

Is Google Scholar use declining?

Martin Fenner, Gobbledygook

January 12, 2008

I'm a regular reader of TechCrunch, a popular blog about internet products and companies. But somehow I missed the article just before christmas that talks about the popularity of different Google products. In this analysis, traffic for Google Scholar was down 32% compared to 2006.

I haven't seen this information reproduced somewhere else, but the number for most of the other Google products were higher than 2006, as expected. And I don't have the numbers of searches in Google Scholar compared to PubMed (you would have to buy this information from companies like comScore). But does this indicate that there is something wrong with Google Scholar? As a PubMed user for 15 years, I still like to get search results chronologically and not by (perceived) relevance. And I like the detailed search options and integration with other databases.

Other search engines in this field include Scirus from Elsevier and Windows Live Academic Search from Microsoft. Incidentally, TechCrunch (and others) reports this week that Microsoft is about to acquire Fast Search & Transfer, the Norwegian company that provides the search technology to Scirus.

Some big company names, but for me Pubmed is still the first stop when searching for journal articles. And PubMed will become more important as the NIH now requires the deposition of all NIH-funded research papers in PubMed Central.