funnelback.

British Columbia Institute of Technology

Contents

The Organization

Founded in 1964, British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) inspires students beyond classroom studies and provides job-ready graduates to industries across Canada and the world.

BCIT's renowned applied education and training model is significant to the prosperity of the province of British Columbia and Canada. BCIT has established itself as one of Canada's leading educational institutions in business, technology and trades programs.

INDUSTRY

Higher Education

COUNTRY

Canada

WEBSITE

www.bcit.ca

SEARCH FEATURES

Funnelback for Higher Education

Faceted Navigation

Search Page Promotions

People Search

Related Searches

Search History

The Situation

STRUGGLING WITH SEARCH

When Google discontinued support for their search appliance, the web services team at the British Columbia Institute of Technology replaced Google site search with another search tool. The results left something to be desired. Alan Etkin, Web Analyst at BCIT, recounts, "Unfortunately, the results proved to be nothing short of frustrating for our users - even though we made extensive customizations to the interface, and configured it to search the specifics of our content."

Within the configuration of this other search solution, the BCIT team prioritized searches for courses and programs, which had the unintended and adverse effect of burying results for common non-academic searches like parking, registration deadlines and service departments. After receiving negative feedback from the community, and after exploring the limited options for improving the configuration, they started to look at other products.

> *The results [before Funnelback] proved to be nothing short of frustrating for our users."*

CHOOSING A NEW SEARCH SOLUTION

The web services team decided on Funnelback after comparing the results of a test indexing of their content. The test managed to blend program, course and other content, providing consistently better search results for both academic and other searches. Etkin reports, "we ran a detailed comparison looking at results across 30 search terms, and Funnelback – with basically an out-of-the-box indexing – provided better results for 26 of the 30 terms."

Key Project Requirements

The primary goal for the new site search at BCIT is to help site visitors find the content they need, quickly, without having to make multiple searches. The team also wanted the ability to promote results with the same styling as standard results. And they needed the ability to customize the look and feel of their search results pages.

Improve user experience	Consistent design between site and search	Reduce search refinements	Increase conversions and goal values	Improved search with enhanced features

MEASURING WITH GOOGLE ANAYLTICS

The team had long been measuring the effectiveness of search with Google Analytics. In addition to the number of people using search, the team carefully considered search refinements - searchers who conduct a second search immediately after the first, likely because the first page did not contain the desired result.

The web team at BCIT had carefully calculated monetized goal values in Google Analytics for key behaviors on their site. Search, it turned out, was a high-value activity on the website. With Funnelback, they wanted to maximize these monetized behaviors and increase the value of each website visitor.

Their new site search solution would need to increase the number of search users and reduce the number of search refinements.

The Solution

The team at BCIT and Funnelback worked together to implement **Funnelback for Higher Education**. The faceted navigation, people search and related searches were important factors in creating a positive search experience for the team and website visitors.

Funnelback's best bet feature and curator tool empowered the team to customize results in the style that matched BCIT's existing results. The web team at BCIT promoted results to the top of search results pages that answered the most searched terms over the previous year.

FUNNELBACK FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

FACETED NAVIGATION

SEARCH PAGE PROMOTIONS

PEOPLE SEARCH

RELATED SEARCHES

SEARCH HISTORY

> "
> *When we rolled out Funnelback, we kept the same look and feel of our previous customized interface, so any change in user experience was based on performance, and not design/usability."*
>
> **ALAN ETKIN**, BCIT

The Results

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DECREASING SEARCH REFINEMENTS

"Our goal for internal search is to help site visitors find the content they need, quickly, without having to make multiple refinements to their search terms," noted Alan Etkin at BCIT.

Using Google Analytics data to segment new and returning visitors to the BCIT site, the team has seen an overall 19% drop in search refinements for new visitors, and a 23% drop for returning users.

For mobile users, a growing percent of site traffic, search refinements have decreased 22%.

