



## Tales from the Terminal Room November 2005, Issue No. 66

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Tales from the Terminal Room (TFTTR) is a monthly newsletter, with the exception of July and August which are published as a single issue. TFTTR includes reviews and comparisons of information sources; updates to the RBA Web site Business Sources and other useful resources; dealing with technical and access problems on the Net; and news of RBA's training courses and publications.

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## Search Tools

### Jux2 is back

Jux2 (<http://www.jux2.com/>) is back having been sold by its previous owner on eBay for over USD 100,000.

Jux2 is a meta search tool that runs your strategy through Google, Yahoo and Ask Jeeves and presents you with a combined list. Nothing unusual or innovative in that, but you can also look at just the unique results found by each of the three engines. The closest alternative that I have seen is Dogpile (<http://www.dogpile.com/>), which enables you to view the lists of results from the "big four" side by side and highlight the unique pages.

For Firefox fans there is a plugin for the search box that adds Jux2 to your list of favourite tools.

### Advanced Internet Search Strategies - Top Tips and Sites

We have been running our Advanced Search Strategies workshop again, this time in Sheffield. As usual, we asked the participants at the end of the day to come up with their top tips and sites. This is the list.

1. Use evaluated subject listings to filter out the rubbish, for example OMNI (<http://www.omni.ac.uk/>) in the health and medical area. Use Pinakes (<http://www.hw.ac.uk/libWWW/irn/pinakes/pinakes.html>) or RDN (<http://www.rdn.ac.uk/>) to help identify them.

2. Ranking.thumbshots.com (<http://ranking.thumbshots.com/>) to demonstrate the overlap - or lack of it - between search engines, and to convince colleagues and users that Google is not always the best or only tool for an enquiry.

3. Use the file format option available on all the main search engines' advanced search screens to narrow down your search. For example spreadsheets for statistics, Powerpoint to find information on or from experts on a particular subject, PDF and Word files for "meaty" market and industry reports, or government reports.

4. Try Kartoo (<http://www.kartoo.com/>) for a different approach to presenting results and for suggestions on additional or alternative search terms.

5. Trovando.it (<http://www.trovando.it/>) to run your search quickly in several different search tools, and as a reminder of the different resource types and tools that are available, for example reference.

6. RDN Virtual Training Suite (<http://www.vts.rdn.ac.uk/>) to bring you up to speed on key, reputable resources in an unfamiliar subject or industry sector.

7. Google numeric range search to look for anything involving a range of numbers. For example, "top" banks may be top 10, 15, 20, 100 (top 10..100 banks), or for identifying forecasts (TV advertising spend forecasts 2005..2012).

8. Pattern search in Exalead (<http://www.exalead.com/>). For example /psych.\*ist/ finds pages containing psychologist, psychiatrist, psychoanalyst etc.

9. Image specific search tools are often better than the image options of the general search engines. For example Flickr (<http://www.flickr.com/>), Morguefile (<http://www.morguefile.com/>), Picsearch (<http://www.picsearch.com/>).

10. Visit Google Labs (<http://labs.google.com/>) to keep up to date with what is new and experimental at Google, for example Google Suggests, Google Sets, Personalized Home Page, Search History.

11. Use the Google synonym search to include synonyms in your strategy. Precede your term with a tilde (~), for example ~bank will also find banks bankers, banking, financial, commerce.

12. Use the site search option on the advanced search screens of the main search engines to limit by type of organisation, for example government or academic, or to search a specific site. Particularly useful for searching massive sites whose navigation and internal search engine are dire.

## Fast Search & Transfer to develop new desktop search tool

<http://www.iwr.co.uk/information-world-review/news/2146375/fast-search-transfer-sets>

An interesting story recently appeared in Information World Review on the Norwegian enterprise search vendor Fast Search & Transfer, and their plans for their "Personal Search Platform" (PSP). This will not be just desktop search. The plans are to involve information providers such as Reed Elsevier so that PSP can provide users with a one-stop-shop for peer reviewed articles, web and desktop search. The article implies that PSP will not be limited to scientific and biomedical publications. Fast, it says, has strong relationships with Reuters, Lexis-Nexis, Factiva and CNET.

## blinkx and Times Online launch Times Smart Search

<http://www.blinkx.com/press/2005/20051201.php>

Blinkx and the Times Online have launched a co-branded toolbar called Times Online Smart Search.

This is a variation on the Blinkx desktop search with content from the Times being delivered via the blinkx News channel. It works in the same way as the standard Blinkx desktop search in that it analyses what the user is viewing at the time and delivers related content.

Blinkx and Times Online have also customised the Smart Folders that update themselves automatically with content relevant to a topic specified by you. I have to confess that in the past I have been very confused as to how to get this to work but I think I've finally cracked it.

