



Company

bestway.co.uk

Industry

B2B Wholesale

Challenge

With more than 20,000 SKUs, Bestway Wholesale needed a way for independent food retailers to quickly find relevant products while also introducing its customers to new offerings.

Solution

Bestway Wholesale turned to SLI Systems for intuitive site search and recommendations that improve the customer experience while increasing online revenue.

Results

▶ **20%**
increase in average order value

▶ **38%**
conversion rate from Rich Auto Complete suggestions

▶ **5x**
higher revenue from searchers vs. non-searchers



“Returning relevant search results across more than 20,000 products and 63 depots is challenging. We are very impressed with the integration of SLI Systems intelligent search solutions and their positive effect on our customers’ online experience. Adding other SLI tools has enabled us to increase visibility of new products and cope with seasonality easily.”

Simon Hogg

Digital Marketing Manager, Bestway Wholesale

SLI Products in Action



LEARNING SEARCH



SEO



RICH AUTOCOMPLETE



LEARNING RECOMMENDATIONS



Delivering a Simple Online Experience to Independent Retailers

Bestway Wholesale is the UK's largest independent cash-and-carry wholesaler and has operated in the sector for 40 years, trading under the Bestway and Batleys names. Its 63 depots support the nation's independent retailers, often time-poor sole traders working alone.

Bestway Wholesale's first transactional e-commerce site launched in 2011 to service pent-up demand in a highly competitive market. The company stocks more than 20,000 different products online, ranging from groceries to pet food.

The company's website previously had a standard text search function which wasn't adequate – customers were failing to find the products they needed easily. The company knew it had to make changes or lose business since website statistics revealed more than 80% of customers used search vs. navigation.

"Our customers don't want to engage with technology, they just need to stock their shops," said Simon Hogg, Digital Marketing Manager for Bestway Wholesale. "Our goal is to deliver the best possible customer experience both online and in depot, so we turned to SLI Systems to add functionality and deliver winning services that would bring measurable improvement quickly."

Stocking a Wide Product Range Is Fast and Easy

Bestway Wholesale knew its existing search engine was unable to return relevant results. Its broken search function caused customer dissatisfaction and lost sales. With 63 depots and more than 20,000 SKUs, the B2B company knew achieving integration would be a challenge. Bestway Wholesale has multiple customer types and online customers see the stock specific for their own depot. In addition, both prices and brands vary by customer and location. For customers to easily find what they want from their local depot, Bestway Wholesale's search function would have to cope with a huge variation in search terms.

Needing to implement change and deliver consistent and relevant search results quickly, Bestway Wholesale selected SLI Learning Search®, which learns from visitor activity to connect shoppers with the products they are most likely to buy. Bestway Wholesale also implemented industry-leading SLI Rich Auto Complete™, which dynamically shows results from the shopper's first click in the search box. This is

important for Bestway Wholesale as entering a generic food type, e.g. porridge, brings up relevant results, including brands which may not contain the search term anywhere in their product name or description.

The ability to fine tune Learning Search® so results include seasonal goods is also a major plus for Bestway Wholesale and its customers. For example, results for the term "chocolate" will include Easter eggs leading up to the holiday. Instantly providing accurate results through Rich Auto Complete™ has proved profitable. Rich Auto Complete suggestions had a 38% conversion rate over the last 12 months.

Bestway Wholesale also wanted to showcase new products to its customers, which was another hard-to-address area as 80% don't browse. It implemented SLI Learning Recommendations™ to deliver tailored product suggestions where they are most effective and up-sell and cross-sell related goods. Learning Recommendations™ also increased the visibility of new products.

"We had no other way of getting new products under people's noses other than by using search. Now customers searching for a brand of fizzy drink get relevant results, so we didn't want to tinker with those," Hogg commented. "One big attraction of using SLI Learning Recommendations is we can put a banner ad for a relevant alternative or new product above the search results."

Coming Up with the Goods Increases Sales

Since implementing SLI, Bestway's customers – 80% of which use the search box – find what they want quickly and are delighted rather than frustrated, helping the company retain its fickle customer base.

The combination of delivering relevant search results, showing seasonal goods at the right time and making new products visible has increased average order value per online transaction by 20%. With an average basket worth approximately £1,500, this has boosted the company's turnover significantly.

To complement its SEO efforts, Bestway Wholesale uses SLI Site Champion® to drive high-quality organic search traffic to its site. Site Champion® creates landing pages based on shoppers' most popular search terms so that those products are easily found by search engines.

About SLI Systems

SLI Systems enables the world's leading e-commerce retailers to increase sales by connecting shoppers with the products they're most likely to buy. With proven search technology that learns from the activity of real site visitors, SLI delivers SaaS-based site search, navigation, merchandising, mobile, recommendations and SEO solutions that arm retailers with the tools they need for rapid growth. To learn more visit sli-systems.com, sli-systems.com.au or sli-systems.co.uk. © 2017 SLI SYSTEMS