Search mechanics

October 17, 2011

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?
  - Effect on your search results?
  - Effect on traffic to certain websites?
- Questions?

Advanced search techniques

- Boolean searching
  - *AND, OR, NOT*

- Truncation

- 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

Upcoming blogging assignments

- Starting next Monday 10/24, 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, October 19

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

Reading: Badke Ch. 2

Assignment: Comment on at least one blog post