

Expert Search - Automated Crawler

Runs to discover Faculty Bio-pages by
crawling University Websites.

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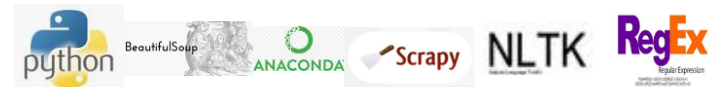
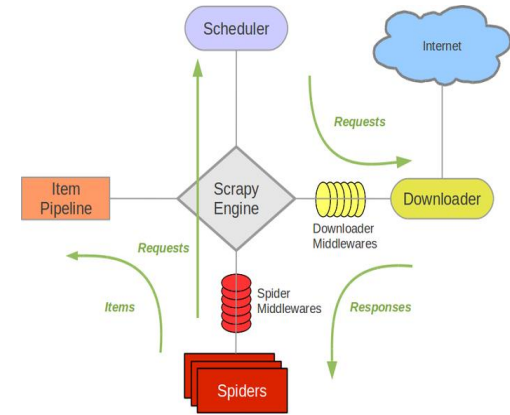


Why an Automated Crawler?

- Manually searching the web and extracting faculty bio pages are time consuming
 - ◆ It's tedious
 - ◆ Doesn't scale
 - ◆ Navigation is difficult
- Our Automated Crawler crawls university websites to automatically fetches bio pages
- It converts the Markup text into normalized text data to feed its downstream components

Technology Stack

- The crawler runs on a cron schedule to to passively crawl universities websites
- The crawler is developed in Python. It utilizes the Scrapy library and follows Breadth First Search (BFS) up to the designated depth specified by the User/Administrator
- Crawler has Spiders that recursively follow all the web links of the University Website and extracts the web page data along with the Website's "URL Tree" to understand, validate, troubleshoot and trace



Crawler in Action

```
C:\Windows\System32\cmd.exe - scrapy crawl faculty_pages_filtered

(py38) C:\CS410TIS\Projects\ExpertSearchCrawler>scrapy crawl faculty_pages_filtered
forrtl: error (208): program aborting due to control-C event
Image                                PC                                Routine                                Line                                Source
libifcoremd.dll                      00007FFCF3613B58                Unknown                                Unknown                            Unknown
KERNELBASE.dll                       00007FFD2F0762A3                Unknown                                Unknown                            Unknown
KERNEL32.DLL                         00007FFD2FF47C24                Unknown                                Unknown                            Unknown
ntdll.dll                             00007FFD31C8D4D1                Unknown                                Unknown                            Unknown

(py38) C:\CS410TIS\Projects\ExpertSearchCrawler>scrapy crawl faculty_pages_filtered

Crawled 50 Bio-pages of Cornell University ...

Crawled 50 Bio-pages of Gatech University ...

Crawled 50 Bio-pages of Utxas University ...

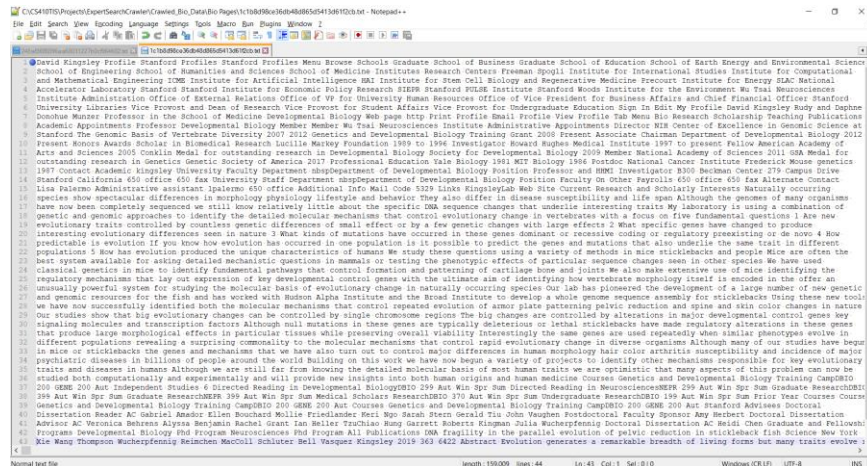
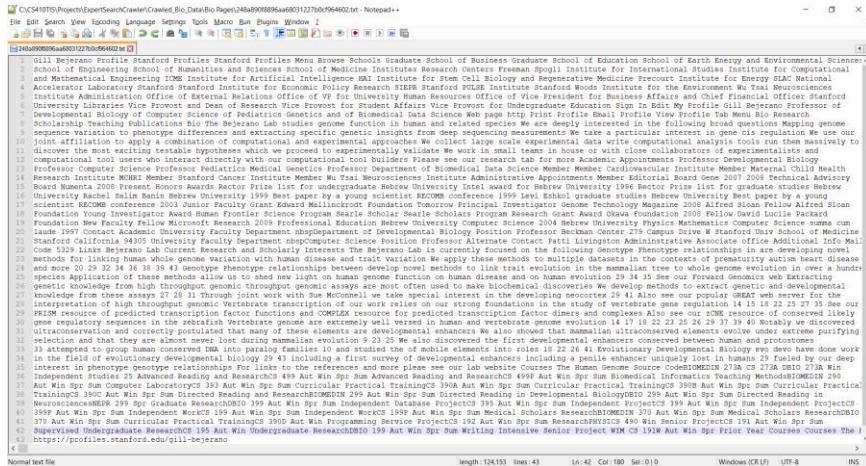
Crawled 50 Bio-pages of Illinois University ...
```

