

# Contents

- 1. Combating Against WebSpam
- 2. HITS

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- 1. Combating Against WebSpam
  - 1 Web Spam: Overview
  - TrustRank: Combating the Web Spam

#### (1) What is Web Spam?

- > Spamming:
  - Any deliberate action to boost a web page's position in search engine results, incommensurate with page's real value
- > Spam:
  - Web pages that are the result of spamming
- > This is a very broad definition
  - SEO industry might disagree!
  - SEO = search engine optimization
- ➤ Approximately 10-15% of web pages are spam

#### (2) Web Search

- **>** Early search engines:
  - Crawl the Web
  - Index pages by the words they contained
  - Respond to search queries (lists of words) with the pages containing those words
- > Early page ranking:
  - Attempt to order pages matching a search query by "importance"
  - First search engines considered:
    - (1) Number of times query words appeared
    - (2) Prominence of word position, e.g. title, header

#### (3) First Spammers

As people began to use search engines to find things on the Web, those with commercial interests tried to exploit search engines to bring people to their own site – whether they wanted to be there or not

#### > Example:

- Shirt-seller might pretend to be about "movies"
- > Techniques for achieving high relevance/importance for a web page

#### (4) First Spammers: Term Spam

- ➤ How do you make your page appear to be about movies?
  - (1) Shirt-seller might pretend to be about "movies" (1) Add the word 'movie' 1,000 times to your page
  - Set text color to the background color, so only search engines would see
     it
  - (2) Or, run the query "movie" on your target search engine
  - See what page came first in the listings
  - Copy it into your page, make it "invisible"
- > These and similar techniques are term spam

### (5) Google's Solution to Term Spam

- ➤ Believe what people say about you, rather than what you say about yourself
  - Use words in the anchor text (words that appear underlined to represent the link) and its surrounding text
- > PageRank as a tool to measure the "importance" of Web pages

#### (6) Why It Works?

- Our hypothetical shirt-seller loses
  - Saying he is about movies doesn't help, because others don't say he is about movies
  - His page isn't very important, so it won't be ranked high for shirts or movies

#### > Example:

- Shirt-seller creates 1,000 pages, each links to his page with "movie" in the anchor text
- These pages have no links in, so they get little PageRank
- So the shirt-seller can't beat truly important movie pages, like IMDB

- (7) Google vs. Spammers: Round 2!
  - ➤ Once Google became the dominant search engine, spammers began to work out ways to fool Google
  - Spam farms were developed to concentrate PageRank on a single page
  - > Link spam:
    - Creating link structures that boost PageRank of a particular page



### (8) Link Spamming

- Three kinds of web pages from a spammer's point of view
  - Inaccessible pages
    - spammer has no control
  - Accessible pages
    - e.g., blog comments pages
    - spammer can post links to his pages
  - Owned pages
    - Completely controlled by spammer
    - May span multiple domain names

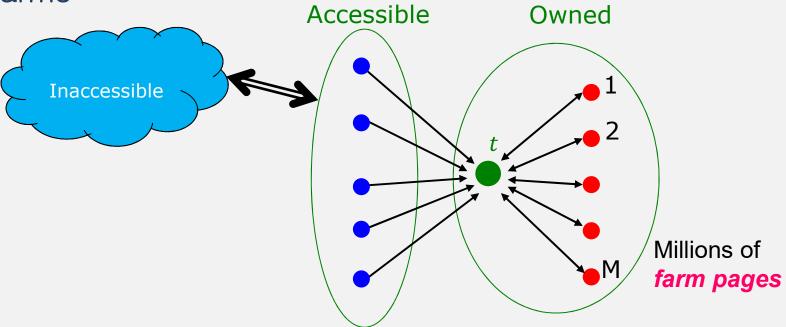
#### (9) Link Farms

- > Spammer's goal:
  - Maximize the PageRank of target page t

#### > Technique:

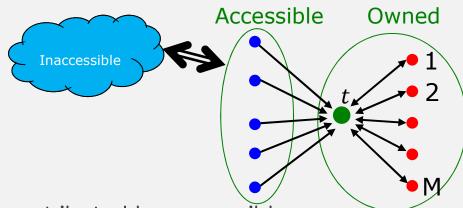
- Get as many links from accessible pages as possible to target page t
- Construct "link farm" using owned pages to get PageRank multiplier effect

