



Hartville Hardware

Hartville Hardware uses Searchspring to update product categories and create merchandised landing pages, all without assistance from their development team.

CASE STUDY



Platform: CV3

Industry: Hardware & Home Improvement

Visit: hartvillehardware.com

62%

of revenue attributed
to search.

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“Searchspring is just easy to use, it’s much more visual than a lot of other tools out there. For me, not being a developer, that’s extremely important. I’m no longer tied to our development team if I want to update our site.”

John Mueller, Ecommerce Manager, Hartville Hardware

THE BRAND

Since 1972, Hartville Hardware has been a locally-owned and family-run business. Starting out as a small hardware store, it has grown into a 305,000 square foot flagship store in Hartville, Ohio with two other locations in northeast Ohio. Stocking an extensive range of products spanning hundreds of brands, the store is a one-stop-shop for everything from hardware and power tools, to seasonal decor and pet supplies.

Unique features like a three lane drive-thru lumber yard, full-service design center, and their 1,850 square foot furnished Idea House have helped carve out the store's niche, along with a focus on friendly customer service and support.

"As a store, we are committed to serving our customers by providing an exceptional experience delivered by our caring experts," says Scott Sommers, President of Hartville Hardware. "Our web team is charged with bringing that same standard to our website. Searchspring helps us deliver that experience online by allowing us to create specially merchandised pages and improve the onsite search experience."





THE CHALLENGES

Traditionally, the main purpose of Hartville Hardware’s website was to provide contact details, basic information about the store, and updates about upcoming events. In recent years, their online strategy has shifted to better integrate the site into the buying journey.

“A lot of our customers go to the site to plan their store visit, and to purchase additional items after returning home,” says John Mueller, Ecommerce Manager. “We have so many unique products, and a lot of our shoppers come from out of town. They might start working on a project and think, ‘I wish I had bought that hook while I was in the store’. The site allows them to get those items delivered post-visit.”

“We are such a destination store that it’s really important for us to be able to support that online. We’ve been making an effort to bring more of that in-store experience to our site, and tell that story of how unique we are.”

An essential part of replicating that experience is supporting shoppers as they navigate the site. With a complex range of niche and technical products, Hartville Hardware’s search and navigation act as the online equivalent of a knowledgeable sales assistant. “John Deere, for example, is one of our top brands,” says John. “We need to be able to break out our John Deere parts by blades, belts, and filters to accommodate the different ways that customers look for those products.”

THE SOLUTIONS

“We implemented Searchspring in 2018, and our initial focus was faceted navigation and site search, specifically synonyms and redirects. In the last year, we’ve also started using landing pages and merchandising features to support our marketing campaigns. If we are promoting 10% off select products from a specific line or department, Searchspring allows us to curate a page just for those products so it’s clear to the customer which items are on promotion. We can also add a banner to the top of the page to reinforce the message. The landing pages have been the star for us over the last year.”

Seasonal changes in products are now better reflected on the ecommerce site. “Our navigation taxonomy is very seasonally-driven, we use Searchspring to update our facets at different times of the year depending on the products we’re currently selling. We also still print seasonal catalogs, so being able to highlight the same products on the website using promotional badges has been really useful.”

New capabilities have also allowed the team to re-think product categories online. “In store, our lighting products are distinctly divided into home decor, outdoor, security, and bulbs. Online, we decided to bring all of those products together so you can get all of your lighting needs in one place. Then, we broke the products out by look, room, finish, and so on. All of those landing pages are built using Searchspring, and they all feature unique banners. That’s our goal for all of our departments, to give customers different ways to interact with the product depending on their individual needs.”

Searchspring’s reporting has also proved useful, both for the buying team and for optimizing the search experience. “On a monthly basis, I pull our search terms and send them to the buyers so they can see if customers are searching for products that we don’t carry, or products that we’ve been on the fence about introducing,” says John. “I also use the zero results report to see if customers are searching for terms that differ from our naming conventions. We can then set up synonyms or integrate those terms into our copy for SEO purposes.”





THE RESULTS

“Being able to use merchandising campaigns and landing pages has been one of the top drivers of growth in our online business. As well as increasing sales, we’ve also seen improvements in our online engagement. Pages viewed and time on site have increased, and our bounce rates have decreased. I think a lot of this improved engagement is thanks to the capabilities we have with Searchspring,” says John.

In 2020, Hartville Hardware saw:

62%

of revenue attributed
to search.

3x

more value from customers
that used search.

Products used for this client:

[Category Navigation](#) | [Search & Autocomplete](#)

Want to see how these products can help you?

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