Search Engines: Technology, Society, and Business

Prof. Marti Hearst

Aug 27, 2007

Today

- Discussion
- Course Goals and Logistics
- Invited Speakers and Instructors
- How the Internet / Web Works
- How Search Engines Work

A Seminar Course

- Low-key; learn something new!
- Both undergrads and graduate students.
- Very wide-ranging backgrounds

Undergraduates

Mass Commun.	20
Undeclared	12
Double Major	9
Interdisc. Studies	3
Anth/Soc/Legal	3
Math/Chem/Op.Rs.	3
Environ. Economics	2
Business	2
Rhetoric	1

Grad students

iSchool	16
CS/EECS	2
Business	1

Course Goals

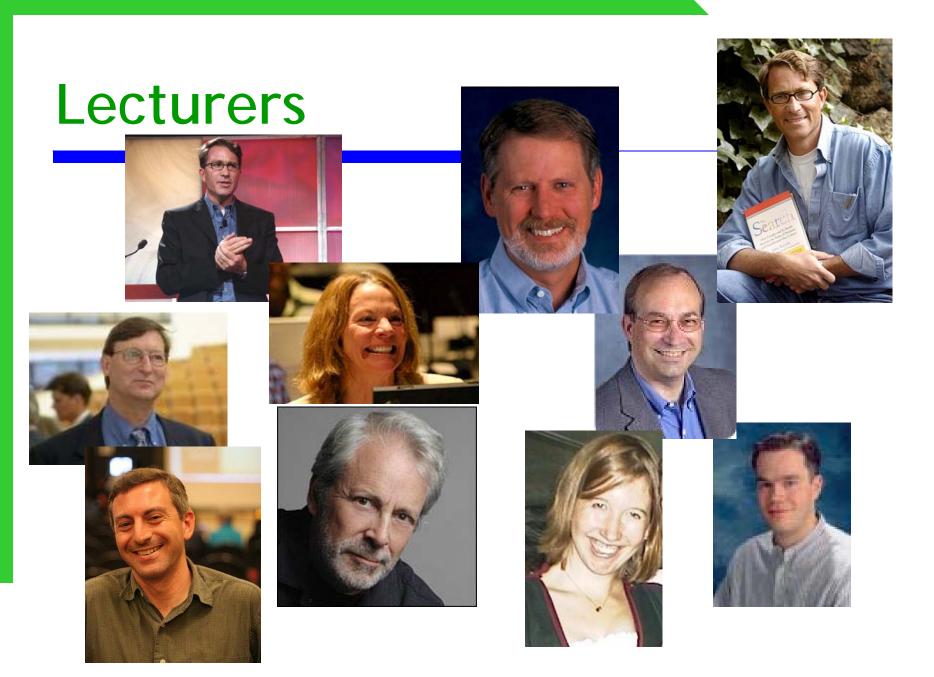
- Gain an interdisciplinary understanding of search engines and related technologies.
 - How they work
 - How they affect communication
 - How they affect business
 - How they are changing our understanding of information and knowledge.
- Make the techy parts understandable for everyone.

Class Format

- Lectures by up-to-date experts
- A few short homework assignments, turned in online
- A paper or project on a topic of your choice
 - Topics will need to be approved by TAs/Prof

Class Attendance

- You must attend class.
 - We want a good audience for our fantastic speakers.
 - Counting today, there are 14 lectures.
 - You can miss only one class (not counting today). Each class missed beyond that will be a reduction of one letter grade.
 - During each class, the TAs will mark your name off a list; you must show your student ID.



Instructor Background

Prof. Marti Hearst

- Associate Professor in the School of Information
 - Affiliate position in the CS department
 - PhD in Computer Science from UC Berkeley
- Research areas:
 - Search, especially user interfaces for search
 - Computational linguistics
 - Information Visualization
- Industry Experience
 - Researcher at Xerox PARC for many years
 - Worked at HP, IBM
 - Was a member of the Scientific Advisory Board for Altavista and Yahoo! Search
 - Consulting at a search startup now.

TAs

- Eun Kyoung Choe
 - iSchool masters student

- Ani Sen
 - iSchool Masters Student
- Office hours TBD

What is the iSchool?



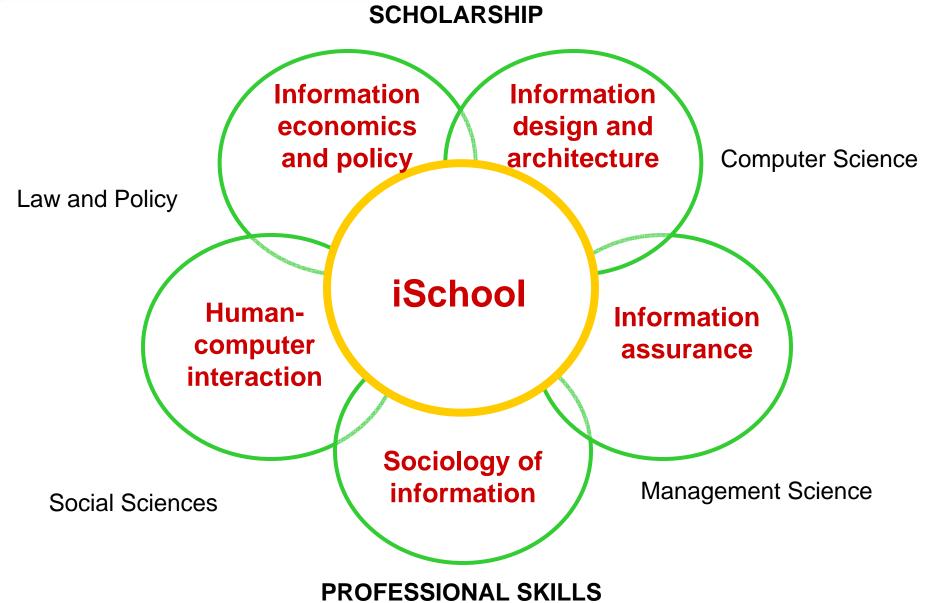
- School of Information
 - Used to be called SIMS
- Newest school on campus; started in 1997
- We have a PhD program and a professional masters degree
 - Like MBAs and Journalism school
- Faculty have diverse backgrounds
 - Computer science, economics, law, political science, sociology, and others.