### (9) Link Farms



One of the most common and effective organizations for a link farm

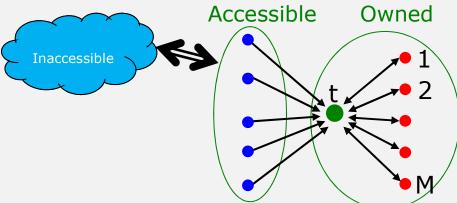
(10) Analysis



N...# pages on the web M...# of pages spammer owns

- > x: PageRank contributed by accessible pages
- y: PageRank of target page t
- > Rank of each "farm" page =  $\frac{\beta y}{M} + \frac{1-\beta}{N}$
- $y = x + \beta M \left[ \frac{\beta y}{M} + \frac{1 \beta}{N} \right] + \frac{1 \beta}{N} = x + \beta^2 y + \frac{\beta (1 \beta) M}{N} + \frac{1 \beta}{N}$
- $y = \frac{x}{1-\beta^2} + c \frac{M}{N} \quad \text{where } c = \frac{\beta}{1+\beta}$

(10) Analysis



N...# pages on the web

owns

*M*...# of pages spammer

- $y = \frac{x}{1-\beta^2} + c \frac{M}{N} \quad \text{where } c = \frac{\beta}{1+\beta}$
- $\rightarrow$  For  $\beta = 0.85, 1/(1 \beta^2) = 3.6$
- Multiplier effect for acquired PageRank
- $\triangleright$  By making M large, we can make y as large as we want (up to c)

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#### (1) Combating Spam

- Combating term spam
  - Use anchor text and PageRank
  - Analyze text using statistical methods
  - Also useful: Detecting approximate duplicate pages
- Combating link spam
  - Detection and blacklisting of structures that look like spam farms
    - Leads to another war hiding and detecting spam farms
  - TrustRank = topic-specific PageRank with a teleport set of trusted pages
    - Example: .edu domains, similar domains for non-US schools

- (2) TrustRank: Idea
  - ▶ Basic principle: Approximate isolation
    - It is rare for a "good" page to point to a "bad" (spam) page
  - > Sample a set of seed pages from the web
  - ➤ Have an oracle (human) to identify the good pages and the spam pages in the seed set
    - Expensive task, so we must make seed set as small as possible

### (3) Trust Propagation

- Call the subset of seed pages that are identified as good the trusted pages
  - principle: Approximate isolation
- Perform a topic-sensitive PageRank with teleport set = trusted pages
  - Propagate trust through links:
    - Each page gets a trust value between 0 and 1
- Solution 1: Use a threshold value and mark all pages below the trust threshold as spam

#### (4) Why is it a good idea?

#### > Trust attenuation

 The degree of trust conferred by a trusted page decreases with the distance in the graph

#### > Trust splitting:

- The larger the number of out-links from a page, the less trust the page author gives to each out-link
- Trust is split across out-links

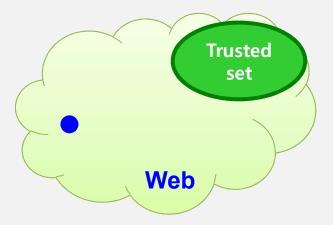
#### (5) Picking the Seed Set

- Two conflicting considerations:
  - Human has to inspect each seed page, so seed set must be as small as possible
  - Must ensure every good page gets adequate trust rank, so need to make all good pages reachable from seed set by short paths

- (6) Approaches to Picking Seed Set
  - > Suppose we want to pick a seed set of k pages
  - > How to do that?
  - > (1) PageRank:
    - Pick the top k pages by PageRank
    - Main idea: you can't get a bad page's rank really high
  - ➤ (2) Use trusted domains whose membership is controlled, like .edu, .mil, .gov

### (7) Spam Mass

- ➤ In the TrustRank model, we start with good pages and propagate trust
- Complementary view:
  - What fraction of a page's PageRank comes from spam pages?
- In practice, we don't know all the spam pages, so we need to estimate



#### (8) Spam Mass Estimation

- Solution
  - $r_p$ : PageRank of page p
  - $r_p^+$ : PageRank of page p with teleport into trusted pages only
- > Then: What fraction of a page's PageRank comes from spam pages?

