

Staples Advantage: Building a Visual eCommerce Strategy

STAPLES®

Background

Staples is a leading office supply retailer with 2,000 stores worldwide in 26 countries and a global ecommerce presence. Staples Business Advantage is their business-to-business arm, providing specialized pricing and dedicated account management to businesses from 20 employees on up. Its brand promise is “We make buying office products easy.”

Keeping the buying experience “easy” can be challenging with over a million SKUs. On the Staples website, 90% of visitors find their products with search, and the average search results in the presentation of 500 items, and some searches return thousands. Business buyers are looking for a quick and accurate path to purchase what they need, so it's important for Staples to continue to innovate its online shopping experience.

Visual Shopping

Seeing a large future role for visual search, Staples called on Allyke to implement their Visual Shopping Platform on their website. Working from a database of Staples SKUs and images, the Allyke team was able to provide a Visual Search Engine to quickly integrate with the Staples Advantage ecommerce engine.

Allyke allows Staples Advantage shoppers to:

- Explore the catalog of products in an intuitive, visual way
- Find the products they want faster
- Discover products that meet their needs

Allyke helps Staples Advantage:

- Improve conversion rates
- Grow AOV (average order value)
- Retain valuable repeat business customers

The Visual Search Engine enables shoppers to click a “find more like this” button on a product page to get an array of images of similar products. Allyke’s technology determines similarity using advanced machine learning algorithms to provide the most relevant matches and help shoppers find what they are seeking quickly.

The Allyke process also improves the efficiency for Staples to onboard new products. Unlike manual tagging of product images, or relying on inconsistent vendor-provided metadata, Allyke’s visual approach requires no human interaction once the image and SKU database is provided. This allows Staples Advantage customers to shop more effectively while enabling them

to discover more products along the way. This sort of discovery draws products from the entire catalog, not just from the “popular” items provided by conventional “people who bought this also bought that” algorithms.

“Staples believes that visual search will play a critical role in the future of eCommerce. We have partnered with Allyke and, together, created one of the first visual search eCommerce experiences.”

Steve Cox
Director, Global eCommerce Search, Staples, Inc.

The Results

With the Allyke Visual Shopping Platform, Staples Advantage provides their business customers with a more intuitive and effective shopping experience. Customers who search visually not only

find what they want faster, they also discover more products along the way. This increases average order value and customer loyalty, cementing Visual Search as a key part of Staples ongoing eCommerce strategy.

See Allyke for yourself: Get a demo with your own data

We can build a demo using just a list of SKUs and photo URLs.
Contact us for details and to arrange an upload of your inventory data.
Let us show you what visual shopping can do.

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