iSchool Mission

We are developing scholars, entrepreneurs, and public leaders who can transform information into knowledge and understanding.





iSchool Courses (Sample)

- Information in Society
- Database Design
- Information Visualization and Presentation
- Open Source Software: Economic, Legal & Social Implications
- Web Services
- The Quality of Information

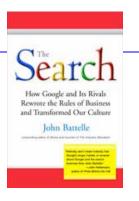
Master's student placements

Representative employers:

- Google, eBay, Yahoo!, Microsoft, Oracle, HP
- UC, Kaiser, US Government, CA Digital Library
- Entrepreneurial

The Next Two Weeks

- Get the textbook, "The Search" by John Battelle
 - Read Chapters 1-2 of "The Search"



- Read this article in the NYTimes:
 - Google Keeps Tweaking Its Search Engine, by <u>SAUL HANSELL</u>, June 3, 2007
 - http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/03/business/yourmoney/03google.html? ei=5070&en=5656dc62628eac96&ex=1188273600&pagewanted=all
- No lecture next week (campus holiday)
- Monday, Sept 10: Jan Pedersen on how search engines work

How Search Engines Work

How Do Search Engines Work?



- Say a user named Oski using his computer at home (or in, say, Seoul) wants to find information about i141?
- What happens when he:
 - Brings up a search engine home page?
 - Types his query?
- First we have to understand how the network works!
- Then we can understand search engines.

Internet vs. WWW

- Internet and Web are not synonymous
- Internet is a global communication network connecting millions of computers.
- World Wide Web (WWW) is one <u>component</u> of the Internet, along with e-mail, chat, etc.
- Now we'll talk about both.

How Does the WWW Work?

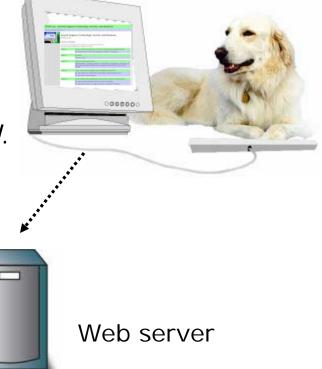


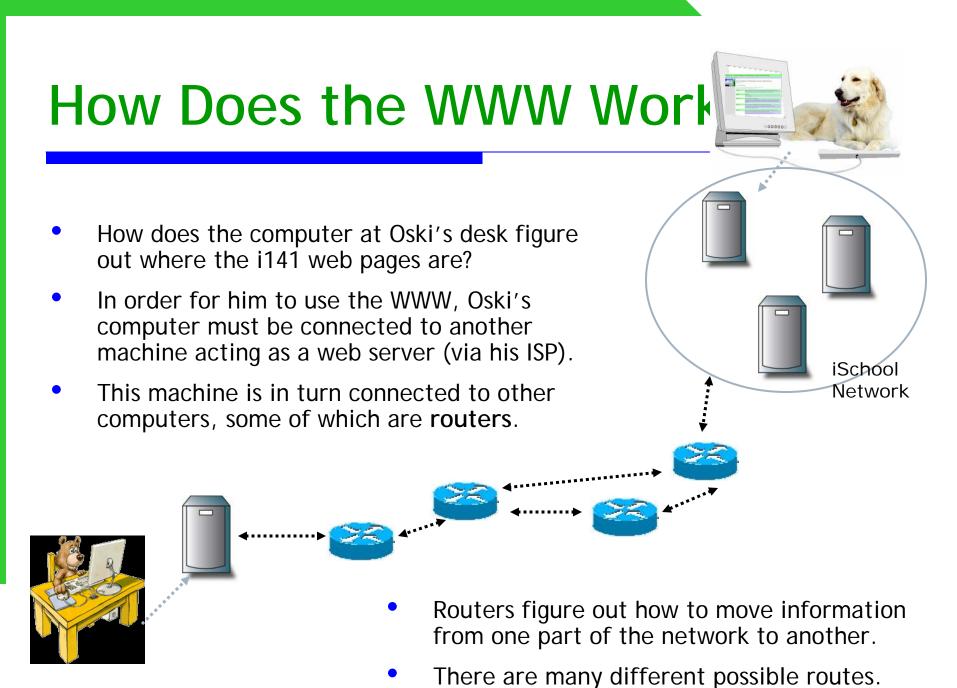
- Let's say Oski received email with the address for the i141 web page, or saw it on a flyer.
- He goes to a networked computer, and launches a web browser.
- He then types the address, known as a URL, into the address bar of the browser.
- What happens next?



