



Industry  
Brief

Site Search, Navigation, Recommendations,  
SEO, Merchandising & Mobile Solutions for

## The Vehicle Parts & Accessories Industry

Shift your e-commerce into high gear, rev up sales and revenue



**E-commerce continues to be a sweet ride for the multibillion dollar** automobile parts and accessories industry. Driving faster than expected, the aftermarket auto parts industry first hit \$5 billion in online sales in 2014 in the United States and is predicted to breakthrough more than \$7 billion in sales in 2016, according to a 2014 study by Hedges & Company.

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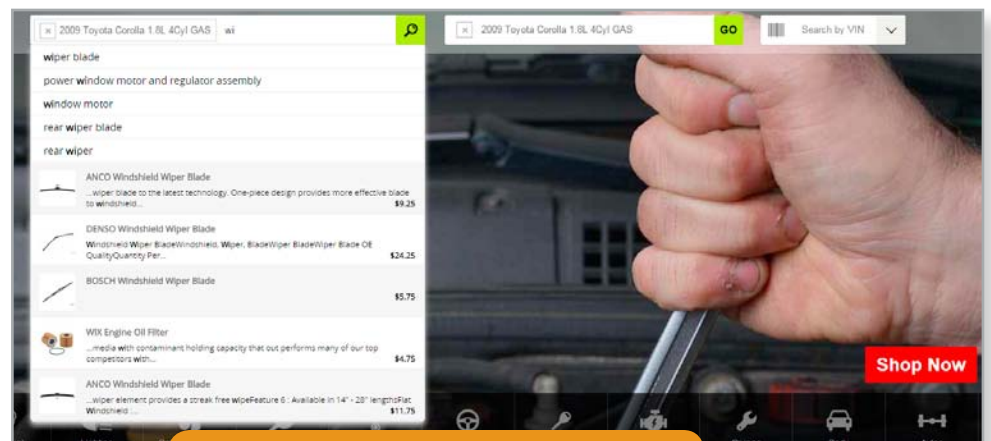
# Accelerate Your Online Success with Relevant Search Results

By 2020, the aftermarket auto parts industry is expected to be \$20 billion in North America and Europe, according to the 2015 Frost & Sullivan study, The Future of Parts and Service Retailing. In Australia, the \$380 million industry is growing at an annual compounded rate of 17%, according to Power Retail in 2015.

The open road of online shopping attracts men and women, do-it-yourselfers and do-it-for-me buyers as well as those replacing and upgrading parts, restoring collectible cars or modifying their rides. Nearly half (47%) of U.S. vehicle owners have purchased auto parts online, according to the results of the 2015 eBay Motors' Future of Automotive Shopping Survey. The 2015 UPS What's Driving the Automotive Parts Online Shopper study looked at consumers who have purchased auto parts and accessories online to find 52% of replacement buyers and 72% of upgrade buyers prefer to buy online versus in-store.

That said, the vehicle parts and accessories industry is not without roadblocks. With an extensive range of possible products including collision parts, engine parts and performance parts and accessories – each particular to a vehicle's year, make and model – it can be difficult for shoppers to confidently and quickly find what they need.

Whether your shoppers are knowledgeable gearheads or first-time auto part buyers, here are some ways you can drive sales and rev up conversions on your vehicle parts and accessories site.



Show results as soon as shoppers type into the search bar

## Start with Year, Make, Model

These three little words completely shape the online automobile shopping experience. Whether shoppers are buying one part or an entire vehicle, they have to be able to find what they want based on year, make and model.

The ability of your site to accurately do this relies heavily on having good data. While there is no substitute for a clean data feed, SLI Learning Search® can help by delivering the most relevant search results for search phrases. Our learned understanding of what shoppers are really looking for helps us connect them with the products they're most likely to buy.

In addition, powerful features like SLI Rich Auto Complete™ speed shoppers' paths to the right products by showing relevant suggestions as soon as visitors start typing letters into the search box.



