

10:1a Researching

EFFECTIVE SEARCH STRATEGIES

How to easily find what you are looking for on the Internet.

Preview

What is a search engine?

How does a search engine know about things on the Net?

What's a subject directory?

Which is better to use?

How can I improve my use of search engines?

How do I use a wild card?

How do I narrow or broaden a search?

What's a meta-search engine?

What are some effective search strategies?

A **search engine** is an Internet tool which will search on the internet for sites containing the words designated in the search. The results of the search come back in the form of hyperlinks to those sites which include the terms typed in the search dialogue box. Search engines search databases of information that have been collected by automated computer programs.

How does a search engine know about things on the Net?

The search engine finds and categorizes information while its “spiders” are out collecting data from the hundreds of thousands of web servers that make up the internet. The information is put into a large database that the user searches. The information is only available if a web site publisher registers the site with a search engine.

10:1b Researching

An Internet subject directory is a topical database of subjects created by a programmer. Users conduct their searches by selecting a series of progressively narrower search terms.

The computer finds and displays links that contain a search element.

Directories allow more control and let the user browse.

Search engines leave the searching pattern to the computer program and can be used to find more specific resources.

There is a fixed vocabulary with directories so there are fewer retrieved items. Search engines produce more retrieved items, so there are more links to go through to find what is needed.

A researcher's chances for successfully finding material are improve with the use of wildcards and Boolean operators.

Wildcards allow users to search simultaneously for several words with the same stem. Boolean operators encourage users to combine terms to broaden or narrow a search.

A wildcard is a special character that can be appended to the root of a word so you can search for all possible endings to that root.

Example :

Doing a search on *whal** would return
whale, whales, whaling, whalers