searchspring

FastGrowingTrees.com

FastGrowingTrees.com uses Searchspring to ensure shoppers can always find the right results, even when they don't know the precise products they're looking for.

CASE STUDY

Platform: Shopify Plus
Industry: Lawn & Garden
Visit: fast-growing-trees.com

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"Every ecommerce site needs search, that's just table stakes, but Searchspring takes it to the next level with its merchandising and faceting tools."

Justin French Director of Marketing, FastGrowingTrees.com

In 2020, shoppers who used search on FastGrowingTrees.com were

6x

more likely to convert.

THE BRAND

FastGrowingTrees.com's mission is to deliver superior trees and plants directly to customers' doors from their nursery in Fort Mill, South Carolina. With varieties spanning fruit and flowering trees, shrubs and hedges, and patio and houseplants, the brand's selection covers wide-ranging climate and landscape needs, across all growing zones.

As an online, direct-to-consumer business, their team has a keen focus on taking the hassle and guesswork out of growing. Director of Marketing, Justin French has been with the company since its inception in 2005, and says the brand differentiates itself through the speed and convenience of home delivery, as well as a comprehensive selection of thousands of plants and accessories, making it easier for growers across the country to access high-quality plants and trees.

THE CHALLENGES

One of the main challenges faced by FastGrowingTrees.com is simply building awareness that trees and plants can be purchased online. "Typically, people have gone to their local Big Box or garden center to purchase plants," says Justin. "We've really started to see more of a shift to online in the last few years, and 2020 definitely accelerated that shift."

As a result, the brand invests in traditional print and radio advertising to attract new customers to the online store. "With our digital marketing, we try to drive shoppers deep into the site, directly to the relevant pages or categories. But as we create more offline awareness, visitors are increasingly landing on our homepage. Our search queries show us that these shoppers are looking for broad topics, they could be searching for rose bushes but they don't know exactly which type of rose bush they want. We need a really strong search capability to support those visitors."

The pandemic has also had a lingering impact on inventory levels for the Garden industry. "Our products take six months to three years to grow. If we experience 100% growth in a year when we were expecting 20-30%, we have to start pulling from next year's inventory. Now that we're in 2021, that's affecting our merchandising strategy. We have to decide: are we going to put all of our products out there so they can sell? Or should we hold some back so they can grow? Flora is very different to most businesses in that the longer we hang on to our inventory, the more it appreciates in value."

THE SOLUTIONS

FastGrowingTrees.com became a Nextopia client in 2011, and migrated to Searchspring following the merger of the two companies. The brand uses Search & Autocomplete to support shoppers who may be unsure of the precise product they're looking for, while the associated reporting and insights play a role in their wider business strategy.

"We're very seasonal, about 60% of our business comes from March – June. Every quarter, we review the top search queries on our site to help us understand what our customers are looking for," says Justin. "We use that data in two ways: to merchandise, and to identify opportunities for new products. If people are regularly searching for something that returns zero results, we should probably pick that product up."

For shoppers who arrive on the site with a broad search term in mind, the search bar suggests specific items in a visual dropdown as they type. Product imagery and ratings are included, and the results can be filtered using facets that dynamically populate based on the product type – from growing zones to sunlight levels. "A big draw for us is that Searchspring can handle customized faceting, not only within the search results, but also in category and collection pages," says Justin.

"We also really like the visual merchandising aspect, and the ability to shuffle and boost products during certain times of the year. The AI behind it continually adapts and ensures the right products are always in the right spot for our consumer. It's just really easy, it doesn't take a developer or programmer to make changes."

THE RESULTS

"Searchspring has been there for FastGrowingTrees.com every step of the way. At implementation, they handled the data feeds as well as the CSS and styling to ensure everything was ready for launch. From that point on, I know our Customer Success Manager is there any time that we need them. They're always willing to walk us through the portal and through the data to understand how we can make changes that will increase sales," says Justin.

In 2020, shoppers who used search on FastGrowingTrees.com:

Were **6x** more likely to convert.	Spent **7x** more per visit.	Generated **28%** of overall revenue.

Products used for this client:

Search & Autocomplete

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Want to see how these products can help you?

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