How Does the WWW Work?

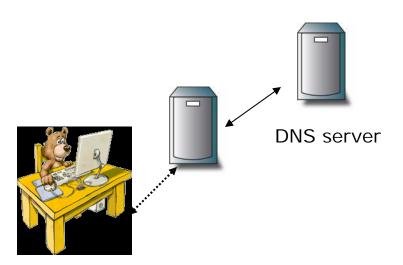
- Say Prof. Hearst has written some web pages for her class on her PC.
- She copied the pages to a directory on a computer on her local network at the ischool. The computer's name is herald.
- This computer is connected to the Internet and runs a program called Apache. This allows herald to act as a web server.





How Does the WWW Work?

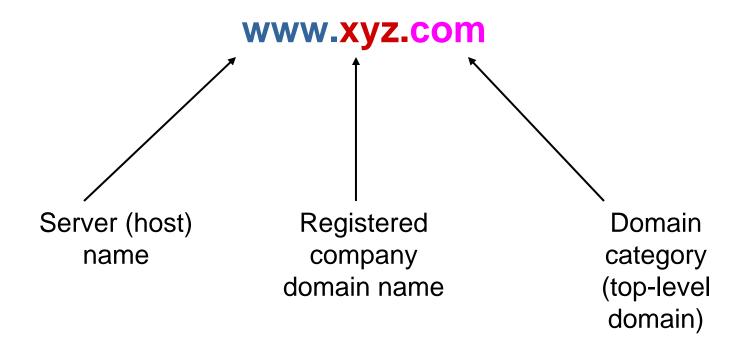
- How do Oski's server and the routers know how to find the right server?
- First, the url has to be translated into a number known as an IP address.
- Oski's server connects to a Domain Names Server (DNS) that knows how to do the translation.



Domain Name Syntax

- Domain names are read right to left, from general to more specific locations
- For example, www.xyz.com can be interpreted as follows:
 - com commercial site top-level domain
 - xyz registered company domain name
 - www host name (it is a convention to name web server hosts "www" which stands for "world wide web")

Typical Domain Name



Domain names are part of URLs, used in web pages.

Top-Level Domains

- com, biz, cc commercial or company sites
- edu educational institutions, typically universities
- org organizations; originally meant for clubs, associations and nonprofit groups
- mil U.S. military
- gov U.S. civilian government
- net network sites, including ISPs
- int international organizations (rarely used)

Many other top level domains are available adapted from CIW foundations

Converting Domain Names

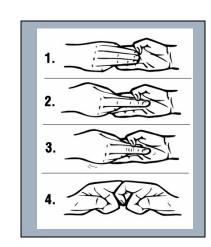
- Domain names are for humans to read.
- The Internet actually uses numbers called IP addresses to describe network addresses.
- The Domain Name System (DNS) resolves IP addresses into easily recognizable names
- For example:
 - 12.42.192.73 = *www.xyz.com*
- A domain name and its IP address refer to the same Web server.

Internet Addresses

- The internet is a network on which each computer must have a unique address.
- The Internet uses IP addresses; for example, herald's IP address is 128.32.226.90
- Internet Protocol version 4 (IPv4) supports 32-bit dotted quad
 IP address format
 - Four sets of numbers, each set ranging from 0 to 255
 - UC Berkeley's LAN addresses range from 128.32.0.0 to 128.32.255.255
 - Other addresses in the iSchool LAN include 128.32.226.49
- Using this setup, there are approximately 4 billion possible unique IP addresses
- Router software knows how to use the IP addresses to find the target computer.

How the Internet Works

- Network Protocols:
 - Protocol an agreed-upon format for transmitting data between two devices
 - Like a secret handshake
 - The Internet protocol is TCP/IP
 - The WWW protocol is HTTP



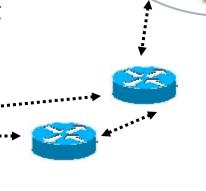
- Network Packets:
 - Typically a message is broken up into smaller pieces and re-assembled at the receiving end.
 - These pieces of information, surrounded by address information are called packets.

IP Packet Format (v4)

_	Bit 0 Field length in bits			Bit 31			
	Version Hdr Len (4) (4)	TOS (8)	Total Length in bytes (16)		16)		
	Identification (16 bits)		Flags (3)	Fragment Offset (13)			
der	Time to Live (8)	Protocol (8)	Header Checksum (16)		6)		
Header	Source IP Address (32)						
	Destination IP Address (32)						
	Options (if any)						
Data	Data (variable length)						



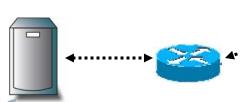
- What happens now that the request for information from Oski's browser has been received by the web server herald at www.ischool.berkeley.edu?
- The web server processes the url to figure out which page on the server is requested.
- It then sends all the information from that page back to the requesting address.



iSchool

Network





Reading a URL

http://courses.ischool.berkeley.edu/i141/f07/index.html

```
http:// = HyperText Transfer Protocol

courses = service name (often is www)

.ischool = host name

.berkeley = primary domain name

.edu/ = top level domain

i141/ = directory name

f07/ = directory names

index.html = file name of web page
```

Web Pages and HTML

So what do we see at

http://courses.ischool.berkeley.edu/is141/f07/index.html ?

i141: Search Engines: Technology, Society, and Business

Course Information, Fall 2007



Search Engines: Technology, Society, and Business i141

(Note new time and location!)

