



PrettyLittleThing

Case Study

How AI-powered search transformed a leading fashion brand

Crownpeak powers PrettyLittleThing's search: an AI-powered search solution that delivers more accurate and relevant shopping experiences – that ultimately boost revenue and enhance the experience for shoppers.

Consumers are so used to the advanced search experiences offered by tech giants: Google, Amazon, Netflix, etc. Crownpeak is using similar artificial intelligence (AI) technologies to enhance the shopping experience for customers like PrettyLittleThing. This means users can now search specific details, make complex searches, and use ambiguous terms.

AI-powered search proved to be transformational for PrettyLittleThing. It reduced zero search results by 97% upon implementation. This increased conversion rates by 20% for affected searches in the UK, and 34% for affected searches in France.

Overview

Goals

- Enrich search results
- Enhance the shopping experience

Challenges

- Adapting to the rapid changes in the way consumers shop.

Solution

- Targeting the 15% of searches that were identified as complex/ long-tail
- Product recommendations now automated and accurate
- Implementing self-learning algorithms to tailor to PLT's customers

Results

- 34% increased conversion rate for affected searches in France
- 20% increase in conversion rates for affected searches in the UK
- 97% reduction in zero results
- 7% increase in rephrased searches in the UK, meaning shoppers found what they wanted faster
- 20% increase in the value per search for affected searches in the UK
- 41% increase in product detail page click rates from affected searches in the UK

Challenges:

Adapating to market changes and increasing search behaviors

PrettyLittleThing, like many other brands, has to adapt to rapid changes in the way consumers shop. Consumers are now looking for specific details, and complex searches are quickly becoming the norm.

Crownpeak's research found that more than 15% of searches are 'long-tail', i.e. low confidence searches that may not match a specific group of products. Often, these produce zero result searches; an untapped revenue stream for many brands.

Complex and unstructured search requests make it a challenge to serve relevant results. In order to serve relevant products, the search engine needs to understand the query, and then use signals from product data, to return results that match the original intent.

Using a combination of natural language processing, deep learning and computer vision, Crownpeak's AI-powered search builds a comprehensive, semantic representation of the products. This enables the AI to understand the underlying intent in search requests to match relevant products, even if they are not specifically mentioned in the search query.

"Crownpeak has been a trusted partner of ours for many years, so when the opportunity rose to implement their new AI-powered search technology we couldn't pass it up."

Leanne Clancy, IT Director, PrettyLittleThing

Solution:

AI-powered search to enrich search results that boost conversion

Crownpeak worked with PrettyLittleThing to review the search patterns on their UK and French sites. They focused on the 15% of searches that were identified as complex and long-tail.

Without AI, these search queries would have produced low confidence results using approximations.

Now, with AI and a technique called semantic matching, the intent behind search requests and thus the products they represent, can be understood for the first time. And with the self-learning algorithms used by AI, the experience is continuously optimized in the background.

During this process, it was important for the PrettyLittleThing merchandising team to have control over how the searches are managed.

Crownpeak gave them the ability to maintain creative control so the merchandising team could manage searches, better execute promotional plans and tailor search experiences for identified queries.

15%

of searches are 'long-tail'

Results:

How PrettyLittleThing used Crownpeak's new AI-powered solution



Visual synonym

Using data and product images, AI could also extract relevant information about products, which further helps build a comprehensive knowledge of products, even if that data is missing. It also understands synonyms for specific features, such as 'graphic' and 'print', which can be identified from product images themselves.



Intent matching and understanding

AI can return relevant search results by identifying the intent behind ambiguous searches. For example, 'baggy' often means oversized, and Crownpeak's AI-powered search continuously learns and returns relevant searches based on this.



A more human search

Shoppers can now search naturally with PrettyLittleThing and AI understands. Crownpeak's AI-powered search identifies keywords in long-tail, natural searches and returns highly relevant results. For example, if a shopper searches 'I am looking for a pink dress with long sleeves' it returns relevant results.



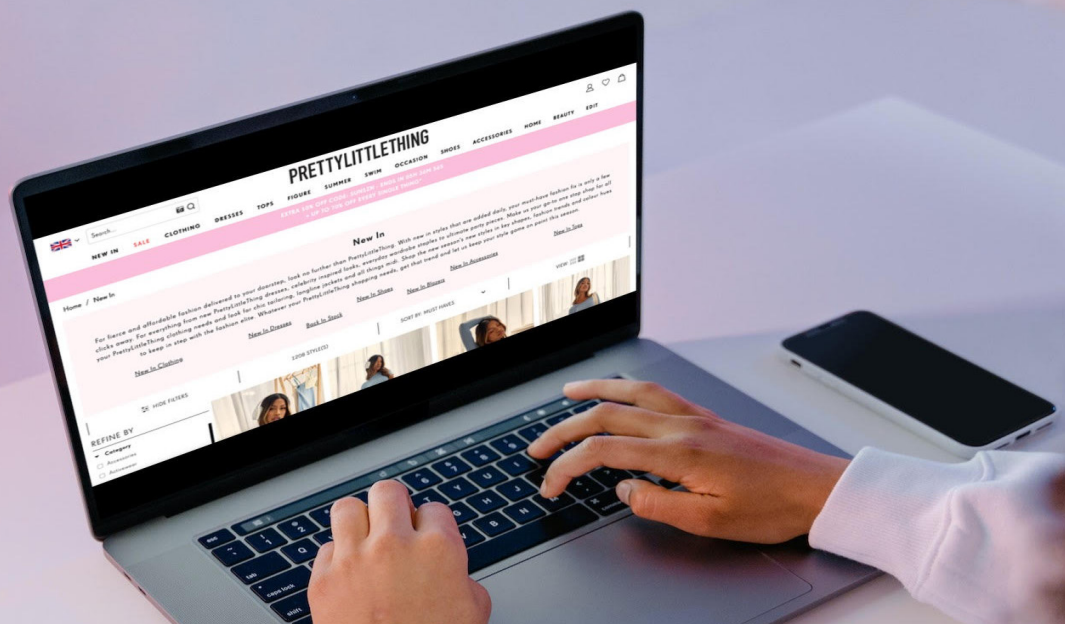
No more zero results pages

If a searched product does not exist, AI can still eliminate zero results by understanding and returning available products which respond to a similar intent or association with a search theme. This way, a similarly styled product is displayed to the shopper, without the dreaded zero results page.



Feature-led search results

The AI-powered search can quickly learn and identify patterns between similar looking features. This includes prints, colours and materials, all from the images and without the need for human-input synonyms.



Search technology that boosts conversion

By introducing AI-powered search across their UK and French stores, PrettyLittleThing saw a transformative improvement

20%

increase in conversion rates for affected searches in the UK

34%

increased conversion rate for affected searches in France

97%

reduction in zero results, now only impacting 0.1% of searches

7%

increase in rephrased searches in the UK, meaning shoppers found what they wanted faster

20%

increase in the value per search for affected searches in the UK

20%

increase in product detail page click rates from affected searches in the UK

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