

# Search Engines

## Information Retrieval in Practice

# Information Needs

- An *information need* is the underlying cause of the query that a person submits to a search engine
  - sometimes called *query intent*
- Categorized using variety of dimensions
  - e.g., number of relevant documents
  - type of information that is needed
  - type of task that led to the requirement for information

# Queries and Information Needs

- A query can represent very different information needs
  - May require different search techniques and ranking algorithms to produce the best rankings
- A query can be a poor representation of the information need
  - User may find it difficult to express the information need
  - User is encouraged to enter short queries both by the search engine interface, and by the fact that long queries don't work

# Interaction

- Interaction with the system occurs
  - during query formulation and reformulation
  - while browsing the result
- Key aspect of effective retrieval
  - users can't change ranking algorithm but can change results through interaction
  - helps refine description of information need
    - e.g., same initial query, different information needs
    - how does user describe what they don't know?

# ASK Hypothesis

- Belkin et al (1982) proposed a model called Anomalous State of Knowledge
- ASK hypothesis:
  - difficult for people to define exactly what their information need is, because that information is a gap in their knowledge
  - Search engine should look for information that fills those gaps
- Interesting ideas, little practical impact (yet)

# Keyword Queries

- Query languages in the past were designed for professional searchers (*intermediaries*)

*User query:*

Are there any cases which discuss negligent maintenance or failure to maintain aids to navigation such as lights, buoys, or channel markers?

*Intermediary query:*

NEGLECT! FAIL! NEGLIG! /5 MAINT! REPAIR! /P NAVIGAT! /5 AID  
EQUIP! LIGHT BUOY "CHANNEL MARKER"

# Keyword Queries

- Simple, *natural language* queries were designed to enable everyone to search
- Current search engines do not perform well (in general) with natural language queries
- People trained (in effect) to use keywords
  - compare average of about 2.3 words/web query to average of 30 words/CQA query
- Keyword selection is not always easy
  - query refinement techniques can help

# Query Reformulation

- Rewrite or transform original query to better match underlying intent
- Can happen implicitly or explicitly (suggestion)
- Many techniques
  - Query-based stemming
  - Spelling correction
  - Segmentation
  - Substitution
  - Expansion



# Query-Based Stemming

- Make decision about stemming at query time rather than during indexing
  - improved flexibility, effectiveness
- Query is expanded using word variants
  - documents are not stemmed
  - e.g., “rock climbing” expanded with “climb”, not stemmed to “climb”

# Stem Classes

- A *stem class* is the group of words that will be transformed into the same stem by the stemming algorithm
  - generated by running stemmer on large corpus
  - e.g., Porter stemmer on TREC News
    - /bank banked banking bankings banks
    - /ocean oceaneering oceanic oceanics oceanization oceans
    - /polic polical polically police policeable policed
    - policement policer policers polices policial
    - policically policier policiers policies policing
    - policization policize policly policy policying policys

# Stem Classes

- Stem classes are often too big and inaccurate
- Modify using analysis of *word co-occurrence*
- *Assumption:*
  - Word variants that could substitute for each other should co-occur often in documents
    - e.g., reduces previous example /polic and /bank classes to
      - /policies policy
      - /police policed policing
      - /bank banking banks

# Modifying Stem Classes

1. For all pairs of words in the stem classes, count how often they co-occur in text windows of  $W$  words.  $W$  is typically in the range 50-100.
2. Compute a co-occurrence or association metric for each pair. This measures how strong the association is between the words.
3. Construct a graph where the vertices represent words and the edges are between words whose co-occurrence metric is above a threshold  $T$ .
4. Find the connected components of this graph. These are the new stem classes.

# Modifying Stem Classes

- Dices' Coefficient is an example of a term association measure
  - $2.n_{ab}/(n_a + n_b)$
  - where  $n_x$  is the number of windows containing  $x$
- Two vertices are in the same connected component of a graph if there is a path between them
  - forms word *clusters*
- Example output of modification
  - /policies policy
  - /police policed policing
  - /bank banking banks

# Query Log

- Records all queries and documents clicked on by users, along with timestamp
- Used heavily for query transformation, query suggestion
- Also used for query-based stemming
  - Word variants that co-occur with other query words can be added to query
    - e.g., for the query “tropical fish”, “fishes” may be found with “tropical” in query log, but not “fishing”

# Spell Checking

- Important part of query processing
  - 10-15% of all web queries have spelling errors
- Errors include typical word processing errors but also many other types, e.g.

poiner sisters

brimingham news

catamarn sailing

hair extenssions

marshmellow world

miniture golf courses

psyhics

home doceration

realstateisting.bc.com

akia 1080i manunal

ultimatwarcade

mainsourcebank

dellottitouche

# Spell Checking

- Basic approach: suggest corrections for words not found in *spelling dictionary*
- Suggestions found by comparing word to words in dictionary using similarity measure
- Most common similarity measure is *edit distance*
  - number of operations required to transform one word into the other



# Edit Distance

- *Damerau-Levenshtein* distance
  - counts the minimum number of insertions, deletions, substitutions, or transpositions of single characters required
  - e.g., Damerau-Levenshtein distance 1
    - extenssions → extensions (insertion error)
    - poiner → pointer (deletion error)
    - marshmellow → marshmallow (substitution error)
    - brimingham → birmingham (transposition error)
  - distance 2
    - doceration → deceration
    - deceration → decoration

# Edit Distance

- Number of techniques used to speed up calculation of edit distances
  - restrict to words starting with same character
  - restrict to words of same or similar length
  - restrict to words that sound the same
- Last option uses a *phonetic code* to group words
  - e.g. Soundex

