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EE Podcast #77 EE Search

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Lea Alcantara: You are listening to the ExpressionEngine Podcast Episode #77, all about ExpressionEngine search. I'm your host, Lea Alcantara, and I'm joined by my fab co-host,

Emily Lewis: Emily Lewis.

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Emily Lewis: The ExpressionEngine Podcast would also like to thank [Pixel & Tonic](#) for being our major sponsor of the year.

[Music ends]

Emily Lewis: Hey Lea, I don't know about you, but I cannot believe it's already September.

Lea Alcantara: You're telling me, I've been in denial about it, especially since I'm turning the big 3-0 this month.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs] That's nothing. I'm turning 38 tomorrow.

Lea Alcantara: My goodness, happy birthday to us.

Emily Lewis: I know, seriously. Are you a Virgo?

Lea Alcantara: Yes.

Emily Lewis: Oh, I think we must have had that discussion before. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: So before we get into today's topic of search, I think we wanted to talk about a bit of EE news starting with EllisLab's recent announcement about some changes to their social media policy.



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Lea Alcantara: Right. In the end I think EllisLab has to do what they think is right and sustainable for them. I have to say I am a bit disappointed because I personally uses social media constantly to engage with others and build my business and clearly so do many others in our community. But we have to remember that just because something works for me or for you doesn't mean it's for every business.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: I think that Ryan Irelan at EE Insider has a very level analysis of the policy, and I encourage all listeners to read it.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, I was just glancing at it myself and I know there are some people who seemed a little frustrated with their decision to consolidate their Twitter accounts and ask for people to reach out to them via email if they have some issues because they felt that that would be a better medium for them to address it.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: The only thing that occurs to me is that they came out with this shortly after the bit of a brouhaha that happened a few weeks ago with people being frustrated with the status of bugs and everything.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: And EllisLab seemed kind of silent.

Lea Alcantara: Sure.

Emily Lewis: And so maybe this was their way of saying, "Listen, we were may be silent on Twitter, but if you had emailed us or you tried to reach out to us, we would have been able to connect with you." I'm going to guess they don't have the resources to properly treat social media the way it needs to be treated for bug reporting or needing help. You do need someone monitoring it all the time. It's a full time job.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, I would agree. I would agree. I think that there are many different ways you can successfully use social media, but if you don't have a united front, I guess, in terms of how you want to use it, then you might as well use something that you know you can engage well in.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.



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Emily Lewis: It will be interesting. I personally don't think it's going to adversely affect what already is happening on Twitter like what the #eecms and everything because that seems to be thriving.

Lea Alcantara: Sure

Emily Lewis: Ryan even commented on that in his EE Insider post.

Lea Alcantara: I agree, yeah.

Emily Lewis: So speaking of the #eecms, we got some really great feedback from the community on our last episode when we've launched that new series where we were interviewing members of the community who are active on that Twitter thread. I think we've got a good formula going.

Lea Alcantara: I think so too. I think it's because the EE community really is the best.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: And with the series we have a chance to highlight the people that make it tick, so it's a way to really connect people even more in the community.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, and I know personally I enjoyed it. It's always just to talk to someone, not to have to like do research and find questions that are in depth and stuff like that.

Lea Alcantara: Sure.

Emily Lewis: But just to get to know someone I really enjoyed it.

Lea Alcantara: Sure, and I think it was a useful episode too. I love talking to people about how they run their business or their philosophy and how they work even if it's completely different to my own workflow, it's really fascinating to see that people can be successful in so many different ways.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees] I think it's going to be a winner. Today though it's just the two of us.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: But I'm really excited to talk about search because it's one area or one of many areas in EE that I don't have a whole lot of experience. I've only used the standard search that comes with EE.

Lea Alcantara: Sure.



<http://ee-podcast.com/episodes/ee-search>

Emily Lewis: So I kind of have a feeling I'm going to be interviewing you today. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs] I think I've had a little bit of experience with some of the search options. When we think about search, really it's one of the core functionalities of all content management systems considering the fact that content management systems are all about the content and how do we find that content, how do we serve that content. So I also want to clarify that this episode is specifically about how to serve the search content within our EE site. Otherwise, it's going to be a giant episode.

