



“At Lawson, we think it’s critical to provide our global business customers with the ability to customize their individual searches to find exactly what they are looking for each and every time they visit our site.”

— Jeff Spencer
Corporate E-Business Manager
Lawson Products
www.lawsonproducts.com

Lawson Products is now able to:

- **Enable B2B customers and partners to quickly locate merchandise and product-related information**
- **Easily maintain a high level of 24X7 customer support**
- **Manage and update extensive product catalog without adding resources**
- **Adheres to its pricing models, i.e., contractual agreements, volume discounts, etc.**
- **Leverage its existing IT infrastructure**

EasyAsk

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Making it easier for your partners and commercial customers to do business with you is a prime objective, especially via the online channel. But offering “superior” 24X7 customer support — without using costly call centers — and extensive product-related information without overburdening online buyers with excessive links is a pressing challenge for B2B ecommerce firms.

Business Challenge

Lawson Products Inc. — one of the world’s largest international sellers and distributors of systems, services and products to the industrial, commercial and institutional maintenance, repair and replacement market — has a B2B ecommerce site that includes more than 45,000 SKUs.

By implementing EasyAsk’s advanced search and information-retrieval technology, commercial customers have instant access to those products and product-related information. One of the challenges that Lawson Products faced as a result of having a global presence was the ability to maintain a high level of customer support 24/7. Because of EasyAsk’s intuitive self-service capabilities, including a plain language interface that allows commercial accounts to enter their own chosen words in the search field, Lawson’s worldwide customers are able to access information and products quickly and easily at their convenience.

And because Lawson’s global customer base has vastly differing levels of technical search proficiency, the company needed a more efficient way of providing information retrieval. With EasyAsk, customers can enter simple keywords and phrases or full-sentence inquiries into the search feature and immediately receive their exact results. For instance, customers can use the specific “part number” or “keyword” option at the top of the Lawson Products homepage (see large screenshot).

Lawson Products was also able to fully leverage EasyAsk’s merchandising and navigation features. A prime example of this is their use of about 50 attributes and images (see small screenshot), offering related items through its “Mates and Relates” program. This feature allows business partners to view associated items that they might be interested in purchasing — thus, better servicing their customers while improving Lawson’s up-sell and cross-sell opportunities.

IT Challenge

Because of today’s economic climate, organizations cannot afford to scrap their existing IT infrastructure and overhaul their commerce sites. Lawson has an IBM environment: IBM DB2 database, WebSphere application server and OS390 hardware platform. Because EasyAsk has “Ready for IBM WebSphere Software” status, it was a seamless integration.

Another issue for Lawson is managing the vast amount of data that is housed within the company’s site, such as product-specific information, that its business customers require. With EasyAsk’s real-time indexing capabilities, Lawson is able to upload content quickly, enabling customers to access the answers to their questions easily, dramatically reducing taxing requests directly to its databases.

Results

Lawson Products is enabling its commercial accounts to quickly locate their products and related information via an advanced search capability, enhancing loyalty and strengthening relationships.



Lawson Products offers more than 50 attributes to help guide their commercial customers.