

CLIENT PROFILE

Name:



Industry:

Grocery Supercenter / Retail

Need:

Improve shopper experience by providing better search results. Create product promotions based on availability, seasonality and trending items. Optimize the digital shelf and customer experience.

Results:

Meijer uses FindTuner to align merchandising and marketing strategies which has led to increased conversion rates and basket sizes,

BACKGROUND

Meijer is a family-owned company that operates over 220 regional supercenters in the Midwest offering a wide variety of products including groceries, clothing, footwear, furniture, jewelry, health and beauty products, housewares and pet supplies.

Meijer uses Apache Solr to power search on meijer.com. Search is the #1 way customers find products with over 2 million searches per month with 80% of customers using search for products vs 20% via navigation.

Meijer initially contacted Innovent to address various system performance and relevancy issues and a successful engagement was carried out. Using Innovent's services, Meijer quickly saw improvements in search performance and core relevancy. Building on the improved relevancy, Meijer wanted to further improve the shopper experience, respond to seasonal marketing needs as well as provide a personalized experience for loyalty program members. Merchandising was needed.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

Investments in search are driven by the core tenant that it must improve customer experience. With this in mind the following opportunities were identified for merchandising.

- **Improve search results**—online search for grocery products have unique challenges since products online are often organized like a grocery store where products are placed in a category that contains dissimilar items, such as Meat and Deli, which can cause searches for milk to find steaks. Additionally, products in a grocery store frequently contain references to other items which effects search relevancy. Take for example the idea of searching for eggs, where a clear expectation is to find cartons of eggs. Many products are sold that contain or are made with eggs, such as egg noodles.
- **Create a curated experience for trending items**—Meijer has a need to create promotional campaigns to highlight collections of products based on season, such as Thanksgiving, or events such as the launch of a Star Wars movie. While it was possible to address these needs via content management, the recent search optimizations proved that the search experience was an ideal means to display these collections.
- **Promote Available Items**—Meijer.com allows for the shopper to select the store on which to base searches. When displaying search results it is desirable to ensure high visibility to products that are available and in stock at that store.
- **Leverage sales data**—Meijer has analytics related to customer purchases via their loyalty program and wanted to promote previously purchased products in search results. Meijer wanted to utilize this data selectively, applying different strategies based on varying use-cases. For example, there needed to be strategies for commodity products like milk, fruit/vegetable and deli items, and other strategies for less common items like condiments or packaged foods.

SOLUTION

Meijer partnered with Innovent Solutions to implement FindTuner, which enables its merchandisers to plan, customize and optimize the way shoppers search and experience meijer.com. Business rules are used to create effective product promotions, curate the shopper experience and provide personalized experiences using loyalty program data.

Improve search results using Product Promotions—The expectation of most consumers when shopping for a simple product is to see that simple product “front and center” in the search results. In the example of searching for eggs it is clear that returning products that contain the word egg isn't incorrect, it's not the best outcome. Using FindTuner's Product Promotions, Meijer is able to boost the Eggs category to the top of results.

Curated Experience for trending items—FindTuner's Curated Results provides Meijer the ability to either collect individual products or to collect an entire group of products into a carefully constructed result page. For example, when a shopper searches for turkey during Thanksgiving, Meijer is sure to show products that are relevant based on the time of year.

Leverage sales data to personalize results—Meijer has extensive sales information for products sold, both through the etail and retail channels. Using FindTuner's Boost Strategies, Meijer is able to define multiple strategies to boost products based on sales performance. An overall strategy was crafted to provide quality results for generic searches, and within certain parts of the product taxonomy Meijer is able to finely tune the strategy.

THE RESULTS

Search results have been greatly improved by enabling personalization strategies, targeted marketing, and solving challenging use-cases in search. FindTuner's lightweight integration permitted Meijer to quickly incorporate merchandising rules on the site without requiring changes to their Solr query architecture.

Meijer is able to focus on strategically aligning merchandising and marketing strategies and its merchandising team has the tools that enable them to optimize the 'digital shelf', leverage their rich sales and analytics data, and improve customer experience with more relevant product search.

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About FindTuner®

FindTuner is a merchandising solution for Apache Solr. FindTuner provides a comprehensive suite of features that give merchandisers the power and control to easily implement impactful strategies that provide high-quality, relevant search results, enhance and personalize the shopping experience and optimize revenue and profitability.

Innovent Solutions is a privately held company headquartered in Irvine, California that provides consulting, training and support services and solutions for Search, Business Intelligence and eCommerce technologies.

Key Features

- **Product promotions** to promote, demote, hide, show, and perform other precise actions.
- **Curated results** that ensure the perfect product visibility and placement.
- **Guided navigation** to reorder, hide and show categories and values.
- **Data-driven boost** to dynamically rank search results using metrics such as conversion, rating, popularity, inventory or sales rank, or any combination.
- **Banner displays** based upon search query and results, organic search, PPC campaigns and more.
- **Redirect** shoppers for common searches such as Customer Service or Shipping.
- **Zero results handling** to ensure content is always visible.
- **Manage synonyms**, stopwords and other aspects of Solr using the Solr Configuration Editor.
- And much more...