Search UI/UX

- Usability
- Search process review
- Pieces to a search interface
 - Query
 - Results
- Examples
- Papers

What is usability?

Usability is one dimension along which we may evaluate a system.

Cost Features, capabilities

Reliability "Objective" "performance

Speed Etc.

What is usability?

<u>Learnability</u>

How easy is it for users to learn how to accomplish tasks for the first time?

Efficiency

Once they've learned, how quickly can they accomplish tasks?

<u>Memorability</u>

How easy is it to re-establish proficiency after a period of non-use?

<u>Errors</u>

What kind, number, and severity of errors do users make? How easy is it for them to recover?

Satisfaction

How "pleasant" or "satisfying" is it to use?

Designing a user interface involves tradeoffs:

<u>Learnability</u>

How easy is it for users to learn how to accomplish tasks for the first time?

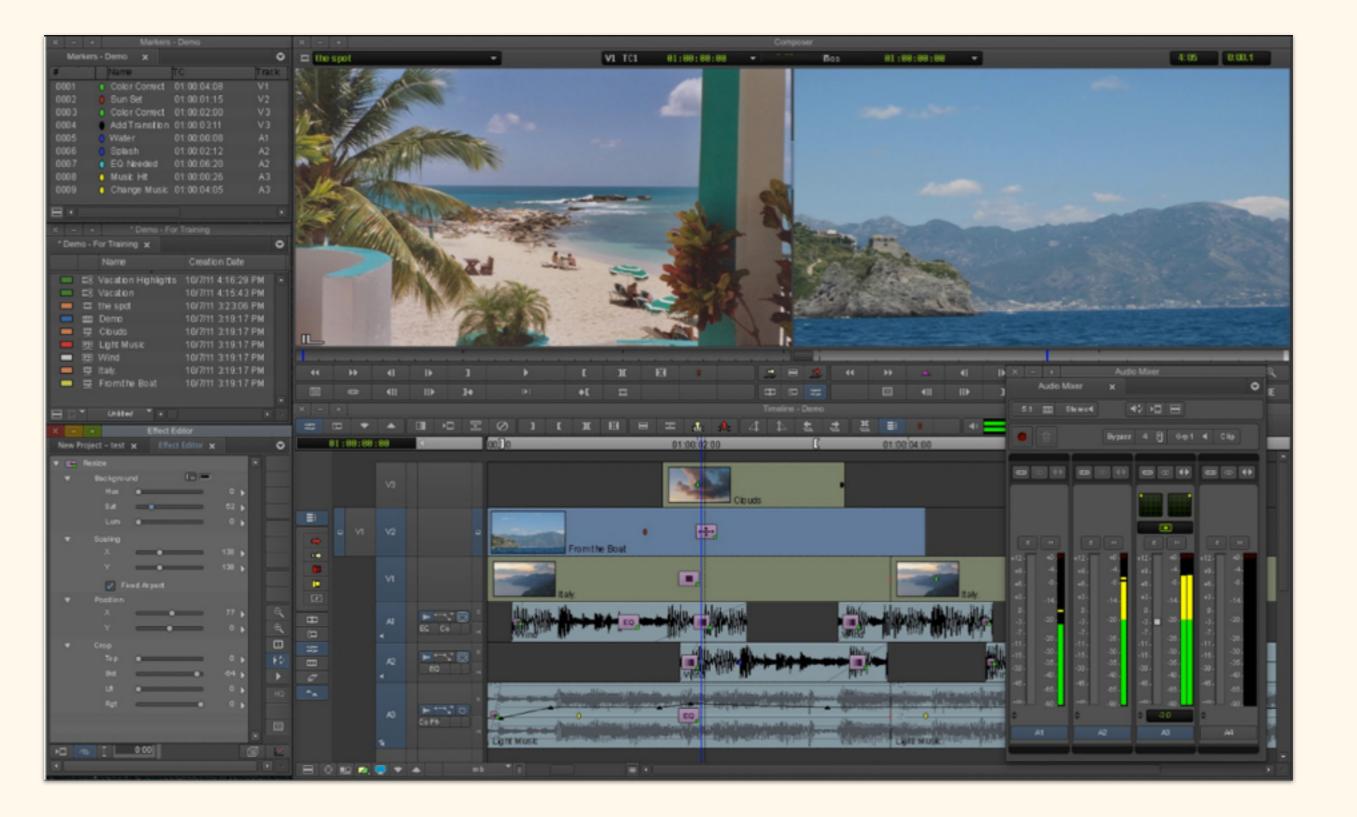
Efficiency

Once they've learned, how quickly can they accomplish tasks?

A system that novices find very easy to learn...

... might be inefficient for experts!





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How to decide on the right balance?

A user centered design process can help!

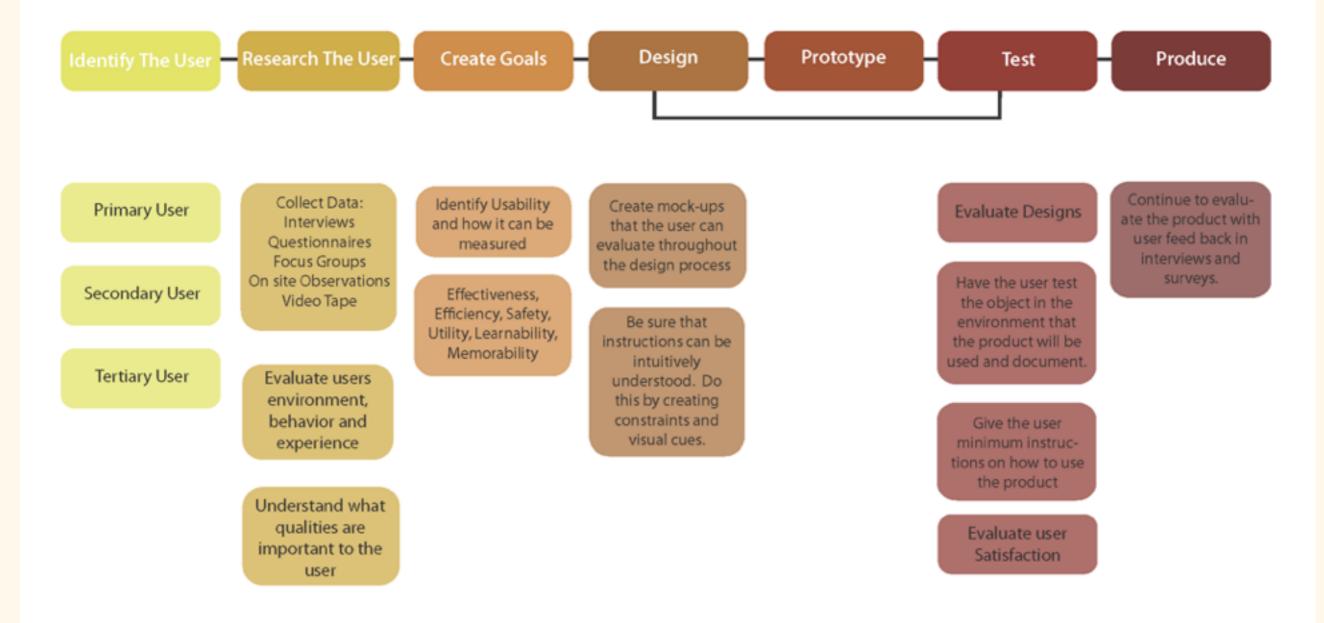
Rather than starting with system capabilities, features, etc....

