

Om Malik in his blog asked the question " [Will a people's collective be able to beat Google at the search game?](#) " "

The simple answer is – of course not. The better question is – "will objective search remain the people's choice in search engines ?". In other words, is there such a thing as a best answer for most questions and is that what a significant number of search users want ?

Or will we see the same trend that we have seen in TV news. That we want our objective answers painted red or blue. That objectivity is very subjective.

Does American Idol voting give us the best singer ? The best entertainer ? The favorite of the best phone dialers ?

Better yet, is the political candidate that gets the most votes the best choice, or just the winner ?

I personally think that for personal search, where the results are geared towards relevancy (as opposed to freshness, ala [icerocket.com](#)) will end up in two flavors, branded and algorithm based.

Branded is just what it implies. I trust a given source of data for my search. I trust this source for this type of search, that source for another. I want my news from foxnews.com or i want my news from CNN.com. If i do a search on intelligent design, i will have an expectation that my results will be ranked differently from each.

Algorithm is what we have now. Plug into google or icerocket or yahoo, and you get what is hopefully influenced only by the blackhat SEOs and economics, rather than some agenda to some school of thought.

Dont be shocked if at some point some cable news channel is reporting on some religious group condemning a search engine because of a perceived slighting in how results are returned.

A search for Christmas on [Google](#), [Yahoo](#), [Icerocket](#), [Ask](#), all return vastly different answers. One offers a top 5 site, which links to what should be a very valid link and besides being a domain parking site, has beer and wine sales listed near the top. No big deal to me. But a huge marketing issue at some point to somebody.

Social networks, where users collective judgement is imposed, will become targets of the internet marauders who congregate on like-minded websites and discussion forums and patrol for dissenting thought and attack when they find it. We havent seen much of it yet, because the social bookmarking sites are mostly driven by technology. You get some Apple, MicroSoft, Open Source bigotry, but its considered acceptable right now

But outside those sites, the internet marauders come out in force.

If i blog about something that could be considered friendly to Democrats, the right wingers come out in force and spam the hell out of my email and blog comments. The same thing happens from the other side as well. In about the same numbers. Of course the more one side attacks, the more the other side marshalls their side to counter attack. Its crazy.

Not only crazy, it will be impossible to eradicate the influence of these maraunders.

So rather than fighting them, search sites will join them.

I have zero doubt that in the future there will be sliders or some equivalent that represent "the flavor" of search that users will look for. Looking for information about the war in iraq... push the slide rule to the right till you reach Bill O'Reilly flavored search, or slide it to the left for the AI Franken flavor. The results are then influenced by the brand you prefer to associate with.

The news is no longer just the news. A holiday is no longer just a holiday. A song is no longer just a song. A search result will no longer just be a search result. We will blow it up into a symbol of something much larger. It wont be of course, but it will happen anyway.

The Web 3.0 – You stay on your side of the web and I will stay on mine.