Prompt shoppers to start their searches by entering year, make and model

TRY OUR NEW **PARTS SEARCH**   Hello, Sign In, Your Account

Select Your Vehicle



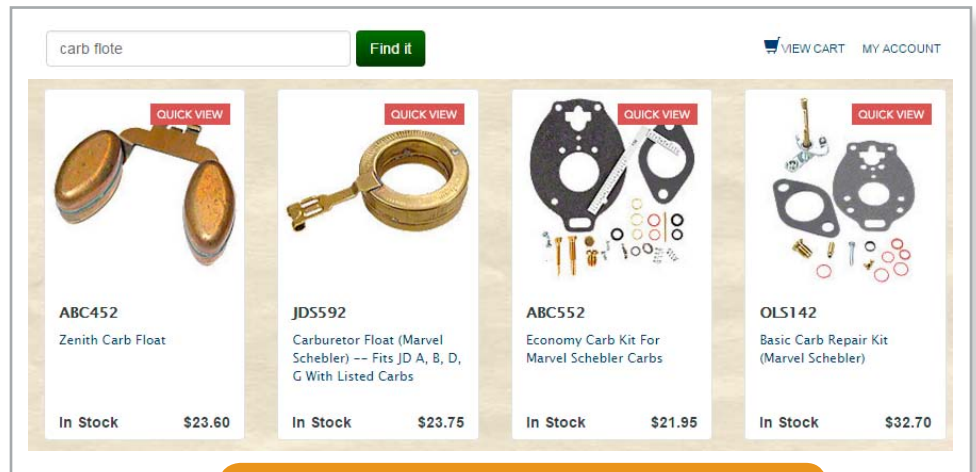
## Account for Thingamajigs and Whatchamacallits

A tire size includes letters, numbers and a forward slash – not to mention the SKU and model number. A search for a P215/65R15 95H tire might end up looking like P 215-65 R 15 95 H or 95H 215/65R. If your site search isn't smart enough to know what a shopper means, your visitors could get "no results" by mistake. Eliminate this risk by creating synonyms for common variations in how shoppers search for model numbers, SKUs and measurements along with often mistyped and misspelled searched terms.

## Be the How-To Expert

More people are willing to play mechanic and install auto parts themselves, but they need to know how. The 2015 UPS What's Driving the Automotive Parts Online Shopper study found 66% of those surveyed installed parts themselves, up from 62% in 2014. YouTube alone hosts more than 460,000 videos on vehicle repair. Make sure your shoppers find the information they need on your site.

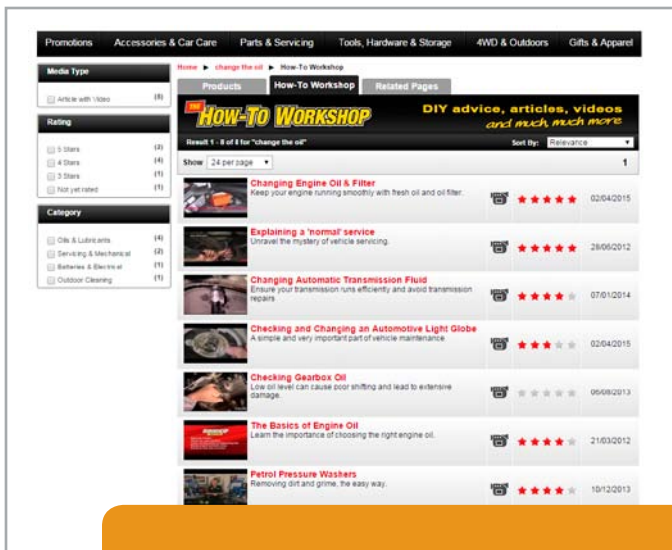
A superior site search experience will deliver all of your documents, online articles, video tutorials, reviews and other non-product content and make it easily searchable, so customers won't have to look elsewhere.



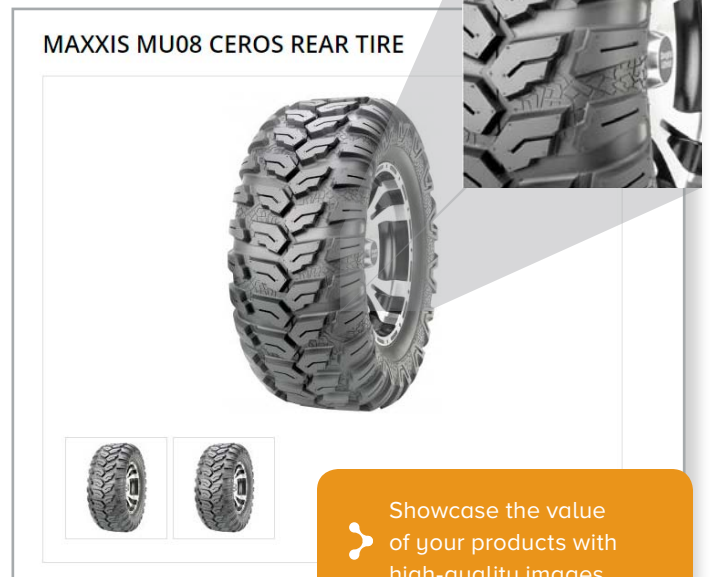
→ Create synonyms for common variations and misspellings to help eliminate "no results"

## Show Off Quality

Without being able to physically hold and inspect a product, online shoppers judge the quality of the part based on the product images. Use high-quality images and show multiple views with an option to mouse-over for a close-up look. This helps shoppers determine quality and confirm they are buying the right thing.



