Findify

HOW YOUR SEARCH BAR CAN MAKE YOU MORE MONEY

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Introduction

It is hardly news that eCommerce is thriving . This year alone, global eCommerce sales will reach $3.5 trillion USD.
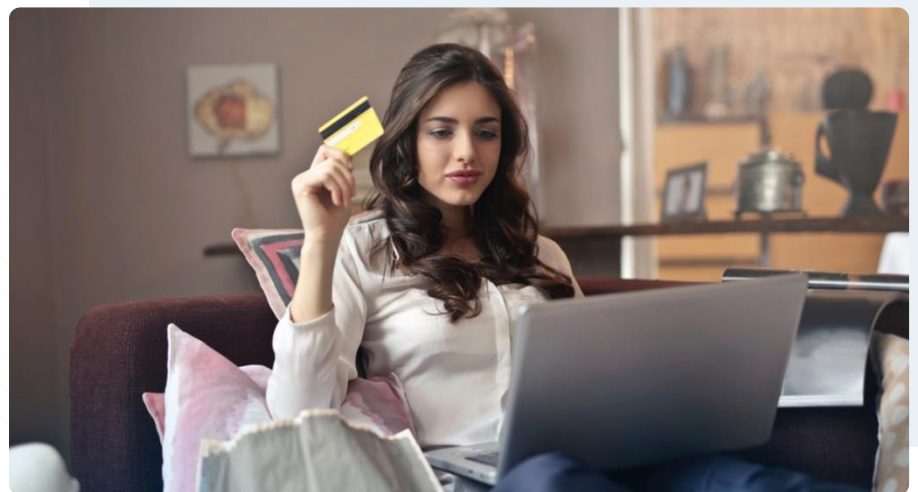
This figure is set to double within the next three years - exceeding $6.5 trillion by 2022 - meaning the sector will soon be worth almost a quarter of total retail.

While we can all appreciate how positive this growth is, the sector is not without its challenges.

Merchants are currently spending an increasing amount of time and money trying to attract shoppers - but aren't seeing the appropriate return in conversion.

One way to mitigate this imbalance lies in your website search solution. In this ebook, we'll go through the characteristics that make for an excellent site search, explain why they're important, and give you examples of how excellent site search solutions have increased revenue and reduced churn for other businesses generating revenue online.

"One way to mitigate this imbalance lies in your website search solution"

Why your search solution is so important

Shoppers who conduct site searches are characterized by high purchase intent.

As such, when a search immediately returns relevant results to the shopper, the conversion rate is between two and three times higher than visitors who have to scroll through collection pages.

Overall, this means that 15% of visitors can generate 40% of total sales, if site search is properly executed, thus providing the merchant with excellent value for money at minimal time investment.

A personalized search solution will increase your conversions to ensure you get more out of your marketing investments and automate processes, freeing up your time.

