Tales from the Terminal Room
December 2007, Issue No. 82

Editor: Karen Blakeman
Published by: RBA Information Services
ISSN 1467-338X

http://www.rba.co.uk/tfttr/

Tales from the Terminal Room (TFTTR) is an electronic newsletter that includes reviews and comparisons of information sources; useful tools for managing information; technical and access problems on the Net; and news of RBA's training courses and publications. Many of the items and articles will have already appeared on Karen Blakeman's Blog at http://www.rba.co.uk/wordpress/

Tales from the Terminal Room can be delivered via email as plain text or as a PDF with active links. You can join the distribution list by going to http://www.rba.co.uk/tfttr/ and filling in the form. You will be sent an email asking you to confirm that you want to be added to the list. TFTTR is also available as an RSS feed. The URL for the feed is http://www.rba.co.uk/rss/tfttr.xml

---

In this issue:

- Search Tools
    - AlltheWeb Livesearch disappears
    - Live link and linkdomain commands gone again
    - Zuula
    - FuzzFind Web Search
- UKeiG Top Search Tips
- Business Information Top Web Resources
- Online Information 2007 – Presentations
- INSOURCE 2008
- Information Resources
    - Chipwrapper – search UK newspapers
    - Wikinvest
- Gizmo of the Month
    - kwout

Search Tools

AlltheWeb Livesearch disappears

AlltheWeb Livesearch has been discontinued. Clicking on the link to Livesearch on the AlltheWeb home page (http://www.alltheweb.com/) or trying to go direct to http://livesearch.alltheweb.com/ redirects to Yahoo. Greg Notess (http://www.searchengineshowdown.com/blog/2007/12/livesearch_turned_off.shtml) suggests that Yahoo has abandoned support for it because 'similar search suggestions' are now part of the standard Yahoo search page.

Live link and linkdomain commands gone again

As Greg Notess (http://www.searchengineshowdown.com/blog/2007/12/live_links_lost_again.shtml) and others have already noted, Live.com's link and linkdomain commands are in a mess again. After they had been disabled in their original form they reappeared as +link: and +linkdomain: commands. I noticed acoule of weeks ago, though, that the +linkdomain was generating some very strange results. Much as I would like to believe that I am very popular I do not honestly believe that over 500,000 people/pages/sites link to my web site! Yahoo's result of 2895 seems more realistic. Now Live's commands have gone AWOL again.

Using Live's Advanced Search screen I can still use the links option, type in the URL of the page and the syntax that it comes back with is link:http://www.rba.co.uk/. But that only gives me 7 results and two of those are internal links on my own site. So it is back to using Yahoo for identifying incoming links. Live's 'linkfromdomain:' **is** still working.

Zuula

Zuula (http://www.zuula.com/) is another search engine along the lines of Intelways (http://www.intelways.com/) and Trovando (http://www.trovando.it/). You type in your search once and then run it through several search engines one by one. The search engines are grouped into Web, Images, Video, News, Blog and Jobs. It is not as wide ranging or as comprehensive as Intelways, for example it does not have a group for searching by file formats, but it does offer an Advanced Search screen that includes a domain search. The order of the search engines within each type of search can be customized by each user. Simply "drag-n-drop" the tabs for the different search engines until they are in the desired order. Another customization feature under Preferences I the option to increase the number of results displayed per page from 10 to up to 60 (now my default).You can also keep a list of your previous searches, but this is stored on the PC using cookies. If you are not using your own PC, or others have access it, you might want to disable this.

FuzzFind Web Search

Yet another gem discovered via Phil Bradley's blog (http://philbradley.typepad.com/phil_bradleys_weblog/2007/12/fuzzfind-web-se.html). FuzzFind Web Search (http://www.fuzzfind.com/search.html) is a meta search tool that combines Google, Yahoo and Live searches with results from social bookmarking site Del.icio.us. The results are amalgamated and deduplicated into a single list. So what? Meta search tools are 10 a penny. But I really like this one because of the way it shows me where each result has been found in each search tool by placing icons and numbers to the left of each entry in the results list. I don't know why that particular and very simple feature impresses me but it does. Search, and the presentation of results, is a very personal thing and what works for one person will not necessarily work for someone else. This one really works for me.

UKeiG Top Search Tips

UKeiG held yet another 'Google and Beyond' workshop on November 6th 2007, this time in London. As usual, the participants were asked to come up with a list of their Top Search Tips. Here it is!

