Search My Space

<http://SearchMy.Space>

An aggregated/curated, free-text search for things of interest in your area

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# Introduction

Free text indexing allows long form documents to be searched quickly using free text search. By following links from location data sources SearchMy.Space will allow users to find location based data that interests them. Filtering options based on attributes of the data will be available, but the free text search will extend the usefulness beyond existing filter based solutions and simplify the basic use case.

The solution consists of a back end which aggregates the indexed data sources and a front end which provides a general search facility for users. The back end can be leveraged by other solutions via the search API.

Implementation will be phased to provide initial basic functionality, with a roadmap for extended functionality and application to broader use cases. The initial phase focusses on finding things to do in South Australia. The second phase will duplicate this functionality across other states, including Brisbane to support anticipated user needs associated with the 2018 Commonwealth games.

Long term this aims to be a platform that can be configured with a set of data sources around a theme to provide a targeted portal for particular use cases/locations.

# Proof of concept

The proof of concept will centre around aggregating the data, indexing the linked full-text data and providing text-based results for relevant items.

This focusses on the main differentiator of the free text search approach to event/POI discovery. Existing solutions rely entirely on structured data driving filtering options. This solution simplifies the discovery by allowing a simple search term as a starting point. It also extends the usefulness of the data by searching free text and linked long form data about events and points of interest.

# Phase 1

## Implementation

Building upon the proof of concept, phase 1 will utilise the aggregated data and the text results to drive a modern single page application (SPA) which handles user searches and drives results in a combination of summary results and a map overlay.

## Functionality / Use Case

1. Potential users can visit SearchMy.Space. They will be presented with a single search box and a location selector. Optionally they can click on advanced search to go straight to step 3 with no results where they can refine their search before executing it.
2. They select their location of interest and (optionally) enter a search term.
3. The top ten items in the data sets indexed will be presented. Across the top there is a refine your search bar.
4. Refine your search allows users to narrow down their search by selecting from metadata associated with items or by selecting data sources. This would include date range filtering for event based items.
5. Data source selection can be driven directly (selecting specific data sets of interest) or by selecting categories which include one or more datasets.
6. User can refine then search again to get more specific results, or they can click directly on a search result.
7. Once they click on search result they’ll go to a detailed result page. Summary information about the item will be displayed, including a snippet of the text which matched the search term.
8. Included on the detailed result page will be a section showing related results across several categories. This will include:
   1. Relevant traffic data for that area
   2. Relevant weather data for that area
   3. Relevant safety warnings for that area
   4. Nearby facilities (eg public toilets, BBQ’s or parks)
   5. Similar items in that area
9. Related results will be clickable, and that would take the user to a detailed results page for that item.
10. Detailed results pages would also include a link to navigate to that location in Google Maps.

## User value

Users would be able to find events or points of interest based on keywords that might not exist in the published metadata, but which are relevant based on the linked page about that entry. For example, the Glenelg Jetty page linked from the Jetties data set has a back story relating to the area’s history.

In SearchMy.Space, a user could find Glenelg Jetty with a search for ‘aquarium’ near Glenelg. They could then read about the history of the jetty which includes information about the aquarium which was demolished in 1929. The detailed result page would tell inform them about the weather and traffic for the area and the nearby facilities and events.

As another example, a user considering going to Birdwood could simply search for Birdwood. Any entries that contain detailed text mentioning Birdwood would appear. They might choose to click on the Birdwood motor museum and they’ll see what the weather is and whether there are any relevant safety warnings before clicking through to find out more about the event. If there are any special events in the area coming up then they’ll also get these as relevant suggestions.

Another interesting source of data is southaustralia.com. The search interface uses a GET method so it is feasible to scrape data from the site and mash it up with other aggregated data on SearchMy.Space. In this way, users could find events listed here and find relevant information about other things happening in the same area.

## Local business value

Business involved with points of interest or events would gain exposure based on the relevance of their linked content.

Businesses looking for opportunities could identify them using this search tool – for example a business that provides security, catering, transport etc might use the tool to look for events some time in the future. These events represent opportunities for the right businesses if they can easily identify them.