> "15% OF VISITORS CAN GENERATE 40% OF TOTAL SALES"
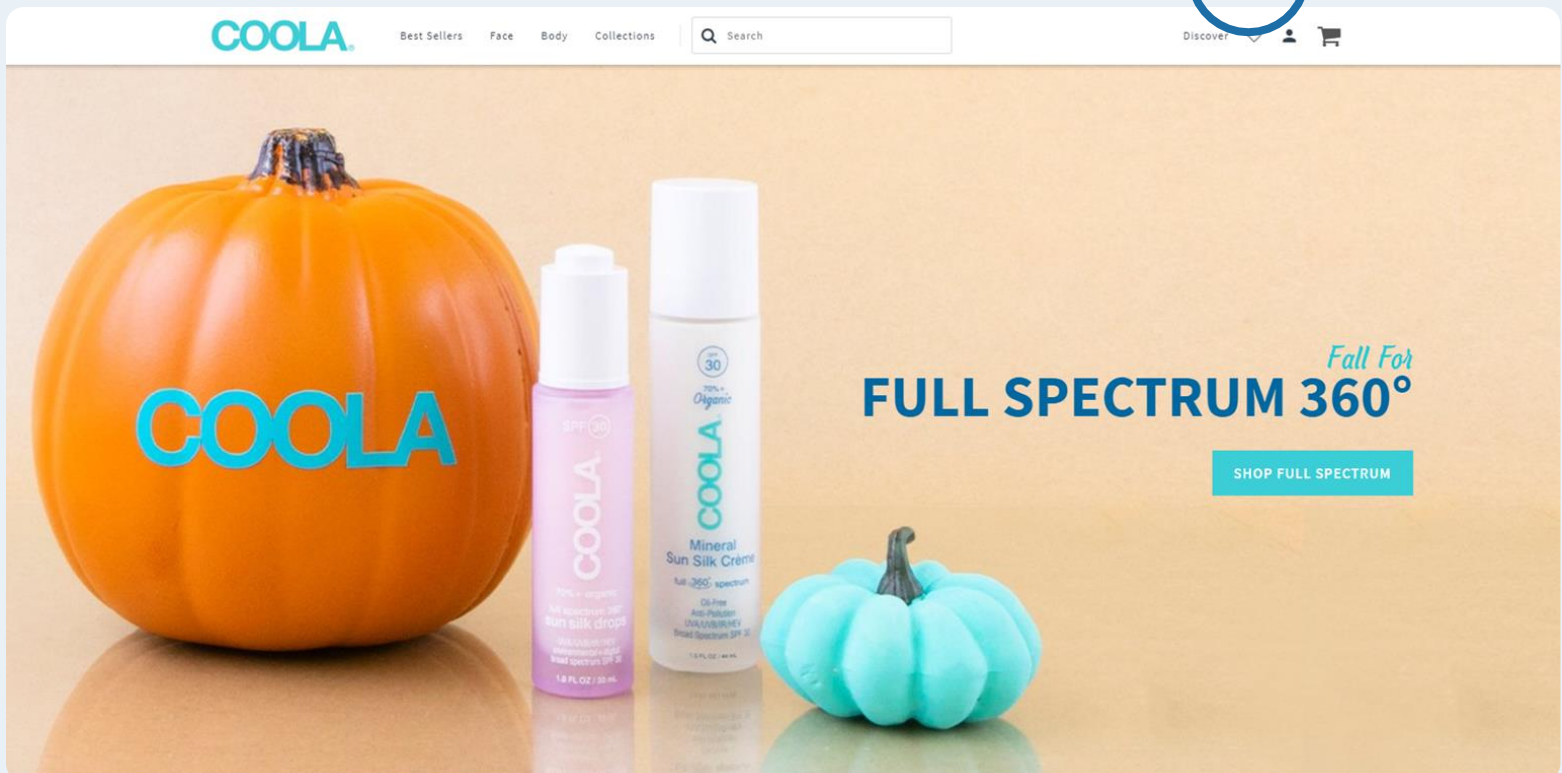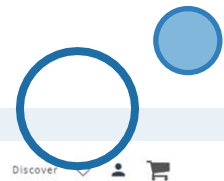
The Basics:
A prominent search bar

In order for your customers to find the products they want, they need to be able to see the search bar.

It may sound like common sense, but you'd be surprised how many ecommerce websites have search fields that are difficult to locate.

As much as we might like them to, most shoppers are simply not going to spend time exploring your website. If they want to search for something and don't immediately see the search bar – they will most likely churn.

Studies have shown that having an open search field resulted in an additional 10% of shoppers using the function.

Additional features increased this number even further - features such as the inclusion of an icon and a call to action in the 'search' field, putting the bar in contrast with the background, increasing space around the bar, and placing it centrally.

