

## True Value Case Study

Customer service is everything when it's a face-to-face transaction

### *Challenge*

True Value wanted to provide its employees with instant access to product information so they could better serve the needs of their in-store customers.

### *Solution*

True Value implemented EasyAsk's<sup>®</sup> advanced search and information-retrieval technology.

### *Why EasyAsk*

With EasyAsk True Value could leverage its existing infrastructure, and EasyAsk's search technology accesses both structured and unstructured content, ensuring employees find all their relevant and complementary information, regardless of its format.

### *Benefit*

True Value employees are easily and quickly responding to the questions of its in-store consumer shoppers and turning them into satisfied and loyal buyers.

As a retailer, when you have shoppers in your brick-and-mortar store, it's imperative that the best customer service is available to them. After all, the "hot" customers are on site and could at any moment reach out for a product and buy it. The same level of service should be available in your online store. However, many need extra information before making that purchase. And if their questions aren't answered, you stand to lose a sale and potentially a long-term customer.

### Improving the In-Store Shopping Experience

True Value, one of the world's largest member-owned wholesale hardware cooperatives, includes approximately 6,100 independent retailer locations worldwide operating under the store identities of True Value, Grand Rental Station, Taylor Rental, Party Central, Home & Garden Showplace and Induserve Supply.

By implementing EasyAsk's advanced search and information retrieval technology, True Value member businesses, including True Value Hardware, have instant access to products and product-related information from True Values' 65,000 SKU catalog. As a result, True Value Hardware members can now offer their in-store customers higher levels of service due to the ability of retrieving specific information from its order-processing intranet.

Because of EasyAsk's superior linguistic processing and filtering capabilities, True Value has eliminated null searches due to

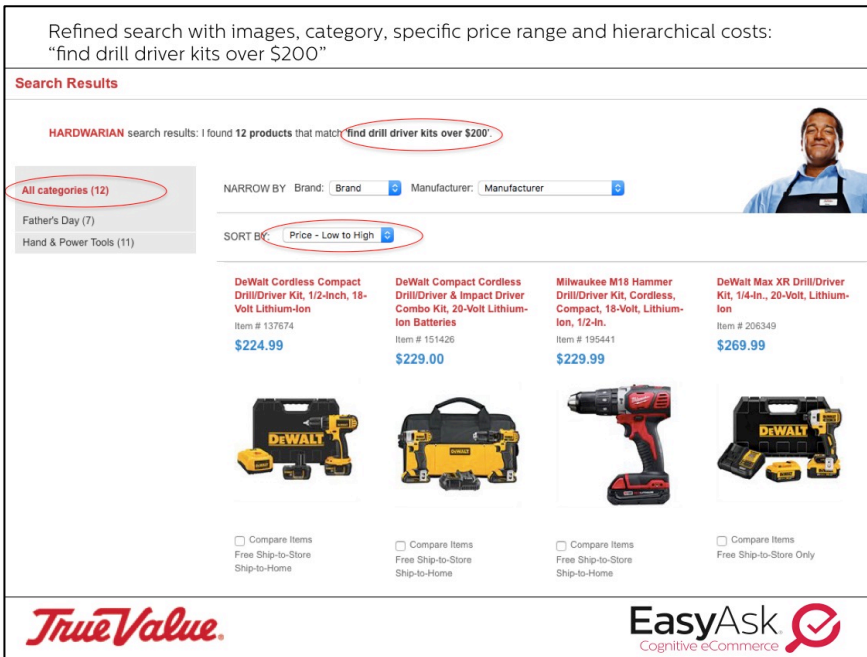
misspellings in queries or source databases. With EasyAsk, True Value members offer real-time insight into product delivery, product backgrounds and, as needed, appropriate alternatives that meet customer needs. For instance, True Value employees are now able use their own chosen words in the intranet's search feature, such as "Find drill driver kits over \$200," and retrieve exact results (see Figure 1) that can be refined with images and attributes, such as specific manufacturer, price range, etc.

## Leveraging an Existing Infrastructure

Because of today’s economic climate, organizations cannot afford to scrap their existing IT infrastructure and overhaul their websites, whether they are intranets, extranets or commerce based. Additionally, True Value didn’t want to waste time reformatting and “cleansing the data.”

EasyAsk searches all types of data formats (i.e., structured and unstructured) no matter where the data resides (i.e., database, repository, data warehouse, etc.). Training time is minimal because True Value’s employees—the end users—simply type in their question, SKU number, manufacturer, etc., into the search feature.

*“True Value is committed to providing the highest level of service to our members and their customers. Our order-processing intranet is a key point of contact with our members and, as such, an important component of our service commitment.” – Eric Lane, Director of E-Business*



## Better Service Leads to Satisfied Buyers

In addition to premium search and navigation features, EasyAsk enables True Value to integrate merchandising and marketing programs into their intranet searches through a full-featured dashboard that incorporates search results analysis. EasyAsk allows True Value to direct searches to items that are in stock as well as to present items in a specific order, for instance, lower-turn inventory or higher margin products. Because True Value has engaged EasyAsk’s advanced search and

information-retrieval technology, True Value employees are easily and quickly responding to the questions of its in-store consumer shoppers and turning them into satisfied and loyal buyers.

### **About EasyAsk Technologies, Inc.**

EasyAsk is the leading independent provider of intelligent natural language search and merchandising functionality. We integrate with and enhance your existing eCommerce site by providing an intuitive User Experience that lets shoppers simply ask for what they need and get the results they want.

Let us show you how much can be done when you put the power of EasyAsk at the fingertips of your customers and your merchandisers.

Contact us at 800 425-8200 or sales@easyask.com