

Looking to improve your e-commerce conversions?

10 Top Considerations for Choosing a Site Search Provider





1. Decide whether you want a SaaS solution or prefer to host it yourself.

- A full SaaS solution is faster and easier to implement and maintain.
- An on-premise solution gives you full control (and responsibility) over how the solution is managed and updated.

2. For SaaS solutions, research the reliability of the provider's hosting infrastructure.

- You want a provider with multiple redundant data centers that hold to the highest levels of security and have added capacity to handle spikes in traffic.
- Be sure your site will be hosted by at least two geographically distributed data centers with global load balancing.
- Ask for a detailed description of the vendor's infrastructure and have your IT team review it.
- Be sure your search results pages will be up and running during the busiest shopping times.

3. With many startups in the e-commerce search space, carefully choose a solid, long-term partner.

- Look for a company that has a long-term track record of serving customers and delivering innovative solutions, along with a solid management team and product roadmap.
- Ask for audited financials – you want to a vendor that will still be in business two years from now.

4. Be sure the solution integrates well with your e-commerce platform.

- Your site search provider should have experience integrating with your e-commerce platform.
- Get an example of another client using the provider with the same platform.
- If you've built your own platform, find out what's required for integration.

5. Understand the implementation process.

- Ask the provider for its documented implementation process with a timeline.
 - Find out what to expect at each step, including what needs to be delivered and which party is responsible.
 - Choose a provider with built-in support and engineering resources to handle any snags that could arise.
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6. Learn which option(s) the provider offers.

- Know whether you want to implement via subdomain, proxy or API.

7. Look for evidence that the provider's site search solution performs better than its competitors'.

- You want a site search that turns up relevant results at the top of the screen, every time. A provider should be able to show you whether it can achieve this.
- Ask for a demo showing how its solution delivers the most relevant results.

8. Be sure the solution easily supports mobile and tablet users.

- Since the number of mobile and tablet shoppers is increasing rapidly, any vendor you choose needs to be experienced in supporting mobile search and navigation applications, mobile sites and responsive designs. Ask for examples.

9. Look at case studies, but read between the lines.

- Any business can get a few good case studies, so look for the exceptional – many examples of great results, quotes from name brand businesses and a wide variety of clients that have gone on record to say they love working with this provider.

10. Ask about the provider's product and engineering team. Look for evidence that this is an innovative company that will grow with you.

- New feature releases should be fast and easy to roll out for SaaS solutions.
 - You want a company that focuses on ongoing innovation so it can grow with you and offer the latest, greatest site search technology.
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Contact SLI Systems

USA

San Jose, California
P (866) 240 2812

JAPAN

Tokyo
P +81 03 5715 8052

EUROPE

London, United Kingdom
P +44 (0) 203 217 0321

NEW ZEALAND

Christchurch
P 0800 754 797

AUSTRALIA

Melbourne
P 1800 139 190

EMAIL

discovery@sl-systems.com

To learn more visit sl-systems.com.

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