**Trusted** 

set

Web

$$r_p^- = r_p - r_p^+$$

- **>** Spam mass of  $p = \frac{r_p^-}{r_p^+}$ 
  - Pages with high spam mass are spam

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  - 1 HITS: Hubs and Authorities

#### (1) Hubs and Authorities

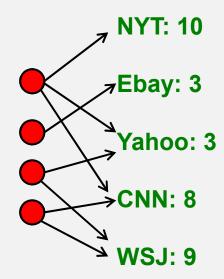
- ➤ HITS (Hypertext-Induced Topic Selection)
  - Is a measure of importance of pages or documents, similar to PageRank
  - Proposed at around same time as PageRank ('98)
- ➤ Goal: Say we want to find good newspapers
  - Don't just find newspapers. Find "experts" people who link in a coordinated way to good newspapers
- Idea: Links as votes
  - Page is more important if it has more links
    - In-coming links? Out-going links?

#### (2) Finding newspapers

Hubs and Authorities

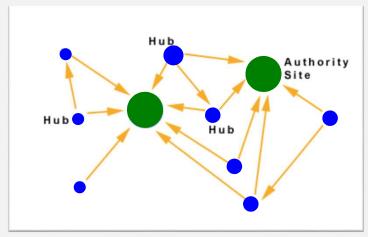
Each page has 2 scores:

- Quality as an expert (hub):
  - Total sum of votes of authorities it points to
- Quality as a content (authority):
  - Total sum of votes coming from experts
- > Principle of repeated improvement

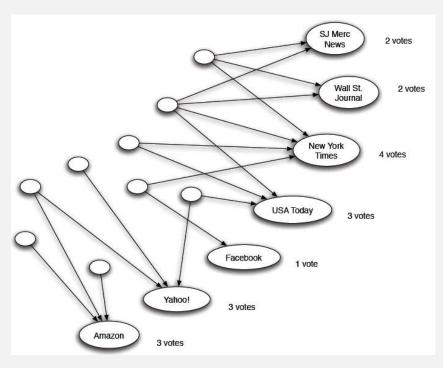


#### (3) Hubs and Authorities

- Interesting pages fall into two classes:
  - 1) Authorities are pages containing useful information
    - Newspaper home pages
    - Course home pages
    - Home pages of auto manufacturers
  - 2) Hubs are pages that link to authorities
    - List of newspapers
    - Course bulletin
    - List of US auto manufacturers

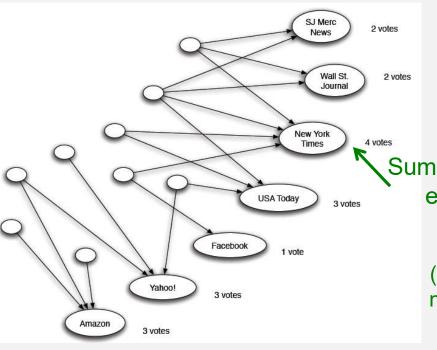


### (4) Counting in-links: Authority



Each page starts with **hub** score 1. **Authorities** collect their votes

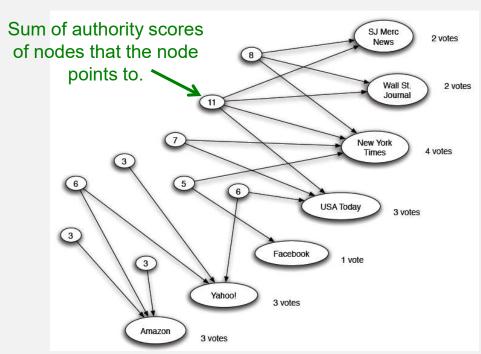
### (4) Counting in-links: Authority



Each page starts with **hub** score 1. **Authorities** collect their votes

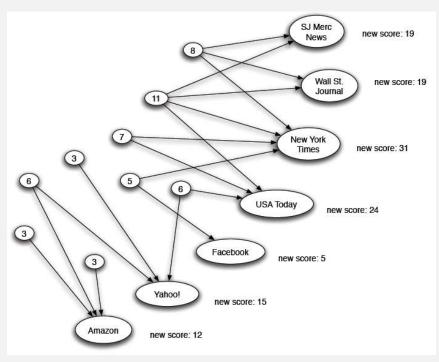
Sum of **hub** scores of nod es pointing to NYT.

