

DOES YOUR CX HAVE A DIY PROBLEM?

Discover the Incredible Limitations and Costly
Impacts of Living with Build-It-Yourself
CX Search Solutions

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Discover the incredible limitations and costly impacts of living with build-it-yourself CX search solutions.

You want your digital experience offerings to be stellar – so what could be holding them back? Whether enabling intelligent workplace experiences for employees or providing product search and discovery for commerce, the digital experience begins and ends with a search. 69% of digital shoppers use search, and 80% leave if they have a poor search experience.

Many companies build their digital experience search solutions from the ground up or use external providers that provide tools and a framework. These ‘Build-It-Yourself’ solutions seem attractive but can lead to many negative results. We created this guide to help you identify and avoid the painful consequences before it’s too late.

Let’s explore the extraordinary cost and impacts of build-everything solutions, including real dollars and other quantitative measures.

Tools and a Framework Are Good Enough, Right?

While having technology frameworks and tools like Elasticsearch, Solr, Google, and others seems like a great starting point, they often fall short of delivering the complete, tailored search solution your business needs. The reality? You get all the raw materials, but the blueprint and the expertise to construct a fully functional, high-performing search and discovery experience are missing.

Think of it like this: Imagine building a luxury car from scratch with just a toolbox and some engine parts. You might have the technical capability to assemble something that moves, but it’s unlikely to match the performance, safety, and user experience of a professionally engineered vehicle. Similarly, DIY search solutions, while functional, often lead to subpar experiences that hinder business goals.

69% OF DIGITAL SHOPPERS USE SEARCH,  **80% LEAVE IF THEY HAVE A POOR SEARCH EXPERIENCE.**

“Technical debt accumulated during the development and maintenance of DIY search solutions can hinder innovation and agility, leaving businesses struggling to keep up with evolving customer expectations.”

— *Harvard Business Review*

Here Are Five Common Pitfalls of Building Your Search Digital Experience:

- 1 A Lack of Out-of-the-Box Functionality:** Frameworks like Elasticsearch are powerful, but they require extensive configuration and customization to achieve even basic search functionality.
→ **Impact: Significant upfront investment in development time and resources.**
- 2 A Continuous Development Cycle:** As business needs evolve and customer expectations rise, DIY solutions require constant updates and enhancements.
→ **Impact: Perpetuates development teams in “build mode”, diverting resources from innovation and strategic initiatives.**
- 3 An Expertise Gap:** Building a truly effective search and product discovery experience demands a specialized skill set encompassing search algorithms, AI, machine learning, data management, and user experience design.
→ **Impact: Most businesses lack the in-house expertise to build and maintain such a complex system, leading to suboptimal results**
- 4 Scalability Challenges:** As data grows and user demands increase, DIY solutions can struggle to scale effectively.
→ **Impact: Slow performance, downtime, and a frustrating user experience.**
- 5 Missed Opportunities:** The focus on building and maintaining the search infrastructure can distract from core business objectives and/or from building truly differentiated user experiences.
→ **Impact: Companies may miss opportunities to innovate, personalize experiences and leverage AI to its full potential.**

DIY approaches burden businesses with high development costs, ongoing maintenance challenges, and a lack of agility. Leaders should shift their focus to solutions that offer out-of-the-box functionality, AI capabilities, and expert support.

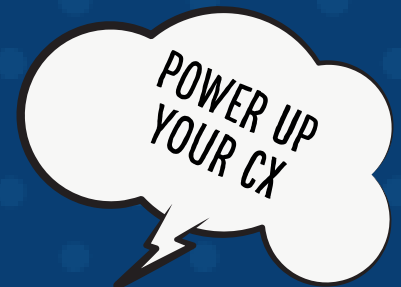


“The demand for skilled AI and search specialists far exceeds the supply, making it challenging and costly for businesses to build and maintain in-house expertise.”

— **McKinsey & Company**

“Companies building their own search solutions spend an average of 18 months on development, missing out on valuable market opportunities and potential revenue.”

— **Forrester Research**



What Happened to Our Agility and Innovation?

The DIY approach often backfires, leading to a frustrating loss of agility and innovation. The steep learning curve associated with tools like Elasticsearch can impede progress, slowing down implementation and hindering your ability to adapt to new market trends and customer needs.

The constant “build” cycle creates technical debt, inflates costs, and results in missed opportunities. Instead of focusing on innovation, your team constantly maintains a complex system, leaving little room for creative solutions and strategic initiatives.

Where Are the Results?

Getting to the results, outcomes, profits, or metrics required for a program to be impactful is often impossible when using developed-yourself solutions. That’s because companies have a lag in the deployment of their programs, missing market opportunities and lowering results.

Additionally, business leaders are tasked with showcasing business results and are separated from the technical teams that build and implement the programs. This misalignment can be costly because separate teams lack the unification to achieve great results.

Examples of Business Metrics Search Program Leaders Seek to Deliver:

- 1 E-commerce:** A pre-built solution with AI-powered recommendations can increase average order value by 10-15%.
- 2 Customer Support:** Self-service capabilities enabled by robust search can reduce support ticket volume by 20-30%, saving on labor costs.
- 3 Knowledge Management:** Improved search can reduce the time employees spend looking for information by up to 30%, increasing productivity.

