



With the multi-channel configuration of FactFinder, we have a feature that is really worth its weight in gold.

Katja Sallie

eCommerce Product Owner

Optimization of B2B shops in 25 countries

The Berner Group is the central B2B trading partner for all materials in the construction, building maintenance, mobility sectors and a leading force of industry 4.0 solutions. Although the core business is direct sales, the group has also invested in its digital distribution channels. The results are more than 20 online shops offered in multiple languages and a product range of 230,000 items. It's therefore crucial that customers are able to procure the right products at lightning speed and for group-wide specifications to be automatically rolled out to online shops in all countries. The Berner Group has solved these and other challenges by switching from an open source search to FactFinder.



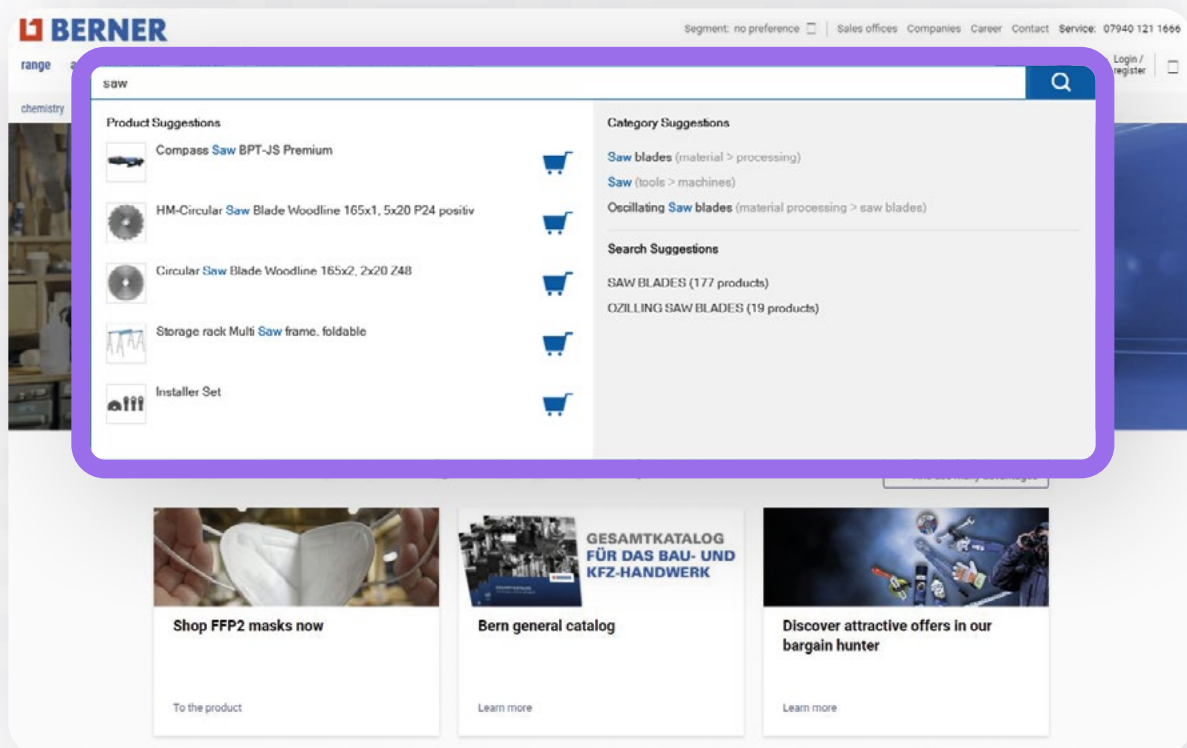
“The quality of search is a reflection of our brand”

The recent evolution and growth of B2B eCommerce is grabbing the attention of buyers, sellers and investors all over the world. For 2019, the global B2B eCommerce market is valued a whopping \$12.2 trillion USD and is over 6 times that of the B2C market – indicating that more and more traders are using digital sales channels. According to a study by ibi research, for 85% of customers, search is the most important function in the purchase process. Katja Sallie, eCommerce Product Owner at Berner Group, confirms that it’s true in reality. She says, “In our online shops, the vast majority of sessions start with a search. And this is exactly where our main problem used to be. Before we started working with FactFinder, shop visitors often found irrelevant products or no products at all. This was not only unfavorable for our conversion rate, but also for our image – after all, the main entry point for us is the search.”

