



# Tales from the Terminal Room

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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/>

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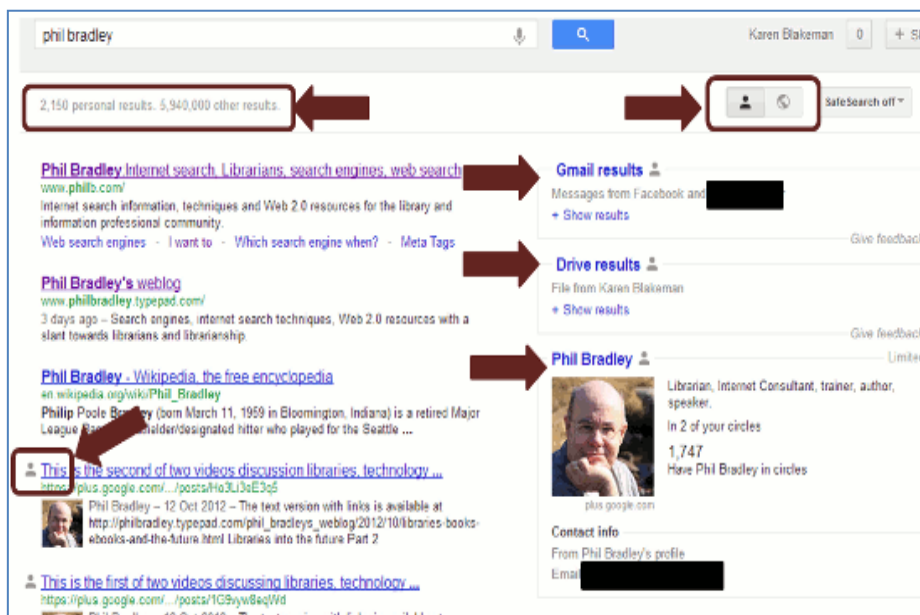
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## Search tools

### Google search to get more personal

Google search is about to get even more personal – possibly. If you are signed in to your Google account and search Google.com, Google includes and highlights content from people in your networks. This has been available for some time but a couple of months ago Google launched a field trial that added your Gmail to the search mix, and a few days ago they added documents from Drive. You have to request to be added to the field trial and it only works on Google.com. If you are interested in trying it out you can sign up at <https://www.google.com/experimental/gmailfieldtrial>.

Above your results Google.com tells you how many personal and other results have been found. A head and shoulders icon next to a result indicates that it is from someone in one of your networks. Click on the number of personal results to see just those. Across to the right there are a head and shoulders and world icons. If you want to hide the personal results click on the world icon. If you have searched on a person or an organisation their Google+ profile, if they have one, is shown to the right of the screen. Above this, any messages or documents in your Gmail and Drive that match your search are displayed.



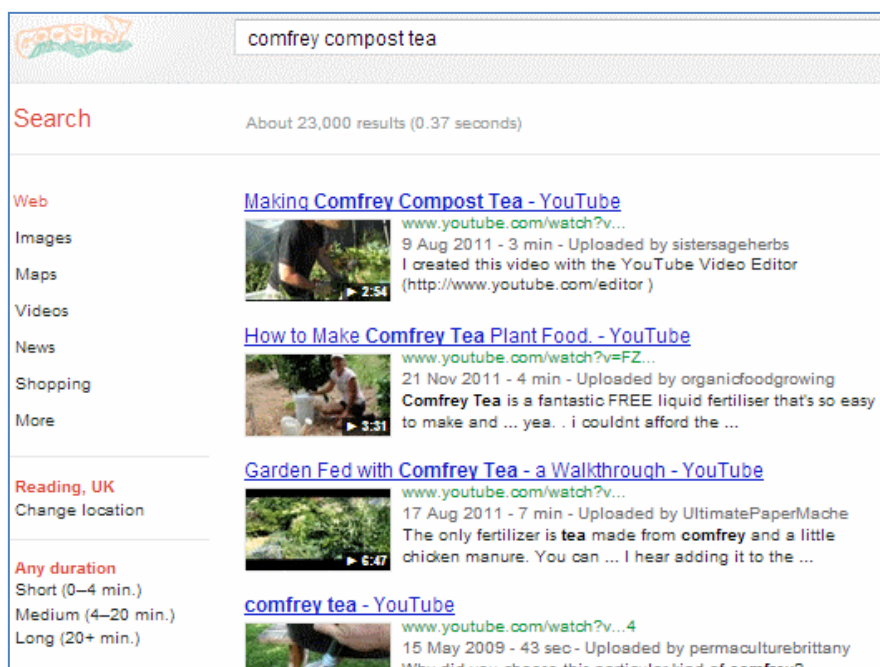
I have mixed feelings about this. At first I was very much against the integration of personal posts and data with general search. If I want to search Google+ I'll do it within Google+, and similarly I go into Gmail if I want to search my email. However, I would not routinely do that for research projects and during this field trial I have sometimes found useful information in my Google+ circles, giving me a very different view of the topic/person/organisation I am researching. The question then is can I pass this on to a client or include it in a report? The answer is not straightforward. If the Google+ posting has been made public and not restricted to a circle then yes. Otherwise I would have to obtain the person's permission to use it or pass it on. With Gmail I would have to obtain permission from all the parties concerned and I would also need to check the ownership of any documents identified within my Drive.