... UCD starts with the users, and their needs, goals, capabilities, etc.

7 Phases of User-Centered Design

Britt Wilcox Kyun Hur Mary Elizabeth Miller

When the user becomes the Co-Designer



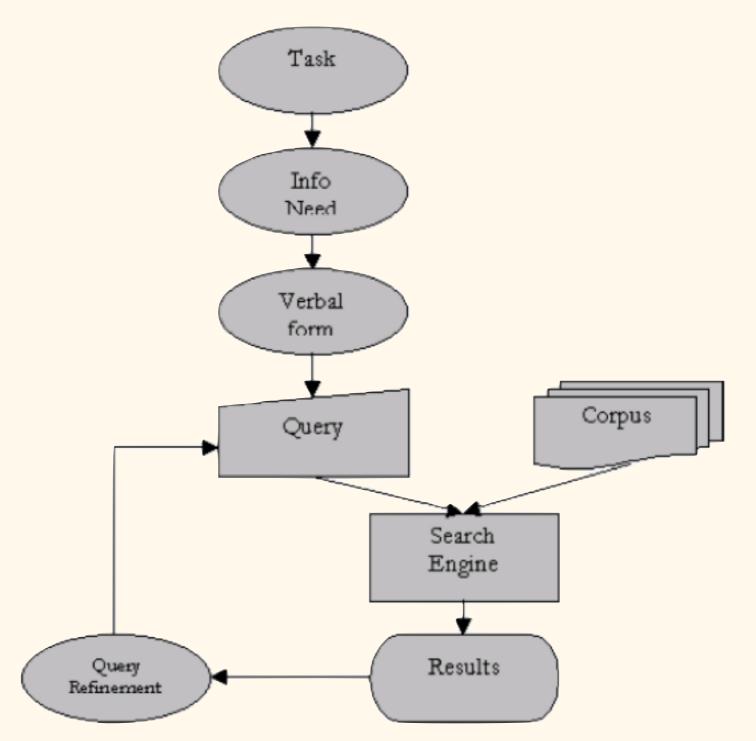
Works Cited:

Sanders, Elizabeth B. *From User-Centered to Participatory Design Approaches.* In Design and the Social Science. Rpt. in Taylor & Francis Limited, 2002

User-Centered Design 1 Abras, C., Maloney-Krichmar, D., Preece, J., (2004) User-Centered Design. In Bainbridge, W. Encyclopedia of Human-Computer Interaction. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications. "User-Centered Design.", Wikipidia.org, 10 Jan. 2010, Web, 16 Jan. 2010

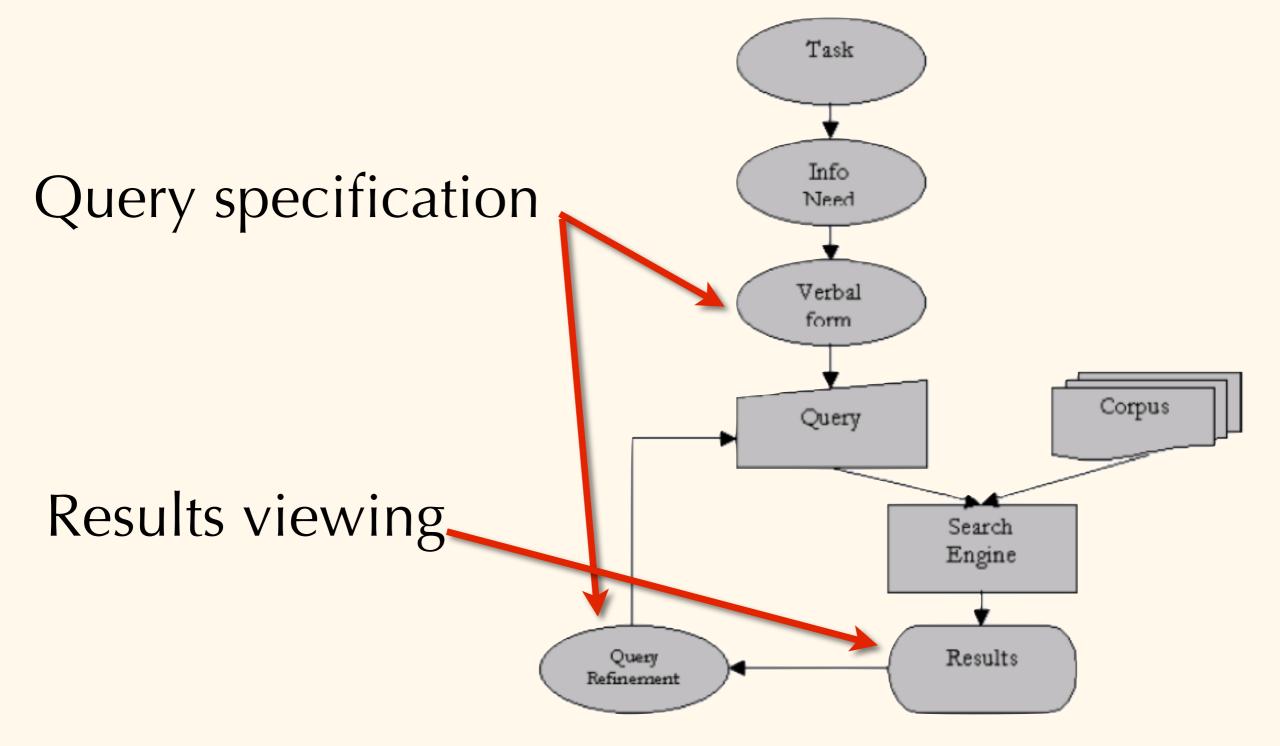
What does usability look like in IR?

Key point: Users rarely use a tool for its own sake.



The various pieces of an IR system exist to help in this process.

