

How's that for a title. Just thought it would be a fun day to rehash some old posts that made me look a little prescient

Today the feds arrested 2 programmers that worked for Madoff. I wrote this in January:

Jan 18th 2009 10:11AM

Im taking a flyer here, but if they were to put me on the case, the first people I would talk to are the software developers. Somewhere along the line there was a software program written or modified that allowed Madoff to enter the numbers he made up, who they were paying out cash to and would print the checks and statements. Its very unlikely that it was off the shelf software because it would be impossible for all the numbers to balance, or he would need to use suspense type of accounts that would raise red flags for even the smallest of accounting firms.

Maybe I have missed it, but I have yet to see an article written or any commentary about the software Madoff Investments used or read about any programmers that have come forward that worked for him. Someone had to outline the details of what they wanted the software to do, and in a scam of this size, could it be anyone but Madoff himself ? Someone had to take that information and either create or modify software to keep the whole mess running smoothly for him.

Find the programmers who wrote the software and you will find out how the whole thing worked.

And as the Google, Murdoch discussions continue, some people have actually started to recognize there might be something to what I wrote in May of 08

Is there anything more fun than sitting around, growing your hair, drinking a Bud while listening to Jethro Tull and pondering how to change the balance of power in the search world and unseat Google ?

Better search ? Too subjective. Better monetization ? After the fact. Better User Interface ? Will we know it when we see it ? A new and different search ? Semantic ? Human powered ? We won't know till we know.

But what about the Google Index, all the websites that are indexed by Google ? What is it worth to be in the Google Index ? What would you, as a website owner require in order to remove your site from the Google Index and no longer be available when someone does a google search ?

It should just be a matter of dollars and cents and sense, shouldn't it ?

How many websites would have to recuse themselves from the Google Index before Google Search was negatively impacted ?

Mahalo.com thinks it needs to support the 25k most common search terms in order to be successful. What would happen if MicroSoft or Yahoo or a MicroHoo went to the 5 top results for the top 25k searches and paid them to leave the Google Index ?

A theoretical maximum of 125k sites, but with overlap, probably closer to 100k or less, times how much per site on average ?

The math starts to get interesting. At \$1,000 per site average times 100k sites, thats only \$ 1 Billion Dollars. The distribution would obviously favor the larger sites, so of that billion dollars, would the top 1k sites take 500k each and the remaining 99k split the rest ?

Given the stakes, why stop at \$ 1 Billion Dollars ? Would the top 1k most visited sites take a cool \$1mm each, plus a commitment from MicroSoft or Yahoo to drive traffic through their search engines to more than make up for the lost Google Traffic. After all, once consumers realized that Google no longer had valid search results for the top 25k searches, that traffic would most likely go to MicroSoft and Yahoo.

And why we are at it, why not require that these 100k sites switch from Googles Publisher Network to Yahoo's or MicroSofts ? It would start to earn back the \$1 Billion paid out very quickly.

On top of that, in order to grease the skids even further, why not issue advertising credits to the sites that switched off Google ? Its soft dollars, that would sweeten the pot and drive more traffic.

IN essence, its no different that any other content aggregation play. Its paying for content . But, It would take some big ones to go for it and see if it worked. However, without question, every search engine has some number of core sites, that when removed from its index , destabilizes the value of its search.

The question is how many ? What would it cost to get that number of sites to turn Google off and stay off, and would the traffic created as users switch from Google more than compensate for the cost ?

Or would Google recognize the risk and jump in and offer more to websites to stay ?

Sure would be interesting to find out.