



## Nomad Travel stops online customers wandering with SLI Systems

### Business problem:

The existing search function was providing irrelevant results negatively impacting on the business

### Solution:

SLI's hosted ecommerce site search service

### Result:

Customers can find what they are looking for more easily providing more qualified leads and increasing the time spent browsing on their site by 35%.

## Improved site search increases customer browsing times and delivers improved conversion

By 2020, an estimated 40 per cent of retail sales in the UK will be made online<sup>1</sup>. As a result, competition will become more intense, and customer expectations of online stores will increase - especially around usability and finding particular products.

With its online traffic increasing year-on-year and accounting for approximately 25 per cent of its last three years' sales, Nomad Travel Store knows only too well the importance of the internet as a channel to customers. As an industry pioneer, the company understood it needed to improve the usability of its website, so engaged SLI Systems to bring its on-site search to an advanced level. Originally we had concerns about outsourcing something so central to our website's navigational functions but working with SLI Systems has been excellent from the very beginning," said Stephen McGeachin, e-commerce manager at Nomad Travel. "The team did a great job in helping us set up our systems and we've found that there is always someone available who knows what they're talking about, should we need them."

### SLI differentiates Nomad from its competition

Founded in 1990, Nomad Travel supplies outdoor clothing, equipment, books and maps, medical supplies and vaccinations. It also supports many expedition organisations, including the Royal Geographic Society, who venture out to remote countries often participating in conservation work or independent expeditions that have set personal challenges. It now has seven stores and clinics across the UK and a growing online presence.

***"SLI Systems has enabled us to better strategically align our marketing with the business and quickly react to customer requirements."***

*Stephen McGeachin  
E-commerce Manager, Nomad Travel Store*



1. According to price comparison service, uSwitch.

As McGeachin explained, the shortcomings of the search and navigation tools on its website, which it had developed in-house, were becoming increasingly apparent and impacting on business.

“The search function on our old site had been completely neglected and would bring up all types of irrelevant product results. We realised that if we were going to continue making a successful transition from the high street to the online world, then we would need to talk to some experts to improve the overall experience for our customers - that’s when we started looking at search.”

“The existing search function on our home-grown site was fairly basic and only provided product information, but I also wanted to be able to provide a wider range of supporting information for travellers, based on the areas and items that other visitors had looked at.”

The reason for this added functionality was to differentiate Nomad Travel from its competition by providing customers with a one-stop-shop for all their travel needs - from equipment to travel information and advice, such as which regions exposed travellers to the greatest risk of Malaria and how best to manage those risks. In doing so, the team has seen real improvements in the length of time visitors spend on the site, as McGeachin explained:

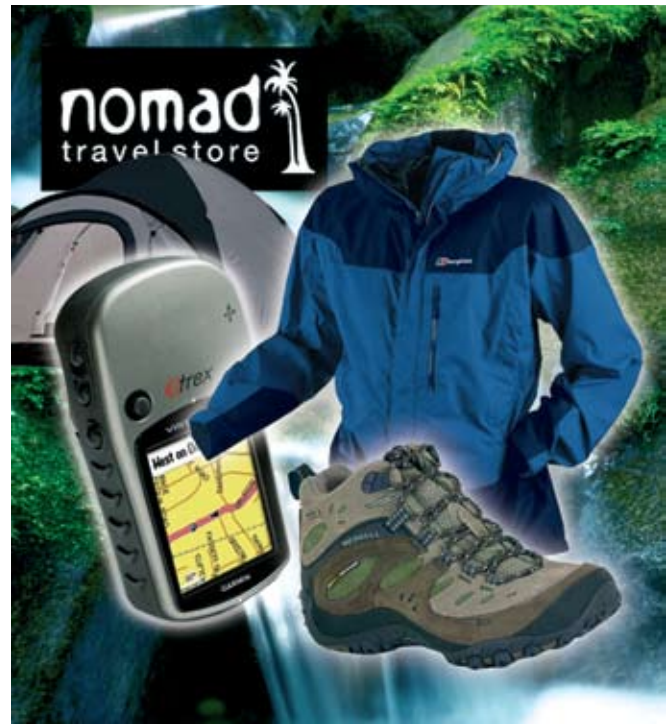
“We are already noticing significant improvements to our site, for example, user engagement, (i.e. the amount of time spent on the site and the number of pages viewed), has increased significantly and individuals have spent, on average, 1.15 minutes (or 35%) longer browsing the site during the last year.”

### Learning Search enhances the user experience

SLI Systems’ technology is designed to enhance the end-user experience by continually learning from visitors to the site, which delivers increasingly more relevant site search results over time. This means that users can find what they are looking for more quickly.

Sites implementing SLI’s ‘Learning Search’ have seen improved customer ‘conversion’ rates (i.e. percentage of people actually buying when they click on a site), by as much as 60 per cent.

“From the statistics so far, we’re already getting considerably more qualified leads and this is very much down to site



visitors being able to find what they want more easily,” said McGeachin. “Before, when people entered a brand name into our search bar, they wouldn’t find it if they misspelled it - a common example of this was ‘Lowe Alpine’, which is one of our most popular brands, but people misspelled in various ways. Now, using Learning Search, we can pick up the various spellings, correct them and take customers to the items they’re looking for, which ultimately improves conversion and sales.”

With the new search the company now also has far greater control over the positioning of promotional banners across its website. If the team decides to have a sale on bags, for example, they now have the ability to instantly advertise that sale and link it to the search function using ‘dynamic banners’.

“The level of control, combined with the improved functionality and feedback on customer shopping habits that SLI Systems gives us, has enabled us to better strategically align our marketing with the business and quickly react to customer requirements - based on what they actually want, rather than what we could postulate our customers are looking for,” concluded McGeachin.

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