There are two main components to a modern search interface:



Google	
Google Search I'm Feeling Lucky	

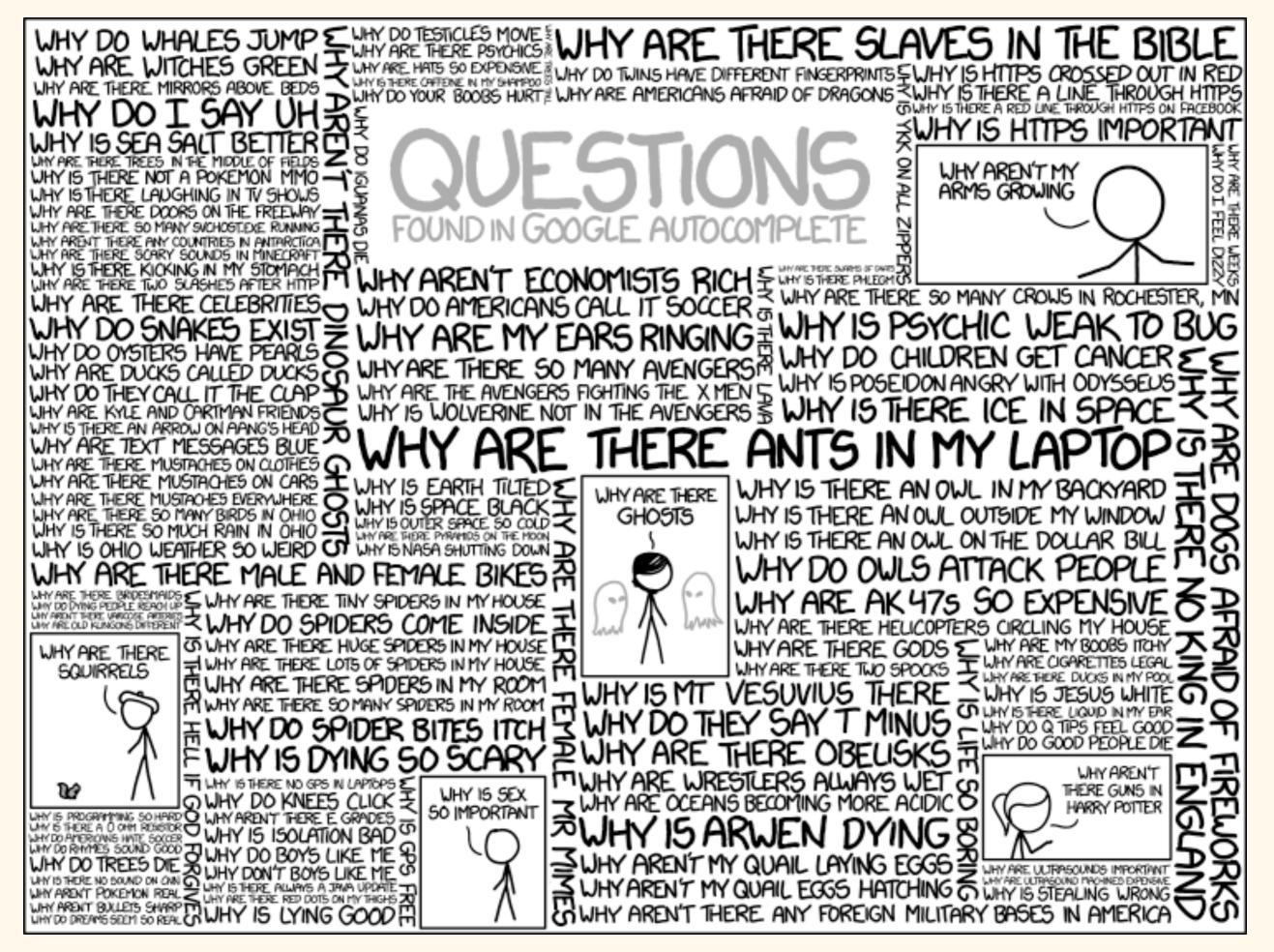
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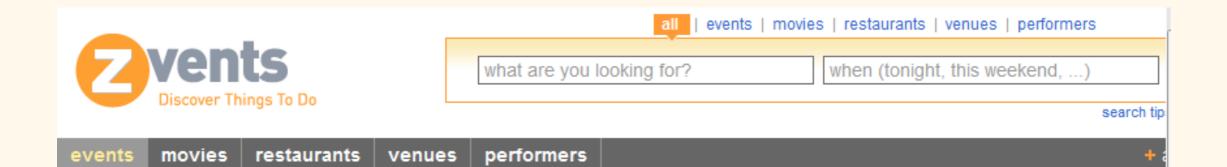


A major consideration for query formulation UI:

User model vs. System model

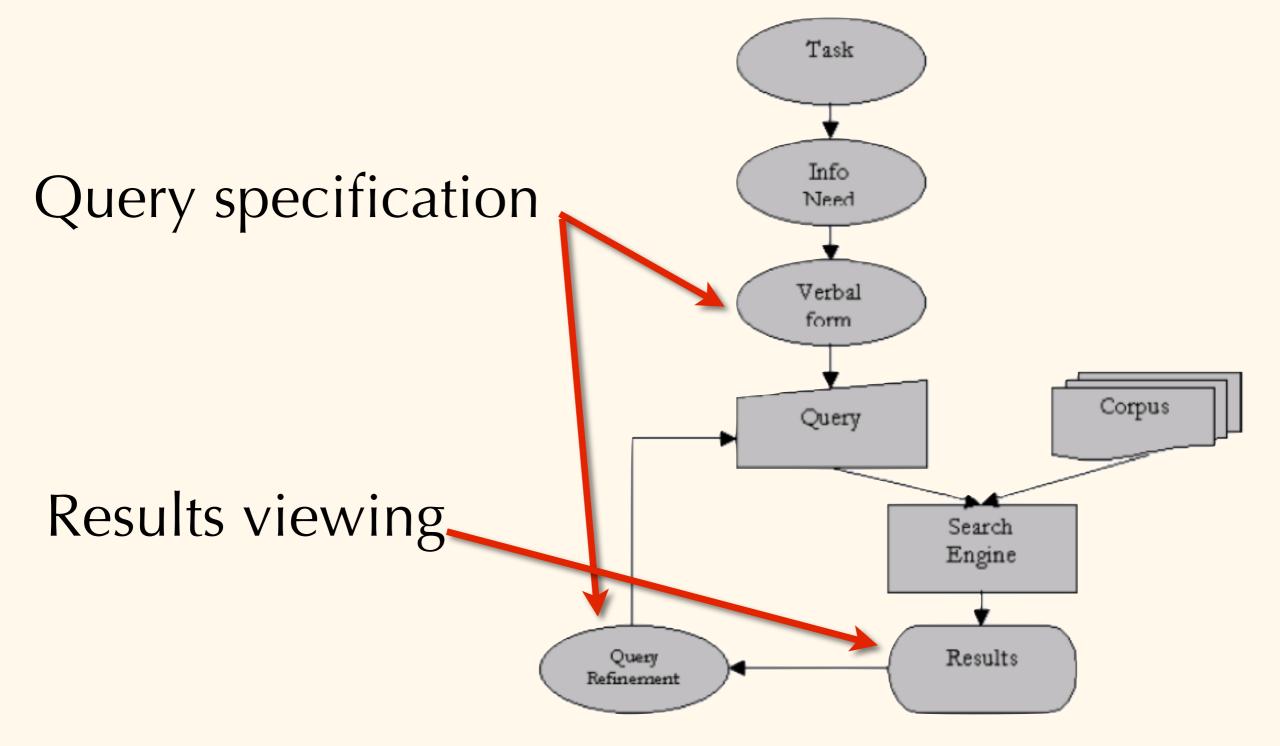
"how do I think the system works" vs. "how does the system actually work"

