**Week 3: Communication and Search Tools**

**Web 1.0: Email, Videoconferencing, Search Tools**

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| http://online.cdu.edu.au/@@/657735D2BC173639A802493120229C4F/courses/1/ETL339_Sem2_2010/content/_845401_1/embedded/week 7.jpg |  |

**The Internet and the Web: what’s the difference?**

Internet: a system: a network of interconnected computer networks that support the exchange information

Web: a service of the Internet, including email and the web and indeed many others. An information service that uses the Internet for the transport of its information

**Web 1.0 Communcation Tools**

* Email - new text genre - formation of a learning community that is time & place independent. Example of its use in education - [http://www.epals.com](http://www.epals.com/)
* Discussion lists - an asynchronous form of discussion which facilitates group discussion. Numerous discussion lists can be found at the following website: [http://tile.net/lists](http://www.epals.com/)
* Chat groups - synchronous communication which provides a service that allows many users to communicate about a topic using the keyboard. Useful for brainstorming and fostering interactions
* Video conferencing - Centra, Netmeeting, Skype are good examples of software that allows members to communicate readily & share documents
* Newsgroups - public forums that focus around a particular topic of interest

Email is becoming such a standard means of communication in business as well as universities, schools, and homes that it is almost expected that everyone should have an email address and that they should use it.

It does however usher in a new means of social interaction with its own norms and its own set of problems. If I write a letter and mail it, I expect to wait about two weeks to receive a reply. However, with email, because it is delivered very quickly and the turn-around times can be very fast, even across the globe, we become impatient and expect almost immediate answers, and with this expectation, we have become very informal in the style of 'conversation' that we use.

**How could I use email in a teaching and learning situation?**

**What skills/conventions might I need to teach students about emails?**

**Search Tools**

The other main way the web is having an impact on schools (apart from as a means for publishing, communicating and **sharing** information) is as a means of **searching out** and retrieving information.

This has led to enewed interest in **resource-based learning (RBL)**. The web is a huge resource and an efficient means of information retrieval. While there are doubts about the overall assurance of the quality of information available, it is true that there are many excellent web sites with resources that are ideal for use in schools.

One of the expected outcomes of RBL is the development of **information literacy among students**, the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable students to:

* recognise an information need and formulate a set of questions that will address the need;
* know where to look to find the sort of information they need;
* know how to search for information using the identified sources and know how to retrieve information from that source;
* make judgements about the suitability of the information retrieved;
* process and present the information in a form that answers the original information questions and is accessible to the intended audience;
* reflect on and make judgements about the efficiency and effectiveness of the processes that they have undertaken.

**What’s the difference between a directory service and a search engine?**

Go here to find out: <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Strategies.html>

**Here’re some lists of popular directory services and search engines . . .**

<http://websearch.about.com/od/enginesanddirectories/tp/human-powered-search-engines.htm>

<http://websearch.about.com/od/generalsearchengines/tp/general-search-engines.htm>

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| **Google Search Shortcuts** | |
| http://z.about.com | |
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| http://z.about.com |
| Here are the top Google Shortcuts that any savvy Googler should have under his or her belt. You'll find that using these Google Search Shortcuts will greatly cut down on your Google search time, as well as make your Google searches more effective and more efficient.   |  | | --- | |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | | **Google Shortcut** | **Finds Pages That Have...** | | **nokia phone** | the words **nokia** and **phone** | | sailing **OR** boating | either the word **sailing** or the word **boating** | | "love me tender" | the exact phrase **love me tender** | | printer -cartridge | the word **printer** but NOT the word **cartridge** | | Toy Story +2 | movie title including the number 2 | | ~auto | looks up the word **auto** and synonyms | | define:serendipity | definitions of the word **serendipity** | | how now \* cow | the words **how now cow** separated by one or more words | | + | addition; **978+456** | | - | subtraction; **978-456** | | \* | multiplication; **978\*456** | | / | division; **978/456** | | % of | percentage; **50% of 100** | | ^ | raise to a power; **4^18** (4 to the eighteenth power) | | old **in** new (conversion) | **45 celsius in Fahrenheit** | | **site:**(search only one website) | **site:websearch.about.com “invisible web”** | | **link:**(find linked pages) | **link:www.lifehacker.com** | | **#...#**(search within a number range) | **nokia phone $200...$300** | | **daterange:**(search within specific date range) | **bosnia daterange:200508-200510** | | **safesearch:** (exclude adult content) | **safesearch:breast cancer** | | **info:** (find info about a page) | **info:www.websearch.about.com** | | **related:** (related pages) | **related:www.websearch.about.com** | | **cache:** (view cached page) | **cache:google.com** | | **filetype:**(restrict search to specific filetype) | **zoology filetype:ppt** | | **allintitle:** (search for keywords in page title) | **allintitle:"nike" running** | | **inurl:**(restrict search to page URLs) | **inurl:chewbacca** | | **site:.edu** (specific domain search) | **site:.edu, site:.gov, site:.org, etc.** | | **site:country code** (restrict search to country) | **site:.br “rio de Janeiro”** | | **intext:**(search for keyword in body text) | **intext:parlor** | | **allintext:** (return pages with all words specified in body text) | **allintext:north pole** | | **book**(search book text) | **book The Lord of the Rings** | | **phonebook:**(find a phone number) | **phonebook:Google CA** | | **bphonebook:** (find business phone numbers) | **bphonebook:Intel OR** | | **rphonebook:**(find residential phone numbers) | **rphonebook:Joe Smith Seattle WA** | | **movie:**(search for showtimes) | **movie:wallace and gromit 97110** | | **stocks:**(get a stock quote) | **stocks:ncesa** | | **weather:**(get local weather) | **weather:97132** | | |