1. Graball http://www.graball.com/
   Search two different search engines side by side and compare results.
2. Use 'site search' to search within a specific, individual site or to a particular type of site e.g. UK government sites. Especially useful for sites that have poor navigation or awful internal search engines. Use the site: command, for example site:gov.uk or use the Advanced Search screens of the search engines.
3. Use file format search to limit your search to one or more file formats, for example PDF, PPT, XLS. A good way of focusing your search: many government and industry/market reports are published as PDFs, statistics in spreadsheet format, and PowerPoints are a good way of tracking down experts on a subject. Use the Advanced Search screens or the filetype: command, for example filetype:ppt
4. Intelways http://www.intelways.com/. Type in your search once and then run it through individual search engines one by one. The search engines are grouped together by type, for example Image, News, Reference. A useful reminder of what else is out there other than Google and that perhaps you should be thinking of searching different types of information.
5. Numeric Range Search. Available only in Google and searches for numbers within a specified range. The syntax is 1st number..2nd number.
   For example:

   TV advertising forecasts 2008..2015

   or

   toblerone 1..5 kg

6. Alacrawiki Spotlights http://www.alacrawiki.com/. Extremely useful in providing reviews and commentary on industry specific web sites that have statistics, market research and news. Invaluable if you need to get up to speed on key resources in a sector or industry.
7. Panoramio. http://www.panoramio.com/. Now owned by Google. A geolocation-oriented photo sharing service with uploaded photos presented as a mashup with Google Earth.
8. Wayback Machine - http://www.archive.org/. For tracking down copies of pages or documents that have disappeared from the original web site. Type in the address of the

web site or the full URL of the document, if you know it. Note: this is not guaranteed but worth a try for older documents that are unlikely to be in the search engine caches.

9. Google Book Search - http://books.google.com/. Useful for searching within books that Google has been allowed to scan, and in particular older text books.

10. Use anything but Google! For example - in alphabetical order - Ask.com, Exalead.com, Live.com, Yahoo.com. For a day, try out other search tools to see if you can survive without Google. You may go back to Google as your first port of call but at least you will have discovered the strengths and key features of the alternatives.

11. For current news try Google News (http://news.google.co.com/) and its alert service (it's free!). And don't forget blogs, for example Google Blogsearch (http://www.google.com/blogsearch/), Ask- Blogs (http://www.ask.co.uk/), Blogpulse http://www.blogpulse.com/), Technorati (http://www.technorati.com/).

12. Blogpulse (http://www.blogpulse.com/) trends. Click on the graph icon on the results page to see how often your search terms have been mentioned in blog postings over time. Used by many of us who monitor competitor or industry intelligence to see what are hot topics and when. Many of the 'peaks' will tie in with press announcements: it is those that don't that are really interesting. Click on the peaks in the graph to see the postings..

Business Information Top Web Resources

Another workshop - another top resources listing.This time it was Business Information Key Web Resources organised by TFPL and held on 31st October 2007. The list, which is compiled by participants at the end of the workshop, is usually limited to 10 but this time they came up with 16! As well as specific sources, they also came up with search techniques that they felt would help them target information more effectively.

1. **Site Search.** Use the Advanced Search screens of search engines to limit your search to an individual site or use the site: command. Useful for tracking down information on large sites with poor navigation or internal search.

2. **File format search**. As in number 1 above, use the Advanced Search to limit your search to a particular file format. For example PDF for market, industry, government reports; PPT or PDF for conference presentations; XLS for data and statistics.

3. **Think local**. If you are researching a market or companies based in a particular country or region, look at the news sources, company registers, databases, and versions of search engines for that country. To change your country version of Google, click on the Language Tools options on the Google home page and go to the list of flags towards the bottom of the page.

4. **Kompass**. http://www.kompass.com/. Well known company, product and service directory with world-wide coverage and detailed product codes. You can search free of charge but have to pay to view most of the information. You can opt for a subscription or the pay as you go option.

5. **EXPO 21XX** - Industry, Automation, Aviation, Yachting, Fashion and Textile Online Fair. http://www.expo21xx.com/ A directory that mimics a trade exhibition in its design. Each "fair" is subdivided into halls, and each company in the hall has a "stand" with a brief description and a flag showing the country in which it is based.

6. **Blogpulse**. http://www.blogpulse.com/ Useful blog search tool with a graph option (Trends) that shows how often your search terms are mentioned in blogs.

7. **Abyznewslinks** http://www.abyznewslinks.com/ Lists newspapers and other news sources by country and by region within each country. There is a language code next to each newspaper and separate links to alternative language versions if they are available.

8. **Del.icio.us** http://del.icio.us/ and other social bookmarking services. Good way to collaborate and share your favourite resources with others, both inside and outside your organisation.