"Another study by <u>Muramatsu and Pratt, 2001</u> with 14 participants found that most people had strong misconceptions about simple Boolean operations. When comparing search engines that automatically applied AND versus OR to query terms, some assumed the ANDing search engine indexed a smaller collection; most had no explanation at all. When receiving empty results for the query **to be or not to be**, two thirds could not explain this phenomenon in a way that remotely resembled stopword removal. For term order variation in queries (for example, **boat fire** vs. **fire boat**), two thirds did not expect the results to differ." (Hearst 2008, Ch. 1)



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There are two main components to a modern search interface:



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Monkey - Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monkey - Wikipedia -Monkeys are haplorhine ("dry-nosed") primates, a group generally possessing tails and consisting of approximately 260 known living species. Many monkey ... List of New World monkey ... - Old World monkey - New World monkey - Atelidae

Monkey | San Diego Zoo Animals

animals.sandiegozoo.org/animals/monkey - San Diego Zoo -Contains monkey facts, differences between Old World and New World monkeys, and how to help them survive.

Monkeys - Pictures, Interesting Facts and Experiments www.livescience.com/topics/monkey/ -

Learn about different species of monkeys; see pictures of monkeys in the wild; and watch intelligent monkeys demonstrate their skills and abilities.

Monkey Pictures - Primate Wallpapers - National Geographic

animals.nationalgeographic.com/.../monkey... - National Geographic Society -See pictures of spider monkeys, baboons, macaques, and more in this photo gallery from National Geographic.

Top 10 Funny Monkey Videos Compilation 2014 [NEW ...



Jun 10, 2014 - Uploaded by mihaifrancu Funny Monkey | Funny Monkey Videos | Funny Monkeys | Funny Videos | Monkey Funny Video | Monkey ...

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In the news



Cookies on the BBC website

BBC News - 22 hours ago An experimental drug has cured monkeys infected with the Ebola virus, US-based scientists ...

Ebola Drug Works Against West African Strain in Study of Monkeys New York Times - 22 hours ago

Ebola drug saves infected monkeys from death The Verge - 1 day ago

More news for monkeys



Monkey

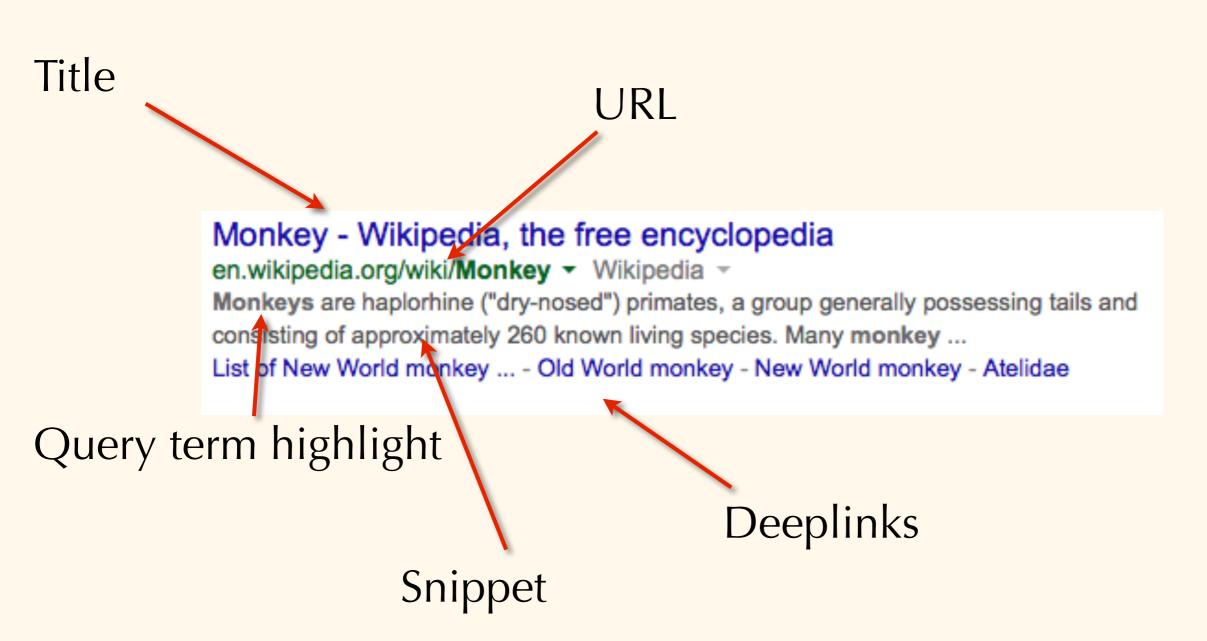
Animal

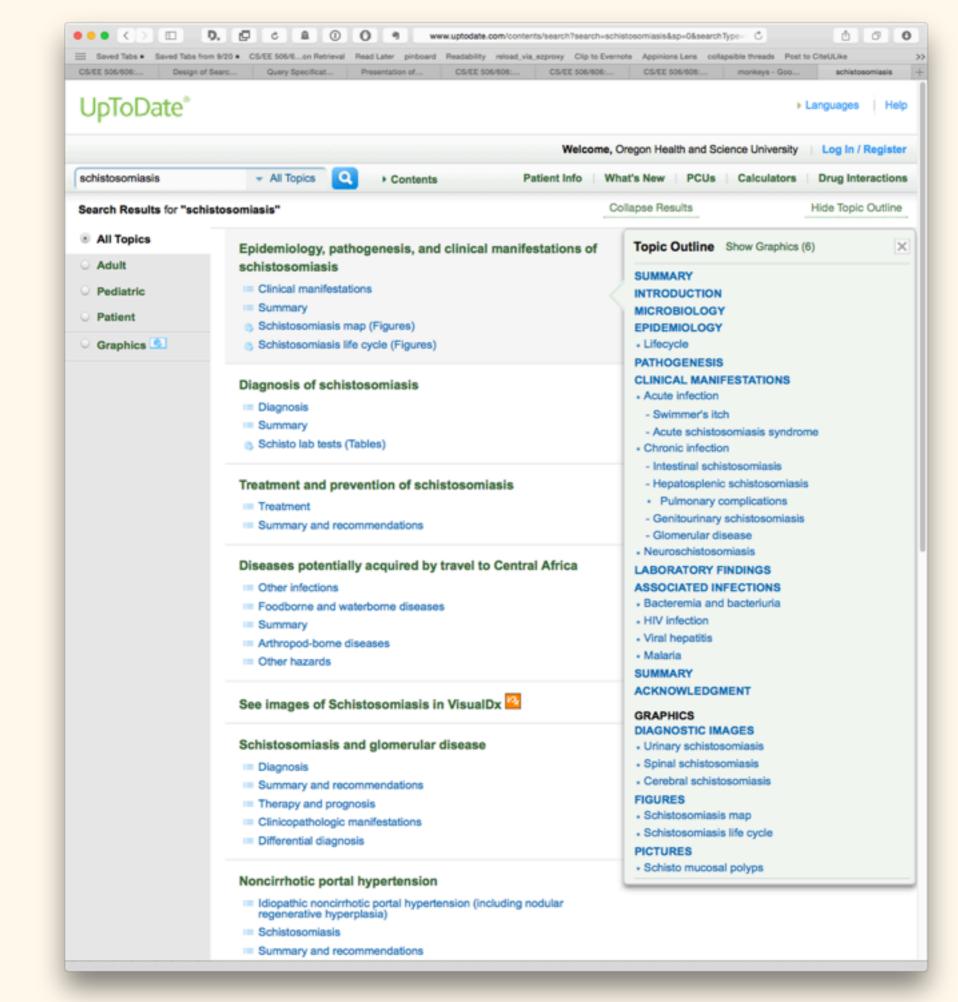
Monkeys are haplorhine primates, a group generally possessing tails and consisting of approximately 260 known living species. Many monkey species are tree-dwelling, although there are species that live primarily on the ground, such as baboons. Wikipedia