# Soundex Code

1. Keep the first letter (in upper case).
2. Replace these letters with hyphens: a,e,i,o,u,y,h,w.
3. Replace the other letters by numbers as follows:
  - 1: b,f,p,v
  - 2: c,g,j,k,q,s,x,z
  - 3: d,t
  - 4: l
  - 5: m,n
  - 6: r
4. Delete adjacent repeats of a number.
5. Delete the hyphens.
6. Keep the first three numbers or pad out with zeros.

extenssions → E235; extensions → E235

marshmellow → M625; marshmallow → M625

brimingham → B655; birmingham → B655

poiner → P560; pointer → P536

# Spelling Correction Issues

- Ranking corrections
  - “Did you mean...” feature requires accurate ranking of possible corrections
- Context
  - Choosing right suggestion depends on context (other words)
  - e.g., *lawers* → *lowers, lawyers, layers, lasers, lagers*  
but *trial lawers* → *trial lawyers*
- Run-on errors
  - e.g., “bank ofamerica”
  - missing spaces can be considered another single character error in right framework

# Noisy Channel Model

- User chooses word  $w$  based on probability distribution  $P(w)$ 
  - called the *language model*
  - can capture context information, e.g.  $P(w_1 | w_2)$
- User writes word, but noisy channel causes word  $e$  to be written instead with probability  $P(e | w)$ 
  - called *error model*
  - represents information about the frequency of spelling errors

# Noisy Channel Model

- Need to estimate probability of correction
  - $P(w|e) = P(e|w)P(w)$
- Estimate language model using context
  - e.g.,  $P(w) = \lambda P(w) + (1 - \lambda)P(w|w_p)$
  - $w_p$  is previous word
- e.g.,
  - “fish tink”
  - “tank” and “think” both likely corrections, but  $P(\text{tank}|\text{fish}) > P(\text{think}|\text{fish})$

# Noisy Channel Model

- Language model probabilities estimated using corpus and query log
- Both simple and complex methods have been used for estimating error model
  - simple approach: assume all words with same edit distance have same probability, only edit distance 1 and 2 considered
  - more complex approach: incorporate estimates based on common typing errors

# Example Spellcheck Process

1. Tokenize the query.
2. For each token, a set of alternative words and pairs of words is found using an edit distance modified by weighting certain types of errors as described above. The data structure that is searched for the alternatives contains words and pairs from both the query log and the trusted dictionary.
3. The noisy channel model is then used to select the best correction.
4. The process of looking for alternatives and finding the best correction is repeated until no better correction is found.

e.g.,  
miniture golfcourses  
miniature golfcourses  
miniature golf courses



# Query Segmentation

- Break up queries into important “chunks”
  - e.g., “new york times square” becomes “new york” “times square”
- Possible approaches:

Treat each term as a concept

*[members] [rock] [group] [nirvana]*

Treat every adjacent pair of terms as a concept

*[members rock] [rock group] [group nirvana]*

Treat all terms within a noun phrase “chunk” as a concept

*[members] [rock group nirvana]*

Treat all terms that occur in common queries as a single concept

*[members] [rock group] [nirvana]*

# Query Expansion

- A variety of *automatic* or *semi-automatic* query expansion techniques have been developed
  - goal is to improve effectiveness by adding related terms
  - semi-automatic techniques require user interaction to select best expansion terms
- Query suggestion is a related technique
  - alternative queries, not necessarily more terms

# Query Expansion

- Approaches usually based on an analysis of term co-occurrence
  - either in the entire document collection, a large collection of queries, or the top-ranked documents in a result list
- Automatic expansion based on general thesaurus not effective
  - does not take context into account

# The Thesaurus

- Used in early search engines as a tool for *indexing* and *query formulation*
  - specified preferred terms and relationships between them
  - also called *controlled vocabulary*
- Particularly useful for *query expansion*
  - adding synonyms or more specific terms using query operators based on thesaurus
- Examples include MeSH and WordNet

# MeSH Thesaurus

<b>MeSH Heading</b>	<b>Neck Pain</b>
<b>Tree Number</b>	C10.597.617.576
<b>Tree Number</b>	C23.888.592.612.553
<b>Tree Number</b>	C23.888.646.501
<b>Entry Term</b>	Cervical Pain
<b>Entry Term</b>	Neckache
<b>Entry Term</b>	Anterior Cervical Pain
<b>Entry Term</b>	Anterior Neck Pain
<b>Entry Term</b>	Cervicalgia
<b>Entry Term</b>	Cervicodynia
<b>Entry Term</b>	Neck Ache
<b>Entry Term</b>	Posterior Cervical Pain
<b>Entry Term</b>	Posterior Neck Pain

# Term Association Measures

- *Dice's Coefficient*

$$\frac{2 \cdot n_{ab}}{n_a + n_b} \stackrel{\text{rank}}{=} \frac{n_{ab}}{n_a + n_b}$$

- *Mutual Information*

$$\log \frac{P(a,b)}{P(a)P(b)} = \log N \cdot \frac{n_{ab}}{n_a \cdot n_b} \stackrel{\text{rank}}{=} \frac{n_{ab}}{n_a \cdot n_b}$$

# Term Association Measures

- Mutual Information measure favors low frequency terms
- *Expected Mutual Information Measure* (EMIM)

$$P(a, b) \cdot \log \frac{P(a, b)}{P(a)P(b)} = \frac{n_{ab}}{N} \log(N \cdot \frac{n_{ab}}{n_a \cdot n_b}) \stackrel{rank}{=} n_{ab} \cdot \log(N \cdot \frac{n_{ab}}{n_a \cdot n_b})$$