Directly to the right products, despite technical terms

Procuring the right materials, tools or accessories in large assortments can be a test of patience in many B2B shops, and not only because of complicated product

descriptions – which buyers either often misspell or don’t even look for. Katja explains how the Berner Group’s eCommerce team solves this challenge. “In terms of the quality of search results, we have taken a big step forward since the introduction of FactFinder. Our analyses in the German and French-speaking shops show, for example, that significantly fewer zero results pages appear. On the one hand, this was possible because FactFinder improved our online shops with its error tolerance and self-learning capabilities, and on the other because we now have many tools to control the search results. Customers often use different search terms to find the same product. To ensure that the right product appears even if a colloquial term is used to search for it, we create synonym entries. This is a practical way for us to optimize the results without having to change anything in the product data.”



The suggest function on Berner's online shops helps buyers conveniently add items their shopping cart and quickly proceed to their next search request.

More orders in less time

If there is one success factor that is particularly decisive in B2B eCommerce, it's speed. Buyers expect to find the right products as quickly as possible. This isn't only because they are used to the B2C convenience from their personal lives, but also because they want to make the most of their working time. "Most of our customers already know how many of each item they intend to order," explains Katja. "With FactFinder, we are able to support this customer group in various ways. For example, the software allows search by product IDs and complex multi-terms such as 'zinc-coated lock washer'. Product ID searches are particularly popular with our buyers. We have also configured the suggest function so that an add-to-shopping-cart is displayed for each product suggestion, which makes the procurement process even easier."

Guided selling for non-expert customers

"The suggest-function is also important for buyers who don't know their way around or want to familiarize themselves with the products before purchasing," continues Katja. "FactFinder gives us the option of displaying blog articles and other content directly in the suggestions menu. This helps shoppers become aware of relevant content and current campaigns right at the beginning of their search." Berner also plans to make greater use of guided selling campaigns in the future. This is a software-supported consulting function that displays relevant products through interaction with the shop visitor. FactFinder asks the buyer product-related questions; every time an answer is selected the search results are narrowed and then followed by another question, until the selection is precisely filtered down. Katja describes future plans, "I see a lot of potential, especially with our matrix products – articles such as screws, which are available in multiple variants. For customers who don't know exactly which article specification is the right one, a digital shopping assistant can certainly increase the conversion rate."



Project data

Industry:

- B2B retailer of all materials for maintenance, repair and production in the construction, mobility and industrial sectors

Objectives:

- Accelerate the digital purchase process in all languages
- Enable fast search of 230,000 shop articles
- Draw shoppers' attention to current e-content campaigns
- Roll out group-wide specifications across international borders
- Make international shop management more efficient

FactFinder benefits:

- Customers save time thanks to the add-to-shopping-cart function featured through product ID searches and suggestions
- Significantly fewer zero results pages
- The use of the search function has increased by 20%
- Automatic consulting for non-expert visitors through content suggestions
- Simultaneous optimization of all decentralized international shops via multi-channel configuration
- Holistic eCommerce consulting and personal consultant who will support your long-term success

