



## Tales from the Terminal Room March 2014, Issue No. 117

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Published by: RBA Information Services

ISSN 1467-338X

<http://www.rba.co.uk/tftr/index.shtml>

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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/>

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/tftr/index.shtml> 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/tftr.xml>

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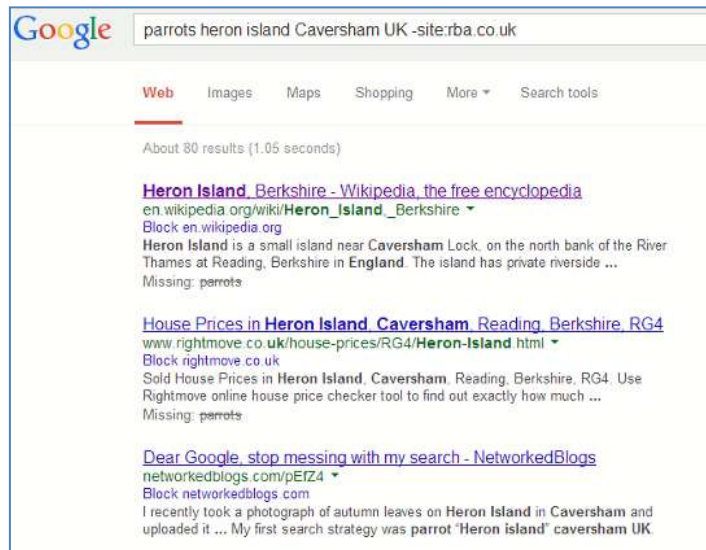
### Search Tools

#### Google shows missing search terms

Some months ago I noticed that Google was displaying the terms it had dropped from my search as 'Missing'. Google started routinely ignoring selected search terms towards the end of 2011 (see <http://www.rba.co.uk/wordpress/2011/11/08/dear-google-stop-messing-with-my-search/>). Google's response to the outcry from searchers was to introduce the Verbatim search option. However, there was no way one could decide whether or not one needed to use Verbatim other than viewing an entire page to see if all of the terms were present.

Fast forward to December 2013, and some people started seeing results pages that showed missing keywords as strikethroughs. I saw them for a few days and then, just as I was preparing a blog posting on the feature, they disappeared! I assumed that they were one of Google's live experiments never to be seen again but it seems they are back. Two people contacted me to say that they are seeing strikethroughs on missing terms. I ran my test searches again and, yes, I'm seeing them as well.

I ran the original search that prompted my November 2011 article (parrots heron island Caversham UK) and included -site:rba.co.uk in the strategy to exclude my original blog postings. Sure enough, the first two results were missing parrots and had “Missing ~~parrots~~” underneath their entries in the list.

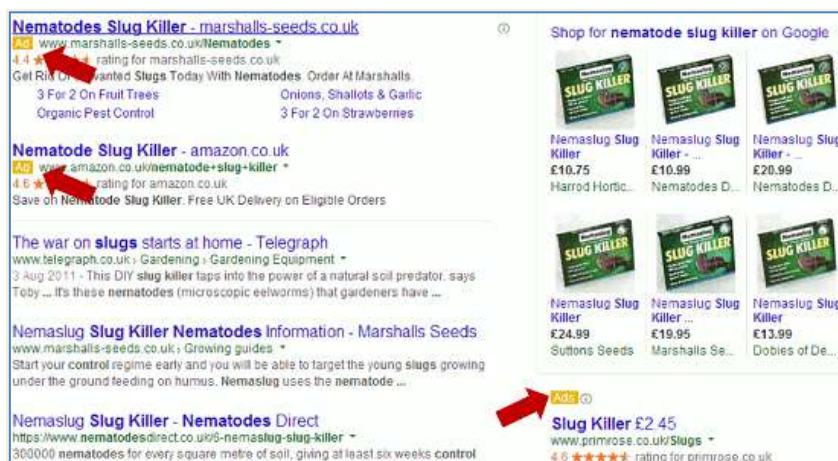


Remember, though, that Google automatically looks for variations on your search terms. Your original keyword may not be present in the results but a synonym may, for example birds instead of parrots. I did find one entry in the top 10 results that seemed out of place. It was an article in the local newspaper; there was no ‘Missing...’ underneath the result and I could not find synonyms of parrots anywhere in the story. The closest was the surname of a person mentioned in the article – Parry – and I can only assume that this was Google truncating my ‘parrots’ keyword and looking for variations. But Parry was not highlighted in the entry in the results list as synonyms are. I shall look at the article in more detail to check that I have not missed a lurking parakeet or cockatoo!

I need to carry out more test searches to see how reliable this new feature is but, nevertheless, it is a welcome and useful addition to Google. If your top 10 results are showing strikethroughs then you know you have to either prefix the missing term with ‘intext:’ or use Verbatim for the whole search.

## Google makes ads more obvious

This is a feature which I have been seeing on and off for a few months and it now seems to be part of the new layout that Google is rolling out to all users. It’s very simple: advertisements that appear at the top of your results and in the panel to the right are marked with a little yellow box with ‘Ad’ written inside.



Over the years it has become harder to identify ads at the top of results as the pale pastel backgrounds to them became more subtle. It has been suggested that the more obvious marker is a consequence of discussions between Google and various regulatory authorities. Whatever the reason it is good news when it comes to assessing and evaluating search results.

## Is Bing dropping search terms?

Google has been automatically dropping terms from searches that give few or no results for some time. It now looks as though Bing may be doing the same. Unfortunately I cannot give the details of the search that brought this to light as it was confidential research. In general, though, what we were searching for were announcements or news articles about two companies involved in a particular project. We hadn't found anything in Google so we tried various alternative search engines including Bing (<http://www.bing.com/>). The results seemed quite promising until we started looking at the individual pages. None of them had all of our terms. It is possible that the missing terms appeared in links to the pages but the content of the documents suggested that this was unlikely, and there is no reliable free tool that shows you who is linking to a specific page. So it looks as though Bing is now dropping terms in the same way that Google does.