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: So we are going to try to focus on the search capabilities that's output to the external site, the main site.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Okay, cool. So when we are talking about just EE core, the search that comes with it, I personally haven't had a project that needed much more than that. So for me, it's satisfies the requirement.

Lea Alcantara: [Agrees]

Emily Lewis: But like I said, my requirements for search have been very simple. Being able to search or limit the search to specific channels is something that I quite like, but I imagine it's not very uncommon. I noticed in some of your notes, you had noted that there were some issues with the speed of the EE core search. Can you tell me more about what you mean by that?

Lea Alcantara: Well, I personally haven't had much issue myself in terms of speed simply because the sites that I've worked on haven't been million visitor sites.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: I think that when the needs of your sites start becoming larger and larger, certain core functionality just might not be enough and so some issues with speed can pop up in terms of how large that database is and how large they need to search within those fields.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



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Lea Alcantara: I think that's the main issue with that. I think EE core though, again, when we are talking about basic needs, really when we are thinking about what are we searching for, we are really thinking about searching a word within custom fields or the title.

Emily Lewis: The title.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, and for most sites, for most small to medium sites, that's more than enough, and that's why you would use the regular core. I think that the moment you start needing more granular options for more searching as well as well as different ways to display the result is when you start trying to look beyond the EE core options.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees] What do you mean by the granularity of the search options, needing more of that, and how EE core doesn't necessarily address that?

Lea Alcantara: Generally speaking, when you are thinking about searching, it's just simply a search text box, and then you press search.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: That's the majority of all search options. However, a certain granular option is where, let's say, you will limit where you search and you want to give them options as for that. Earlier you've talked about how you can limit search via channel, but what if you want to give them an option to limit to one channel as well as all channels, for example, right?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Or if you want to search in terms of fuzzy keywords, what that does means is what if you want them to not look for that particular keyword exactly, the exact spelling. What if it looks for that keyword in multiple spellings or different ways to output synonyms of that word. Sometimes when you go to Google and you search for something, sometimes they ask you, "Do you actually mean this?" Right?

Emily Lewis: Right, right.

Lea Alcantara: In EE core, you don't really have those types of granular options.



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Emily Lewis: Got you. You also said that in terms of how search results can be displayed and I've experienced this myself, you are a bit limited in terms of what you can display, especially because you can only select one field as the search excerpt, right?

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, and then I think essentially you have very limited custom fields to even display using the EE core, and another thing I wanted to talk about in terms of custom field, EE core really only is very good at searching custom fields that are simply text based, if that makes sense.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: If it stores the data as a text field or a text area, really easy it searches it normally. But let's say you've got a complicated matrix field or some crazy custom field that stores data in a different way that isn't necessarily text only, well, it won't know. It won't search that properly.

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: So again, if you have like extra fields that you need that just little bit of extra search options, then you need to go beyond the EE core.

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Emily Lewis: So when you do go beyond the EE core, where do you start? How do you determine what kind of additional functionality you need?

Lea Alcantara: Well, a lot of that is trying to figure out what kind of functionality we need, and depending on how accurate and how vast the database is. So for many people, you might as well use Google search engine. It's the most powerful search engine in the world and we all use it. We all know how to use it. It's just a matter of how do we integrate the search that's built into ExpressionEngine.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: For those people who want to have pretty much every search option under the sun, using Google search engine or the various Google search options out there might be the best solution. There are a couple of options for you for that. The most famous one, I think, is Low GoogleSearch. That's the one that I have experience with because a client of mine owned Google Search Appliance, so essentially Google Search



<http://ee-podcast.com/episodes/ee-search>

Appliance uses its own custom Google search engine specifically for them, and it's a way that we can display the search results within the template seamlessly.