I can clearly see and understand the difference between public and private search results as I am sure all information professionals and many researchers can, but I do wonder about other Google users. "It's come up in a Google search so I'm free to use it as I want". It could be argued that you shouldn't put anything up on Google+ unless you don't mind it going public, even if you have restricted it to a small circle of contacts but email should remain private and be kept out of general search results. I can see legal actions looming!

This is a limited field trial, though, so not everyone who uses Google.com is seeing the Gmail and Drive results yet. If you do take part in the trial and have any concerns about how it works and potential privacy issues, there are feedback links next to the Gmail and Drive results. Use them!

## Oi, Google! NO!!

I've been seeing what looks like a new annoying Google search "feature" for a few weeks. I have been trying to ignore it in the hope that it would go away but it hasn't. The problem is that Google has started giving me long lists of YouTube videos for some of my queries, even though I am in web search. For example a search on comfrey compost tea came up with about a dozen videos before giving me web pages with text describing the benefits of comfrey compost, which was what I wanted. In addition, in the menus on the left hand side of the screen Google offered me options to refine my video search by duration. But, Dear Google, I did NOT want videos at all!



It did not matter whether or not I was signed in to my Google account. The videos were still given priority. I also tried Verbatim, but to no avail. Verbatim makes sure that all your terms are in the pages/documents exactly as you have typed them in but that still gives Google plenty of leeway in presenting those results. Google still bombarded me with videos although some were different from my original search.

I wondered if this was just an issue with Chrome so I switched to Firefox. The list of videos disappeared and was replaced by just one entry for YouTube at the top.

comfrey compost tea

About 23,000 results (0.23 seconds)

**Making Comfrey Compost Tea - YouTube**  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=MLj3XKFbXWo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MLj3XKFbXWo)  
 9 Aug 2011 - 3 min - Uploaded by sistersageherbs  
 I created this video with the YouTube Video Editor  
 (<http://www.youtube.com/editor>)



More videos for **comfrey compost tea** »

**Comfrey**  
[www.allotment.org.uk](http://www.allotment.org.uk) › Grow Your Own  
 Making **Comfrey** Liquid **Compost** or **Comfrey Tea**. **Comfrey** can be made into a wonderful liquid feed – it is quite simple. Take a barrel or tub, add **comfrey** leaves, ...

**Comfrey and Compost Tea Maker - Harrod Horticultural (UK)**  
[www.harrodhorticultural.com/compost-tea-maker-pid7849.html](http://www.harrodhorticultural.com/compost-tea-maker-pid7849.html)  
 The **Comfrey** and **Compost Tea** Maker will help revive plants with a cuppa; we all know that compost is terrific stuff but what about the often.

**Compost Tea - Make your own compost tea**  
[heartgarden.com.au/composttea.asp](http://heartgarden.com.au/composttea.asp)

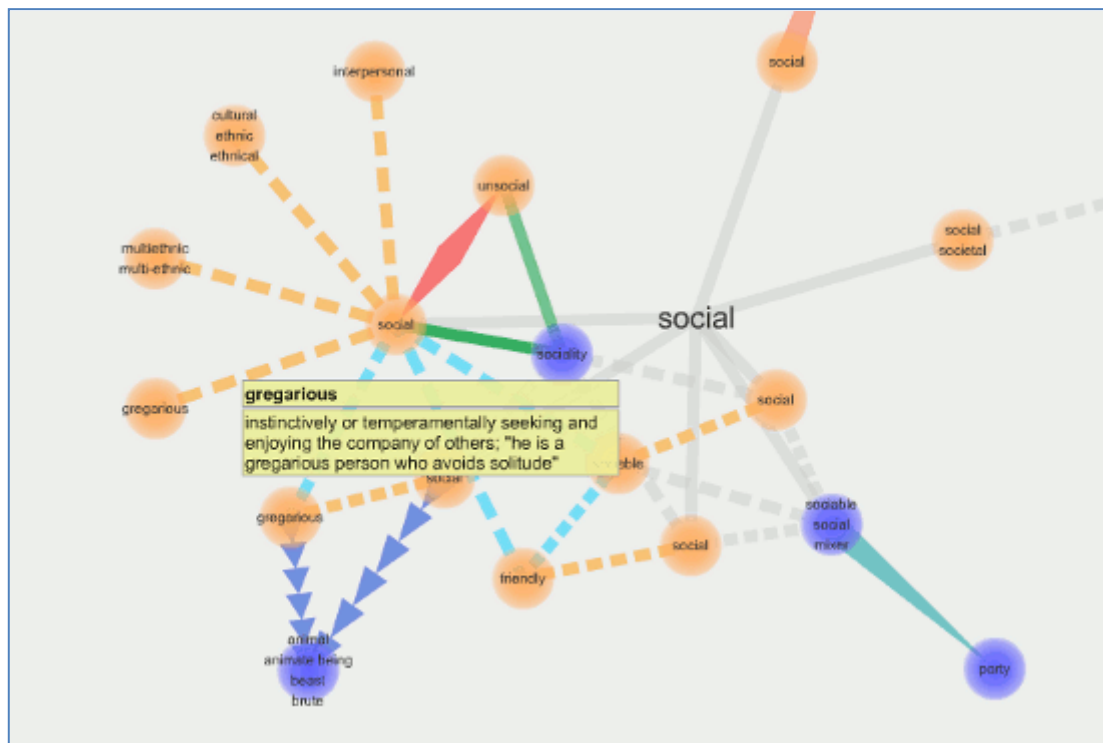
This gave me a clue as to what might be going on. I use Chrome for most of my “personalised” search. I generally stay logged in to my account, have enabled web search history and do not clear out the search cookies. In contrast I use Firefox for “de-personalised” search. I stay logged out of Google and social networks, and cookies and history are cleared after each session. I usually watch permaculture and gardening videos in Chrome, which probably explains why YouTube was taking pride of place in many of my search results. To test the theory I paused and deleted my web search history, and cleared cookies and browsing data. I then signed out of Google, cleared cookies again and re-ran the search. The blasted videos were still there.

