shipping, quick delivery, and 100 days of free returns, which I personally think is really important. We’re proud to have won awards for our customer service, and we put a lot of effort into ensuring our customers can always find the products they’re looking for and get help when they need it.”







# THE CHALLENGES

CostumeBox first began looking for a search and merchandising solution because of a lack of automation within their native platform. “We used to do all of our merchandising manually, which was a full time job in itself because we had so many pages. We could easily spend 3-4 hours merchandising each category, it was something we had to constantly maintain and find time for. There were parts of the site that we ended up neglecting because we just didn’t have time to optimize every category,” says Vanessa.

This proved particularly arduous given the seasonal nature of the business. CostumeBox’s site is updated regularly based on upcoming holidays, the latest movie releases, and breakout trends, meaning promotional banners and product arrangement all change continually. “Coming up to something like St Patrick’s Day, we would have to manually move all of the relevant products to the top of category pages because there was no way to force it automatically. Once that day had passed, we had to move them all back again,” says Vanessa.

Halloween and Book Week are the two busiest holidays for their online store, and both happened to coincide in October of 2020 because of pandemic-related rescheduling. “We found ourselves dealing with two of our peak seasons at once, just as COVID-19 restrictions were easing in Australia. Suddenly, we had this surge in orders after months when people couldn’t socialize or throw parties. It was especially challenging because we were also experiencing delays in stock arriving from overseas, but in the end the spike in sales helped us to get through what was a difficult year,” says Vanessa.

# THE SOLUTIONS

“Once we started using Searchspring’s merchandising, managing our site became so much easier. It was so refreshing to trust that everything would just fall into the right place on a page with a few clicks. We love that we can customize rules by individual categories and schedule campaigns for specific time periods,” says Vanessa.

CostumeBox has a specific structure for category pages, usually displaying women’s costumes first within a given theme, followed by men’s and then children’s costumes. Next, they display accessories, which are grouped together by product type – from wigs and shoes to wings and capes. “Lastly, we show party supplies, with the themed products displaying first,” says Vanessa.

“For example, our Avengers category would have Avengers items followed by other party supplies that fit that theme’s colors. Searchspring’s boost rules help us to control that structure, so we can display products in an order that makes sense to our customers and optimizes their shopping experience.”

With a variety of themes and characters on offer, customers can sometimes struggle to find the right words when they turn to the site’s search bar. “It’s common for shoppers to make spelling mistakes, which is where autocorrect comes in. Or, they might not quite know a character’s exact name. Search synonyms and redirects have been a lifesaver for us to ensure our customers can still find the products they’re looking for. We have redirects set up for Super Mario, for example, where shoppers might search for ‘Mario’, ‘Mario bros’, ‘Mario brothers’ – all of those searches bring shoppers to our Super Mario Brothers page.”







Many of these search terms become apparent through Searchspring's reporting. "We review the reports every Monday to see what customers are searching for and whether we're missing anything in the market. If there is a new character that shoppers are really interested in, the reports help us to assess demand and decide whether to order new inventory. We also get insights into how our customers navigate through our pages – are they filtering by color versus occasion, for example. That's really useful for us, particularly during peak seasons," says Vanessa.

CostumeBox also has plans to implement Searchspring's inline banners to highlight sales and promotions, as well as to showcase a new business venture. "We're launching a new initiative on CostumeBox called PartyList, which will help our customers find all the services they need for their parties such as equipment hire, entertainment, and catering. With inline banners, we'll be able to link to those services without disrupting the shopping experience. We're really excited about that."

# THE RESULTS

“Searchspring has helped us to free up so much time that we can now spend on other areas of the business. With our product line growing all the time, it would be a huge challenge to effectively merchandise our site without Searchspring,” says Vanessa.

On the CostumeBox site in 2020:

**56%**

of revenue was attributed  
to search

Conversion rates were

**4.5x**

higher with search



Products used for this client:  
[Category Merchandising](#) | [Search & Autocomplete](#)

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