"Looking at our most searched terms over the previous year, we checked their search rankings and promoted approximately 50 to the top of the results. The search refinements for many of these terms dropped by up to 60%," Etkin reported.

Distinct from the earlier solutions, Funnelback allowed BCIT to promote results and appear with the same styling as other organic results.

The knowledge that visitors who use site search are more valuable to the institution has already had significant impact on their business goals and results.

Results (cont.)

ROI OF SEARCH

Continuing to monitor key metrics in Google Analytics, the team saw that over the first six months with Funnelback, **site search users have a per user goal value of approximately $114**, compared to the site average of $23.

Site visitors using Funnelback search are meeting more of BCIT's business goals. The team saw a 2.4% increase in **per user goal value** from search users since implementing Funnelback. By multiplying the increased dollar value by the total number of search users, BCIT has seen a solid return on investment.

Now the team is committed to drive more traffic to the BCIT site and encourage visitors to use internal site search as much as possible. With Funnelback, BCIT has an intelligent search engine to power the site experience and drive their business goals.
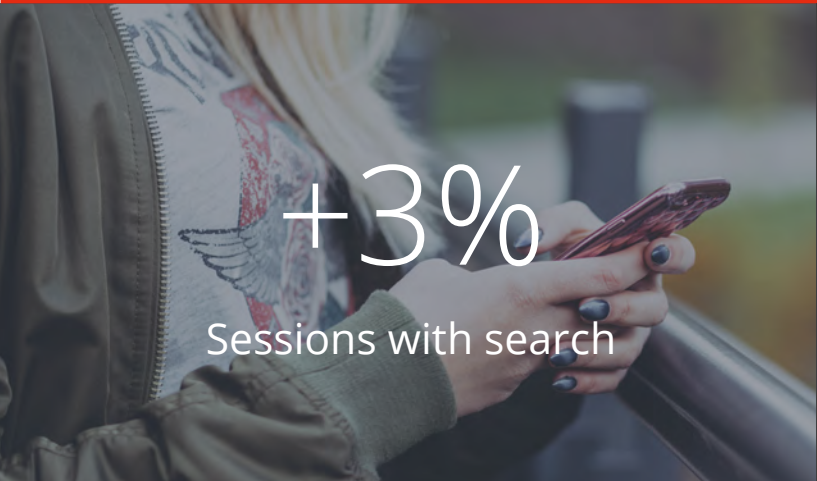
By improving our search results, user complaints about search have disappeared, our search performance metrics look great, and we're seeing a solid ROI."
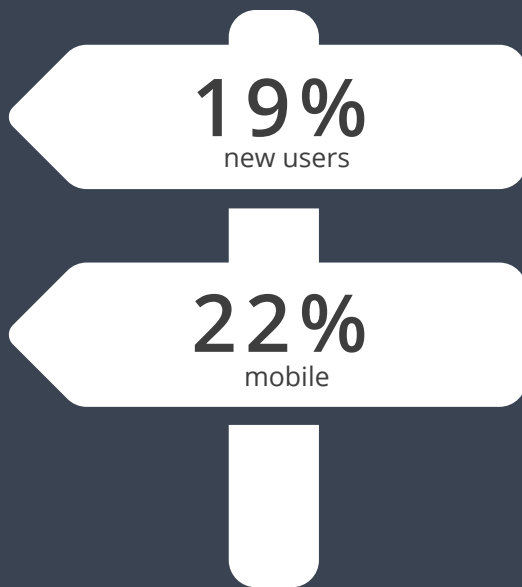
ALAN ETKIN, BCIT

By the Numbers

+3%
Sessions with search

Funnelback provided better results for

26/30

search terms
out-of-the-box

19%
new users

22%
mobile

Decrease in search refinements*

*Where a single search was not sufficient

Visitors that use site search have

5X

the goal value of non-searchers

+2.4%

Increase in **per user goal value** since implementing Funnelback

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