

Lastminute.com founders use Flax search software to power latest venture*mydeco adopts open-source search technology*

Flax™ search software is at the heart of mydeco.com, launched this month by Brent Hoberman and Martha Lane Fox, founders of Lastminute.com.

mydeco offers users the chance to design virtual rooms and fill them with furnishings and decorative items from hundreds of real prospective suppliers. Flax's powerful search features are used throughout the site for searching products, discussion forums and user profiles. Search results are ranked in terms of relevance, calculated using Flax's Bayesian probabilistic techniques, which are ideally suited for these purposes. Further advanced features include faceted search and automatic suggestion of similar items.

Paul Chudleigh, CTO at mydeco, said "We chose Flax because it offered high performance and incredible accuracy, and because it was easy to integrate into our software architecture. The software is also licensed under an open source model which makes it easy to modify and improve it, for example to add features such as geo-location allowing users to search for items in stores close by. Lemur Consulting, the company leading the ongoing development and providing full support for Flax, helped us to customise and tune Flax and has worked closely with us over the last few months to ensure that the mydeco search engine is an invaluable part of the site."

"mydeco is an exciting idea, applying 'Web 2.0' techniques such as social networking and tagging to let users design, share and rate their rooms online", said Charlie Hull, Managing Director of Lemur Consulting. "A great search engine is an essential part of this vision. We've enjoyed working with mydeco to build their fantastic new site and wish them success with their latest venture."

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Editors Notes:

About Flax

The Flax software, developed by Lemur Consulting in Cambridge, UK, builds on established open source technology. It incorporates a world-beating open source search core, used by organisations including the German newspaper Die Zeit, Cambridge City Council and the Newspaper Licensing Agency, with additional software allowing it to build indexes of hundreds of different kinds of files, emails and databases. Lemur has also developed several interface options so that Flax will fit seamlessly into any company's existing data infrastructure.

Flax can build searchable indexes of millions of documents in common formats such as Microsoft Office, HTML and Adobe Acrobat (PDF), which can then be searched in milliseconds using a customisable interface to meet specific needs. Flax is cross-platform and provides highly accurate and relevant results. Support for Flax is provided by Lemur Consulting; search engine specialists with a reputation for quality service and support. Lemur will customise, install and configure a Flax solution to meet your specific needs and will supply ongoing maintenance, software updates and support as required.

Flax offers a high-performing, secure and stable search infrastructure with all the benefits of open

source software, backed by expert support and maintenance. With no license fees payable, Flax is also a highly cost-effective enterprise search solution.

<http://www.flax.co.uk>

About Lemur Consulting

Lemur is highly active in the information retrieval market with international clients from sectors including academia, public relations, e-commerce, government and private businesses. Lemur's Flax™ software delivers a cutting-edge enterprise search solution, using the power of open source software to drive down costs and provide world beating search performance with no software licence fees. <http://www.lemurconsulting.com>

About mydeco

mydeco makes it easy and enjoyable to furnish your home using the latest online technology.

mydeco will offer products from more than 500 retailers including: Heal's, Argos, John Lewis, The Conran Shop, Furniture Village, Graham and Green, OKA, Alessi, M&S, Andrew Martin and Lombok.

Easy-to-use 3D room-planning tools help you to see how real products will look in your room and buy with confidence.

The site's advantages include:

- The widest range of home products in the UK, over 1.5 million products in one place online
- Revolutionary 3D room-planning tools that allow you to see how real products will look in your room
- Over 1,000 inspirational room 'looks' to choose from, which can be tailored to your budget
- Advice and style from leading designers such as Sir Terence Conran and Tara Bernerd
- An online community so users can swap ideas, or even see each others' rooms

<http://www.mydeco.com>