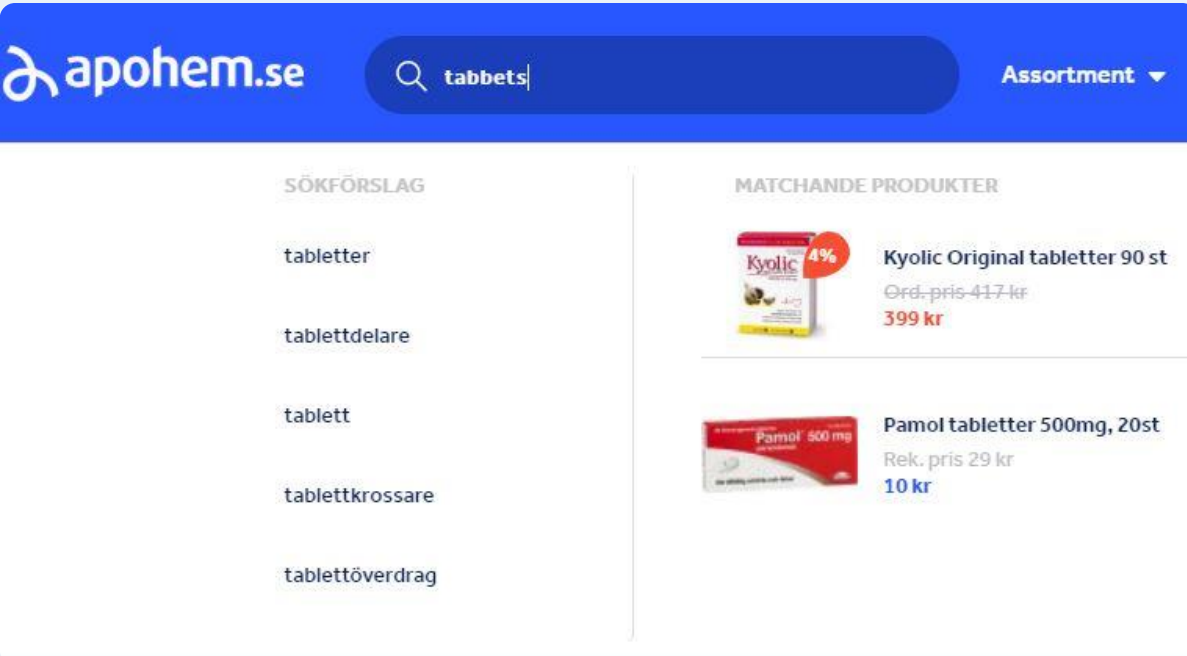*Findify client Coola using a highlighted search bar to nudge shoppers.*

The Basics: Spelling tolerance

Another basic, but extremely necessary, function is spelling tolerance.

Take, for example, the word "tablets". If a person browsing on your site makes a typing error and accidentally searches for "tabluts" or "tabbets", you want the search engine to recognize this and return the correct results regardless of slight misspelling.

If the shopper's search has an error, and the search engine returns no results, they are unlikely to search again - meaning you will lose a potential customer.

Spelling tolerance in action on Findify client Apohem's website.

The Basics:
Zero results workaround

A zero result occurs when a customer searches for something which you either don't have on your website, or they search for an item you usually have but which is now out of stock.

It's important that a zero results search leads to other relevant products so customers can see similar items they might possibly want to buy.

It's also important that analytics captures the term which caused the zero results search so the merchant can either order more items if something is out of stock, or consider buying a new product if a lot of their customers are searching for it.
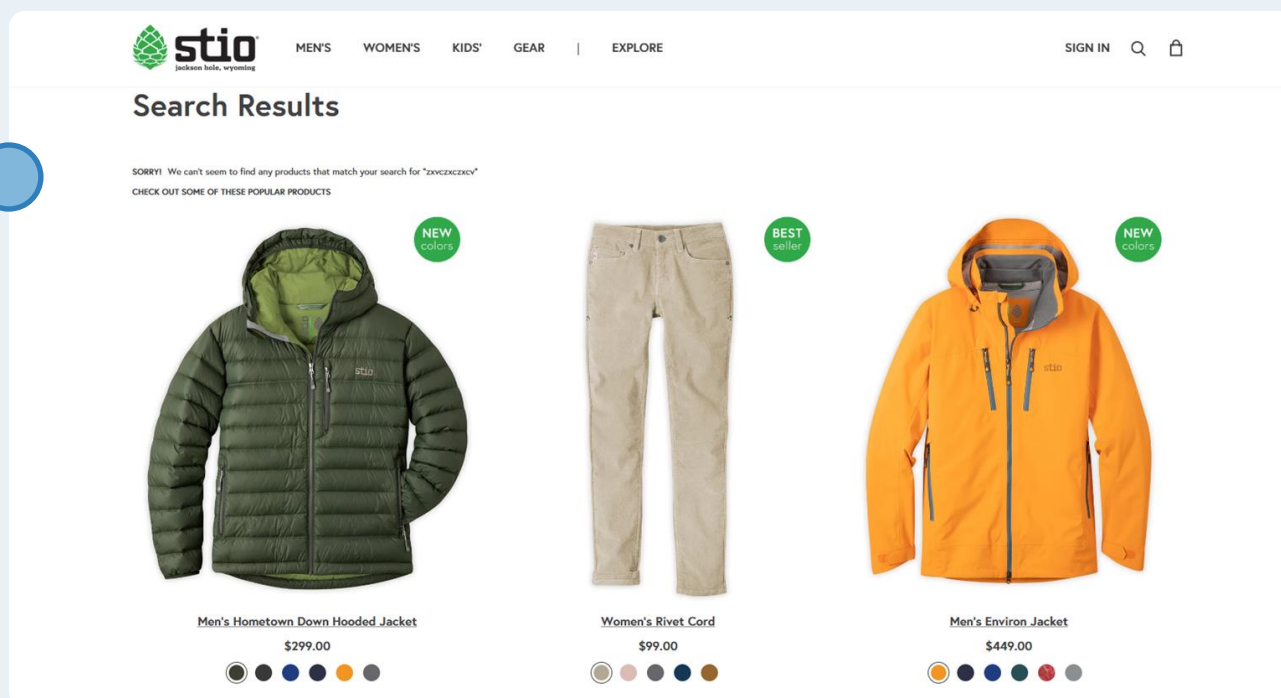
A zero result workaround in action on Findify client Stio's website.

