Introduction to Power Searching on the Web

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(Enriching Scholarship 2006)
http://www.umich.edu/~pfa/pro/8fold/

Introduction to Power Searching

- Workshop Overview
  - Internet Searching vs. Library Resources
  - Basics of Internet Searching
  - Search Engine Tasks
  - Search Engine Tools
  - Question/Answer

Internet Searching vs. Library Resources

- Many of the resources demonstrated have fee-based equivalents, that have been paid for by the University Libraries.
- Think of the resources demonstrated both as useful in their own right, but also as illustrations of a resource type or discovery tool that might be useful in other contexts.
- Our discussion today begins with the Internet. Other contexts might include, for example, print or peer-reviewed research.
**Introduction to Power Searching: Tips**

- Quotation marks
- Parentheses
- OR
- Limit by site
- Limit by filetype
- + (plus sign)
- - (minus sign)
- ~ (tilde sign)

**Tip 1: Quotation marks**

This is most useful when the words to be searched are not very specific, have different meanings in various subject areas, or when it is important that the same word is repeated.

- "2 of clubs"

**Tip 2: Parentheses**

Useful to group terms that should be processed together, at the same time and in the same way in the search, but which you want to combine with another concept.

- (swine OR pigs OR hogs) "animal husbandry"
Tip 3: OR

- Use this when you want any of the terms, not all of the terms.
- books (train OR trains OR railroad) (lyrics OR "sing-along" OR songbook OR "song book" OR "folk songs" OR folksong)

Tip 4: Limit by site

- This is useful when you want to control the quality of the search results, when you know a site that is likely to have what you need, and also when you want to find again a known document.
- (amoxil OR amoxicillin OR trimox) (site:fda.gov OR site:nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/druginfo/)

Tip 5: Limit by filetype

- Especially useful when you have reason to suspect that the answer you need will be in a certain format.
- ("child safety seats" OR "child car seats") "seat belts" (standards OR standard OR specification) filetype:pdf
Tip 6: + (plus sign)

- Use the plus sign to force the inclusion of stop words in phrase searches.
- euclid book I OR euclid book +I
- Use this to search foreign words with diacritics exactly as spelled.
  - collège or +collège

Tip 7: - (minus sign)

- Use the minus sign to exclude terms from my results that represent a clustering of irrelevant results.
  - "breast cancer" (recovery OR survivor OR survival) -xxx -porn -pornography -paid

Tip 8: ~ (tilde sign)

- Searches the selected term in thesaurus-mode (Google only)
  - cancer survivor or ~cancer survivor
Introduction to Power Searching: More Tips

- Search Refinement
  - Compare results from multiple search engines
  - Use truncation
  - Use concept and term suggestions
  - Use reviewed search results/links
  - Use special search engine features

Refinement 1: Compare results from multiple search engines

- Try several search engines for richest results.
  - Twingine: http://www.twingine.com/
  - Dogpile: http://www.dogpile.com/
  - SurfWax: http://www.surfwax.com

Refinement 2: Use truncation

- True truncation
  - Exalead example: child* (therapy OR therapeutic OR treatment) "cystic fibrosis"
- Pseudo-truncation
  - use of the tilde (~) in Google
- Stemming
  - Google etc.: search term plurals assumed: e.g., child or children
Refinement 3: Use concept and term suggestions

- When you realize you aren't satisfied with the results you've already found, change search terms (1st) or search engine (2nd).
- Tools range from those that offer concept and term suggestions to concept maps to tools that allow you to click and "drill in" for a more focused search.
  - See: Clusty, Gigablast, iBoogie, Kartoo, Surf wax, etc. …

Refinement 4: Use reviewed search results/links

- Use authoritative link sites, e.g. Librarians’ Index to the Internet (http://www.lii.org)
- Locate a selected directory on the topic, such as HealthWeb for health and medicine (http://www.healthweb.org)
- Search for bookmark collections from experts or authoritative sources:
  - [topic] (“web links” OR “web resources” OR “web directory”)

Refinement 5: Use special search engine features

- Google:
  - http://www.google.com/features.html
- Yahoo:
- Search Engines by Search Features from Search Engine Showdown:
Introduction to Power Searching

- Search Engine Tasks
  - Finding print resources
  - Finding pictures
  - Finding multimedia

Task 1: Finding print resources

- Google options for searching in the text of print resources.
  - Google Books
    - [http://books.google.com/](http://books.google.com/)
  - Google Scholar
    - [http://scholar.google.com/](http://scholar.google.com/)

Task 1: Finding print resources

- A9.com offers custom options that include searching holdings for libraries, and a variety of special databases.
  - For "Robert Frost", A9 found 673,000 websites; 60,748 books; and from 200 to 400+ titles in various libraries.
- WorldCat also searches library holdings.
  - [http://www.worldcatlibraries.org/](http://www.worldcatlibraries.org/)
Task 1: Finding print resources
- Search for scholarly content, especially articles
  - FindArticles
    - http://www.findarticles.com/
  - Scirus
    - http://www.scirus.com/srsapp/

Task 2: Finding pictures
- Searching for a picture of something
  - Royalty-Free: Corbis, FotoSearch
  - Thumbnails of Web Pages
    - Exalead, IceRocket
  - Collections of Image Search Tools
    - FaganFinder, KidsClick
  - Specialty Image Search Tools
    - American Memory, CSIRO, NIX, Trove

Task 3: Finding multimedia
- Searching podcasts and vodcasts with tags
  - All Podcasts
  - Blog Universe: Podcast Links and Audio Weblogs
  - Podcast Alley
  - Podcast.net
  - Sundic8 Podcasts
  - Yahoo: Podcasts
- Searching the audio content
  - Blinkx
  - Podzinger
Other Tasks

- International
  - Google Spain: http://www.google.es/
  - Yahoo Germany: http://de.yahoo.com/
- Finance
  - Google Finance: http://finance.google.com/finance
- Requests from you

Introduction to Power Searching

- Search Engine Tools
  - Noodle Tools: Information Literacy: Search Strategies: Choose the Best Search for Your Information Need (Debbie Abilock)
  - Infopeople
    - Best Search Tools Chart
    - Best Search Engines Quick Guide
    - How to Choose a Search Engine or Directory (Laura Cohen)
  - Review searchenginewatch.com

Questions?

- http://www.umich.edu/~pfa/pro/8fold/