- actually only 1 part of full EMIM, focused on word occurrence

# Term Association Measures

- *Pearson's Chi-squared ( $\chi^2$ ) measure*
  - compares the number of co-occurrences of two words with the expected number of co-occurrences if the two words were independent
  - normalizes this comparison by the expected number
  - also limited form focused on word co-occurrence

$$\frac{(n_{ab} - N \cdot \frac{n_a}{N} \cdot \frac{n_b}{N})^2}{N \cdot \frac{n_a}{N} \cdot \frac{n_b}{N}} \quad \underline{\underline{rank}} \quad \frac{(n_{ab} - \frac{1}{N} \cdot n_a \cdot n_b)^2}{n_a \cdot n_b}$$



# Association Measure Summary

<i>Measure</i>	<i>Formula</i>
Mutual information ( <i>MIM</i> )	$\frac{n_{ab}}{n_a \cdot n_b}$
Expected Mutual Information ( <i>EMIM</i> )	$n_{ab} \cdot \log\left(N \cdot \frac{n_{ab}}{n_a \cdot n_b}\right)$
Chi-square ( $\chi^2$ )	$\frac{(n_{ab} - \frac{1}{N} \cdot n_a \cdot n_b)^2}{n_a \cdot n_b}$
Dice's coefficient ( <i>Dice</i> )	$\frac{n_{ab}}{n_a + n_b}$

# Association Measure Example

<i>MIM</i>	<i>EMIM</i>	$\chi^2$	<i>Dice</i>
trmm	forest	trmm	forest
itto	tree	itto	exotic
ortuno	rain	ortuno	timber
kuroshio	island	kuroshio	rain
ivirgarzama	like	ivirgarzama	banana
biofunction	fish	biofunction	deforestation
kapiolani	most	kapiolani	plantation
bstilla	water	bstilla	coconut
almagreb	fruit	almagreb	jungle
jackfruit	area	jackfruit	tree
adeo	world	adeo	rainforest
xishuangbanna	america	xishuangbanna	palm
frangipani	some	frangipani	hardwood
yuca	live	yuca	greenhouse
anthurium	plant	anthurium	logging

Most strongly associated words for “tropical” in a collection of TREC news stories. Co-occurrence counts are measured at the document level.

# Association Measure Example

<i>MIM</i>	<i>EMIM</i>	$\chi^2$	<i>Dice</i>
zoologico	water	arlsq	species
zapanta	species	happyman	wildlife
wrint	wildlife	outerlimit	fishery
wpfmc	fishery	sportk	water
weighout	sea	lingcod	fisherman
waterdog	fisherman	longfin	boat
longfin	boat	bontadelli	sea
veracruzana	area	sportfisher	habitat
ungutt	habitat	billfish	vessel
ulocentra	vessel	needlefish	marine
needlefish	marine	damaliscu	endanger
tunaboat	land	bontebok	conservation
tsolwana	river	taucher	river
olivacea	food	orangemouth	catch
motoroller	endanger	sheepshead	island

Most strongly associated words for “fish” in a collection of TREC news stories.  
Co-occurrence counts are measured at the document level.

# Association Measure Example

<i>MIM</i>	<i>EMIM</i>	$\chi^2$	<i>Dice</i>
zapanta	wildlife	gefilte	wildlife
plar	vessel	mbmo	vessel
mbmo	boat	zapanta	boat
gefilte	fishery	plar	fishery
hapc	species	hapc	species
odfw	tuna	odfw	catch
southpoint	trout	southpoint	water
anadromous	fisherman	anadromous	sea
taiffe	salmon	taiffe	meat
mollie	catch	mollie	interior
frampton	nmf	frampton	fisherman
idfg	trawl	idfg	game
billingsgate	halibut	billingsgate	salmon
sealord	meat	sealord	tuna
longline	shellfish	longline	caught

Most strongly associated words for “fish” in a collection of TREC news stories. Co-occurrence counts are measured in windows of 5 words.

# Association Measures

- Associated words are of little use for expanding the query “tropical fish”
- Expansion based on whole query takes context into account
  - e.g., using Dice with term “tropical fish” gives the following highly associated words:  
goldfish, reptile, aquarium, coral, frog, exotic, stripe, regent, pet, wet
- Impractical for all possible queries, other approaches used to achieve this effect