9. **Official Statistics on the Web** http://www.library.auckland.ac.nz/subjects/stats/offstats/ Starting point for statistical sources by country, topic or subject. This service includes sources offering free and easily accessible social, economic and general data from official

or similar "quotable" sources, especially those that provide both current data and time series.

10. **BvD Taste of Mint Free Directory** http://www.bvdep.com/ Free directory giving basic information on companies covered by the Bureau van Dijk collection of priced services. Search by name, country or activity, and size. Information provided free of charge includes company name, town, country, activity and size.

11. **Eco5** http://www.eco5.com/. Click on the **Research** tab. This service is aimed at researchers in the areas of finance and economics world-wide. Resources include links to national institutions such as central banks, stock exchanges and government bodies, and to national and international institutions.

12. **Try a different search tool**. Try something other than Google: another search engine e.g. Live, Yahoo, Ask, Exalead; an evaluated listing e.g. Alacrawiki (http://www.alacrawiki.com/), Intute (http://www.intute.ac.uk); a listing of sites by type of information e.g. news (see number 7), statistics (see number 9).

13. **Repeat your search terms** one or more times to change the way results are sorted.

14. **Allwhois**. http://allwhois.com/. Domain name registry that can help you track down who owns or is behind a web site.

15. **Wayback Machine**. http://www.archive.org/. Use the wayback machine to track down 'lost' pages, documents or sites. Also useful for seeing how companies have marketed themselves on the web in the past.

16. **Nationmaster**. http://www.nationmaster.com/. Repackages information from many different sources and enables you to compare data in a variety of ways, for example countries, a region, or an economic group such as OPEC and then a category and statistic for that category. Click on Advanced View to see all of the search options. The information is not always the most up to date, but the source is always given so you can then search the original site for the most recent date

Online Information 2007

The presentations I gave at Online 2007 as part of the free exhibition seminar programme are now available as follows:

Tricks and Tips for Better Web Search

PowerPoint (http://www.rba.co.uk/presentations/online2007/TipsnTricks.ppt) and on Slideshare (http://www.slideshare.net/KarenBlakeman/tricks-and-tips-for-better-web-search-193903).

Searching without Google

 PowerPoint (http://www.rba.co.uk/presentations/online2007/SearchwithoutGoogle.ppt) and on Slideshare (http://www.slideshare.net/KarenBlakeman/searching-without-google-192110)

INSOURCE 2008

Conference on Professional Electronic Information Resources for Business, Marketing, Competitive Intelligence and Knowledge Management

Diplomat Hotel, February 5-6th 2008, Prague, Czech Republic

The first INSOURCE 2008 conference will be focused on professional information resources and their use in business, knowledge management, marketing, market research, competitive intelligence etc. Unlike many other events the INSOURCE will put stress on the information contents available via the Internet rather than information technologies. The target group for INSOURCE are mainly risk managers, marketing specialists, business researchers, financial officers, market analysts, strategic managers, knowledge management professionals, content managers and information specialists.

Speakers include Marydee Ojala (USA), Karen Blakeman (Great Britain), Vito Giannella (Belgium), Rainer Michaeli (Germany) and Lenka Mynářová (Czech Republic). Full details of the programme and how to register can be found at http://www.insource.cz/en/

Information Resources

Chipwrapper - Search UK newspapers

Chipwrapper (http://www.chipwrapper.co.uk/) is a Custom Google Search Engine that searches across the UK's major national newspapers: The Daily Express, Daily Mail, Daily Mirror, Financial Times, The Guardian, The Independent, The Sun, The People, News of the World, The Scotsman, Daily Star, The Telegraph and The Times. It also searches the BBC News web site, ITN and Sky. It carries out a Google web search of these sources, not a Google News search, so although you cannot sort the results by date you do pull up older, archival material that is not included in the standard 30 days of Google News. As many of the newspapers give the date as part of the text of the stories you can often limit your search to a year and sometimes a specific month by simply including the month and year in your search. Also available are RSS feeds for the top headlines, general sport, rugby and football headlines, and a Chipwrapper browser search plugin is available for IE7 and Firefox 2.

I ran one of my standard test searches on "Richard Budge", the UK coal magnate, and included 2007 in the search strategy to limit the stories to the current year. It worked impressively well but the FT was conspicuous by its absence, and I knew that there had been at least two articles about him in the FT this year. I went direct to the FT site, ran a similar search and found three articles. I then did a Google Web search using my Chipwrapper strategy but added site:ft.com. Again three results. Back to Chipwrapper with some different searches, and it did pick up FT articles. Obviously there is something about my Richard Budge search that it does not like.