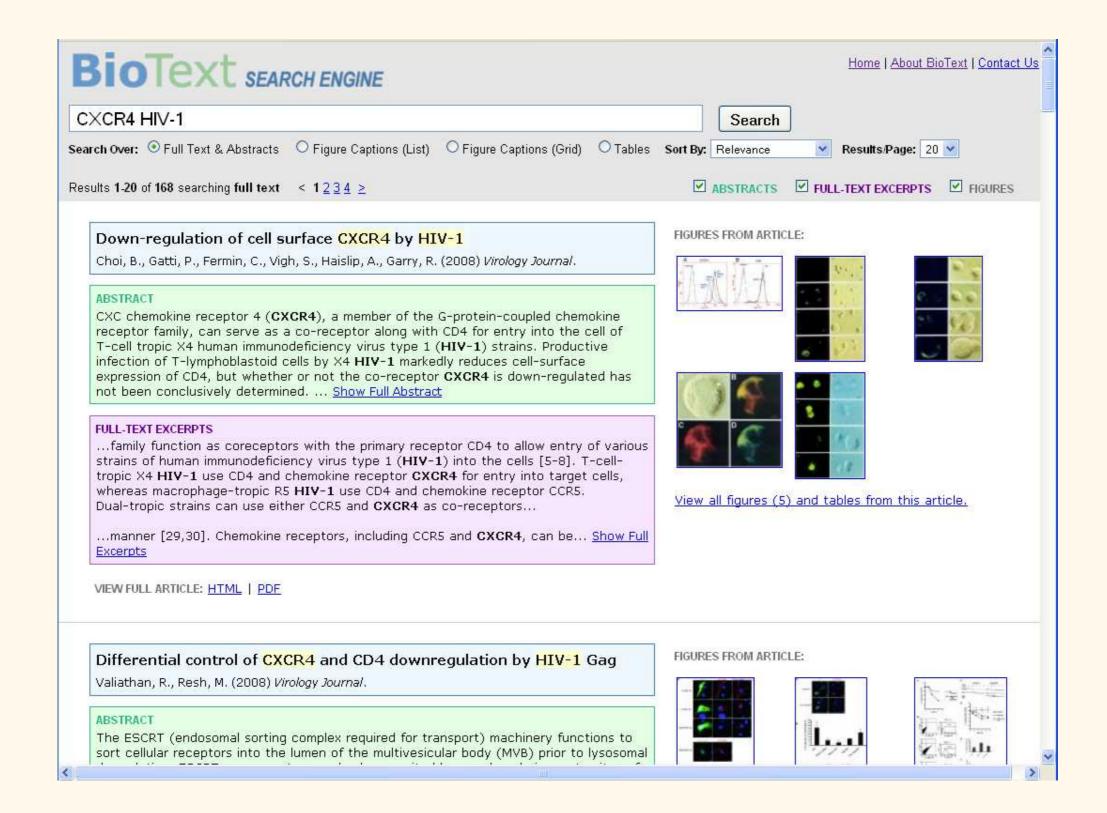
Representative species: Old World monkey, Atelidae, Night monkey, Cebidae, Pitheciidae, Callitrichidae

Feedback

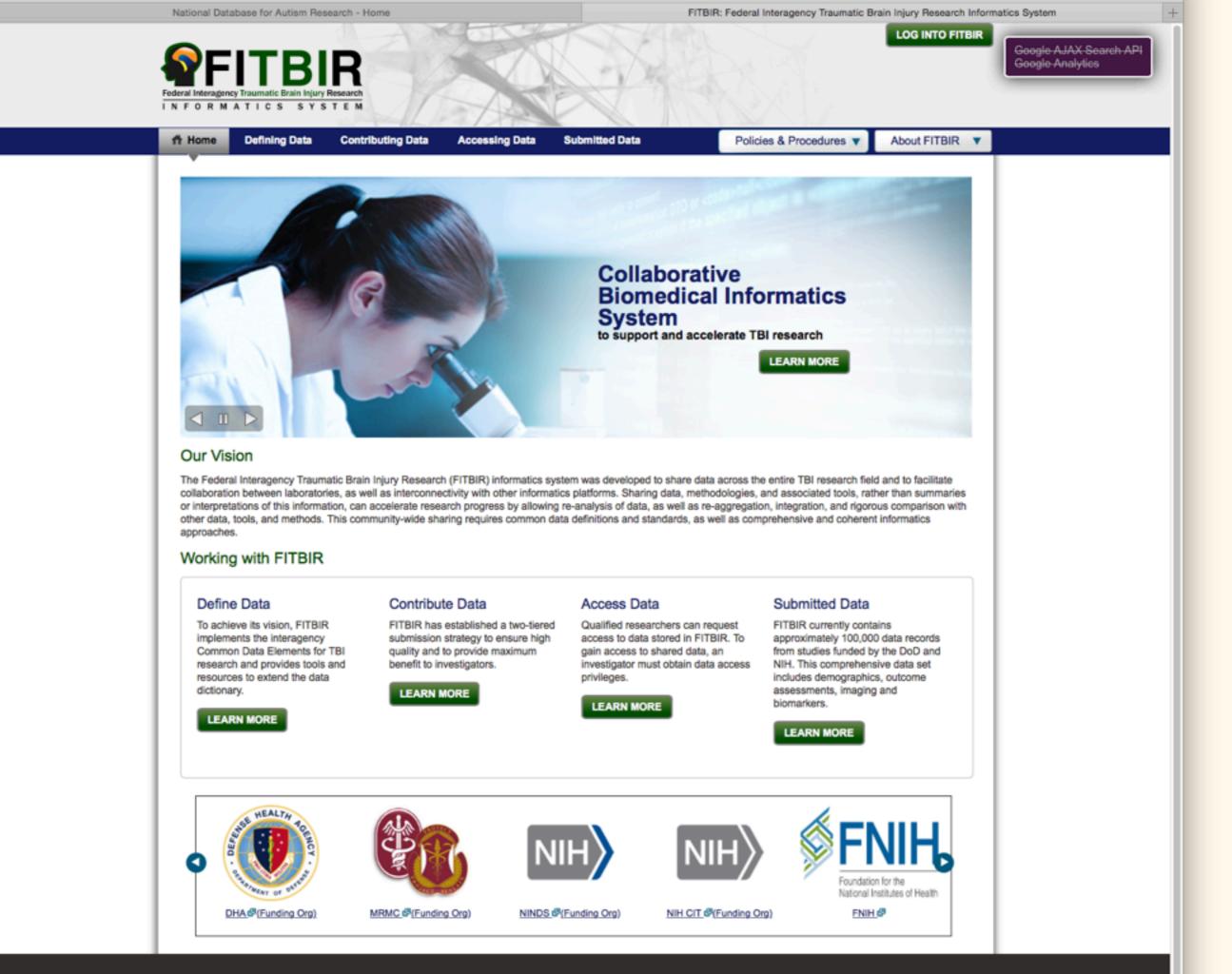
SERPs typically include "document surrogates":