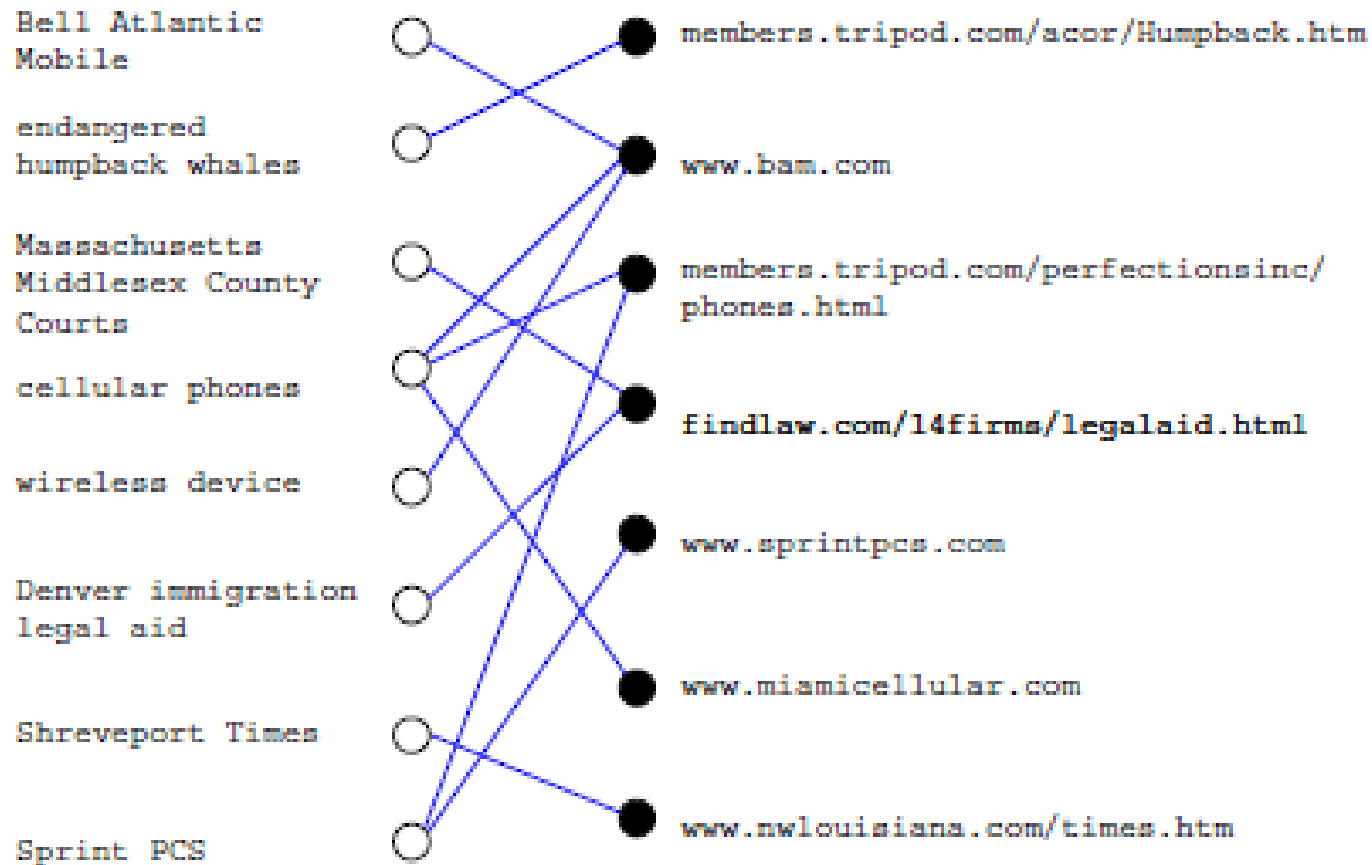
# Other Approaches

- Pseudo-relevance feedback
  - expansion terms based on top retrieved documents for initial query
- Context vectors
  - Represent words by the words that co-occur with them
    - e.g., top 35 most strongly associated words for “aquarium” (using Dice’s coefficient):  
zoology, cranmore, jouett, zoo, goldfish, fish, cannery, urchin, reptile, coral, animal, mollusk, marine, underwater, plankton, mussel, oceanography, mammal, species, exhibit, swim, biologist, cabrillo, saltwater, creature, reef, whale, oceanic, scuba, kelp, invertebrate, park, crustacean, wild, tropical
  - Rank words for a query by ranking context vectors

# Other Approaches

- Query logs
  - Best source of information about queries and related terms
    - short pieces of text and click data
  - Query reformulation/expansion based on term associations in logs
    - e.g., most frequent words in queries containing “tropical fish” from MSN log:  
stores, pictures, live, sale, types, clipart, blue, freshwater, aquarium, supplies
  - Query suggestion based on finding similar queries
    - group based on click data

# Query Click Log





# Query Click Logs

- Compare queries by comparing overlap of clicked URLs
  - can include weights based on number of clicks
- Cluster based on similarities
- Rank based on *random walk* on click graph
  - similar to basis of PageRank
- Example of a *recommender system*
  - c.f. Amazon, Netflix

# Clustering in Query Log

- e.g., Beeferman and Berger, KDD 2000
- Iterative agglomerative clustering
  - Calculate similarities between pairs of queries, URLs
  - Group most similar pair of queries, then most similar pair of URLs, then iterate

Bell Atlantic  
Mobile

endangered  
humpback whales

Massachusetts  
Middlesex County  
Courts; Denver  
immigration  
legal aid

cellular phones

wireless device

Shreveport Times

Sprint PCS



[members.tripod.com/acor/Humpback.htm](http://members.tripod.com/acor/Humpback.htm)

[www.bam.com](http://www.bam.com)

