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case study

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The Challenge

Improving Site Search to Help Shoppers More Easily Navigate Thousands of Combinations

With features such as their acclaimed 55-point inspection, personal one-on-one advice, and an online *Guitar Gallery* packed with thousands of images of individual guitars, *Sweetwater* has provided a rich guitar shopping experience for many years. The challenge for *Sweetwater*'s ecommerce team was to relaunch their *Guitar Gallery* in time for the holiday season, with greatly expanded navigation and comparison features.

Sweetwater's original *Guitar Gallery* had been a wild success with customers. Since the *Guitar Gallery*'s debut in 2004, *Sweetwater*'s guitar business had grown to become one of their top categories. But, with thousands of guitars in the gallery, spanning a wide variety of features and price points, this major online music equipment retailer wanted to give customers faster and easier navigation options.

Sweetwater wanted to:

- Allow customers to search by various guitar attributes (e.g. price, body style, materials, color, type of pickups, etc.).

- Return results ranked by the attributes most important to the shopper.

- Be able to store user favorites to eliminate the need to re-find guitars.

- Provide visitors the convenience of comparing guitars side by side.

The Solution

Pressed for time before the holiday rush, *Sweetwater* reached out to *Thanx Media*, their *Site Search* provider to implement an advanced series of filters that would allow visitors to quickly find guitars with a specific set of attributes. Once *Sweetwater*'s team had defined the design and functionality, they looked to *Thanx Media* to provide additional technical expertise and industry knowledge on how to integrate their improvements in a timely fashion.

According to Mike Clem, Sweetwater's Director of Ecommerce, "With the new *Guitar Gallery*, we wanted customers to easily search by the features that were most important to them. The *Thanx* team helped us do this quickly, saving invaluable development time."

Thanx Media helped Mike and his team implement a one-of-a-kind search experience within their revamped *Guitar Gallery*. *Thanx Media*'s team worked with *Sweetwater* to create a multi-select functionality environment that allowed the visitor to search and then refine their results across multiple attributes. The customized refinement process has enabled *Sweetwater*'s visitors to quickly and easily find the perfect guitar based on their specified criteria.

According to Clem, "The *Thanx Media* team was great to work with. They brought energy, creative problem solving, and flexibility to the table. With their assistance we were able to implement the improved *Site Search* tool in about three months."

The Results

The *Sweetwater* and *Thanx Media* teams worked closely together to deliver a revised *Site Search* solution on time and on budget.

Since launching the new and improved *Guitar Gallery* in early September, *Sweetwater*'s guitar sales have grown dramatically, and the *Guitar Gallery* is consistently one of the most visited areas of the site. "The changes that *Thanx* has helped us implement have made the shopping experience more enjoyable than ever, and the feedback from customers has been incredible," says Clem.

About
Sweetwater

Sweetwater began business 34 years ago in Ft. Wayne, Indiana and is the country's most respected dealer in high-technology equipment for musicians, recording studios, and broadcasters – from microphones and digital recording systems to electric guitars to electronic keyboards and electronic drums. *Sweetwater* customers range from beginners to rock stars. The company's equipment can be found in Los Angeles, New York, and Nashville recording studios, TV and radio stations all across the country, as well as in tens of thousands of home recording studios nationwide. *Sweetwater* is built on a commitment to the highest level of customer service in the music technology. For more information, visit www.sweetwater.com.

About
Thanx Media

Thanx Media is an enterprise solutions company that focuses on three major part of a consumers website: Gathering all relevant or necessary content, managing that content through a proven Product Content Management (PCM) or Master Data Management (MDM), and growing revenue and conversions through relevant site search and guided navigation. With over 150 customers, partnerships with industry leaders, as well as breakthrough proprietary technology, *Thanx Media* is redefining the landscape of driving an effective website experience. Headquartered in Chicago, Illinois, *Thanx Media* is a private company with North American operations.
For more information, visit www.thanxmedia.com.