Next Steps: Visual enhancements

Now that we've covered the basics, it's time to move on to next steps. These solutions will help you build upon basic site search capabilities, resulting in increased revenue and reduced churn.

Making search items pop

When it comes to marketing products, pictures really do speak louder than words.

Scientifically, the human brain retains only up to 20% of the information it reads. As soon as this information is paired with an image our information retention skyrockets to 65%.

As such, showing products as part of your search engine autocomplete is a no-brainer.

When researching site search providers it's important to select one which enables the merchant's brand experience to reach out through every aspect – which includes adding images to your autocomplete.

"Showing products as part of your search engine autocomplete is a no-brainer"

A zero result workaround in action on Findify client BH Cosmetics' website..

Next Steps: Leverage NLP

Natural Language Processing (NLP) is a form of Artificial Intelligence that extracts meaning from human language to make decisions based on the information.

This technology is integral when developing an excellent site search capability.

With it, your search bar can interpret the meaning of words in the same was as a human salesperson and can tell the difference between the product, a product attribute, a category, and a brand.

Take, for example, the search term "Black Sneaker 11".

Using NLP, an excellent site search will be able to tell the difference between every single word, ensuring accurate results.

It knows "Black" is the attribute you're looking for, "Sneaker" is the product, and "11" has to be the size you want to order.

Findify client Rocket Dog leveraging NLP for accurate search results.

Next Steps: Basic personalization

The very definition of personalization, according to the Oxford Dictionary, is the act of designing or producing something to meet someone's individual needs.

We all know how important it is these days, in retails terms, to provide a highly personalized shopping experience for customers.

Not only does it make them feel valued and special, thereby increasing the chance of repeat business, it also ensures they can immediately access the items they personally require, as fast as possible. This means they are more likely to convert from window shopper to paying customer.

In traditional brick and mortar stores, this is perhaps seen best in the form of a floating attendant – a shop clerk who is on hand to greet customers and ask "Is there something specific you're looking for?"

A website's search bar is essentially the online equivalent of this floating store clerk. It's where your customers go when they want to find something specific.

These days there are many companies jumping on the personalization bandwagon, making a big deal about how they're providing a personalized search capability at a low cost.

Companies offering this basic level of search personalization do so only by way of aggregation.

Their software collects general information on the masses, and then tailors search results depending on current trends and how the majority of people generally tend to behave.

While this is great, as any level of personalization has been proven to increase conversion rates, deeper levels of personalization do exist and should be considered.
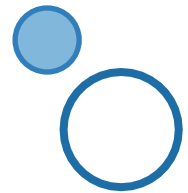
"Deeper levels of personalization do exist and should be considered"

Expert Level: Deeper personalization

<u>Individual personalization</u> collects information on the individual shopper, learning their habits and their own specific preferences.

Let's use a customer called Jane as an example. Jane goes to website A and searches for t-shirts. Website A doesn't have any levels of personalization, so her query returns 200 pages of results, sorted according to linguistic relevance. She looks at the first page, doesn't see anything she likes, and leaves.

Jane visits website B, a site with first level personalization. She again searches for t-shirts, and again gets 200 pages of results. This time there are sorted in order of what is most popular with others - plain black and white t-shirts for men and women in various sizes. She looks at the first page, sees a t-shirt she likes, and adds it to her cart.

Jane then visits website C, one of her favourite sites, and one that uses Artificial Intelligence to enable individual personalization.

She searches for t-shirts, gets 200 pages of results, and her first few hits are t-shirts for women, in her general size, in her favourite colours and patterns. She adds three t-shirts to her cart.

But how did this happen?

The AI running in the background is, in real time, curating Jane's experience based on her individual actions. So, while she searches for women's clothing in a certain size range and looks at vibrant colours and patterns, this is what she gets more of.