Name	Date modified	Type	Size
00_50_tree.txt	12/15/2020 2:43 PM	Text Document	532 KB
00_100_tree.txt	12/15/2020 2:45 PM	Text Document	639 KB
00_150_tree.txt	12/15/2020 2:46 PM	Text Document	686 KB
00_200_tree.txt	12/15/2020 2:46 PM	Text Document	726 KB
00_250_tree.txt	12/15/2020 2:47 PM	Text Document	761 KB
00_300_tree.txt	12/15/2020 2:47 PM	Text Document	801 KB
00_350_tree.txt	12/15/2020 2:48 PM	Text Document	866 KB
00_400_tree.txt	12/15/2020 2:48 PM	Text Document	964 KB
0043771213c0e20a066c1c157962.txt	12/15/2020 2:46 PM	Text Document	11 KB
0aef471ba87c1606718021402327930.txt	12/15/2020 2:47 PM	Text Document	10 KB
0b0a09060854617ababedee76176.txt	12/15/2020 2:40 PM	Text Document	3 KB
0b3520e0a0320a1d9f6c0f08b0ad.txt	12/15/2020 2:42 PM	Text Document	4 KB
0b4c0b6c4a4e955da21d7613ba20f.txt	12/15/2020 2:48 PM	Text Document	4 KB
0b6ec1ba3f11bded71ed091ba2a7a1d.txt	12/15/2020 2:45 PM	Text Document	9 KB
0b9d501197bac340b1994e3b050be7.txt	12/15/2020 2:47 PM	Text Document	12 KB
0b3b440113aaf0e0f77a170503a1f1.txt	12/15/2020 2:47 PM	Text Document	8 KB
0b2883b5187440588ba0a745c581d.txt	12/15/2020 2:46 PM	Text Document	4 KB
0c1a044196a157073ac0a093909c4a.txt	12/15/2020 2:48 PM	Text Document	9 KB
0c4c31f77bd5ac15534a41c250862a.txt	12/15/2020 2:46 PM	Text Document	7 KB
0c4c9f198c2709615581d1071a0a7c.txt	12/15/2020 2:39 PM	Text Document	13 KB
0c94a76c352a367c76db0a71f71b0b.txt	12/15/2020 2:48 PM	Text Document	11 KB
0d52ba748024ee984748f95c2e0a02.txt	12/15/2020 2:35 PM	Text Document	3 KB
0d63a0e145137b0a2a7a5c35362.txt	12/15/2020 2:46 PM	Text Document	4 KB
0d640d51d1d665d6c9f5e08616ac51.txt	12/15/2020 2:42 PM	Text Document	4 KB
0d675216c32e5179ed0ea784c6c3a5.txt	12/15/2020 2:48 PM	Text Document	4 KB
0d840a0202c1b080a0023777f7e7e.txt	12/15/2020 2:35 PM	Text Document	3 KB
0d971c1d4e0e05f09807019f1c0a3a.txt	12/15/2020 2:46 PM	Text Document	9 KB
0f0a3b743c72a799808c39a1f5c041.txt	12/15/2020 2:46 PM	Text Document	5 KB
0f6b26a7815a4af5f120d09f1c0a5.txt	12/15/2020 2:47 PM	Text Document	9 KB
0f6a0d44a4ab79430a35020a7703b.txt	12/15/2020 2:36 PM	Text Document	9 KB
0f6a0d44a4ab79430a35020a7703b.txt	12/15/2020 2:36 PM	Text Document	17 KB
0f6a0d44a4ab79430a35020a7703b.txt	12/15/2020 2:36 PM	Text Document	17 KB

Crawler in Action (contd...)

The image shows two side-by-side browser windows displaying lists of URLs from Stanford University. The left window shows a list of URLs, with 'https://cs.stanford.edu/directory/faculty' highlighted in red. The right window shows a list of URLs, with 'https://profiles.stanford.edu/david-kinney' highlighted in green. A green arrow points from the highlighted URL in the right window to the text 'Faculty Bio Page URLs'.

Crawler in Action (contd...





Challenges

- Crawler runs a long time and drains computational resources on the developer's machine when we run it for all Universities through all the web pages of the university websites without any limitation on its depth.
 - ◆ Parallelization over multiple machines works best
- Optimizing the crawler was challenging
 - ◆ We had to eliminate different branches of crawl tree that were uninteresting, e.g. publications, news, sports



Questions?

Please reach out to cheerla3@illinois.edu if you have any question.



Thank you!!