Mondays 10:00am-12:00pm, (2 units)

1.5 hour of lecture per week, 0.5 hour of discussion per week.

CCN: 42706

Prerequisites: None.

Location: 155 Kroeber Hall

Open to all undergraduate students and designed for those with little technical background.

(Graduate student version of this course)

Lecture Notes

Readings and Assignments

Administrivia

Speaker Schedule,

Resources

Syllabus,

Speakers

We will schedule a set of top-notch experts to speak during Fall 2007. A speaker schedule is now available. You can also see the schedule from Fall 2005.

The instructor, **Prof. Marti Hearst**, is an Associate Professor at the School of Information at UC Berkeley. She has done extensive research on search user interfaces, was on the Science Advisory Board for Search at Yahoo from 2004-2005 and for Altavista from 2002-2004. She will provide the introduction to the course, devise the homework assignments, and create lectures for topics that are not covered by other speakers.

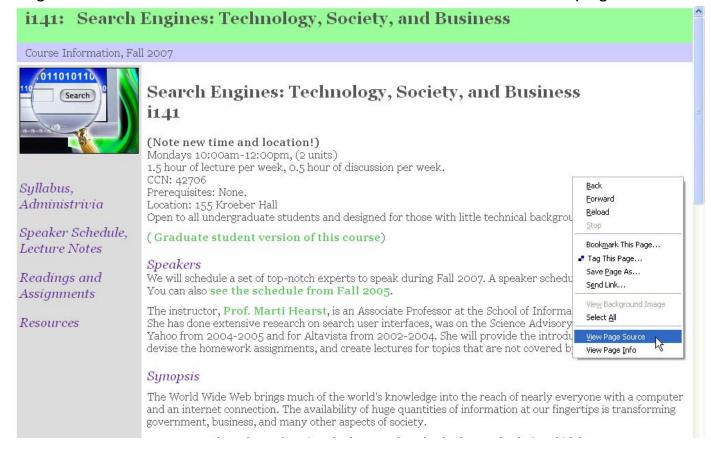
Synopsis

The World Wide Web brings much of the world's knowledge into the reach of nearly everyone with a computer and an internet connection. The availability of huge quantities of information at our fingertips is transforming government, business, and many other aspects of society.

For most people, Web search engines (such as Google and Yahoo) are technologies which have enormous influence on how people find and think about information. They are the gateways, (or some might argue, gate keepers) to this vast sea of information. With the rising importance of search engines come new legal, business, and policy questions and considerations.

Web Pages and HTML

- So what do we see at <u>http://courses.ischool.berkeley.edu/is141/f07/index.html</u> ?
- Right-click to see the "source" or HTML code for the web page



Web Pages and HTML

• What does HTML look like?

```
🥮 Source of: http://courses.ischool.berkeley.edu/i141/f07/index.html - Mozilla Firefox
File Edit View Help
<h2>Search Engines: Technology, Society, and Business<br>
i141 </h2>
<br/>
<br/>
Note new time and location!)</b><br/>
br>
Mondays 10:00am-12:00pm, (2 units) <br>
1.5 hour of lecture per week, 0.5 hour of discussion per week. <br>
CCN: 42706<br>
Prerequisites: None. <br>
Location: 155 Kroeber Hall < br >
Open to all undergraduate students and designed for
those with little technical background. 
(<a href=http://courses.ischool.berkeley.edu/i290-1/f07/index.html>
Graduate student version of this course</a>)
<h3> Speakers</h3>
We will schedule a set of top-notch experts to speak during Fall
2007. A speaker schedule
<a href=http://courses.ischool.berkeley.edu/i141/f07/schedule.html>
is now available</a>.
You can also
<a href=http://www2.sims.berkeley.edu/courses/is141/f05/schedule.html>
see the schedule from Fall 2005</a>.
```

HTML

- HyperText Markup Language
 - Uses <tags> which mark up the text and tell the browser how to display the content.
 - A backslash tag means the end of the command but is sometimes optional
- Examples
 - This is boldface text .
 - indicates a paragraph break
 - <h1> This is a large heading </h1>
 - <h3> This is a smaller heading </h3>

HTML Hyperlinks

Mondays 4:00-6:00pm, (2 units)

2 hours of lecture per week, 1 hour of discussion per w

CCN: 42702

Prerequisites: None.

Location: 100 Genetics & Plant Biology Bldg Open to all undergraduate students and designed for the

Hyperlink is the most important:

 100 Genetics & Plant Biology Bldg

- The green part is called anchor text
 - It's the text you see on the link
- The pink part is the url that the link will take you to if you click on it. The http:// at the front indicates the http (Web) protocol.
- The ... is the command that indicates the enclosed information is a hyperlink, and the that text between the tags is the anchor text.
- A hyperlink can be clicked on by a person OR followed by a computer program.