### (5) Expert Quality: Hub



**Hubs** collect authority scores

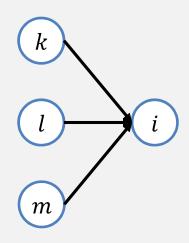
### (6) Reweighting



# Authorities again collect the hub scores

- (7) Mutually Recursive Definition
  - ➤ A good hub links to many good authorities
  - A good authority is linked from many good hubs
  - Model using two scores for each node:
    - Hub score and Authority score
    - Represented as vectors h and a

### (8) HITS



Then:

$$\boldsymbol{a}_i = \boldsymbol{h}_k + \boldsymbol{h}_l + \boldsymbol{h}_m$$

that is

 $a_i$  = sum of  $h_j$  over all j that edge (j, i) exis

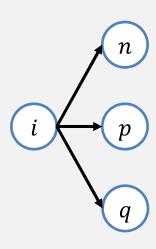
ts

or

$$a = A^{\mathrm{T}}h$$

where A is the adjacency matrix (i, j) is 1 if the edge from i to j exists

### (8) HITS



Symmetrically, for the 'hubness'

$$\boldsymbol{h}_i = \boldsymbol{a}_n + \boldsymbol{a}_p + \boldsymbol{a}_q$$

that is

 $h_i$  = sum of  $a_j$  over all j that edge (i, j) exis

or

ts

$$h = Aa$$

### (8) HITS

> Iterate the following equations until they converge

$$egin{aligned} oldsymbol{h} &= oldsymbol{A} oldsymbol{a} \ oldsymbol{a} &= oldsymbol{A}^{\mathrm{T}} oldsymbol{h} \end{aligned}$$

#### (9) Convergence of HITS

> Iterate the following equations until they converge

In short, the solutions to the iterative algorithm

$$h = A a$$
$$a = A^{T} h$$

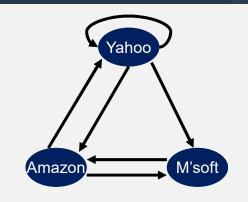
are the largest eigenvectors of  $AA^{T}$  and  $A^{T}A$ .

Starting from random a' and iterating, we'll eventually converge

### (10) Example of HITS

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$

$$A = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 1 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 \\ 0 & 1 & 0 \end{bmatrix} \qquad A^T = \begin{bmatrix} 1 & 1 & 0 \\ 1 & 0 & 1 \\ 1 & 1 & 0 \end{bmatrix}$$



	iteration	0	1	2	3	•••	$\infty$
<b>h</b> (yahoo)		0.58	0.80	0.80	0.79		0.788
<b>h</b> (amazon)	=	0.58	0.53	0.53	0.57		0.577
<b>h</b> (m'soft)		0.58	0.27	0.27	0.23	•••	0.211
	iteration	0	1	2	3	•••	∞
<b>a</b> (yahoo)	iteration	<b>0</b> 0.58	<b>1</b> 0.58	<b>2</b> 0.62	<b>3</b> 0.62		∞ 0.628
<b>a</b> (yahoo) <b>a</b> (amazon)	iteration =		1 0.58 0.58				

Note that each vector is scaled so that L2 norm is 1



#### Motivation for link analysis

- > Graphs are everywhere
- > Web as graphs

#### Pagerank: an important graph ranking algorithm

- ➤ A page is important if it is pointed to by other important pages
- Pagerank vector gives the stationary distribution for the random walk on a graph

#### Topic-specific Pagerank

- > Teleports to a topic specific set of pages
- > Useful when query nodes are given



#### Combating against WebSpam

- ➤ WebSpam: definition and method of attacks
  - Term Spam and Link Spam
- ➤ TrustRank: how to combat WebSpam
  - Topic-sensitive PageRank with teleport set = trusted pages

HITS algorithm: another algorithm to rank pages, but with two scores (authority and hub scores)

- Authorities are pages containing useful information
- ➤ Hubs are pages that link to authorities

# Questions?