→ Deliver articles and how-to videos with your search results



→ Showcase the value of your products with high-quality images

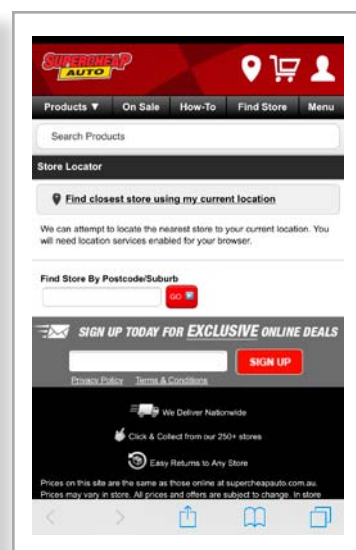
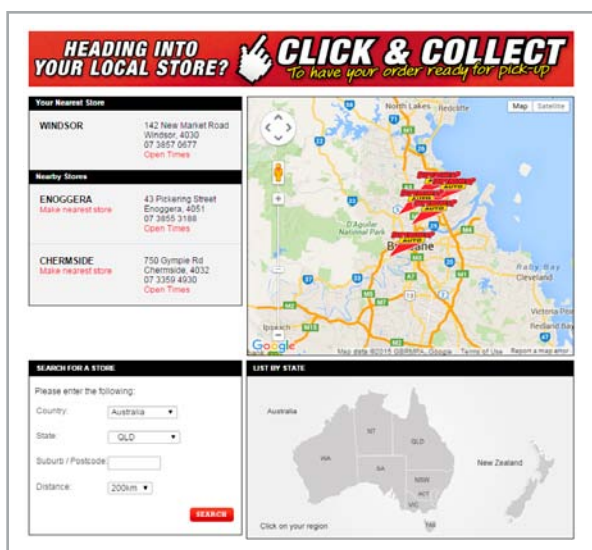
## Drive Shoppers to Your Site

Add year, make and model to every vehicle part and you'll quickly see why the vehicle parts and accessories industry has an almost endless number of possible long-tail searches. You can boost your existing SEO efforts by leveraging the most popular search terms for your site. SLI Site Champion® creates custom landing pages based on keywords that your site search visitors use. These user-generated pages are indexed and ranked by Internet search engines such as Google, Bing and Yahoo!, increasing page ranks so that more of your products are found.

## Direct Buyers to Your Store

Mobile shoppers are often trying to solve an immediate problem. This means they are more likely to want to know where to find your closest location and whether or not you have a particular product in stock. Cater to mobile shoppers by adding geolocation features, such as a store locator or the ability to search by local inventory. Mobile friendliness is especially important for car dealerships. Nearly 70 percent of consumers have used their mobile device to search for dealership information, according to the results of the 2015 eBay Motors' Future of Automotive Shopping Survey.

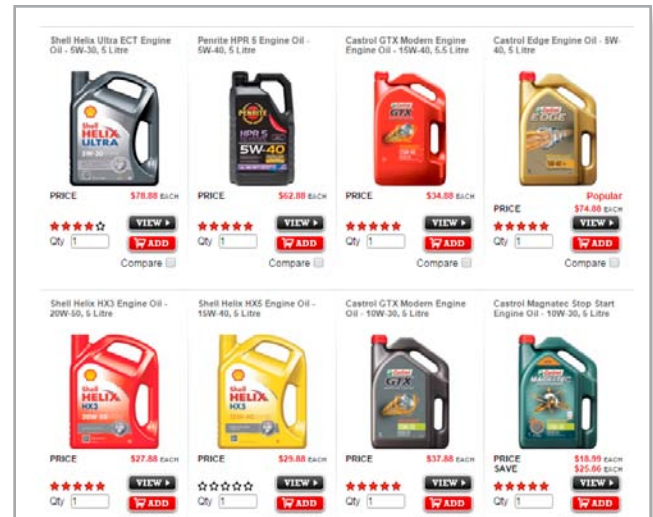
SLI Mobile™ features prominent search box placement, mobile navigation, easy-to-use buttons and succinct product information. As a bonus, the more mobile friendly your site is, the higher it will rank in Google's search page results.