This is really important because there are so many ways you can integrate third-party options into EE, but a lot of them that really needs to have some JavaScript embed and then in terms of branding and look and feel that just looks awful, and when you use an add-on like Low GoogleSearch, then you can actually style every single point of how that search result looks like even though it's using Google's search engine for you.

Emily Lewis: Nice.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, exactly.

Emily Lewis: Now, for your client that had the Google Search Appliance, is that the only thing that Low GoogleSearch works with?

Lea Alcantara: No. So Google search options are actually a lot more complicated than most people understand, Low actually has several different options depending on what your search needs are. They've got Google Search Appliance. They actually have something called Google Mini and then they have Google Site Search. Now, most people in our community probably is more familiar with Google Site Search because that's how you can integrate Google search engine for your site specifically, so it will output search results that's specific for your site.

There is also something called Google Custom Search engine that Low's add-on doesn't actually tap into, and I think that sort of related to the main Google that we know that isn't Google Site Search, and to be frank, I'm not really a hundred percent sure what the major difference between Google Site Search and Google Custom Search is. I think with Google Site Search, you actually have to sign up for it and it's specific to your site while Google Custom Search is kind of like plugging in regular Google's search stuff into your site. So it might have results that aren't necessarily related to your site.

Emily Lewis: Right, got you. In terms of using the Low add-on, the strength of it is that you really can control your search results output and then the styling of it.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, exactly. So it basically makes Google search engine invisible, right?

Emily Lewis: Right, nice.



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Lea Alcantara: Yeah. So it looks like it's using the regular EE core, because it really is using your templates and Low's tags and everything they've got to output the search results exactly as you want it so there is a lot more options on how to do that and clearly when you're using the Google Search Appliance and if you know how to set all that stuff up, then you might have more relevant results.

Now, these are solutions for really database, giant content, site-intensive stuff. The reason why you would use something like Google Search Appliance is because sometimes, let's say, this particular client actually has multiple sites that they own that they want to kind of consolidate and only consolidate those sites into one place. So it's not searching the entirety of Google's database, it's just searching your multiple sites and then sending you relevant results specifically for the multiple sites that you added to the Search Appliance.

Emily Lewis: Nice. Was that Search Appliance something that you had worked with a client who advised them to set that up, or is that something they already had before you came on board?

Lea Alcantara: That was something they already had before I came on board, and it seemed like they actually had a full time guy dealing with all of that having to babysit this Search Appliance and making sure the database is good and customizing all that stuff because it's a full time job trying to make sure that all the data is tagged properly and dealt with, et cetera and so forth.

Beyond just Low's add-on, there is a Google Custom Search Engine by Amphibian Design, so that's for the custom search because that's something that Low doesn't have. He has the Google Search Appliance, Google Mini and Google Site Search, but the custom search is not included. So Amphibian actually created Google Custom Search, so it has similar functionality as Low's except that he uses a different engine.

Emily Lewis: Okay, got you.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah. But in terms of, let's say, we are still using EE core because our needs are simple, there different ways that you can still enhance the search options because, let's say, you're okay with the way the results are being found, but maybe there are different ways you want to enhance it in terms of results and how it shows. So one of the main things that third-party add-on developers have created for the core are ways to highlight search content and sort of keywords through themselves.

Emily Lewis: Oh, right. So you can scan a page and you can glance and see your keyword in the excerpts. Is that what you mean?



<http://ee-podcast.com/episodes/ee-search>

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah, exactly. So EllisLab actually already created their own add-on for that called Search Hilite. Simply, it helps you style the word, whether you want to have like a yellow highlight in the background or something if you're searching for that particular word. It seems like a lot of third-party add-ons had a similar idea, but they've had their own little twist to it. Aaron Gustafson created something called Search Summary that does something similar. There is this other add-on called Spyglass that's also similar to Hilite. However, I think Spyglass which is a commercial add-on does something a little bit different. I think it searches the system a little bit different because it says it's very, very fast.

Emily Lewis: So it's sort of...

Lea Alcantara: So I'm not a database expert.