Comparison with Google News Archive

Of course Google News is probably the service that most people will use as the benchmark and this is where it becomes really interesting. Back to dear old Richard and a search in the Google News Archive. I went into the Advanced Search screen, entered the phrase Richard Budge, typed in 2007 for the year and selected Show Timeline. Unlike the Advanced Search in current Google News you cannot specify a country of origin for the source so I had to resign myself to the possibility of wading through a substantial number of articles. Google Archive News does, though, give you an option to home in on a specific month via the Timeline (see below).

Google Archive News Results with Timeline

It came up with 94 results, about twenty of which claimed to be from the Financial Times and dated Jan 1 2007. I clicked on a few of the links and they took me to "Access My Library" (http://www.accessmylibrary.com) where I was repeatedly told that the articles had been deleted. I gave up after eight or nine, but I think we can assume that the FT has decided not to play ball. Three links with $$ signs next to them took me to Press Display (http://www.pressdisplay.com/) but I was told that the items had been "removed from the back issues access". A minority of the links took me direct to the news source, for example The Telegraph, BBC, Doncaster Today. The articles from the Guardian, Independent and Times that had been picked up by Chipwrapper were nowhere to be seen. I can only think that like the FT they have declined Google's offer to be part of the Archive.

Conclusion

I have to confess that this is the first time I have analysed the results from Google News Archive in any depth. I was not surprised to find the FT absent but amazed that so many of the other UK daily papers were not there. Even worse, Google still has in its index links to stories that were carried by third party services, such as Access My Library and Press Display, but which have now been removed. The Timeline is still a good way of looking at major stories relating to a company or person but be aware that some of the key resources are not included.

Despite the glitch with the FT in my test search, and that there is no date sort option, Chipwrapper is a great tool for searching new and archival stories appearing in the leading UK papers. I recommend that you give it a go next time you need to research a UK story.

Note on the name Chipwrapper for non UK readers

A favourite take-away food in the UK is deep fried, battered fish with chips - aka fries. (Mushy peas are optional but an essential component as far as I am concerned). Today, EU and UK regulations dictate that these have to be placed in grease proof paper (in practice not grease proof at all) and then wrapped in large plain sheets of paper. I recall that in my dim and distant youth newspaper was regarded as **the** superior wrapping material. Some connoisseurs claimed that the ink, which dissolved in the presence of the salt and vinegar, gave extra flavour.

Wikinvest

Founded by Michael Sha and Parker Conrad, Wikinvest (http://www.wikinvest.com/) covers US stocks with a market capitalization of at least USD 100 million. And, yes, it is a wiki where anyone can edit and comment so bear that in mind when using this site. Having issued the health warning, I must add that I have not yet found any vandalism or spamming on the main pages although there have been the expected crop of idiots in the discussion areas. That could be down to the vigilant monitoring by the serious contributors, or that the site is not yet well known, or both. It is not comprehensive in coverage. At the time of writing this, there were 349 companies on Wikinvest and not all had articles associated with them, but the number is increasing and they do all have stock charts. On the Companies page you can browse by industry sector or search by company name. As you type in the name a drop down list appears with the all the options. Once you have found your company, you should see four tabs: Neutral, Bulls, Bears and WikiChart.

Wikinvest Company Information

'Neutral' is where you will find the main article about the company, which covers topics such as history, products, market trends, competition. The main 'contributors' to the article are listed and you can click on individuals for their profiles, although not all have provided detailed information about themselves. I was initially confused by the uniformity and limited number of job titles but then realised that these are assigned by Wikinvest depending on the number of contributions you have made to the articles. The bottom rung is Analyst and the top is Senior Director. I am still a mere analyst as I have yet to make any edits or comments! This page also includes a thumbnail of the WikiChart for the company and the top three Bulls and Bears. As with most wikis, you can view the History of the page and see who has edited what and when.

The WikiCharts use quotes provided by Thomson Financial and are delayed at least 15 minutes for NASDAQ, and 20 minutes for NYSE and AMEX. They go back to 1981 and you can use the slider on the top time line to focus in on a a particular time period. The main chart can be annotated so that key events are superimposed on the graph, making it easy to see how an event or announcement may have affected the share price. An option to overlay a graph for the stock market index as a whole would be useful here so that one can assess whether any major shift in the share price is due to company events or the to changes in the markets in general.