http://websearch.about.com/library/cheatsheet/ngooglecheatsheet.htm

**Evaluating Search Results**

Having conducted a search, students must develop the habit of critically examining the sites that they have found. Two fundamental questions must be asked:

1. Do the items returned as a result of the search answer the information questions that were asked?

2. Is the information found of an appropriate quality?

The first of these questions can be answered by inspecting the results of the search. The second is more difficult. Numerous guidelines are available to assist in this process. Essentially, a number of related questions need to be answered:

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| **Questions to ask** | **Support** |
| Is the site authoritative? i.e. is there a personal or institutional author, and does that person or organisation have a reputation in the field? | It is difficult to know whether the site was produced by someone with an established reputation. If the site is well recognised, it should be possible to find other sites that refer to it and references to it should be found in other sources. |
| Is there a reason to suspect bias in the site? | While for many sites this question is not relevant, there are sites created by organisations with political or social agendas. If you were seeking information about whether Australia should become a republic or not, it is likely that you will encounter many sites presenting for and against cases. It would be difficult to find "neutral" sites. Under these circumstances, it is necessary to seek a balance between the information from alternative points-of-view. |
| Is the material current? | Web only been in mainstream use since 1993, and in the early days there were relatively few sites, so most web sites are only a few years old. Therefore it is tempting to think that few sites would carry dated information. However, old information could have been included in a site when it was initially set up, and it may not have been updated since.  Of great importance in assessing the currency of information is to decide how important it is in relation to the issue. If you want to find out what Shakespeare wrote, it would not matter greatly if the material was prepared in 1970, as Shakespeare has not been a prolific writer of late. However, if you want to know about stock market prices, material a few hours old may well be too old to be useful to you. You must decide how recent information needs to be in order to meet your needs.  Sites that do not have dates on them should be treated with some suspicion. Either near the top of an article or in a footer there should be a creation date and a last revision date. |
| Is the material accurate? | Accuracy is difficult to judge. The best way to test this is by checking it against the information found on independent sites. It would also be sensible to seek information from other sources, eg traditional reference works. |
| Is the material of an appropriate reading level for its audience? | This matter can be judged readily by teachers by examining the text of the site. |

**Here are some other useful sites that give support to help students evaluate the sites they’ve found:**

* A great site that has evaluation checklist handouts suitable for students of different ages: <http://school.discovery.com/schrockguide/eval.html>
* A more technical evaluation checklist: use yourself or with senior students: <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Evaluate.html>
* A straightforward approach to teaching evaluation: <http://kathyschrock.net/abceval/>

**THE FIVE W’S OF WEB SITE EVALUATION**

**WHO**

Who wrote the pages and are they an expert?

Is a biography of the author included?

How can I find out more about the author?

**WHAT**

What does the author say is the purpose of the site?

What else might the author have in mind for the site?

What makes the site easy to use?

What information is included and does this

information differ from other sites?

**WHEN**

When was the site created?

When was the site last updated?

**WHERE**

Where does the information come from?

Where can I look to find out more about

the sponsor of the site?

**WHY**

Why is this information useful for my purpose?

Why should I use this information?

Why is this page better than another