Emily Lewis: Do you think it bypasses the core search and does its own?

Lea Alcantara: Oh yeah. I think one of the things that it mentions on the Devot:ee page is that it actually... let's see here, I'm just reading this. Fast database, base search on keywords. Oh, no more redirect to search results page.

Emily Lewis: Oh.

Lea Alcantara: So it actually directly runs the search when the data is available.

Emily Lewis: Wonderful.

Lea Alcantara: So I think those are the reasons why they are much faster. A lot of the things that we do in the core, we always have to refresh to a new template to get stuff happening.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: So do you use the Hilite or the Search Summary features often?

Lea Alcantara: No, not really. My clients didn't really want it or need it. I remember years and years, we tried to work I think with Search Hilite before and it wasn't working as I expected so I just abandoned it, and that's just my personal experience for that.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



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Lea Alcantara: Another add-on that I saw that I haven't used, but I think is really cool, it's called A&M Impact Search Suggest. So it's something that, let's say, the Google search and like, well, Google does this normally. If you search for something and it doesn't have any results, it gives you suggestions saying, "Well, did you mean this?"

Emily Lewis: I love that idea, and that's not too expensive of an add-on. It's just \$10. I think that would be great.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah, absolutely, because we make typos all the time, so having something like that just enhance the user experience for searching. I think it's a great add-on.

Emily Lewis: Yeah, that one would be interesting to try. It says it's based on a dictionary that can be formed from the content at your site. I wonder if that's something you have to set up in advance or not, but it would be cool.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: I do think it's important that when you are displaying search results to make them as useful, it's kind of like a 404 page. You can just say there were no results.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Or you can guide your user in another direction. So I'm going to look at that add-on myself.

Lea Alcantara: So let's say that you've decided that Google search items are really overkill, and frankly, Google Search Appliance, for example, is really expensive, it's really an enterprise product. You have to buy a \$20,000 license. [Laughs]. So most people won't really be using those types of things unless they've got an enterprise-level project.

Emily Lewis: Right.

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Lea Alcantara: And again, it might be overkill or for whatever reason you don't believe that the Google search options are exactly what you need, there is a couple of major add-ons that I know that the community knows about that you utilizes ExpressionEngine's database and it's become its own search engine within EE. So I'm



<http://ee-podcast.com/episodes/ee-search>

going to talk about those ones that I have experienced with first before we go to the next one and that is Solspace's Super Search.

Emily Lewis: Super Search.

Lea Alcantara: Super Search. Yeah, for my particular client, we were essentially building an academic database, so it's being run and updated by a librarian and it's surfed through by various academics, so there is a lot of need for search capabilities and so we needed to have abilities for it to be searched by category, topic and keyword, and so when you're setting this up in ExpressionEngine, the category is just the regular EE categories. The topic was actually a word list that was multiple check box field and the keyword is essentially any word that's written in any text-based custom field, so like a text area or a text field.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And then they wanted that the results also be sortable by year of publication that's sortable by title, sortable by language, because they were publishing items from multiple countries and then they also wanted to be sorted as to when the link was added on, which is separate from the year of publication. So they could have added a resource that was published in 2005 yesterday and then so they needed a way that you can just see recently added items versus other one.

Emily Lewis: Wow!

Lea Alcantara: Anyway...

Emily Lewis: That is really custom. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, exactly, but when you think about academic database and then researchers are reading the site, they need to have a billion different ways to isolate the content and information so we chose Solspace's Super Search for this essentially because it's a workhorse. It gives you so many different options to search and basically everything that I just told you, it can do.

Emily Lewis: Wow!

Lea Alcantara: It was able to do. So again, like I said, I just mentioned the requirements of that site clearly [laughs] versus ExpressionEngine's main data...

Emily Lewis: You couldn't do that with the core.



<http://ee-podcast.com/episodes/ee-search>

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, exactly, exactly. So I was really glad that Super Search existed. It's definitely a commercial add-on with so many different features.

Emily Lewis: With all those features, is there a steep learning curve getting it set up?