Make sure shoppers can find your nearest location from any device

## Use Ratings, Reviews and Recommendations

Here's a stat to rev your engine: 71% of online auto part shoppers consider reviews more influential than other website features (UPS, 2015). Ratings and reviews boost buyer confidence while smart recommendations provide a tailored shopping experience.



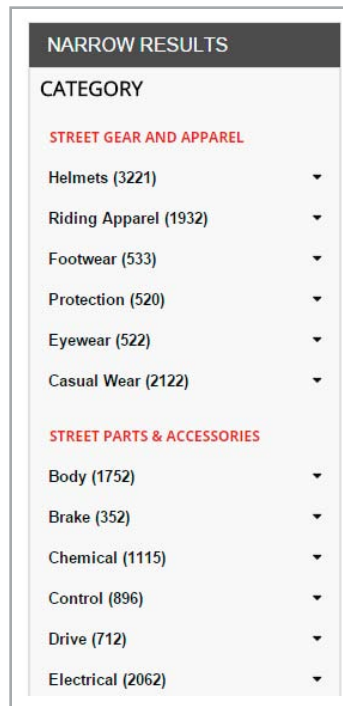
Guide shoppers to the best products by including ratings in your search results

Recommendations such as “Customers who bought this item also bought” and “Customers who viewed this item also viewed” let shoppers explore products they may have otherwise missed. SLI Learning Recommendations™ provides contextually relevant recommendations based on patented Learning Search® technology. This creates cross-sell and up-sell opportunities in different areas of your site. Also, adding “recently viewed” can be a great strategy for reminding shoppers where they left off.

## Refine Your Refinements and Navigation

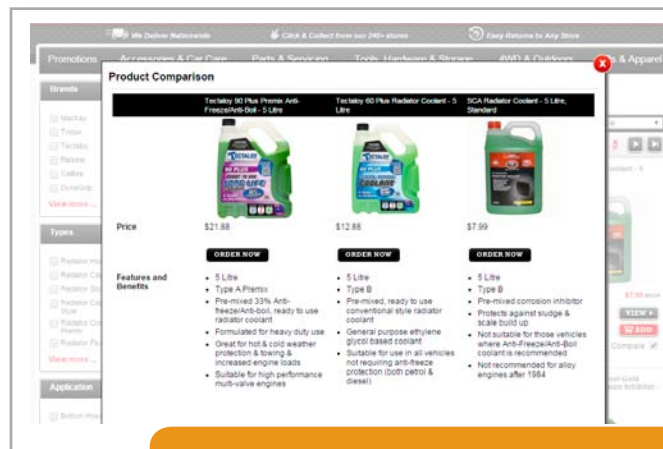
Improve your user experience by providing a consistent look and feel to your site search and navigation pages. SLI Learning Navigation® builds pages with the same facets and refinements as Learning Search®, making it easier for shoppers to connect with the products they want to buy.

Offer the same refinements across both search and navigation pages to create a consistent user experience



## Compare and Contrast

Help shoppers decide what to buy by letting them easily compare products. Include specs and features as well as price, ratings and reviews. (Don't forget year, make and model compatibility.) Your customers will appreciate the convenience of a snapshot view, which might be just what they need to place an order.



Help shoppers decide by allowing them to compare several products at once

## Leverage Your Search Data

Your search data is the key to your merchandising success. The search box is where your customers tell you exactly what they want in their own words. The analytics available with an advanced site search solution can give you the ability to easily pull reports and spot trends. The SLI Merchandising and Reporting Console keeps you up to date on your site's top search phrases and those ending in "no results." SLI Landing Page Creator™ lets you use this data to quickly create tailored landing pages that can be used in PPC campaigns, email promotions or as links from your home page or category pages.

## Deliver a Standout Shopping Experience

As you can see, there are many ways to ensure your vehicle parts site stands out from the rest. Whether your customers want to order replacement parts or read how-to guides, the e-commerce solutions mentioned above will give them smooth shopping experiences. Contact SLI Systems to learn more about learning-based search, navigation, recommendations, merchandising, mobile and SEO solutions that contribute to the success of top vehicle parts sites around the world.

## About SLI Systems

SLI Systems enables the world's leading e-commerce retailers to increase sales by connecting shoppers with the products they are most likely to buy. With proven search technology that learns from the activity of real site visitors, SLI delivers SaaS-based site search, navigation, merchandising, mobile, recommendations and SEO solutions that arm retailers with the tools they need for rapid growth.

To learn more visit [sli-systems.com](http://sli-systems.com), [sli-systems.com.au](http://sli-systems.com.au) or [sli-systems.co.uk](http://sli-systems.co.uk).