Search Engines and Phrases

by Noah W - Friday, October 26, 2012

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If you search for something online, it's highly likely that you're going to use a search phrase to locate that item. Whether that's a commonly known name, a combination of words or phrases, or maybe even one word, searching for something starts with what comes to mind.

How is it then that there are some search requests that produce vastly different results? For instance, searching for the term "dog food" may produce a set of results that is or can be completely different from the search term "puppy food."

There is certainly nothing magical about the search engines or the internet in particular, but the mystery in most searches is in the *way* that the searches are launched. In other words, the results of a search are often determined by the method in which the request was made.

Was the search made with capital letters? Proper nouns or pronouns?

Was the search given a specific parameter from which to search, i.e., a certain place, involving a certain person, or spelled differently from its widely-known origin?

Let's look at some things that you can do to customize your internet searches and make them more targeted at what you're actually looking for. This will give you more favorable results and perhaps even reduce the time you spend looking, guessing and getting frustrated.

1. Set it Apart

If you are searching for a particular phrase, a commonly known name or phrase, or you have the exact spelling of the name of the search that you're about to launch, it is highly advantageous to set the quote apart by using quotation marks in your search. Exact names or phrases should be put into the quote marks so that the search engine spiders will know to look specifically for that term. For instance, the quote "what happened in 2001" is way too vague, and you're bound to get a myriad of results and various tidbits of information about that year in general. But if you get more specific in your search and let the search engine spiders know exactly what you're searching for, you'll definitely get more hits and more targeted information. For instance, if you type in "events of 9-11," the returns on that search request launch are going to show you exactly what happened on that date in history.

2. Word Selection

This is especially important if you're looking for unique things that occur together. Or, this may be important especially if you're searching for targeted information like manufacturer's information, or a release date for a product. Once you place specific, targeted information into the search engine, it's more likely to give you the relative information that you seek. For instance, the term "Coca Cola" will likely yield generic information about the product whereas the term "1895 Coca Cola" will give you more specific information about the company, its history, its inception and much more detailed information that you would get from a generic search.

3. Connect

Stringing together words can also be helpful in finding and locating information. For instance, words that already go together would be hyphenated, but you can also include other words within that hyphenation for better results. For instance, typing in "line-dances" will yield a bevvy of results, but try typing in "wedding-line-dances," and you'll get far more targeted results than normal. This is especially helpful and even recommended for those search terms where there are three or more words in a string or if the term is qualified with a description attached to it that would make it easier to locate.

There's no need for searches to be evasive or elusive. Just simply having accurate information that makes it easier to locate will be better for the search and the search results.

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