HTTP

- HTTP is the protocol used by the WWW
- When a user clicks on a hyperlink in their web browser, this sends an HTTP command to the Web server named in the URL
- This command usually is to "GET" the contents of the web page and return them to the user's browser.
- It is a very simple protocol
 - It relies on the TCP/IP functionality

HTTP Request: Example

This information is received by the web server at www.ischool.berkeley.edu :

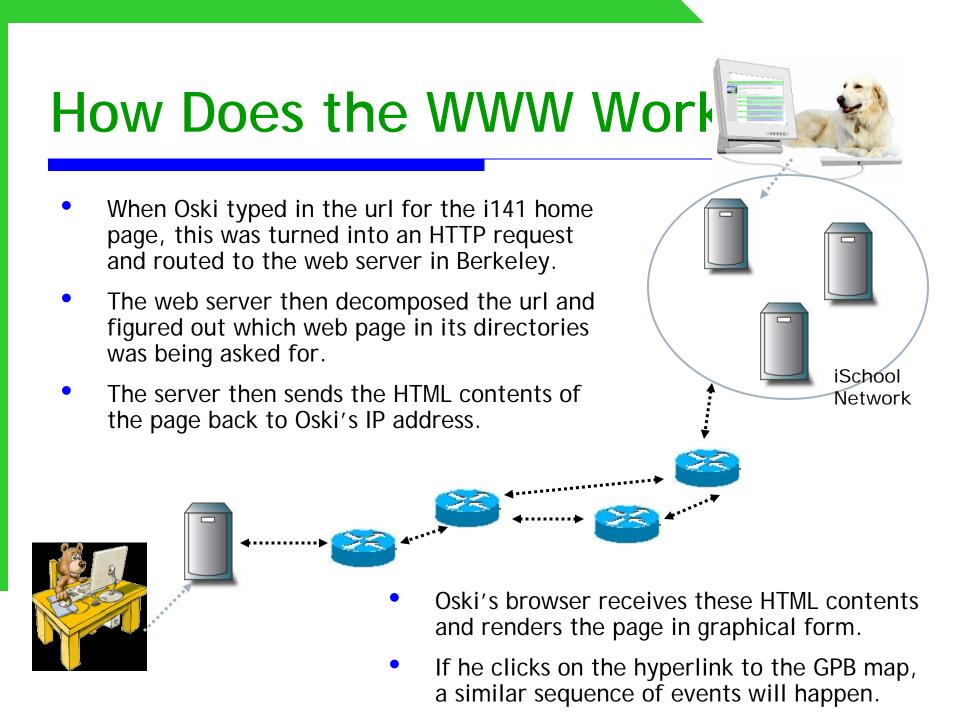
Request line
Request header
Blank line

GET i141/s07/index.html HTTP/1.1<CRLF>

Host: courses.ischool.berkeley.edu <CRLF>

<CRLF>

Because HTTP is built on TCP/IP, the web server knows which IP address to send the contents of the web page back to.



How the WWW/Internet Work

- More information is available online.
- There are many good glossaries:
 - http://www.alpinetech.net/glossary.html
 - http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/Glossary.html
- There are good essays too:
 - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internet_Protocol
 - http://computer.howstuffworks.com/web-server.htm

How Search Engines Work

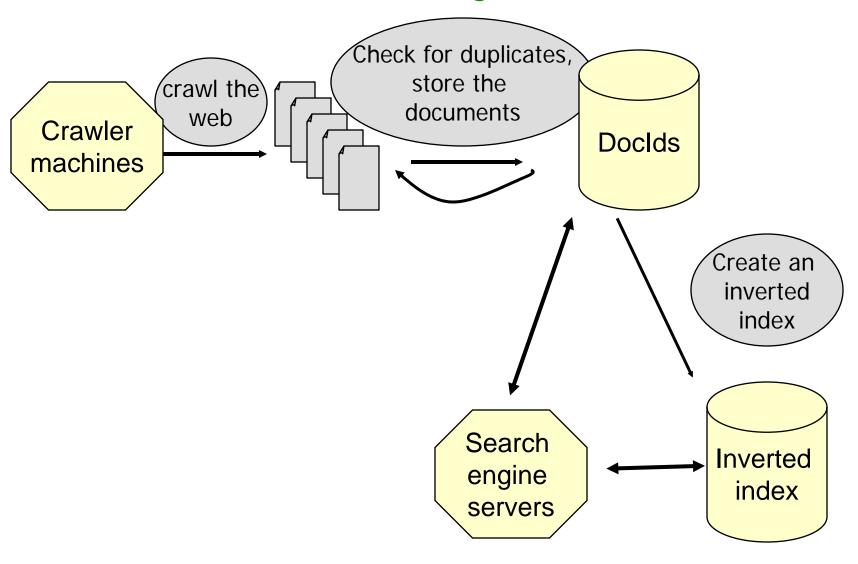
- There are MANY issues
- I'm only giving the basics today
- More will come out in future lectures