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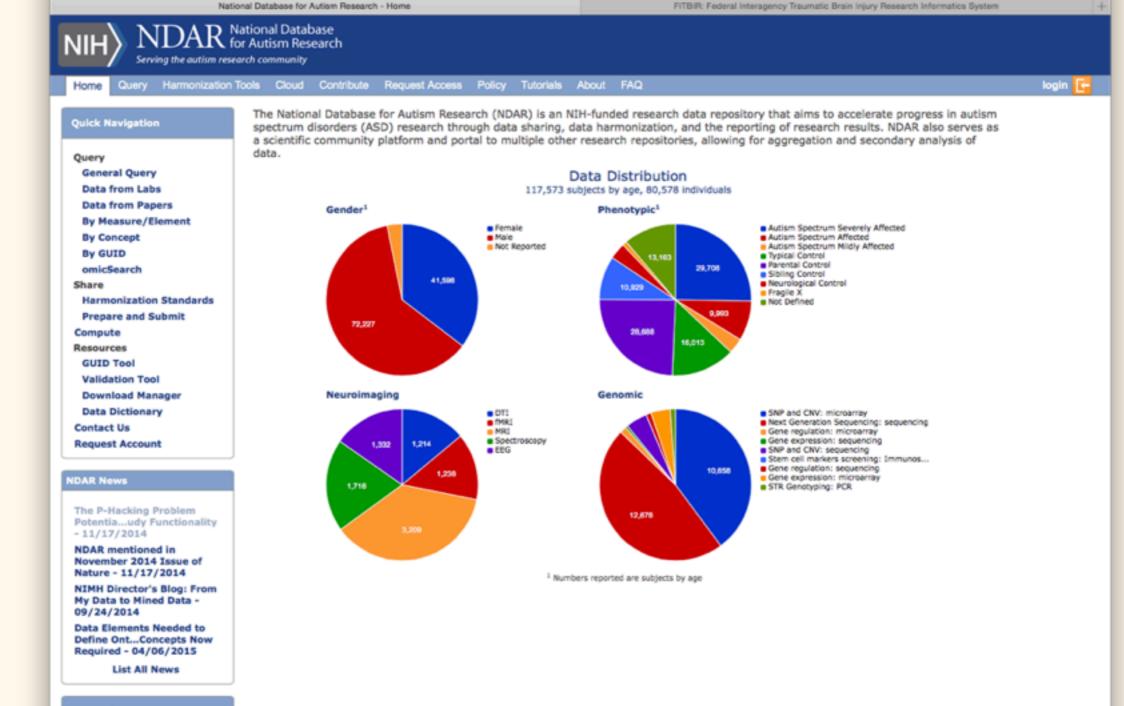
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For Participants

About NDAR

For Scientists

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National Database for Autism Research - Data Dictionary