Lea Alcantara: Not really, not really. It was surprisingly easy because once you just kind of lists over, "Okay, here is what it needs to search," I just had to figure out how do I build this form. Right?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And then the SolSPACE's documentation had enough ways where it understood how to search. It gives you many options how to search from category, topic and keyword, so just basically the search form is really intense. [Laughs]. It gives you very many options and yeah, SolSPACE's Super Search was able to do all of that.

Emily Lewis: Nice, and at least from the product page, it says that it will also do that sort of suggesting of terms.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. So when you deal with a third-party add-on like Super Search we were talking about, oh, granular options and highlight options and things like that, well, when you buy like a giant commercial add-on like this, it kind of has all the features you would really want to consider in terms of...

Emily Lewis: Everything in one place so it's like worth your money.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, exactly. So you're not kind of add like add-ons to do all the things that you want. It's just all in one add-on to do all of that. Now, it's not perfect. For me I've never really had any speed issues like when it renders it. It's really fast for my client's site.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: However, one of the issues that I did run into when dealing with this and I haven't looked into it again and so I'm not sure if this has changed over the versions, and this isn't just isolated to Super Search. I think some search add-ons still have difficulties dealing with even more granularity.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]



<http://ee-podcast.com/episodes/ee-search>

Lea Alcantara: And what I mean by that is, what if you want to search specifically for a group of words. So let's say you want to search for dessert and cake, so you put in dessert and cake in the keywords. Most search options will look for both those words always. So it will only give you a search that's also have both those words somewhere.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: What if you only want to put dessert and cake and you want it to show up anything that has the word dessert or cake as long as it got one or the other?

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: There is difficulty in having that option on there. That's I think one caveat about that kind of thing.

Emily Lewis: Is that when like using a Google search comes in handy, like when you do need that kind of "or" searching?

Lea Alcantara: I believe so. I've never had any need to add that within the form, so most of the time it really kind of is a fuzzy search where it just looked for any entry. It's just that right now sometimes it just gives you a default item and it just won't give you an option for any of the other ones, right?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: So it's like one search place this size, okay, so it's going to be the "any" as opposed to the "and" or whatever, right?

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: Again, I haven't had a chance to, with this particular client, to really dive into it to double and triple check that. That's been addressed in the search options, but I know for sure that was something that I still had to work on back when I was in implementing it.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees] You also had shared a note when you were talking about SolSpace's Super Search that it could be a possible replacement to the channel entries tag.



<http://ee-podcast.com/episodes/ee-search>

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. I think that was an interesting note in Super Search's page. But really, when you stop and think about it, they are kind of right because really search results, really, what is the channel entries tag? It's searching through your database with specific content needed.

Emily Lewis: Oh, right.

Lea Alcantara: Like it will only show content from the blog channel within dates this and this or the most recent entries. Let's say with Super Search, you've got something really, really specific you want to list that you can't find within the channel entries tag and let's say Super Search had the parameters to search through them, then technically that's what it is because all these entry loops.

Emily Lewis: That's clever.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, yeah. I thought that was an interesting way to think about it because I never really thought about that way until I read it on their page. If you really have some specific results listing that you want, it can essentially be a replacement for the channel entries tag, especially because we are always talking about optimizing ExpressionEngine, "How is the fastest way did you do this, et cetera, and so forth?"

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: A lot of the third-party add-on developers are always thinking about, "How do I get this to show up as fast as possible?" And perhaps these add-ons bypass something, the extra checks, because whenever I do performance checks with ExpressionEngine, you turn on that feature where it shows you like every single query that it does.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: Well, with the channel entries tag, you have to disable so many things. Otherwise, it will search through everything, et cetera and so forth. Well, with Super Search, you just be really more specific and then it won't even search through the tables you don't want it to search. It just searches exactly where you want it to.

Emily Lewis: Nice.

Lea Alcantara: And that's why it's a possible replacement for the entries tag. I thought that was actually quite interesting.