How Search Engines Work

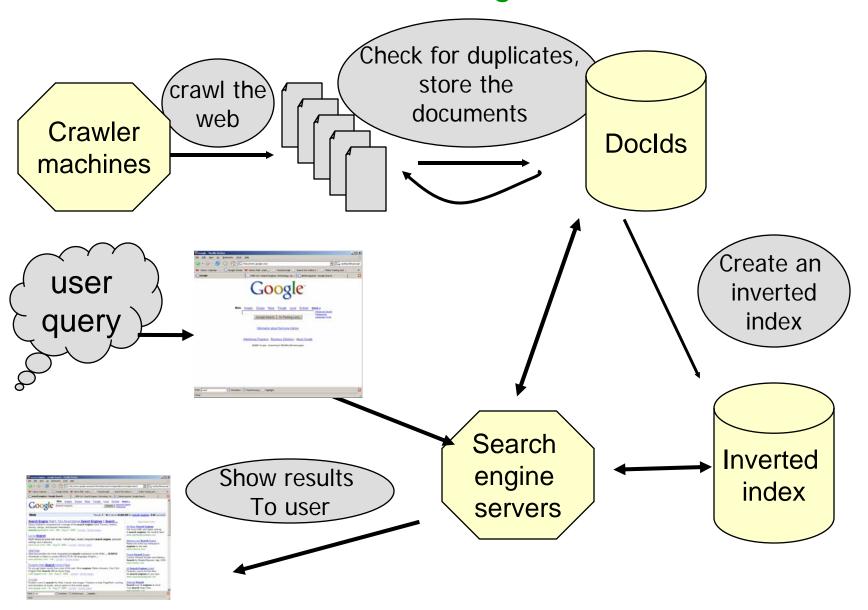
Three main parts:

- Gather the contents of all web pages (using a program called a crawler or spider)
- Organize the contents of the pages in a way that allows efficient retrieval (indexing)
- Take in a query, determine which pages match, and show the results (ranking and display of results)

Standard Web Search Engine Architecture

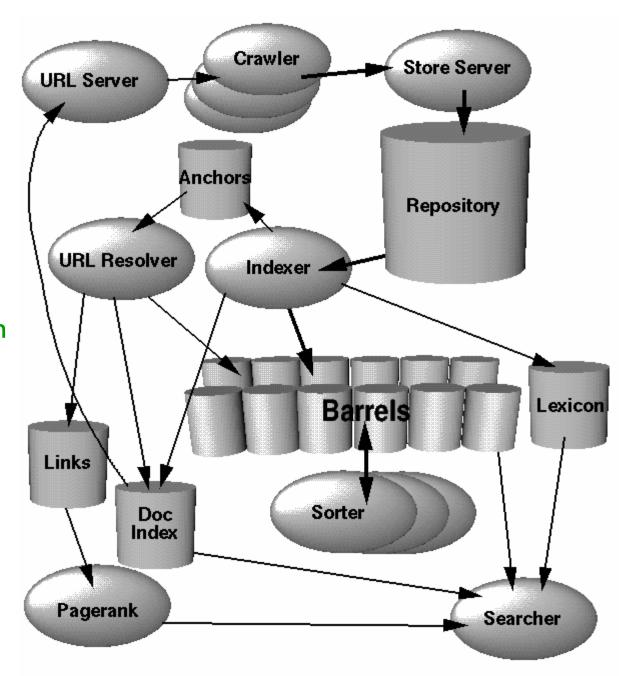


Standard Web Search Engine Architecture



More detailed architecture, from "Anatomy of a Large-Scale Hypertext Web Search Engine", Brin & Page, 1998.

http://dbpubs.stanford.edu:8090/pub/1998-8



i. Spiders or crawlers

- How to find web pages to visit and copy?
 - Can start with a list of domain names, visit the home pages there.
 - Look at the hyperlink on the home page, and follow those links to more pages.
 - Use HTTP commands to GET the pages
 - Keep a list of urls visited, and those still to be visited.
 - Each time the program loads in a new HTML page, add the links in that page to the list to be crawled.

Spider behaviour varies

- Parts of a web page that are indexed
- How <u>deeply</u> a site is indexed
- Types of files indexed
- How <u>frequently</u> the site is spidered

Four Laws of Crawling

- A Crawler must show identification
- A Crawler must obey the robots exclusion standard

http://www.robotstxt.org/wc/norobots.html

- A Crawler must not hog resources
- A Crawler must report errors

Lots of tricky aspects

- Servers are often down or slow
- Hyperlinks can get the crawler into cycles
- Some websites have junk in the web pages
- Now many pages have dynamic content
 - The "hidden" web
 - E.g., schedule.berkeley.edu
 - You don't see the course schedules until you run a query.
- The web is HUGE

The Internet Is Enormous

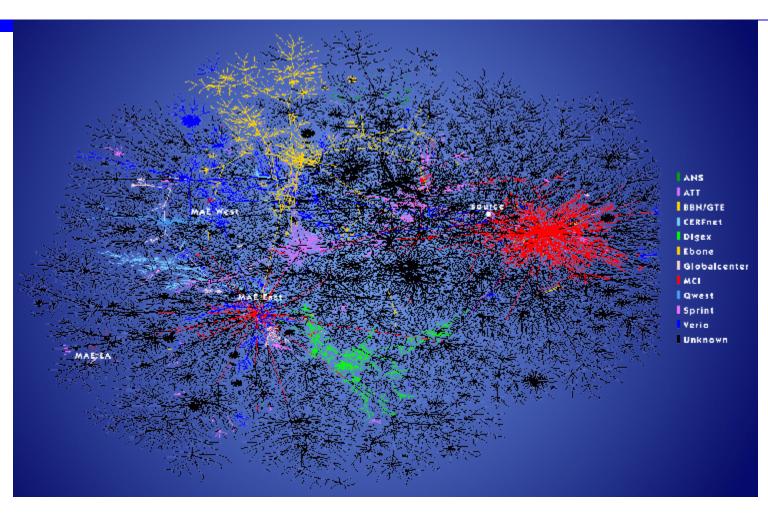


Image from http://www.nature.com/nature/webmatters/tomog/tomfigs/fig1.html

"Freshness"