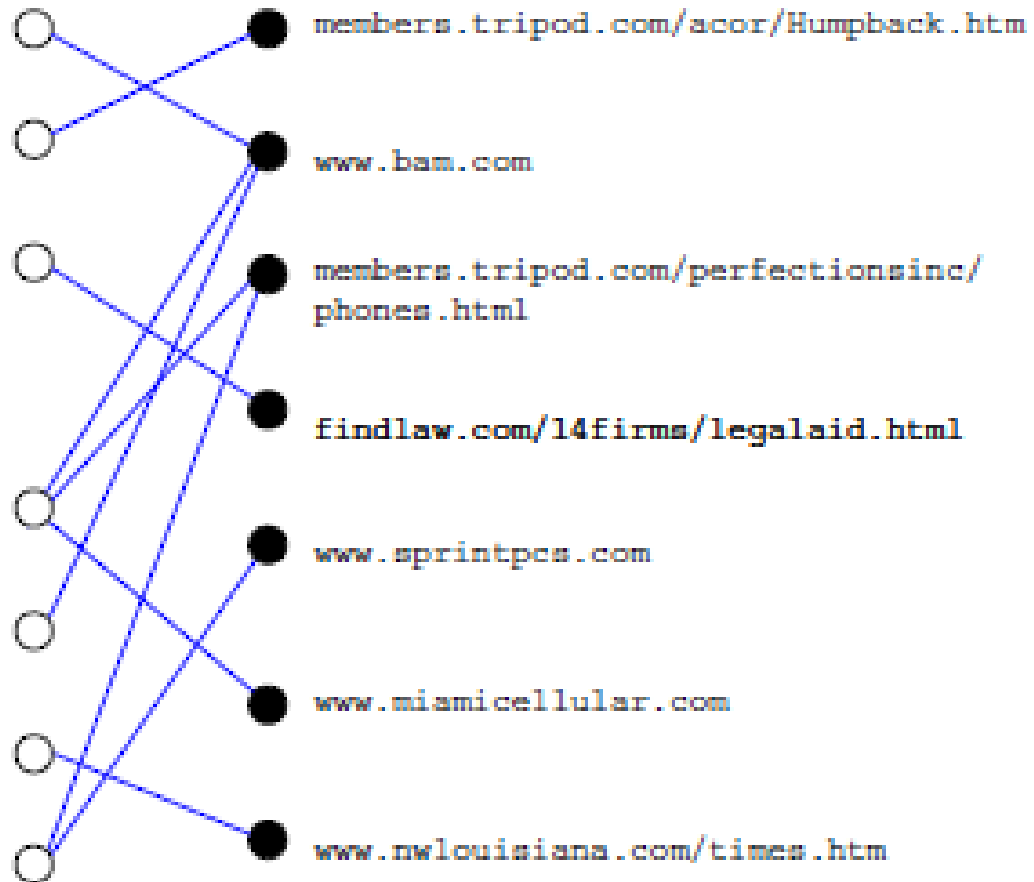
[members.tripod.com/perfectionsinc/phones.html](http://members.tripod.com/perfectionsinc/phones.html)

[findlaw.com/14firms/legalaid.html](http://findlaw.com/14firms/legalaid.html)

[www.sprintpcs.com](http://www.sprintpcs.com)

[www.miamicellular.com](http://www.miamicellular.com)

[www.nwlouisiana.com/times.htm](http://www.nwlouisiana.com/times.htm)



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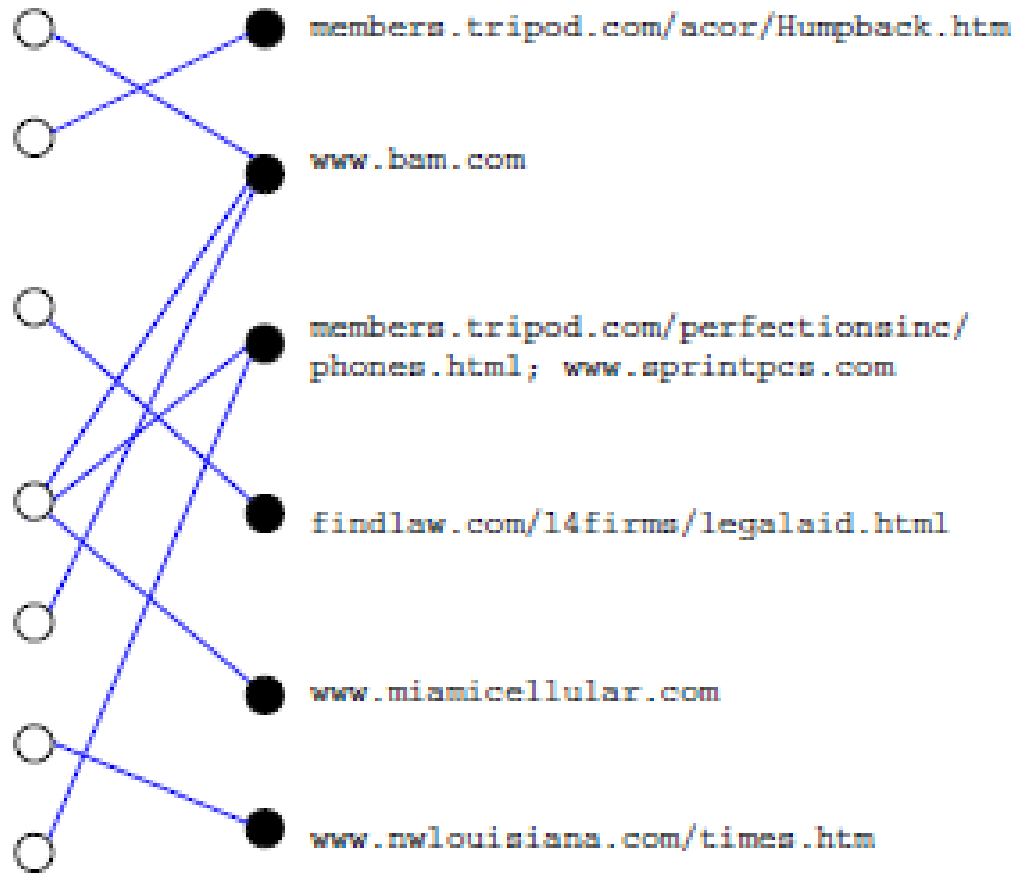
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[findlaw.com/14firms/legalaid.html](http://findlaw.com/14firms/legalaid.html)

[www.miamicellular.com](http://www.miamicellular.com)

[www.nwlouisiana.com/times.htm](http://www.nwlouisiana.com/times.htm)

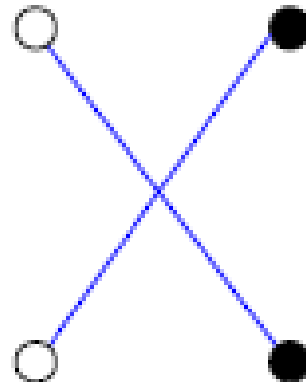


Bell Atlantic  
Mobile, wireless  
device, cellular  
phones, Sprint  
PCS

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[findlaw.com/14firms/legalaid.html](http://findlaw.com/14firms/legalaid.html)

[www.nwlouisiana.com/times.htm](http://www.nwlouisiana.com/times.htm)

# Relevance Feedback

- User identifies relevant (and maybe non-relevant) documents in the initial result list
- System modifies query using terms from those documents and re-ranks documents
  - example of simple machine learning algorithm using training data
  - but, very little training data
- Pseudo-relevance feedback just assumes top-ranked documents are relevant – no user input

# Relevance Feedback Example

1. **Badmans Tropical Fish**

A freshwater aquarium page covering all aspects of the **tropical fish** hobby. ... to Badman's **Tropical Fish**. ... world of aquariology with Badman's **Tropical Fish**. ...