<http://ee-podcast.com/episodes/ee-search>

Emily Lewis: Yeah. That's a nice option to point out because I know when there are times when I ended up being like, "Oh, I'm going to have to write something custom," and that could be a way around that.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, for sure. Oh, cool. But that might be overkill considering if you don't have vast search needs, it is a \$100 extra.

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah.

Emily Lewis: Although sometimes a \$100 is totally worth it. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. Oh, absolutely. It's totally absolutely. But beyond Super Search, that's the one that I have experienced with, there is another add-on that is also very powerful and it's by Low. It's not Google search, but it's just Low Search and so it doesn't look through the Google Search Appliance and everything like that, but it's Low's way to search within the ExpressionEngine database, and one of the things that mentions again is that it's a very fast, and I think one really high profile site that uses Low Search is Devot:ee.

Emily Lewis: Oh, does it?

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, they just made a switch over.

Emily Lewis: Oh, okay. I was going to say, "I can't say that their search is fast." [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: [Laughs] Yeah. I think that's something that they've been working on more and more is, of course, speeding up their site, and our next guest, Adrienne, actually has optimized Low Search specifically for Devot:ee.

Emily Lewis: Nice.

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Lea Alcantara: And we could chat with her a little bit more over how she did that. I think, again, I'm not a developer, but I'm reading Devot:ee's post about it, it says, "Low Search uses MySQL's native full text search capabilities, which means it uses a lot fewer queries and is blazing fast." So I think that's part of the reason. Again, another reason why you might want to bypass the native EE core is it probably just uses way more queries than it needs to or you want it to do.



<http://ee-podcast.com/episodes/ee-search>

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And Low Search bypasses that.

Emily Lewis: Nice. Well, I have to get in Devot:ee soon and check it out because I will say in the past, I didn't think their search was like blazingly fast.

Lea Alcantara: It is now.

Emily Lewis: So if it has improved, it will be noticeable so I'm excited to try that.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, for sure. So I think that Low Search is definitely another option for those that are taking a look at the different third-party search options. It is also less expensive than Solspace's Super Search as well.

Emily Lewis: Yeah.

Lea Alcantara: So that's something to keep in mind. I remember taking a look at Low Search, the earlier version, before choosing Super Search instead. I think it just didn't have some sort of extra search functionality that I wanted at the time, which is why we went with Super Search, but it looks like Low Search is really promising.

Emily Lewis: Nice. Well, one thing that's really nice about this episode is there are a lot more options out there than I realized.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, absolutely.

Emily Lewis: There is a lot. [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: Yes. Oh, another thing that I noticed that Low on his site, one of the first bullet points that he put on there is that his search is accent and diacritic insensitive, and I think that's...

Emily Lewis: What does that mean?

Lea Alcantara: What it really means is like if you have a French site with E accent...

Emily Lewis: Oh.



<http://ee-podcast.com/episodes/ee-search>

Lea Alcantara: You know that, for example, those kind of things. So if it's diacritic insensitive, that means it's going to give you the search result even if it doesn't have the accented E.

Emily Lewis: Nice.

Lea Alcantara: Does that make sense?

Emily Lewis: Yeah, I got you.

Lea Alcantara: It's insensitive like because they understand that you're trying to look for the particular word because when you're programming, it needs to be like so exact sometimes, right?

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: And that you have to program it to be a little bit less exact so it actually gives you the results that you want, and I think that's something that's interesting about third-party developers that is not in North America, you know?

Emily Lewis: Right.

Lea Alcantara: And I noticed that right away because as you know Low is from Amsterdam?

Emily Lewis: Ahh.

Lea Alcantara: He is in Europe.

Emily Lewis: He's Dutch, right?

Lea Alcantara: Yes, yeah. He lives in a houseboat in Europe. [Laughs]

Emily Lewis: [Laughs]

Lea Alcantara: And I think it's very interesting especially if you are an international ExpressionEngine developer or just simply developer looking into ways to be sensitive towards different languages if that's what your site needs to have. Something like this could be very important for your search item that may not be in other search options.