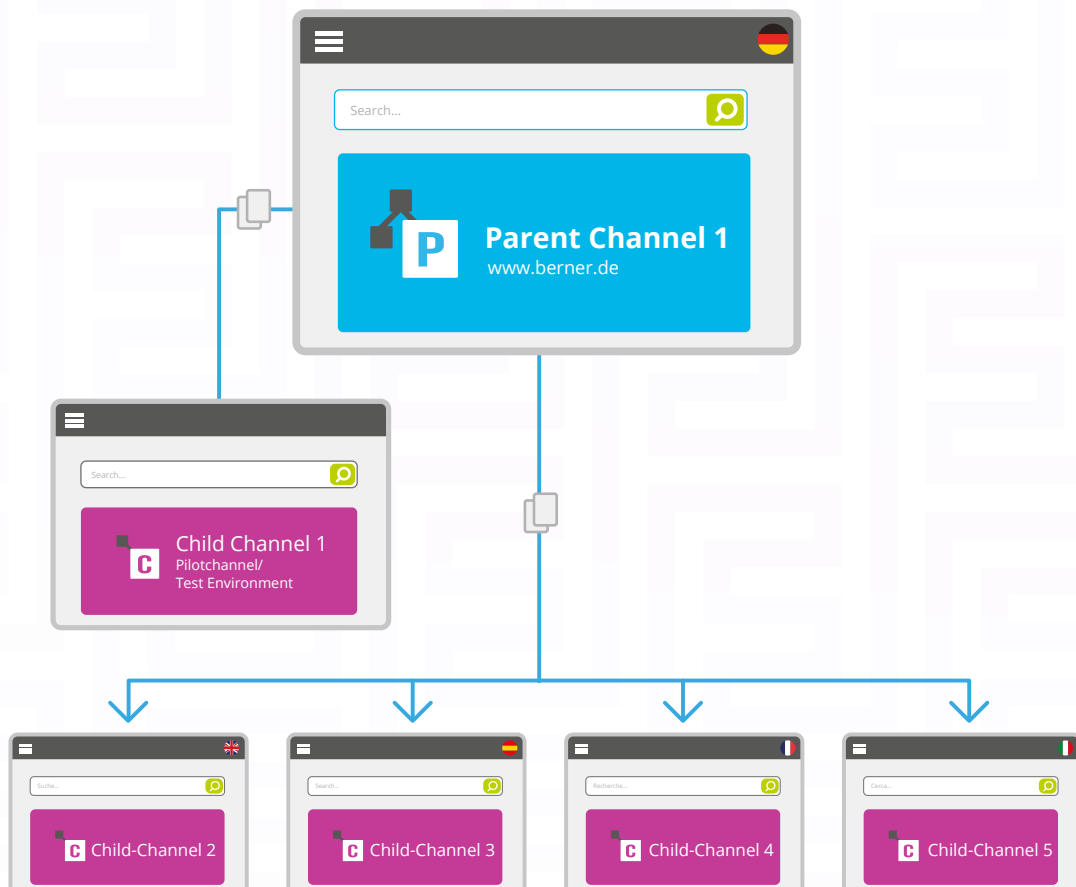
Efficient shop control with decentralized eCommerce structure

As an internationally active B2B trading partner, the Berner Group maintains local eCommerce teams in various national subsidiaries. For this reason, technologies that are used internationally have to meet very special requirements - and here is where the previously used open source search reached its limits. "It is extremely important for us to be able to roll out group-wide requirements from a central location. Alongside that, however, our local eCommerce managers must be able to implement fine adjustments such as synonyms, ranking rules or product promotions themselves. With FactFinder's multi-channel configuration, we have a feature that is really worth its weight in gold. Once a particular optimization or campaign has been successfully tested in the German shop, we can roll it out directly to all channels - without having to convert each of our 20 country shops individually. That is, of course, an enormous relief," says Katja.

Identify revenue potential through consulting

The Berner Group Management Team plans to continue the enhancement of the customer journey in their

international shops. However, the team doesn't have to do it alone - they are supported by experts. FactFinder consultants provide personalized advice on how to align the modules to your business objectives. In our expert training sessions, we teach retailers how to work successfully and efficiently with FactFinder. Katja tells of her personal experience, "I am very pleased with the personal support - communication and reaction times are great. There is a personal contact at FactFinder for any questions that we have. In addition to the Service Desk, which supports us for technical questions, we also use the consulting program on an hourly quota basis. This allows us to communicate regularly with Mr. Wagner, our consultant - with particular focus on topics such as product data optimization, recommendations and personalization."



Thanks to the multi-level rights system, Berner can quickly roll-out corporate guidelines across international channels with just one click. If needed, local eCommerce managers can then make fine adjustments to their shop.

25

locations in Europe

8,500

employees

5,500

field service employees

50

companies

€1 billion

annual revenue

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FactFinder supports Berner Group's eCommerce growth

- **Fast, reliable search.** Even with spelling mistakes, product ID entries or multi-word terms, buyers are still led directly to the right products. The results are significantly fewer zero results pages.
- **Suggestions list with shopping cart function.** Faster shopping in less time. Upon entering the first letters of a search, product suggestions are displayed which buyers can then add to their shopping cart.
- **Powerful results.** Filters adapt dynamically to the search results list and can be freely arranged and designed. Even with hundreds of items, buyers can quickly find what they are looking for.
- **Language-independent technology.** As the FactFinder core works in all languages, the Berner Group can make new, country-specific online shops retail-ready in record time.
- **Efficient shop control in 25 countries.** Multi-channel configuration allows for roll-out of successfully-tested optimizations and campaigns throughout all online shops with one click.
- **Holistic consulting.** With FactFinder, the Berner Group benefits from market-leading technology as well as first-class support and consulting in more than 20 online shops.



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Our eCommerce experts can offer support in multiple languages.

2,000+ online shops grow and excel with FactFinder

