

# Con Edison made site information easy to find with Google Site Search



“The Google Site Search engine itself is the best thing that could happen to webmasters.”

Thomas Astuto  
Webmaster, Public Affairs



## ABOUT GOOGLE SITE SEARCH

Google Site Search is a hosted website search solution, powered by Google.com. Google Site Search leverages the relevancy and sub-second response times of Google.com to improve your website experience. As a Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) solution, you can setup Google Site Search in just minutes; customize the look and feel of search results; apply refinement labels; enjoy reporting features; obtain email and phone support; and turn off the ads on your searchresults.

For more information, visit  
[www.google.com/sitesearch](http://www.google.com/sitesearch)

## Company

For more than 180 years, Consolidated Edison, Inc. has served one of the world's most dynamic and demanding marketplaces – metropolitan New York. Con Edison's principal business segments are Consolidated Edison Company of New York's regulated electric, gas, and steam utility activities, Orange & Rockland Utilities' (O&R) regulated electric and gas utility activities, and Con Edison's competitive energy businesses.

Con Edison of New York provides electric service to approximately 3.2 million customers and gas service to approximately 1.1 million customers in New York City and Westchester County. The company also provides steam service in parts of Manhattan. O&R provides electric service to 300,000 customers in southeastern New York and adjacent areas of northern New Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania and gas service to more than 126,000 customers in southeastern New York and adjacent areas of eastern Pennsylvania.

## Approach

As a corporate entity, Con Edison places a high priority on open communications. A full picture of Con Edison's environmental, health, and safety mission is publicized regularly to stakeholders inside and outside the company. In addition, Con Edison publishes comprehensive reports, even about sensitive subjects like rebuilding after steam pipe explosions. These are just a few admirable examples of the company's culture of frank and unobstructed dialog and its efforts to provide interested parties with sought-after information.

Webmaster for Public Affairs Thomas Astuto is closely involved in helping to ensure that information is readily available to interested stakeholders. The company had been using a custom-built search engine created using CGI scripts, but it only showed the titles of the results, and it wasn't very helpful to site visitors. “We needed to implement a search engine that would

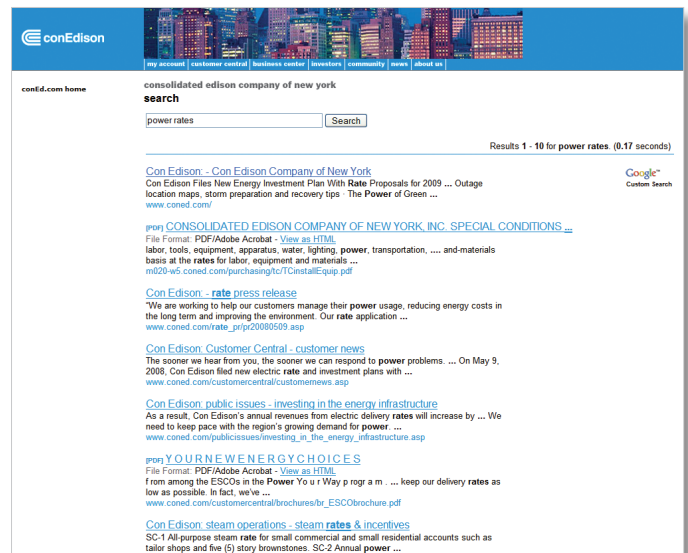


Figure 1: Con Edison especially values the ability of Google Site Search to search PDF files

find all types of documents including HTML and PDF files. We also wanted to create an engine that was user friendly,” he says. “Google is the top-rated search engine so what better engine to use than Google Site Search?” With the obvious alternative in its sights, Con Edison proceeded with implementing a Google Site Search solution.

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“For the price, just give it a try and you will see the results for yourselves.”

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## Results

According to Astuto, “The Google Site Search engine itself is the best thing that could happen to webmasters; the engine is powerful and easy to setup.” This is accompanied by industrial-strength features like XML annotations, included and excluded sites, and great webmaster tools such as analytics on the search engine. In addition, the ability to search PDF documents, which are plentiful on the company’s site, is a major boon. The ability to tailor the search engines results using an XML annotation file has proven to be very useful, because Con Edison can place certain pages in the top results for specific search phrases.

The search results that come back are detailed, and accompanied by an insightful summary. Con Edison is furthering its ability to analyze search results by using Google Site Search in conjunction with Google Analytics. “Analytics provides the best breakdown I have ever seen. I have been a web developer for 10 years now, and compared to other products on the market, Google Analytics makes it so much easier to measure website results with an easy to read and navigate user interface,” he says. Every month, Astuto sends a detailed report so management can see how certain content is being utilized and retrieved. And, says Astuto, the ability to simply click and save the results is a major benefit.

Since implementing Google Site Search, Con Edison has noticed a measurable spike in search queries, and users report that it is much easier to find the information they are looking for. “This powerful search engine has given our end users the ability to find the information they are seeking with a common user interface results page,” says Astuto. “We now boast in advertisements about the search capabilities on our site. And the price for Google Site Search was very reasonable.”

Astuto’s tips for other webmasters? “For the price, just give it a try and you will see the results for yourselves,” he says. “And the best advice I can offer: be sure you learn all about using the XML annotation file for custom results.”

