

Search mechanics

March 12, 2012

What is a database?

Badke: “a collection of data that can be retrieved using organized search”

[Wikipedia](#): “a system intended to organize, store, and retrieve large amounts of data easily.”

Examples?

What does a search engine do?

Search engines retrieve information
from databases

Examples?

Liddy, “How a Search Engine Works”

- Indexable elements
- Stop words & weight assignments
- Document features that make a good match to a query:
 - Frequency of terms
 - Location of terms
 - Link Analysis/Popularity
 - Date
 - Proximity
 - Others?

Questions about search engines?

- Did you understand Liddy's explanation?
- Had you known any of this before?
- In the news, Google changed its search algorithm (see blog post & news stories)
 - Effect on your search results?
 - Effect on traffic to certain websites?
- Questions?

Advanced search techniques

- Boolean searching
 - *AND, OR, NOT*
- Truncation
 - truncat* finds variations: truncated, truncation, truncate
- Phrase searching
 - *“quotes around a phrase”*
- Nested searching
 - *(education or school) and (adolescent or teen)*

Have you ever used any of these? What do you consider your “power search” strategies?

Activity

Practice searching for your research topic:

- Choose keywords to describe your topic
- Search in one of the alternative search engines we just looked at
- Try using Boolean searching, truncation,

Upcoming blogging assignments

- Starting next Wednesday 3/21, you'll be writing research journal posts in addition to reading response posts and comments (5 total)
- I will post a prompt on the blog and you will write a response (minimum 100 words)
- Reflection/description of your research process; read each others' posts, comment, and learn

For Wednesday, March 14

Discussion: The research process: needs assessment, preliminary strategies, topic development

Reading: Badke Ch. 2

Assignment: Comment on at least one blog post