2. **Tropical Fish**

Notes on a few species and a gallery of photos of African cichlids.

3. **The Tropical Tank Homepage - Tropical Fish and Aquariums**

Info on **tropical fish** and **tropical** aquariums, large **fish** species index with ... Here you will find lots of information on **Tropical Fish** and Aquariums. ...

4. **Tropical Fish Centre**

Offers a range of aquarium products, advice on choosing species, feeding, and health care, and a discussion board.

5. **Tropical fish - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia**

**Tropical fish** are popular aquarium **fish** , due to their often bright coloration. ... Practical Fishkeeping • **Tropical Fish** Hobbyist • Koi. Aquarium related companies: ...

6. **Tropical Fish Find**

Home page for **Tropical Fish** Internet Directory ... stores, forums, clubs, **fish** facts, **tropical fish** compatibility and aquarium ...

7. **Breeding tropical fish**

... intrested in keeping and/or breeding **Tropical**, Marine, Pond and Coldwater **fish**. ... Breeding **Tropical Fish** ... breeding **tropical**, marine, coldwater & pond **fish**. ...

8. **FishLore**

Includes **tropical** freshwater aquarium how-to guides, FAQs, **fish** profiles, articles, and forums.

9. **Cathy's Tropical Fish Keeping**

Information on setting up and maintaining a successful freshwater aquarium.

10. **Tropical Fish Place**

**Tropical Fish** information for your freshwater **fish** tank ... great amount of information about a great hobby, a freshwater **tropical fish** tank. ...

Top 10 documents  
for “tropical fish”

# Relevance Feedback Example

- If we assume top 10 are relevant, most frequent terms are (with frequency):
  - a (926), td (535), href (495), http (357), width (345), com (343), nbsp (316), www (260), tr (239), htm (233), class (225), jpg (221)
  - too many stopwords and HTML expressions
- Use only snippets and remove stopwords
  - tropical (26), fish (28), aquarium (8), freshwater (5), breeding (4), information (3), species (3), tank (2), Batman's (2), page (2), hobby (2), forums (2)



# Relevance Feedback Example

- If document 7 (“Breeding tropical fish”) is *explicitly* indicated to be relevant, the most frequent terms are:
  - breeding (4), fish (4), tropical (4), marine (2), pond (2), coldwater (2), keeping (1), interested (1)
- Specific weights and scoring methods used for relevance feedback depend on retrieval model

# Relevance Feedback

- Both relevance feedback and pseudo-relevance feedback are effective, but not used in many applications
  - pseudo-relevance feedback has reliability issues, especially with queries that don't retrieve many relevant documents
- Some applications use relevance feedback
  - filtering, “more like this”
- Query suggestion more popular
  - may be less accurate, but can work if initial query fails

# Context and Personalization

- If a query has the same words as another query, results will be the same regardless of
  - who submitted the query
  - what other queries were submitted in the same session
  - where the query was submitted
- These other factors (the *context*) could have a significant impact on relevance

# User Models

- Generate user profiles based on documents that the person looks at
  - such as web pages visited, email messages, or documents on your desktop
- Use profiles to modify query, results
- Can be effective with enough data
  - Privacy??

# Query Logs

- Query logs provide important contextual information that can be used effectively
- Context in this case is
  - previous queries that are the same
  - previous queries that are similar
  - query sessions including the same query
- Query history for individuals could be used for caching or query transformation

# Local Search

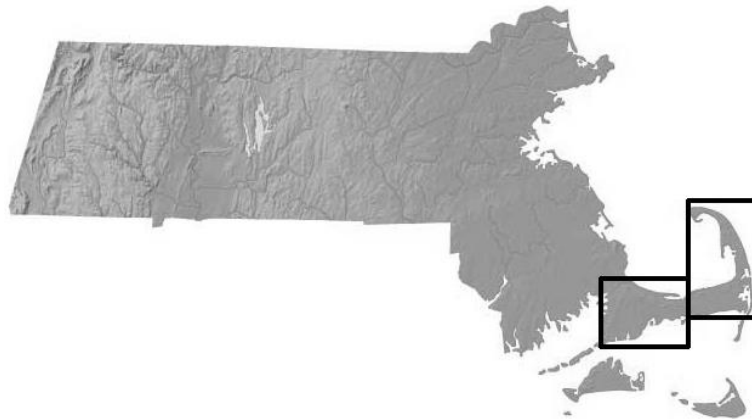
- Location is context
- *Local search* uses geographic information to modify the ranking of search results
  - location derived from the query text
  - location of the device where the query originated
- e.g.,
  - “fishing supplies cape cod”
  - “fishing supplies” from mobile device in Hyannis

# Local Search

- Identify the geographic region associated with web pages
  - use location metadata that has been manually added to the document,
  - or identify locations such as place names, city names, or country names in text
- Identify the geographic region associated with the query
  - 10-15% of queries contain some location reference
- Rank web pages using location information in addition to text and link-based features

# Extracting Location Information

- Type of information extraction
  - ambiguity and significance of locations are issues
- Location names are mapped to specific regions and coordinates



- Matching done by inclusion, distance



# Snippet Generation

## **Tropical Fish**

One of the U.K.s Leading suppliers of **Tropical**, Coldwater, Marine **Fish** and Invertebrates plus.. . next day **fish** delivery service ...