WikiChart
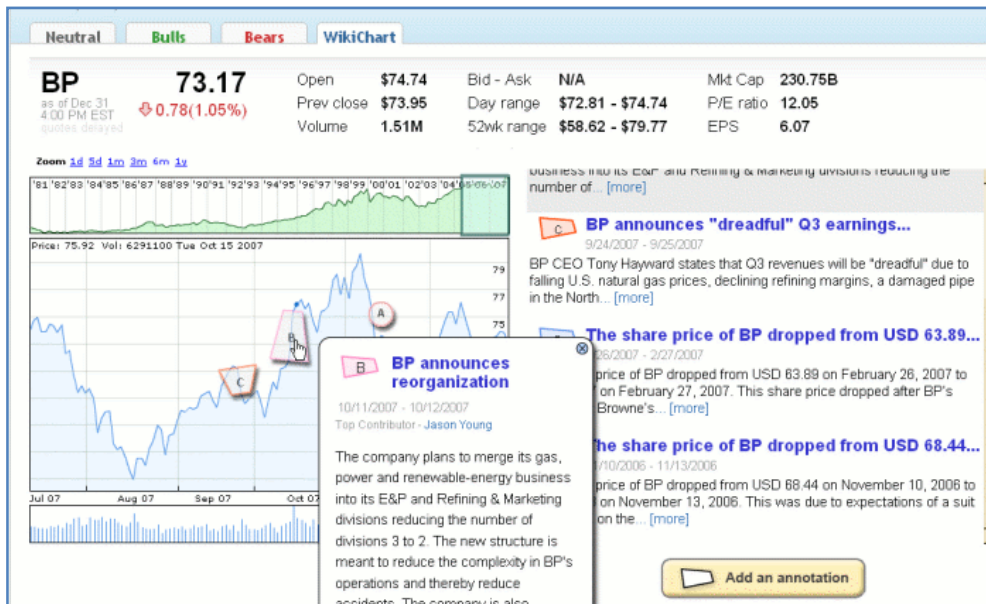
The concepts section looks at the main trends and ideas within a sector and also get you up to speed with the main issues affecting an industry. For example, under energy there are articles on biofuels, clean coal, carbon trading and peak oil.

At a personal level you can edit existing articles or write new ones, bookmark companies in which you are interested or 'Track changes' to an article, for which you need to set up an account (free of charge) and to be logged in. There is an email alerts option for the 'Track changes' but no RSS feeds.

Conclusion

I must confess that because of its 'wiki nature' I was somewhat hesitant about using this as a serious source of information for US listed companies. So far, I have not spotted any vandalism. Any arguments I may have with an opinion on a stock or market are exactly the same as those I would have with articles that appear in the mainstream press such as the FT or WSJ. For a quick overview of a major company listed in the US I would still go to Yahoo Finance first, and then to the SEC for the official filings. For opinions and a more detailed, and free (!) history, and the '1981 - to now' annotated share price graph I will definitely use Wikinvest.

Gizmo of the Month

kwout

http://www.kwout.com/

Found via Jane's e-Learning Pick of the Day (http://janeknight.typepad.com/pick/)

kwout enables you to quote a part of a web page as an image with an image map. To use it, all you need is to add the kwout bookmarklet to your browser. Click the bookmarklet on a web page you wish to quote, and the screenshot of the entire web page will pop up. The size of the screen shot can be selected from small, medium or large. By dragging a mouse on the screenshot, you can select the area you wish to quote, and click the "Cut Out" button. The area you selected will be cut out as an image with an image map (hyperlinks). Finally, the embed code, which is used to post the image (with the image map) to your web site, is displayed. There are also options for posting it directly to Flickr or Tumblr.

Contact Information

Karen Blakeman, RBA Information Services
UK Tel: 0118 947 2256
Int. Tel: +44 118 947 2256

UK Fax: 020 8020 0253
Int. Fax: +44 20 8020 0253

Address: 88 Star Road, Caversham, Berks RG4 5BE, UK

Archives

TFTTR archives: http://www.rba.co.uk/tfttr/archives/

Subscribe and Unsubscribe

To subscribe to the newsletter fill in the online registration form at http://www.rba.co.uk/tfttr/

To unsubscribe, use the registration form at http://www.rba.co.uk/tfttr/ and check the unsubscribe radio button.

If you wish to change your subscription from the PDF to the Plain Text version, send an email to tfttr@rba.co.uk with "Plain Text Version Please" in the subject line.

Privacy Statement

Subscribers' details are used only to enable distribution of the newsletter **Tales from the Terminal Room**. The subscriber list is not used for any other purpose, nor will it be disclosed by RBA Information Services or made available in any form to any other individual, organization or company.