- Need to keep checking pages
 - Pages change (25%,7% large changes)
 - At different frequencies
 - Who is the fastest changing?
 - Pages are removed
 - Many search engines cache the pages (store a copy on their own servers)

What really gets crawled?

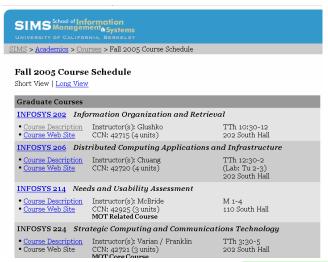
- A small fraction of the Web that search engines know about; no search engine is exhaustive
- Not the "live" Web, but the search engine's index
- Not the "Deep Web"
- Mostly HTML pages but other file types too: PDF, Word, PPT, etc.

ii. Index (the database)

Record information about each page

- List of words
 - In the title?
 - How far down in the page?
 - Was the word in boldface?
- URLs of pages pointing to this one
- Anchor text on pages pointing to this one

The importance of anchor text



ClickZ. You are in the: ClickZ Network > ClickZ Network Navigation Members Area With Exclu-(SearchEngineWatch 🕟 Metasearch The Blogosphere With Clusty
August 29, 2005 - A 'hidden' feature of a powerful meta search engine allows you to mine for gold in the blogosphere. Featured Discussions In Our Forums Traffic Power Files Suit Against SEO Book ● SEO For MSN ● O'Reilly In Off-Topic Link Selling Debate ● NYT On Google As The New Microsoft ● More From Our Forums ... August 26, 2005 - Links to the week's topics from search engine forums across the web: O'Reilly In Off-Topic Link Selling Debate - Google Talk Instant Messaging - MSN Search Toolbar Anyone? - Google Launches Enhanced Desktop Software -Strategies for Taking Advantage of New AdWords System, and Latest From the Search Engine Watch Blog AOL News Joins the Big League of News Search Engines August 25, 2005 - AOL News has quietly and quickly sprinted into pace as a leading news search engine, joining Yahoo

<a href=http://courses.ischoti141



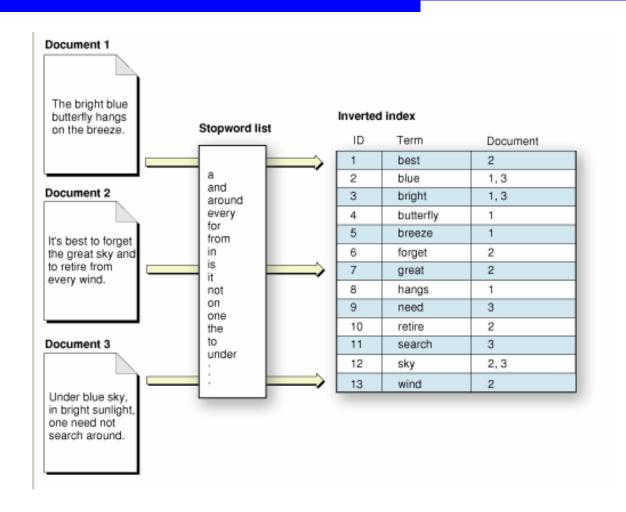
 A terrific course on search engines

The anchor text summarizes what the website is about.

Inverted Index

- How to store the words for fast lookup
- Basic steps:
 - Make a "dictionary" of all the words in all of the web pages
 - For each word, list all the documents it occurs in.
 - Often omit very common words
 - "stop words"
 - Sometimes stem the words
 - (also called morphological analysis)
 - cats -> cat
 - □ running -> run

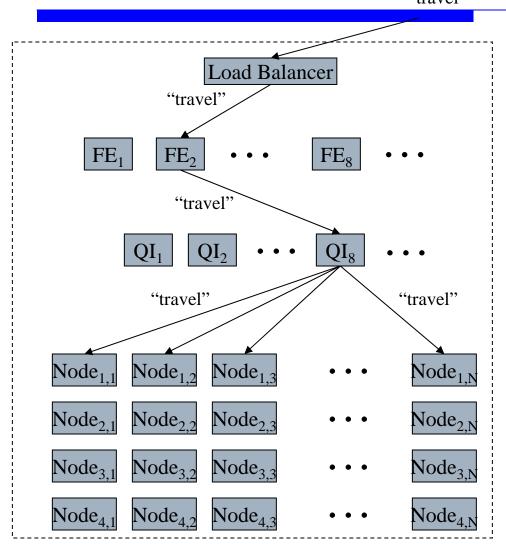
Inverted Index Example



Inverted Index

- In reality, this index is HUGE
- Need to store the contents across many machines
- Need to do optimization tricks to make lookup fast.