ANY ‘DEVELOP-YOURSELF’ SOLUTION BURDENS YOUR TEAM WITH BUILDING RATHER THAN USING. PRE-BUILT SOLUTIONS, ON THE OTHER HAND, SPEED UP YOUR TEAM’S TIME TO VALUE WITH FEATURES LIKE:

- ✓ MACHINE LEARNING MODELS
- ✓ AI + GEN AI MODULES
- ✓ DATA CONNECTORS
- ✓ RECOMMENDER MODULES
- ✓ FLEXIBLE SIGNAL CAPTURING
- ✓ MERCHANDISING TOOLS
- ✓ CHATBOT APPS AND INTEGRATIONS
- ✓ DATA CONNECTORS
- ✓ BEST-IN-CLASS RELEVANCE AUTOMATION
- ✓ PERSONALIZATION AUTOMATION, MODELS, AND RULES



Why Are My Business and IT Teams Misaligned?

The “build-it-yourself” approach to search and product discovery often creates a rift between business leaders and the technical teams responsible for implementation. This misalignment stems from several factors:

Different Priorities and Goals: Business leaders are focused on increased sales, improved customer satisfaction, and enhanced brand loyalty. Technical teams, on the other hand, may prioritize technical excellence, scalability, and maintainability of the solution. These differing priorities can lead to conflicts and misunderstandings during the development process.

Communication Gaps: Technical teams often struggle to translate the nuanced needs of business users into technical requirements. Jargon, technical limitations, and a lack of shared understanding can hinder effective communication, resulting in a solution that doesn’t fully meet business expectations.

Evolving Business Needs: A DIY solution built on rigid technical foundations may not be agile enough to adapt to new requirements or market trends. This can create frustration for business leaders who feel their needs are not being adequately addressed.

Lack of Domain Expertise: Technical teams might lack deep domain expertise in specific business areas, making it difficult to anticipate and address the unique challenges of search and product discovery in a particular industry or vertical.

Resource Constraints: Building and maintaining a custom search solution can be resource-intensive, requiring ongoing investment in development, infrastructure, and maintenance. This can strain IT resources and delay the implementation of new features or enhancements.



Exemplifying the Misalignment:

Scenario 1: E-commerce Personalization: A merchandising team wants to implement personalized product recommendations based on customer browsing history. The technical team might struggle to integrate the necessary data sources or implement complex algorithms, resulting in a less effective personalization strategy.

Scenario 2: B2B Customer Support: A customer support team wants to provide self-service capabilities with a knowledge base search. The technical team might focus on basic keyword search, neglecting the need for advanced semantic understanding and context-aware search, hindering users from finding relevant answers.

Scenario 3: Financial Services Research: A research team must search vast financial data, including complex terminology and jargon. The technical team might build a generic search solution that struggles to understand the domain-specific language, limiting the effectiveness of the research process.



What's the Real Impact to My Business?

Building your own search and product discovery solution with tools like Solr or Elasticsearch might seem appealing initially, but the total cost of ownership can quickly spiral out of control. The investment in developer hours (around 11,000), first-year services costs (\$1.8M), and the ongoing need for a dedicated maintenance team (approximately 10 developers) create a substantial financial burden.

In contrast, pre-built solutions can deliver significant cost savings and tangible business benefits. Consider these compelling statistics that are real results: 1,100-1,300 curation hours saved annually, a 20-30% reduction in curated rules, a 10-15% improvement in search relevance, and a remarkable 91% reduction in zero-result queries. These efficiency gains directly translate to increased revenue, with a 28% increase in search-influenced order value and a 30% rise in search-influenced orders.

By choosing a pre-built solution, businesses can avoid the hidden costs and complexities of DIY search, freeing up valuable resources and accelerating time-to-market. Moreover, they can leverage the power of advanced search technologies and AI to deliver exceptional customer experiences, ultimately driving revenue growth and long-term success.

POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS REALIZED BY SWITCHING FROM BUILD-IT-YOURSELF SOLUTIONS

BUILD-IT-YOURSELF

- ✗ DEVELOPER HOURS: ~11,000
- ✗ DEVELOPER 1ST YEAR SERVICES: \$1.8M USD
- ✗ MAINTENANCE (2-5 YRS): ~10 DEVELOPERS

VS

OUT-OF-THE-BOX

- ✓ 1,100-1,300 CURATION HOURS SAVED PER YEAR
- ✓ 20%-30% FEWER RULES CURATED
- ✓ 0%-15% MEAN RECIPROCAL RANK IMPROVEMENTS
- ✓ 91% REDUCTION IN ZERO-RESULTS QUERIES
- ✓ 28% INCREASE IN SEARCH-INFLUENCED ORDER VALUE
- ✓ 30% INCREASE IN SEARCH-INFLUENCED ORDERS

391% POSITIVE ROI
WITH LUCIDWORKS
SEARCH

DOES YOUR CX HAVE A DIY PROBLEM?

Schedule a no-obligation 30-minute discovery call with an expert today. In return, you get a personalized assessment of the potential lift in outcomes and cost savings by moving away from built-it-yourself CX solutions.

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GET A PERSONALIZED
ASSESSMENT