

THE HEIGHTS

The Independent Student Weekly of Boston College

June LXXXIII, Number 22, ©1997, The Heights, Inc.TM

October 14, 1997

Search engines: How to find what you want on the Internet

The Internet is a gold mine of information, the combined knowledge of millions of institutions and individuals. Here scrooges' hopes, dreams, relatives' and often parts of their anatomy are on display.

But how do you find what

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you want? There is a tremendous volume of data on the 'Net' or surfing, but people can vibrate very quickly if they do not know where they should be looking.

Used properly, a person can

find anything, and I mean anything, on the Internet. The best way to access this vast reservoir of data is to use the indexes and search engines on the World Wide Web.

Although these sites will often only show pages that have gone out of their way to register themselves for perusal, the sheer number of sites in these searchers is staggeringly varied.

The easiest and most distracting index is Yahoo, located at <http://www.yahoo.com>. Usually people go there to look up one thing and see a dozen other places they want to visit.

It is a huge index that a person could surf for a year and

not see everything. Either click on the different categories and sub-categories to find what you are looking for, or search the index by keyword.

A few nice places are the multiple ultra-current television listings in their Entertainment index, search engines in the Reference Index that can be used to find people's phone numbers, addresses and e-mail addresses, and their Education section has a thorough list of the Internet sites of Colleges and Universities. The only problem is that the information on most of the searchers are a year or two old, but most of it is still accurate.

As well as indexes, there

are many search engines that you can use to find things on the Web by keyword.

These searchers not only delve into the Web, but also look through FTP archives, areas of the Internet that contain free programs for people to download and use. My favorite is WebCrawler at <http://www.webcrawler.com>.

It's very fast and even lists the probability of accuracy on each page it finds with your keyword on it.

Another good searcher is the Lycos searcher at <http://www.lycos.com>. It claims to have indexed 90% of the Web.

For commercial endeavors,

i.e. looking for someone to send a resume, check InfoSeek at <http://www2.infoseek.com>. This browser searched the web of the many addresses that fit their own web pages.

To use these searchers all at once, go to the Bowdoin College Library in Maine. It runs a page of eight of them at <http://www.bowdoin.edu/dept/library/search/index.html>.

Got a question about your computer? Have it answered in our new "My Corner of the Net" column. All questions should be e-mailed to compnet@bc.edu with the subject line "Corner of the Net."