

Understanding search functionality

Situation: the product team are interested in determining whether they should work on the search feature for their next development cycle, and if so, how they should modify it.

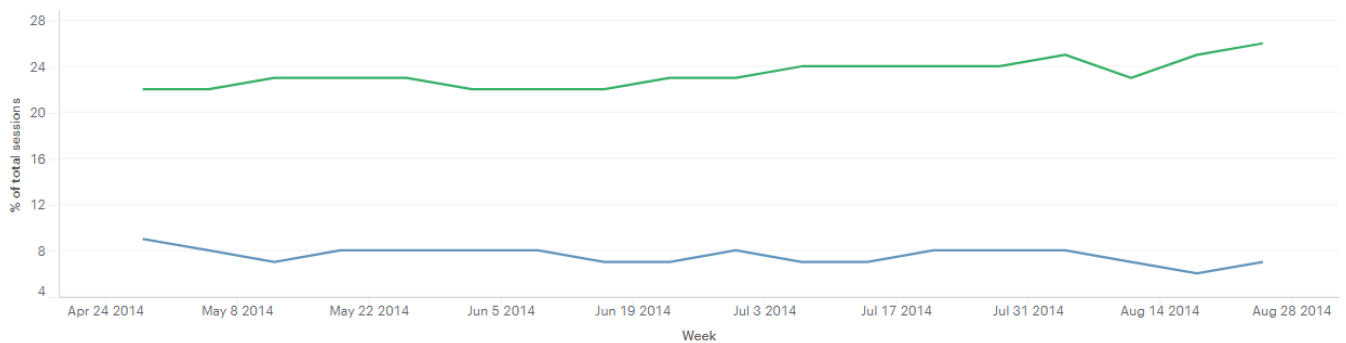
01. Analysis

Key Q: What percentage of sessions are the search functionality and auto-search features used? A session is defined as a 10-minute interval from which a user starts an action (e.g. login, click on the homepage, like a message, conduct a search)

Proportion of sessions which use the search and autocomplete features

2014, %

● autocomplete ● search

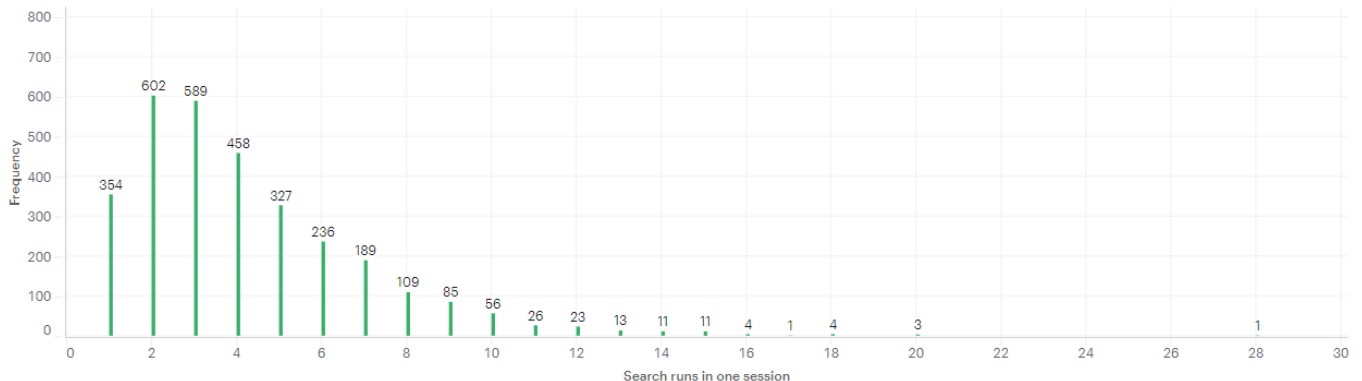


Insight: users are using the autocomplete feature more than search, suggesting that there is demand for a function which helps users find things. However, this also indicates that the current search functionality is not popular. We will investigate why this is.

Key Q: Within a session, how often is the search functionality used?

Number of search runs conducted within a session

2014, #



Insight: this could imply one of two things. The first is that the search functionality is not very accurate. We would expect to see a large number of sessions with just one search, indicating that the user found

exactly what they wanted the first time. The second is that there could be a group of users who like using search and, as such, use it very often. To test the latter, we could check how often users click on the search results after conducting a search run

Key Q: For the users that started a search run, how often do they click the results?

	did_not_click	did_click
1	1692	1410

Insight: search functionality is not accurate as most users do not click on any of the suggested results. This suggests an opportunity to improve the results-ordering algorithm.

Key Q: When a result is clicked, which position does it sit?

	first_result	second_result	third_result	fourth_result	fifth_result	sixth_result	seventh_result	eighth_result	ninth_result	tenth_result
1	874	903	749	809	685	588	533	538	602	421

Insight: results are evenly distributed among result positions, suggesting that the search algorithm is not prioritizing the right results.

02. Key takeaways and next steps:

- Autocomplete feature is performing well so should not be the focus of the current development cycle.
- Instead, the product team should concentrate on improving the accuracy of the search functionality, ensuring that the results are relevant to the user's search criteria and displayed in order of relevance.