Going one step further, the AI then decides to show Jane additional items that it thinks would go well with the t-shirts in her cart. Jane agrees, and buys a cardigan and a dark pair of jeans.

This example shows that first level personalization can increase conversions, but also that individual personalization can increase conversations even more, maximizing sales.

"Individual personalization can increase conversions even more, maximizing sales"
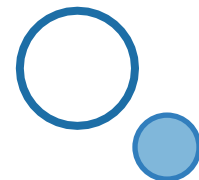
Expert Level: Synonym results

Quite often different people will refer to the same item in many different ways.

Take, for example, mobile vs cell phone, sweater vs jumper, trainers vs sneakers vs runners.

Merchants need to allow for this by making their eCommerce site search as intelligent as possible.

Part of this is implementing a synonym control tool which returns the correct product results no matter which way the customer describes the product they're looking for.

Many more basic site search providers offer only very limited synonym capabilities, using a set synonym dictionary.

Providers working with the latest in AI technology, however, have taken this one step further, using machine learning to ensure that synonyms are constantly being added behind the scenes.

Let's take the example of organic cotton. In Sweden, it is common to refer to this item as "green" cotton. If customers are searching for green cotton, and don't always get the desired result, it could result in churn.

Using AI, however, the machine-learning technology running in the background is constantly learning. It recognizes the trend in people searching for "green" cotton who end up buying organic cotton. It then suggests to the merchant that they add "green" as a synonym for "organic".
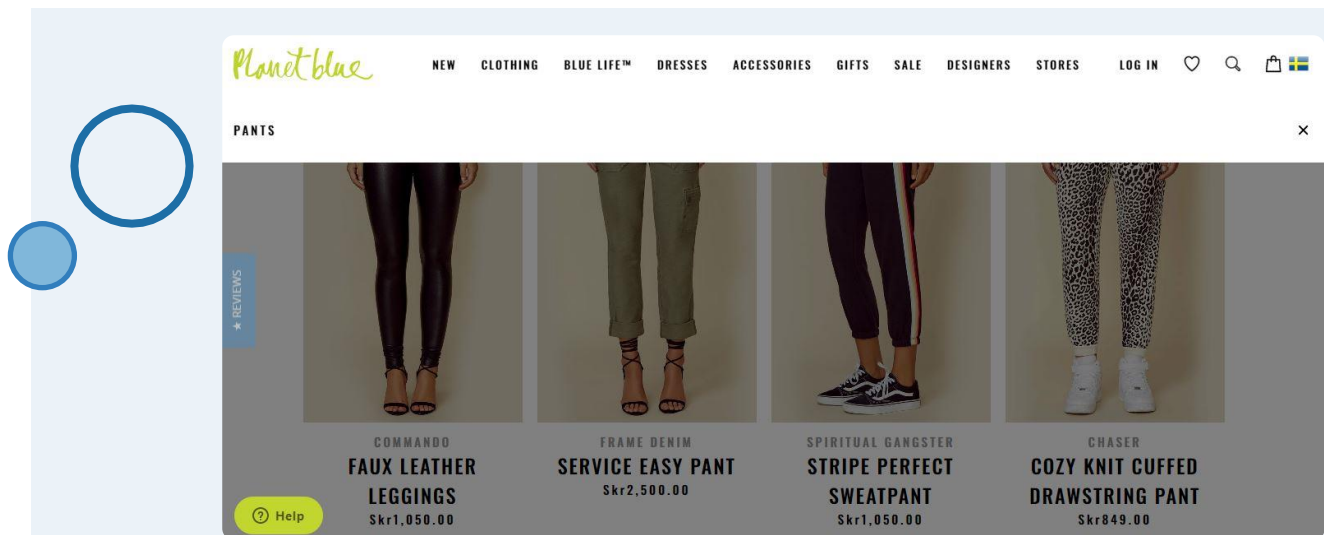
A search for 'Pants' on Findify client Planet Blue's website also returns results for leggings, pant, and sweatpant.

Expert Level: Bringing content closer

Many merchants have a rich content library available to them, mainly used for shopper recruitment.

But bringing the product even closer to the actual product experience allows merchants to further leverage this content, thereby strengthening the shopper journey.

Adding social content, such as blogs and Instagram feeds, to the search experience allows merchants to engage with shoppers directly at the point of purchase.

As an example, let's check back in with Jane.

Jane is still online, searching for t-shirts.