<http://ee-podcast.com/episodes/ee-search>

Emily Lewis: Right, and it's something that is easy to overlook if it's something you're not dealing with regularly, but like you said, outside of maybe North American developers, they are a lot more sensitive to multiple languages.

Lea Alcantara: So I think we've chatted a lot about all the search options we can have for ExpressionEngine.

Emily Lewis: Well, I did have one question. Is there a search for searching the actual like control panel?

Lea Alcantara: Yes, there is an actual control panel search add-on. So this is now just for searching within the control panel. This is more for your clients and for yourself rather than an output for visitors to your site. It's called Switchboard by VayaDesign.

Emily Lewis: Now, have you used this, or you're just checking it out?

Lea Alcantara: No, I'm just checking it out, but it looks nice.

Emily Lewis: So it just gives you a way to find stuff easier from your control panel?

Lea Alcantara: Yeah, I think so because I mean, for especially for those starting with ExpressionEngine where it's hard to figure out where things are and you forget where things are too, and it's just a fast way to get from point A to point B instead of going through the menus, et cetera and so forth.

Emily Lewis: Now, I haven't used Zenbu yet, but is it similar to that?

Lea Alcantara: No, I wouldn't really say so because Zenbu searches within entries.

Emily Lewis: Okay.

Lea Alcantara: And it has different ways to search and organize your entries in the edit page while Switchboard kind of just searches through the entire control panel, so if you need to switch "how do I get to field groups to edit field groups." Or "how do I get to templates," or "how do I get to category groups really quickly instead of going through the menu." It's just a search option where you can find it and then you can get into that section right away.

Emily Lewis: Oh, okay. So it's probably most useful to a developer, maybe not the client, but like you said, a new developer who is not too familiar with all the nesting and the dropdown menu buttons.

Lea Alcantara: Sure.



<http://ee-podcast.com/episodes/ee-search>

Emily Lewis: Cool.

Lea Alcantara: So I think that's pretty much all the options for the search that I found. I did do a search and found a few more add-ons, but I wanted to highlight the most popular ones and the ones that I've actually used, and also one that have been updated in 2012.

Emily Lewis: Oh, right.

Lea Alcantara: Yeah. So...

Emily Lewis: Active development.

Lea Alcantara: Exactly. So it doesn't have to be like updated yesterday or whatever. Some add-ons don't need that, but there are add-ons that are out there for search that hadn't been updated since 2010 or 2011, so I haven't mentioned those.

Emily Lewis: [Agrees]

Lea Alcantara: But the ones that we've mentioned in this episode are definitely in production and still being used and I personally used a couple of them.

Emily Lewis: Well, again, this is just another reason why I love this podcast because I now have five different add-ons I can do research on for my next project that I wouldn't have thought of before.

Lea Alcantara: For sure. For sure.

[Music]

Lea Alcantara: That's all the time we have for today. We'd now like to thank our sponsors for this podcast, [EE Garage](#) and [Pixel & Tonic](#).

Emily Lewis: We would also like to thank our partners, [EllisLab](#), [EngineHosting](#) and [Devot:ee](#).

Lea Alcantara: Also, thanks to our listeners for tuning in. If you want to know more about the podcast, make sure you follow us on Twitter [@eepodcast](#) or visit our website, [ee-podcast.com](#).

Emily Lewis: Don't forget to tune in to our next episode when Adrienne Travis will join us to talk about template, partials and Stash and maybe we will ask her what she thinks about Low Search, too, for Devot:ee.



<http://ee-podcast.com/episodes/ee-search>

Lea Alcantara: For sure.

Emily Lewis: Be sure to check out our schedule on our site, ee-podcast.com/schedule for more upcoming topics. We've got some great guests lined up.

Lea Alcantara: This is Lea Alcantara.

Emily Lewis: And Emily Lewis.

Lea Alcantara: Signing off for the ExpressionEngine Podcast. See you next time.

Emily Lewis: Cheers.

[Music stops]