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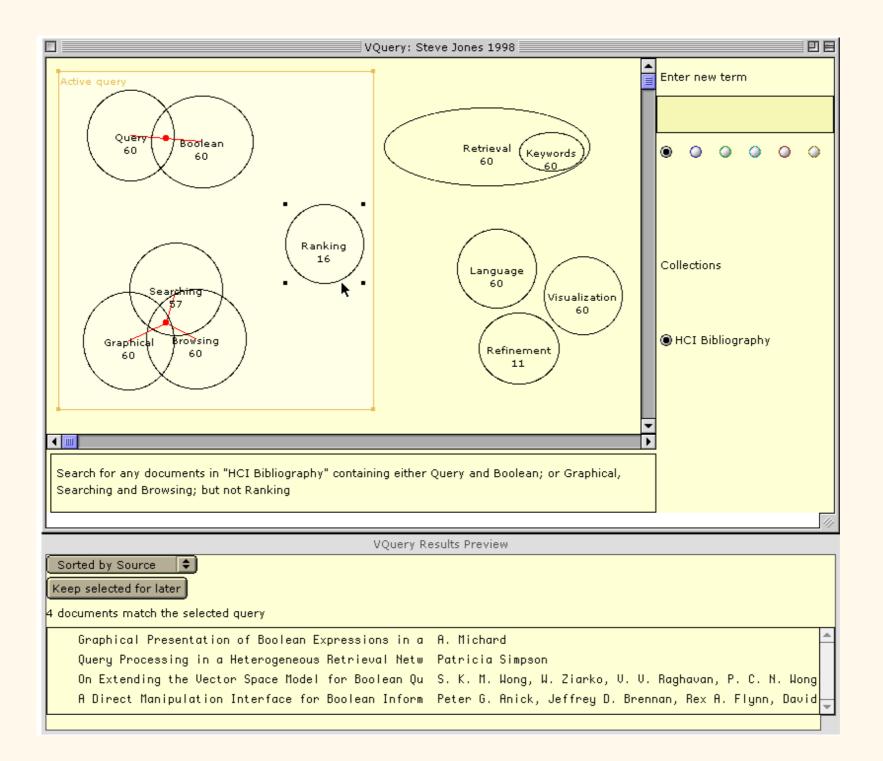
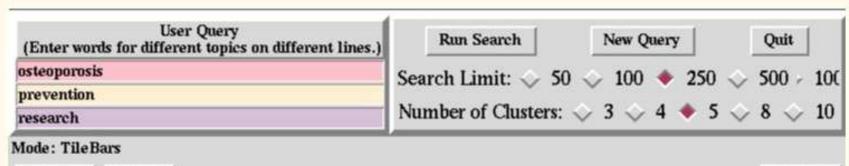
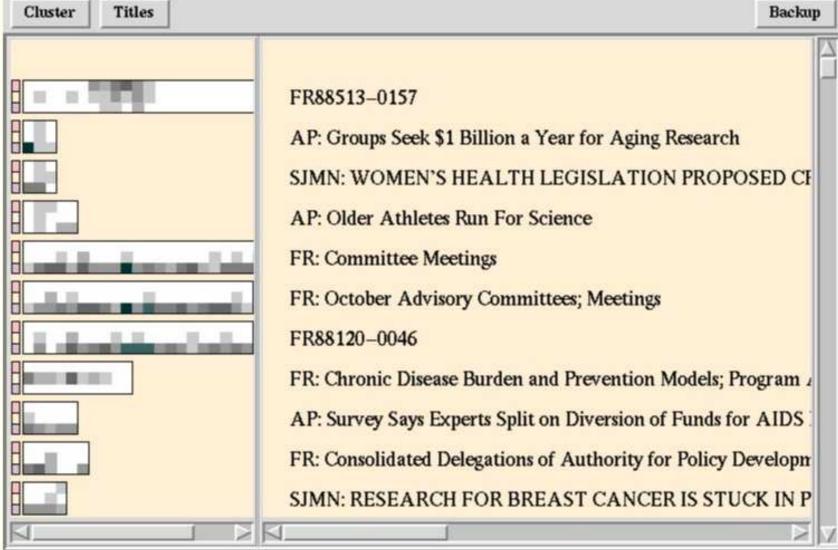
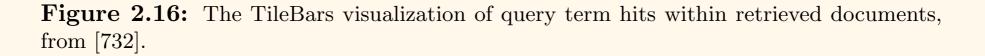
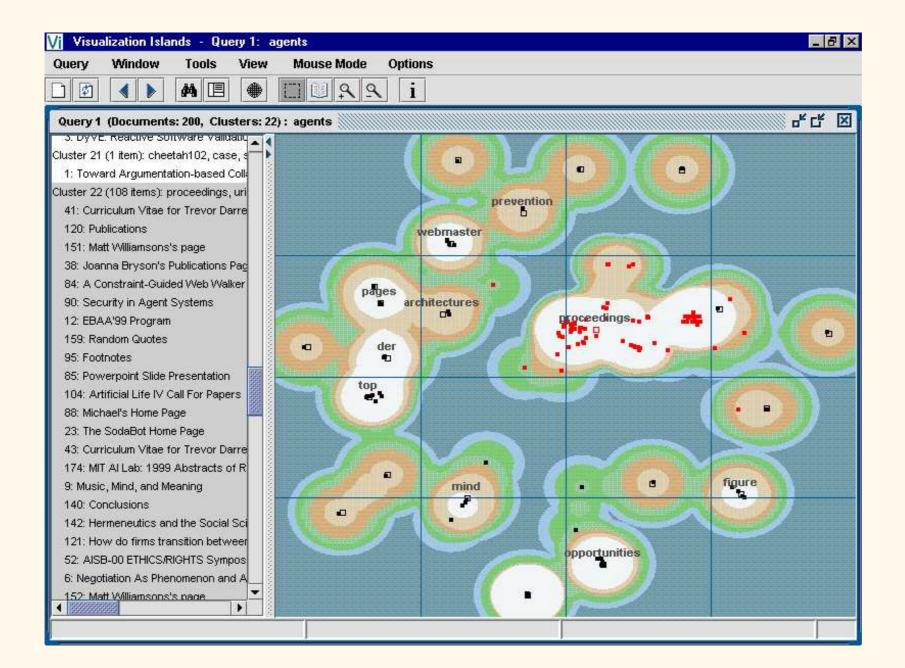


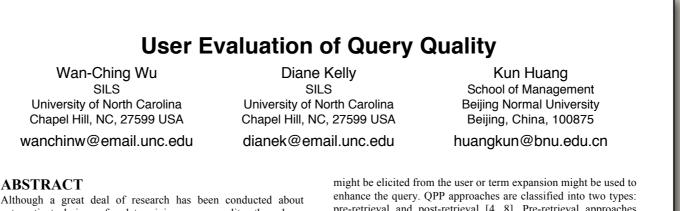
Figure 2.15: The VQuery [851] Venn Diagram interface for Boolean query specification.











Although a great deal of research has been conducted about automatic techniques for determining query quality, there have been relatively few studies about how people judge query quality. This study investigated this topic through a laboratory experiment with 40 subjects. Subjects were shown eight information problems (five fact-finding and three exploratory) and asked to evaluate queries for these problems according to several quality attributes. Subjects then evaluated search engine results pages (SERPs) for each query, which were manipulated to exhibit different levels of performance. Following this, subjects reevaluated the queries, were interviewed about their evaluation approaches and repeated the rating procedure for two information problems. Results showed that for fact-finding information problems, longer queries received higher ratings (both initial and post-SERP), and that post-SERP query ratings were more affected by the proportion of relevant documents viewed to all documents viewed rather than the ranks of the relevant documents. For exploratory information problems, subjects' ratings were highly correlated with the number of relevant documents in the SERP as well as the proportion of relevant documents viewed. Subjects adopted several approaches when evaluating query quality, which led to different quality ratings. Finally, during the reliability check subjects' initial evaluations were fairly stable, but their post-SERP evaluations significantly increased.

Categories and Subject Descriptors

H.3 [Information Storage and Retrieval]: Information Search and Retrieval - query formulation, search process.

General Terms

Experimentation, Human Factors

Keywords

Query quality, query recommendation, query evaluation

1. INTRODUCTION

Query performance prediction (QPP) is the task of estimating the expected quality of search results for a query in the absence of relevance feedback [4, 8]. The basic goal is to predict when a query will perform poorly so that some intervention can occur before results are returned. For example, additional information

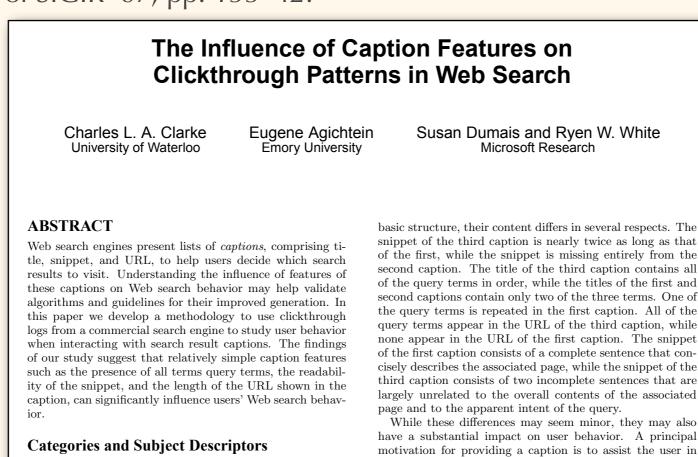
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pre-retrieval and post-retrieval [4, 8]. Pre-retrieval approaches estimate query performance based on features of the query while post-retrieval approaches consider the results retrieved by the query. Pre-retrieval approaches are further subdivided into those that exploit the linguistic structure of the query, including the morphological, syntactical and semantic properties of the query, and those that use term statistics, including specificity, similarity, coherency and relatedness. Post-retrieval approaches include measures such as clarity and robustness, and score analysis.