There are two versions of Times Smart Search: a light version that does not search your own PC but gives you access to Smart Folders and some custom-made Times Online services, and the full "advanced" version that includes desktop search. They are only available for PCs running "later versions" of Windows - there is no Mac version at present - and the toolbar works with both IE and Firefox.

<http://www.rba.co.uk/tftr/archives/2005/nov2005.shtml>

It is not obvious on the Times home page where one can download the Smart Search but I think the starting point is the invitation to try Smart Search beta.

## Google Print becomes Google Books

Google Print has become Google Book Search with a new URL at <http://books.google.com/>.

Google say that "This change reflects the ongoing growth of the product and our continuing effort to make the search service more user-friendly... Additionally, users and publishers told us the name Print was confusing: some thought the product existed to help them print web pages."

As well as a name change, there are additions to the Advanced Search screen including options for searching by title, author, publisher, year or years of publication, and ISBN.

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## Firefox 1.5 released

<http://www.mozilla.com/>

Firefox 1.5 has been released.

New and improved features include:

- "Drag and drop" feature for tabbed browsing so that you can rearrange the tabs
- Improved pop-up blocker
- Answers.com now included in the integrated Search box.
- Improved Live Bookmarks feature for RSS feeds.
- New Automatic Update system
- New Clear Private Data tool so that you can clear all private information, such as history and form entries, via one settings window.

I have also noticed that it displays pages significantly faster.

You may find that some of your extensions may be disabled because Firefox thinks that they are not compatible with this latest version. I initially had a problem with Flashblock, Googlebar, TinyUrl creator and

Pagerank. Checking for updates will sort out most of the "incompatibilities". For the rest, try the Nightly Tester Tools extension. Primarily intended to check for new nightly builds of Firefox, it also has an option that tells Firefox your existing plug-ins can work with the latest download. There is a chance that an extension could cause problems but it worked OK with my collection.

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## Information Resources

### EBRD Directory 2006

<http://www.dataresources.co.uk/>

The new 2006 EBRD Directory of business information sources on central and eastern Europe and the CIS is now in press.

Available from February 2006, the directory has been completely revised and extended to provide a comprehensive guide to business information resources on the region. The sites are from the world's leading publishers, banks, commercial and investment agencies. These are sources used daily by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development Business Information Centre.

As well as the printed directory, you receive an Internet password that gives you access to updated information. I do quite a bit of research on central and eastern Europe and I find this an invaluable resource on these regions. Yes, I could probably locate much of the information via a Google/Yahoo/Exalead search but the directory is much quicker and I know that their resources have been quality assessed and evaluated.

The price is GBP 165, EUR 250, USD 320 but if you place your order before December 31st you save 15% (GBP 140, Eur 213 or USD 272).

Email your order to [sales@dataresources.co.uk](mailto:sales@dataresources.co.uk) stating your name, organisation, postal and email addresses together with any applicable order number and Dataresources will send you a pro-forma invoice by return.

### See the Cheapest UK Petrol Prices for Free

<http://www.petrolprices.com/>

This site is maintained by Fubra who are the people behind OurProperty.co.uk. To find the lowest petrol price in your area you just type in a town or postcode. By default it looks for unleaded prices within 5 miles of your area. You can change the fuel type to Super Unleaded, LPG, LRP, or Premium Diesel and the distance to 2 miles (inner metropolitan areas only), 10, 15 or 20 miles. As well as listing the 5 cheapest stations and the price, you can see their location on a map from Google Local.

The data covers over 10,000 stations and there are about 8000 daily updates. Data is provided by Catalist in association with Arval and collected from fuel card transactions that are processed at petrol stations across the country each day.

You can search 20 unique areas or postcodes per week and are allowed to search for each unique postcode as many times as you like. It is a free service but you do have to register to view the detailed information.

### Inderscience Journals Catalogue

The 2006 Inderscience Journals Catalogue is now available at:

<http://www.inderscience.com/catalogue>. The Catalogue gives details of the 170 journals published in: Management and Business Administration; Engineering, Computing/ICT and Technology; Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development; Healthcare, Sport and Leisure. Inderscience offers a range of subscription plans and packages, plus pay-per-view. Content (approximately 8000 articles) can be searched free of charge.

Inderscience have also started up a free quarterly newsletter called HIGHLIGHTS. This is available at:

<http://www.inderscience.com/highlights> and you can subscribe at: <http://www.inderscience.com/www/news2005/go.html>. HIGHLIGHTS features news, free trials, free articles, details of RSS, etc.

## Bureau van Dijk adds Moreover to Mint

Bureau van Dijk Electronic Publishing (BvDEP) has added a new Web Watch facility that generates additional "real time" news searches on its business intelligence product, MINT UK.

The Web Watch service is powered by Moreover, a provider of aggregated online current awareness and blog content, gathered from over 12,000 news sources. The Web Watch service is available at no additional cost to users. Set up in conjunction with MINT UK's alert systems, users can monitor their customers, prospects, sectors and subject areas for real-time awareness. MINT UK was launched in September 2004 and will soon be joined by MINT GLOBAL, which will deliver BvDEP's ORBIS database to end users in a similar way.