[www.tropicalfish.org.uk/tropical\\_fish.htm](http://www.tropicalfish.org.uk/tropical_fish.htm) [Cached page](#)

- Query-dependent document summary
- Simple summarization approach
  - rank each sentence in a document using a *significance factor*
  - select the top sentences for the summary
  - first proposed by Luhn in 50's

# Sentence Selection

- Significance factor for a sentence is calculated based on the occurrence of *significant words*

- If  $f_{d,w}$  is the frequency of word  $w$  in document  $d$ , then  $w$  is a significant word if it is not a stopword and

$$f_{d,w} \geq \begin{cases} 7 - 0.1 \times (25 - s_d), & \text{if } s_d < 25 \\ 7, & \text{if } 25 \leq s_d \leq 40 \\ 7 + 0.1 \times (s_d - 40), & \text{otherwise} \end{cases}$$

where  $s_d$  is the number of sentences in document  $d$

- text is *bracketed* by significant words (limit on number of non-significant words in bracket)

# Sentence Selection

- Significance factor for bracketed text spans is computed by dividing the square of the number of significant words in the span by the total number of words

- e.g.,  
W W W W W W W W W W W.  
(Initial sentence)

W W S W S S W W S W W.  
(Identify significant words)

W W [S W S S W W S] W W.  
(Text span bracketed by significant words)

- Significance factor =  $4^2/7 = 2.3$

# Snippet Generation

- Involves more features than just significance factor
- e.g. for a news story, could use
  - whether the sentence is a heading
  - whether it is the first or second line of the document
  - the total number of query terms occurring in the sentence
  - the number of unique query terms in the sentence
  - the longest contiguous run of query words in the sentence
  - a density measure of query words (significance factor)
- Weighted combination of features used to rank sentences

# Snippet Generation

- Web pages are less structured than news stories
  - can be difficult to find good summary sentences
- Snippet sentences are often selected from other sources
  - metadata associated with the web page
    - e.g., `<meta name="description" content= ...>`
  - external sources such as web directories
    - e.g., Open Directory Project, <http://www.dmoz.org>
- Structured pages like Wikipedia

# Snippet Guidelines

- All query terms should appear in the summary, showing their relationship to the retrieved page
- When query terms are present in the title, they need not be repeated
  - allows snippets that do not contain query terms
- Highlight query terms in URLs
- Snippets should be readable text, not lists of keywords
- Sometimes snippet can have extra information like an image

# Advertising

- *Sponsored search* – advertising presented with search results
- *Contextual advertising* – advertising presented when browsing web pages
- Both involve finding the most relevant advertisements in a database
  - An advertisement usually consists of a short text description and a link to a web page describing the product or service in more detail

# Online Advertising

- Cost Per Mille (CPM) / Cost Per Impression (CPI)
  - Advertisers pay for exposure (view) of their message to a specific audience
  - Per Mille means per thousand impressions (or number of times an ad loads on the page)
  - Useful when user education is most important
- Cost Per Click (CPC) / Pay Per Click (PPC)
  - Advertisers only pay when a user clicks the ad and is directed to the website
  - Useful when user destination is most important
  - Current approach in search engines



# Searching Advertisements

- Factors involved in ranking advertisements
  - similarity of text content to query
  - bids for keywords in query
  - popularity of advertisement
    - general popularity
    - query-specific popularity
  - goal is to maximize the expected profit
- Small amount of text in advertisement
  - dealing with vocabulary mismatch is important
  - expansion techniques are effective

# Example Advertisements

## **fish tanks** at Target

Find **fish tanks** Online. Shop & Save at Target.com Today.  
[www.target.com](http://www.target.com)

## **Aquariums**

540+ Aquariums at Great Prices.  
[fishbowls.pronto.com](http://fishbowls.pronto.com)

## **Freshwater Fish Species**

Everything you need to know to keep your setup clean and beautiful  
[www.FishChannel.com](http://www.FishChannel.com)

## **Pet Supplies at Shop.com**

Shop millions of products and buy from our trusted merchants.  
[shop.com](http://shop.com)

## **Custom Fish Tanks**

Choose From 6,500+ Pet Supplies. Save On Custom **Fish Tanks**!  
[shopzilla.com](http://shopzilla.com)

Advertisements retrieved for query “fish tank”

# Searching Advertisements

- Query reformulation based on query log
  - queries in a same session
  - 50% reformulation in query sessions
- Pseudo-relevance feedback
  - expand query and/or document using the Web
  - use ad text or query for pseudo-relevance feedback
  - rank exact matches first, followed by stem matches, followed by expansion matches

# Contextual Advertising

- Generating a query from the page
- Term selection
  - similar to sentence selection
    - significance factors
  - classification algorithms
    - term-level features, e.g, collection frequency, query log frequency, term positions, ...

# Organizing Search Results

- Meaningful grouping can help users to understand the results
  - Clustering
  - Faceted Categories

# Clustering Results

- Result lists often contain documents related to different *aspects* of the query topic
- *Clustering* is used to group related documents to simplify browsing
- Example: <http://clusty.com/>

Example clusters for  
query “tropical fish”

Pictures (38)

Aquarium Fish (28)

Tropical Fish Aquarium (26)

Exporter (31)

Supplies (32)

Plants, Aquatic (18)

Fish Tank (15)

Breeding (16)

Marine Fish (16)

Aquaria (9)

# Result List Example

1. **Badmans Tropical Fish**

A freshwater aquarium page covering all aspects of the **tropical fish** hobby. ... to Badman's **Tropical Fish**. ... world of aquariology with Badman's **Tropical Fish**. ...