Although a great deal of research has been conducted about OPP, there have been relatively few studies about the relationship among QPPs and users' evaluations of query difficulty. Hauff et al. [10] note "while most QPP methods have been motivated and developed based on how a user might rate a query, these intuitions have never been empirically validated" (pg. 980). To address this limitation, Hauff et al. [9, 10] compared the query performance ratings made by humans with performance scores estimated by a suite of QPP methods. Results showed that user ratings and QPPs were mostly uncorrelated, suggesting that QPP methods are not representative of how users evaluate query quality. Lioma et al. [12] found that users could not reliably identify pre-determined query difficulty ratings associated with a set of 420 queries, but were able to identify some features that would make a query difficult for a search system.

While these previous studies provide some insight about the relationship among QPPs and users' evaluations of query difficulty, they do not reveal insight about how people actually judge query quality. In one of the studies reported by Hauff et al. [10], assessors were provided with queries and information need descriptions and asked to judge the queries based on what they expected the results to be if they submitted the queries to a Web search engine. Assessors made their judgments using a 5-point scale, where 1=poor quality query and 5=high quality query. The researchers did not report assessors' experiences using this scale to evaluate query quality, although it was noted that their ratings varied considerably. Lioma et al. [12] asked assessors to rate queries using three categories (easy, medium, hard). In both studies, assessors evaluated queries without inspecting results. Neither study probed people about how they judged query quality.

People rate a variety of objects in daily life (e.g., movies, restaurants, books), but it is unlikely that many people have rated queries. How would people approach this task? What factors would they consider when evaluating query quality? How would they make decisions about which numeric ratings to assign to which queries? In this paper we explore these questions. We are not concerned with the relationship between QPPs and people's evaluations of query quality, but instead seek to address more fundamental questions about how people make evaluations of query quality. Specifically, our research questions are (RO1) Clarke CLA, Agichtein E, Dumais S, White RW. The Influence of Caption Features on Clickthrough Patterns in Web Search. Proceedings of SIGIR '07, pp. 135–42.



H.3.3 [Information Storage and Retrieval]: Information Search and Retrieval—search process

General Terms

Experimentation, Human Factors

Keywords

Web search, summarization, snippets, query logs

1. INTRODUCTION

The major commercial Web search engines all present their results in much the same way. Each search result is described by a brief *caption*, comprising the URL of the associated Web page, a title, and a brief summary (or "snippet") describing the contents of the page. Often the snippet is extracted from the Web page itself, but it may also be taken from external sources, such as the human-generated summaries found in Web directories.

Figure 1 shows a typical Web search, with captions for the top three results. While the three captions share the same

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snippet of the third caption is nearly twice as long as that of the first, while the snippet is missing entirely from the second caption. The title of the third caption contains all of the query terms in order, while the titles of the first and second captions contain only two of the three terms. One of the query terms is repeated in the first caption. All of the query terms appear in the URL of the third caption, while none appear in the URL of the first caption. The snippet of the first caption consists of a complete sentence that concisely describes the associated page, while the snippet of the third caption consists of two incomplete sentences that are largely unrelated to the overall contents of the associated

have a substantial impact on user behavior. A principal motivation for providing a caption is to assist the user in determining the relevance of the associated page without actually having to click through to the result. In the case of a navigational query — particularly when the destination is well known — the URL alone may be sufficient to identify the desired page. But in the case of an *informational* query, the title and snippet may be necessary to guide the user in selecting a page for further study, and she may judge the relevance of a page on the basis of the caption alone.

When this judgment is correct, it can speed the search process by allowing the user to avoid unwanted material. When it fails, the user may waste her time clicking through to an inappropriate result and scanning a page containing little or nothing of interest. Even worse, the user may be misled into skipping a page that contains desired information.

All three of the results in figure 1 are relevant, with some limitations. The first result links to the main Yahoo Kids! homepage, but it is then necessary to follow a link in a menu to find the main page for games. Despite appearances, the second result links to a surprisingly large collection of online games, primarily with environmental themes. The third result might be somewhat disappointing to a user, since it leads to only a single game, hosted at the Centers for Disease Control, that could not reasonably be described as "online". Unfortunately, these page characteristics are not entirely reflected in the captions.

In this paper, we examine the influence of caption features on user's Web search behavior, using clickthroughs extracted from search engines logs as our primary investigative tool. Understanding this influence may help to validate algorithms and guidelines for the improved generation of the

An Eye Tracking Study of the Effect of Target Rank on Web Search

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ABSTRACT

Web search engines present search results in a rank ordered list. This works when what a user wants is near the top, but sometimes the information that the user really wants is located at the bottom of the page. This study examined how users' search behaviors vary when target results were displayed at various positions for informational and navigational tasks. We found that when targets were placed relatively low in the first page of search results, people spent more time searching and were less successful in finding the target, especially for informational tasks. Further analysis of eye movements showed that the decrease in search performance was partially due to the fact that users rarely looked at lower ranking results. The large decrease in performance for informational search is probably because users have high confidence in the search engine's ranking; in contrast to navigational tasks, where the target is more obvious from information presented in the results, in informational tasks, users try out the top ranked results even if these results are perceived as less relevant for the task.

Author Keywords

Web search, eye tracking, target position, trust.

ACM Classification Keywords

H5.m. Information interfaces and presentation (e.g., HCI): Miscellaneous.

INTRODUCTION

With the increase in volume of digital information, search has become one of the most efficient ways to find what users are looking for. Various search engines or search services have been launched to help users find information stored on World Wide Web, inside corporate networks, or on personal computers.

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When a user searches for information with a search engine, its effectiveness is determined by whether it gives back relevant results. Most search engines display results in a rank-ordered list, with the highest ranked result placed on top and others ordered below that.

Although this is efficient when the first few results displayed in the list are the most relevant, such ranking can be problematic when these results are not what users are looking for. Past studies [6] have shown that people often choose the first few results on the top of the list and ignore the rest. It was observed that users often click on the first item even if the second is more relevant. In addition, users may simply change their queries when the first few results are not promising, even though some results further down the list might well satisfy their search goals. This leads us to ask: how does the ranking (as determined by a search engine) of the results affect how people search? Do they blindly follow the search engine's ranking or make their own judgment of results based on information they see? What happens when the user's goal is not included at the top of the search result list?

EXPERIMENT

To investigate how people search for information when the best result is not on top, we designed a study that varied the absolute rank position of the "best" search result for each task. We used eye tracking to record what people looked at during search. Eye tracking technologies have been widely used as a proxy for users' attention. Eye movement data helps us understand where people invest attention, and in what order before they make a selection[5].

Design

The design of the experiment crossed *Task Type (2)* x *Target Position (6)* as two within subject factors. Two types of search tasks (navigational and informational tasks) identified in the literature [1] were used in this study. In *navigational* tasks, users were asked to find a specific website or homepage for the task; the goal was simply to get to their destination. In *informational* tasks the goal was to acquire some kind of information irrespective of where it was located. The target result was displayed at six positions (1, 2, 4, 5, 7, and 8) for each task. The study also systematically varied the length of the descriptive text. For the results related to the snippet length, please see [3].