More information on MINT UK can be found at <http://www.mintforbusiness.com/>

## Market Research Portal

<http://www.marketresearchworld.net/>

This site gives free access to various industry information including research findings, and to articles written by industry professionals on topics such as market research in general, qualitative research, quantitative research, survey methods and statistics. In addition there is career and job related information, book lists and up-to-date news. A useful starting point for anyone wanting to understand market research jargon and methods.

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## Searching Questions

### Searching for rankings

#### Question:

I am often asked to find rankings of various sorts, for example top 10 banks, top 20 pharmaceutical products. The problem is that the quickest way to get the best results is to specify the number as part of the search but the list might be top 10, 20, 100 etc. I could 'OR' the numbers in the strategy but Sod's law says that my perfect list might be top 12 or 15! Is there an easy way of dealing with this?

<http://www.rba.co.uk/tftr/archives/2005/nov2005.shtml>

#### Answer:

Try Google's numeric range search. Type in your main search terms, and then your first number followed by two full stops (periods) followed by your second number. For example: top 10..200 banks. Google will look for numbers between and including 10 and 200 on the web page. This is also a useful way of locating forecasts for a range of years, for example TV advertising spend forecast 2005..2012.

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## These things are sent to try us

### When all fails, plug it in

November 29th was the start of "Online", one of the major information events of the year in the UK. I was on the UKeIG stand (UK eInformation Group) and there was a point early on when it looked as though we were going to be offline for online. The first problem was that the computer we had hired did the Blue Screen of Death on us several times when we tried to boot it up. In fact putting a boot up it was what we felt like doing an hour later.

Once it decided it was going to behave we had to set up the Internet connection. Of course, all of us have customised our own systems so much and are using such weird and wonderful variations of operating systems, that it took us another half an hour to find the right settings panel. But still the wretched thing refused to connect. So we phoned support and were promised that an engineer would be along in a while.

By chance, we glanced down at the system unit. "Where's that cable supposed to go?" my colleague Christine Baker asked. A definite 'doh' moment as I realised that the network cable was not plugged in! Thankfully, the engineer had not arrived and we were able to phone and explain that we had "solved" the problem.

## Gizmo of the Month

### Folder Share

<http://www.foldershare.com/>

This month's gizmo was recommended to me by Chris Armstrong of Information Automation (<http://www.i-a-l.co.uk/>)

Folder Share enables you to synchronise your laptop with your desktop machine. You can try it for free with a limited number of folders; the full version is about USD 2.50 / month. You specify which folders and/or files you want to keep synchronised and every time both machines are online, they are kept in synch automatically. It also enables you to download a file from your home machine when you are away - assuming you left it switched on and there hasn't been a power cut!

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## Meetings and Workshops

**Workshop:** RSS, Blogs and Wikis

**Organiser:** UKeiG

**Presenter:** Karen Blakeman

**Venue:** Netskills Training Suite, University of Newcastle

**Date:** Wednesday, 22nd February 2006

**Course fee:** UKeiG members £150 + VAT (£176.25); others £180 + VAT (£211.50).

**URL:**

[http://www.ukeig.org.uk/training/2005\\_02\\_22\\_rss.html](http://www.ukeig.org.uk/training/2005_02_22_rss.html)

**Outline:** Whether you plan to use these new technologies purely as information sources, or intend using them as part of your information delivery strategy, this workshop will guide you through the jargon and demonstrate why you ought to be using these technologies. There will be practical sessions during which you can set up your own personal alerts service using RSS, start a blog, and contribute to a wiki. The techniques and approaches described in this workshop can be applied to all subject areas.

**Workshop:** Assessing the Quality of Information

**Organiser:** TFPL

**Presenter:** Karen Blakeman

**Venue:** TFPL, London

**Date:** Wednesday, 1st March 2006

**URL:** <http://www.tfpl.com/>

**Workshop:** Searching the Internet: Google and Beyond

**Organiser:** UKeiG

**Presenter:** Karen Blakeman

**Venue:** Main Library Training Room, University of Birmingham

**Date:** Tuesday, 21st March 2006

**Course fee:** UKeiG members £150 + VAT (£176.25); others £180 + VAT (£211.50).

**URL:**

[http://www.ukeig.org.uk/2005\\_03\\_21\\_search.html](http://www.ukeig.org.uk/2005_03_21_search.html)

**Outline:** Most of us head straight for Google when we want to search the Internet. But Google is not the only search engine and all too often we would be better off taking a completely different approach. With so many new tools available and so many new search features being launched every day, it can be difficult to know which one to use and when. Karen Blakeman will take you through the best of the search engine world and highlight how they can be used to significantly improve your results. By the end of the day participants will have a vital toolkit to help them search more effectively, including key search tools, comparisons, top tips and essential techniques.

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