

The Internet

I. Internet Search Tools – Two Categories

A. Search engines – Two types:

1. **Individual search engine** – uses computer programs called “spiders”, “crawlers”, or “robots” to match key search words with the web pages that contain them
 - a. The results returned are lists of web pages and titles
 - b. Does not search the Internet itself, but instead, searches databases of information about the Internet
 - c. Examples:
 - i. Google.com – the largest database of Web pages
 - ii. Ask.com
 - iii. Search.yahoo.com
2. **Meta-search engine** – sends requests for information to several search engines simultaneously and compiles the results
 - a. As the results are compiled, duplications are eliminated, thus yielding fewer results than a search engine
 - b. A time-saver compared to a regular search engine
 - c. Examples:
 - i. Google Custom Search Engine allows users to control their search by specifying the following:
 - (a) Name of the search engine
 - (b) Description
 - (c) Language
 - (d) Sites
 - ii. www.excite.com
 - iii. <http://webcrawler.com>

B. **Subject directories** – searchable databases that are developed and maintained by human selection of sites to search broad subject categories and their descriptions

1. Used in research and often linked to library systems
2. Also referred to as research databases
3. Mostly made up of thousands of specialized searchable databases, such as library catalogs and article databases
4. Searches for non-HTML formats (PDF, Word, Excel, script-based, PowerPoint, etc.)
5. Results in more reliable pages than search engines
6. Examples:
 - a. <http://infomine.ucr.edu> – compiled by academic librarians from the University of California and elsewhere
 - b. Directory.google.com
 - c. www.iii.org – Librarians’ Internet Index

- d. www.about.com
- e. EBSCOhost – premium online information resources for institutions worldwide, representing millions of end-users, including:
 - i. Colleges and universities
 - ii. Hospitals and medical institutions
 - iii. Corporations
 - iv. Government
 - v. K-12 schools
 - vi. Public libraries
- f. Libraryresearch.com – a subsidiary of EBSCOhost
- g. ERIC (Education Resources Information Center)
- h. CRIS (Current Research and Information System)
- i. Incywincy.com
- j. Completeplanet.com
- k. Google Scholar

II. Internet Search Methods – Four Categories

A. Keyword

- 1. Unique phrases or terms (search string)
- 2. Synonyms or word variations

B. Field

- 1. A search parameter, such as a title, genre, date of publication
- 2. Useful for drilling down and focusing on specific content
- 3. Breadth and depth

C. Boolean logic

- 1. Uses operators with keywords to narrow search parameters
- 2. Operators include AND, OR, and quotation marks
 - a. AND narrows results by searching for pages that contain both keywords
 - b. OR expands results by search for pages that contain either of the keywords
 - c. Quotation marks narrow results by searching for phrases instead of individual words. For example:
 - i. “eye nose throat” will produce results about hazardous chemicals and poisons
 - ii. eye nose throat will produce results about medical associations and specialists
- 3. Boolean is implied in many search engines, but still a valuable method for narrowing and defining searches

D. Miscellaneous search methods

- 1. **Different language support** – searches for words in different languages

2. **Spell checker** – gives suggestions if the word keyed for the search is spelled incorrectly
3. **Phonebook** – uses phone numbers to search for locations and addresses
4. **Math/equivalents** – solves basic math problems and converts equivalents