2. **Tropical Fish**

Notes on a few species and a gallery of photos of African cichlids.

3. **The Tropical Tank Homepage - Tropical Fish and Aquariums**

Info on **tropical fish** and **tropical** aquariums, large **fish** species index with ... Here you will find lots of information on **Tropical Fish** and Aquariums. ...

4. **Tropical Fish Centre**

Offers a range of aquarium products, advice on choosing species, feeding, and health care, and a discussion board.

5. **Tropical fish - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia**

**Tropical fish** are popular aquarium **fish** , due to their often bright coloration. ... Practical Fishkeeping • **Tropical Fish** Hobbyist • Koi. Aquarium related companies: ...

6. **Tropical Fish Find**

Home page for **Tropical Fish** Internet Directory ... stores, forums, clubs, **fish** facts, **tropical fish** compatibility and aquarium ...

7. **Breeding tropical fish**

... intrested in keeping and/or breeding **Tropical**, Marine, Pond and Coldwater **fish**. ... Breeding **Tropical Fish** ... breeding **tropical**, marine, coldwater & pond **fish**. ...

8. **FishLore**

Includes **tropical** freshwater aquarium how-to guides, FAQs, **fish** profiles, articles, and forums.

9. **Cathy's Tropical Fish Keeping**

Information on setting up and maintaining a successful freshwater aquarium.

10. **Tropical Fish Place**

**Tropical Fish** information for your freshwater **fish** tank ... great amount of information about a great hobby, a freshwater **tropical fish** tank. ...

Top 10 documents  
for “tropical fish”

# Clustering Results

- Automatic
- Can reveal new trends in data
  - e.g., after an event
- Useful for vague or ambiguous queries



# Clustering Requirements

- Efficiency
  - must be specific to each query and are based on the top-ranked documents for that query
  - typically based on snippets
- Easy to understand
  - Can be difficult to assign good labels to groups
  - Monothetic vs. polythetic clustering/classification

# Types of Clustering

- Monothetic
  - every member of a class has the property that defines the class
  - typical assumption made by users
  - easy to understand
  - preferred in search result clustering
- Polythetic
  - members of classes share many properties but there is no single defining property
  - most clustering algorithms (e.g. K-means) produce this type of output

# Classification Example

$$D_1 = \{a, b, c\}$$

$$D_2 = \{a, d, e\}$$

$$D_3 = \{d, e, f, g\}$$

$$D_4 = \{f, g\}$$

- Possible monothetic classification
  - $a$  and  $e$  are significant terms
    - $\{D_1, D_2\}$  (labeled using  $a$ ) and  $\{D_2, D_3\}$  (labeled  $e$ )
- Possible polythetic classification
  - $\{D_2, D_3, D_4\}, D_1$
  - labels?

# Result Clusters

- Simple algorithm

- group based on words in snippets

aquarium (5)	(1, 3, 4, 5, 8)
freshwater (4)	(1, 8, 9, 10)
species (3)	(2, 3, 4)
hobby (3)	(1, 5, 10)
forums (2)	(6, 8)

- Refinements

- use phrases
  - use more features
    - whether phrases occurred in titles or snippets
    - length of the phrase
    - collection frequency of the phrase
    - overlap of the resulting clusters,

# Faceted Classification

- A set of categories, usually organized into a hierarchy, together with a set of *facets* that describe the important properties associated with the category
- Manually defined
  - potentially less adaptable than dynamic clustering
- Easy to understand
  - commonly used in e-commerce

# Example Faceted Classification

Books (7,845)

Home & Garden (2,477)

Apparel (236)

Home Improvement (169)

Jewelry & Watches (76)

Sports & Outdoors (71)

Office Products (68)

Toys & Games (62)

Everything Else (44)

Electronics (26)

Baby (25)

DVD (12)

Music (11)

Software (10)

Gourmet Food (6)

Beauty (4)

Automotive (4)

Magazine Subscriptions (3)

Health & Personal Care (3)

Wireless Accessories (2)

Video Games (1)

Categories for “tropical fish”

# Example Faceted Classification

## Home & Garden

Kitchen & Dining (149)

Furniture & Décor (1,776)

Pet Supplies (368)

Bedding & Bath (51)

Patio & Garden (22)

Art & Craft Supplies (12)

Home Appliances (2)

Vacuums, Cleaning & Storage  
(107)

## Brand

<brand names>

## Seller

<vendor names>

## Discount

Up to 25% off (563)

25% - 50% off (472)

50% - 70% off (46)

70% off or more (46)

## Price

\$0-\$24 (1,032)

\$25-\$49 (394)

\$50-\$99 (797)

\$100-\$199 (206)

\$200-\$499 (39)

\$500-\$999 (9)

\$1000-\$1999 (5)

\$5000-\$9999 (7)

Subcategories and facets for “Home & Garden”

# Visualization in Search Interfaces

- Visualizing query terms in retrieved documents
  - Highlighting terms
  - Plotting term positions
- Visualizing relation between terms
- Visualizing relation between document
- Domain-specific visualization
  - Visualizing relation between authors in people search



# Design and Evaluation of Interfaces

- A field of Human Computer Interaction (HCI)
- Studies how people think about, respond to, and use technology
- The quality of interface is determined by people responses
  - Subjective measures
  - Speed, familiarity, preferred features, ...
- Studying new features on a random subset of users and comparing their actions