She can't decide which one she wants, so she toggles her view in the search screen so she can see the brand's social content which is associated with these specific t-shirts.

She finds Instagram pictures of people wearing various styles of the t-shirt, and reads a guest blog post written by an influencer she admires.

Jane's mind is now made up - in one click she toggles back to the product list and makes a purchase.
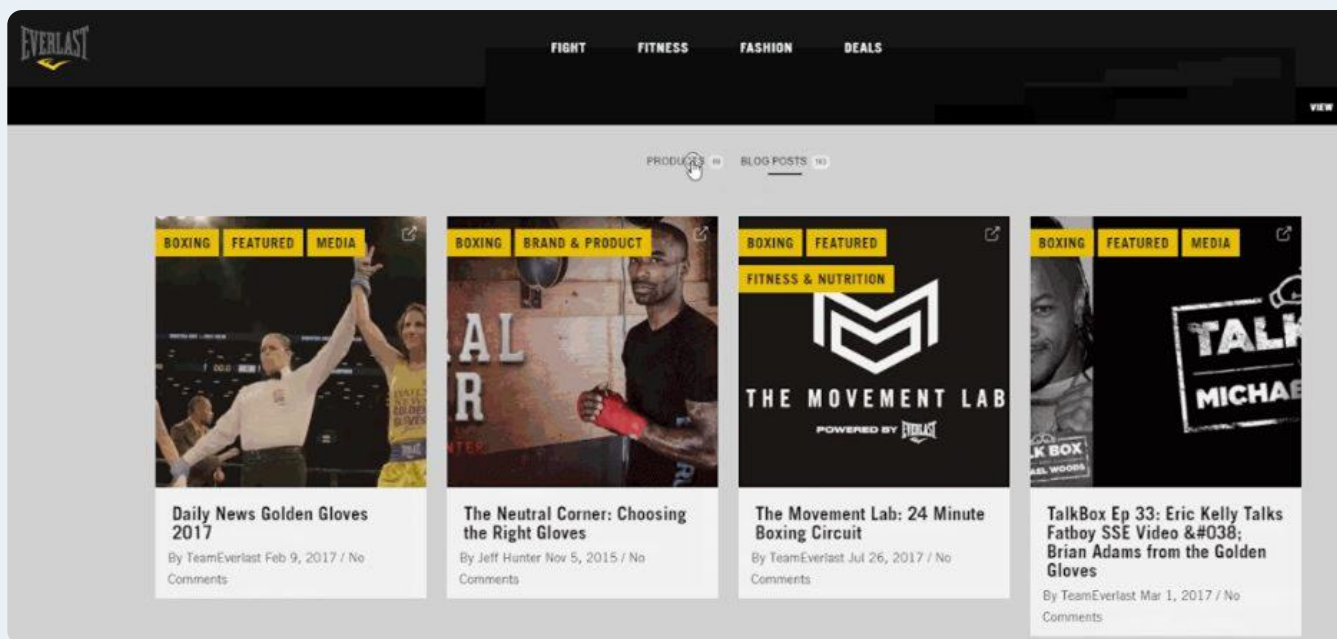
Findify client Everlast adding a blog feed to their search solution.

Return on Investment

A growing number of businesses are coming to the realisation that they now need to capitalize on new developments in the world of search personalization.

We see this every day at Findify, in the increasing amount of new queries we get from merchants looking to improve their performance in this area.

When a new merchant contacts us, we discuss their business with them and give them a no-strings-attached demonstration of our solution. As part of this, we also go through their website and indicate what we think could improve in terms of smart search capabilities.

To date, Findify has helped more than 1,800 merchants increase their revenue, and their conversion rate, and reduce churn.

To the right are a few of the success stories we have seen recently. Click on each link to read a full case study about each client.

✓ **Findify helped White River double their online sales**

✓ **UroTuning saw a 25% increase in conversion after integration with Findify**

✓ **Sleefs now has an 18% higher revenue per user thanks to Findify**

✓ **The Skin Nerd found Findify solutions resulted a 9% higher conversion rate**

Findify clients include:

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bh

Shopping Express

HARNEY & SONS
FINE TEAS
MASTER TEA BLENDERS
EST. 1983

JOHN HENRIC
SWEDEN

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bicyclesonline
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Findify is a leading machine learning and search personalization company which provides solutions to ecommerce businesses thereby increasing their revenue and reducing churn.

Want to know more about how your site search capability can make you money? Send us an email via **yourfriends@findify.io** or book a Findify demo by clicking the button below.

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