What if I ran the search in a Chrome incognito window? The results were identical to those when using Firefox. Back to a normal Chrome window and the videos returned. I then checked that my web history was off and deleted. It wasn't and it steadfastly refused to go away. Then the penny dropped. All my Chrome data – bookmarks, history etc – are synced to my Google account so no matter how often I try and delete the stuff locally it will all come back down again from my account. I disconnected my Google account under Chrome's settings and, “Hey presto”, no more videos. I reconnected and they were back. It appears that if you are using Chrome and have synced it with your Google account you will get personalised results, even if you are signed out of your account.

So, if you are a Chrome user you may think that you have switched off personalisation by logging out of your account but that may not be the case. If you are conducting serious research it is always worth running your searches in an Incognito window, using a different browser or a completely different search engine such as DuckDuckGo (<http://duckduckgo.com/>).

## Visuwords online graphical dictionary

Visuwords (<http://www.visuwords.com/>) is an online graphical dictionary based on Princeton University's WordNet (<http://wordnet.princeton.edu/>). Type in a word and it displays definitions, related terms, synonyms and antonyms as a diagram.



The colours show whether the words are nouns, verbs, adjectives or adverbs and the format of the lines joining them represent the type of link between words. A broken blue line, for example, represents "also see". Move the cursor over a word to see a definition and double click on a node to expand it. This is a great tool if you are stuck for an alternative word and prefer a visual rather than textual approach to this type of search. It was suggested by one of my European contacts who was looking for a tool to help a colleague draft documents in English.

## Twitter Notes

The following are some of my recent tweets and retweets. They are selected because they contain links to resources or announcements that may be of general interest. I have unshortened the shortened URLs

### 2nd October

"How to View Full Profiles of Your 3rd Degree LinkedIn Network

<http://www.booleanblackbelt.com/2012/10/how-to-view-full-profiles-of-your-3rd-degree-linkedin-network/>

### 3rd October

Really? Only 4,700 surveyed. And read the comments: "33 % Of Google Users Will Use Bing More After 'Bing It On'" <http://searchengineland.com/bing-33-percent-of-google-users-will-use-bing-more-after-bing-it-on-challenge-135158>

### 5th October

Google's 65 changes for August and September - Inside Search

<http://insidesearch.blogspot.co.uk/2012/10/search-quality-highlights-65-changes.html>

## 16th October

RT @stephendale: Google 'to be told by EU to unravel privacy policy'  
<http://www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2012/oct/15/google-privacy-policy>

RT @UKSourcers: Big changes on the way for your LinkedIn profile. Get a preview here  
<http://www.linkedin.com/profile/sample> via @TheSourceress

Why Natural Gas isn't Likely to be the World's Energy Savior | Our Finite World  
<http://ourfiniteworld.com/2012/10/17/why-natural-gas-isnt-likely-to-be-the-worlds-energy-savior/>

## 21st October

RT @Charonqc: The UK Tour is almost ready to begin - with the assistance of 'Roving Reporters'  
<http://charonqc.wordpress.com>

## 23rd October

If you haven't seen it already "There are no "regular results" on Google anymore" Vimeo video from @duckduckgo <https://vimeo.com/51181384>

## 25<sup>th</sup> October

7 Most Incredible Abandoned Power Plants on Earth <http://www.environmentalgraffiti.com/news-abandoned-power-stations>

£1bn-a-year "black hole" in university funding revealed - Education News - Education - The Independent <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/labour-slam-chaos-and-confusion-in-governments-higher-education-policy-following-report-stating-there-was-a-1-billion-a-year-black-hole-at-its-heart-8225465.html>

## 28<sup>th</sup> October

Very interesting comparison and analysis MT @Wowter #ili2012 by @MsPhelps and @Sieverts analysis of Scopus WoS & Google Scholar results <http://www.slideshare.net/bmkramer/beyond-coverage-ili2012>

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