Query Serving Architecture



- Index divided into segments each served by a node
- Each row of nodes replicated for query load
- Query integrator distributes query and merges results
- Front end creates a HTML page with the query results

iii. Results ranking

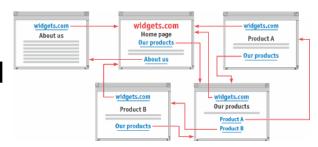
- Search engine receives a query, then
- Looks up the words in the index, retrieves many documents, then
- Rank orders the pages and extracts "snippets" or summaries containing query words.
 - Most web search engines assume the user wants all of the words (Boolean AND, not OR).
- These are complex and highly guarded algorithms unique to each search engine.

Some ranking criteria

- For a given candidate result page, use:
 - Number of matching query words in the page
 - Proximity of matching words to one another
 - Location of terms within the page
 - Location of terms within tags e.g. <title>, <h1>, link text, body text
 - Anchor text on pages pointing to this one
 - Frequency of terms on the page and in general
 - Link analysis of which pages point to this one
 - (Sometimes) Click-through analysis: how often the page is clicked on
 - How "fresh" is the page
- Complex formulae combine these together.

Measuring Importance of Linking

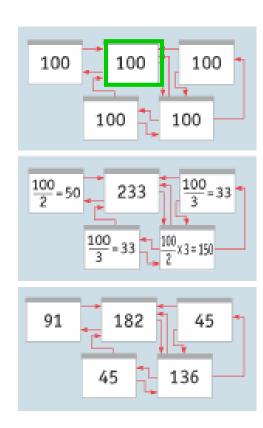
- PageRank Algorithm
 - Idea: important pages are pointed to by other important pages



- Method:
 - Each link from one page to another is counted as a "vote" for the destination page
 - But the importance of the starting page also influences the importance of the destination page.
 - And those pages scores, in turn, depend on those linking to them.

Measuring Importance of Linking

- Example: each page starts with 100 points.
- Each page's score is recalculated by adding up the score from each incoming link.
 - This is the score of the linking page divided by the number of outgoing links it has.
 - E.g, the page in green has 2 outgoing links and so its "points" are shared evenly by the 2 pages it links to.
- Keep repeating the score updates until no more changes.



Manipulating Ranking

- Motives
 - Commercial, political, religious
 - Promotion funded by advertising budget
- Operators
 - Search Engine Optimizers
 - Web masters
 - Hosting services
- Forum
 - Web master world (<u>www.webmasterworld.com</u>)

A few spam technologies

Cloaking

- Serve fake content to search engine robot
- DNS cloaking: Switch IP address. Impersonate

Doorway pages

 Pages optimized for a single keyword that re-direct to the real target page

Keyword Spam

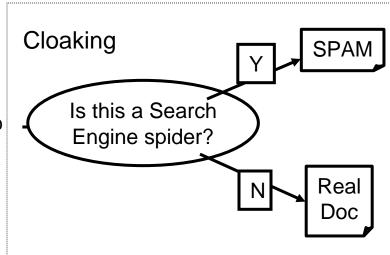
- Misleading meta-keywords, excessive repetition of a term, fake "anchor text"
- Hidden text with colors, CSS tricks, etc.

Link spamming

- Mutual admiration societies, hidden links, awards
- Domain flooding: numerous domains that point or redirect to a target page

Robots

- Fake click stream
- Fake query stream
- Millions of submissions via Add-Url



Meta-Keywords =

"... London hotels, hotel, holiday inn, hilton, discount, booking, reservation, sex, mp3, britney spears, viagra, ..."

Slide adapted from Manning, Raghavan, & Schuetze

Paid ranking

Pay-for-inclusion

- Deeper and more frequent indexing
- Sites are not distinguished in results display

Paid placement

Keyword bidding for targeted ads

Know your search engine

- What is the default boolean operator? Are other operators supported?
- Does it index other file types like PDF?
- Is it case sensitive?
- Phrase searching?
- Proximity searching?
- Truncation?
- Advanced search features?

Keyword search tips

- There are many books and websites that give searching tips; here are a few common ones:
 - Use unusual terms and proper names
 - Put most important terms first
 - Use phrases when possible
 - Make use of slang, industry jargon, local vernacular, acronyms
 - Be aware of country spellings and common misspellings
 - Frame your search like an answer or question
- For more, see http://www.googleguide.com/

Search Engine Information

- www.searchengineland.com
- www.searchenginewatch.com
- www.searchenginejournal.com
- www.searchengineshowdown.com
- http://battellemedia.com

Class Attendance

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 - Counting today, there are 14 lectures.
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 - During each class, the TAs will mark your name off a list; you must show your student ID.

The Next Two Weeks

- Read Chapter 1-2 of "The Search"
- Read this article in the NYTimes:
 - Google Keeps Tweaking Its Search Engine, by <u>SAUL</u> <u>HANSELL</u>, June 3, 2007
 - http://www.nytimes.com/2007/06/03/business/yourmoney/03google. html?ei=5070&en=5656dc62628eac96&ex=1188273600&pagewanted=all
- No lecture next week (campus holiday) but we will have discussion sections next week:
- Monday, Sept 10: Jan Pedersen