There are two ways to stop Bing doing this. The first is to use the Boolean AND operator between all of your terms. The second is to prefix the term that must be present in a document with 'inbody:', for example inbody:aardvark.

Did we find anything that answered our question? No, but sometimes I don't expect to and it is frustrating when the search engine thinks it knows best and unilaterally decides to rewrite the search strategy.

For a list of all of the Bing advanced search commands go to <http://msdn.microsoft.com/en-us/library/ff795620.aspx>

## Anything but Google – Top Tips

This collection of Top Tips is a combined list nominated by those who attended the autumn and spring UKeIG workshops on "Anything but Google". The participants came from all sectors and types of company, and included a couple of self employed researchers. The sessions covered both general search tools and specialist services, and the list is an interesting mix of strategies and specific sites. A big "Thank- you" to everyone who participated in the workshops.

### 1. Get to know the advanced search commands and options.

Google is not the only search tool that uses them and they can help focus your search, especially when using general search tools such as Bing.

### 2. If you are conducting serious research don't stop with the first reasonable looking results.

Information of dubious quality can infiltrate even the most well respected of specialist websites. Put on your "skeptical goggles" as one delegate said! There are plenty of alternative tools and resources out there so get some corroboration from additional sources before acting on the information you find.

### 3. Allocate time for your search.

If you are carrying out in-depth research don't leave it to the last minute. You will probably need to tweak your strategy and try different search tools to ensure that you are retrieving the best information. It can sometimes take longer than you anticipate.

### 4. Plan your strategy.

Think about the type of search you want to conduct and the type of information you are looking for. For example if you are carrying out a systematic review and want to use Boolean operators forget about Google; head for Bing instead. And if you need official statistics or company information go straight to specialist sites that provide that data.

### 5. Don't stick with what you regularly use.

Experiment with other resources, especially if you suspect your default search tool is not telling you the whole story.

### 6. Country versions of search tools.

Many search tools offer country versions that give priority to the country's local content, although that might be in the local language. This is a useful strategy when searching for industries, companies and people that are active in a particular country.

### 7. Learn when to try something else.

If a site's navigation or internal search engine seems to be returning rubbish don't struggle with it. Try another route to get to the information. Either try an alternative source of information or use the 'site:' command – available in Bing as well as Google – to search inside the site.

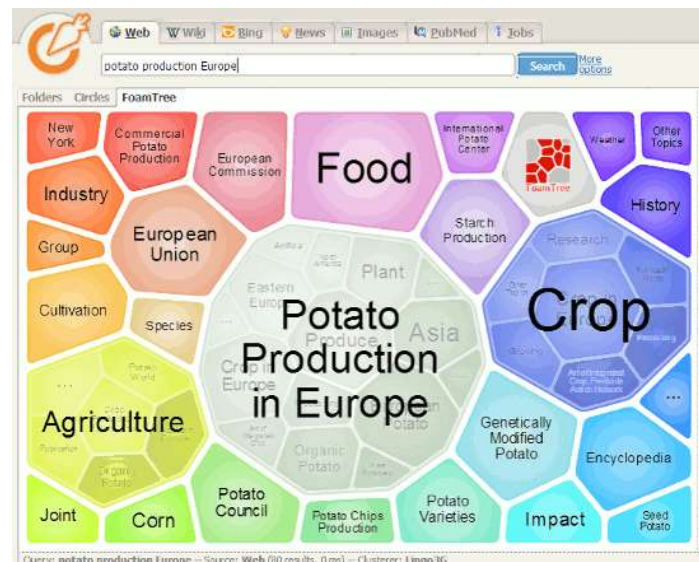
### 8. DuckDuckGo <http://www.duckduckgo.com/>

This was recommended for its clean, straightforward layout and the range of resources it offers on a topic. A school librarian commented that the pupils at her school loved it.

### 9. MillionShort <http://millionshort.com/>

If you are fed up with seeing the same results from Google again and again give MillionShort a try. MillionShort enables you to remove the most popular web sites from the results. Originally, as its name suggests, it removed the top 1 million but you can change the number that you want omitted. The page that best answers your question might not be well optimised for search engines or might cover a topic that is so "niche" that it never makes it into the top results in Google or Bing.

### 10. Carrot Search <http://carrotsearch.com/>



This was recommended for its clustering of results and also the visualisations of terms and concepts via the circles and "foam tree". There is a link to the live web demo on the left hand side of the home page.

### 11. Microsoft academic Search – charts <http://academic.research.microsoft.com/>

This is a direct competitor to Google Scholar. The site can be slow to load and it sometimes assigns authors to the wrong institution. Nevertheless, the visualisations such as the co-author and citation maps can be useful in identifying who else is working in a particular area of research. The visualisations can be accessed by clicking on the Citation Graph image to the left of the search results or an author profile.

### 12. Creative Commons and public domain images.

Use the Bing license option (US version only) to search for images with creative commons or public domain licenses, but do go to the original webpage and check that the license is indeed associated with the image you want to use. Alternatively use one of the following:

Flickr Creative Commons <http://www.flickr.com/creativecommons>  
Flickr The Commons <http://www.flickr.com/commons/>  
Wikimedia Commons <http://commons.wikimedia.org/>  
MorgueFile.com <http://www.morguefile.com/>  
Geograph <http://www.geograph.org.uk/>  
Nasa <http://www.nasa.gov/>

**13. Tineye Multicolr** <http://labs.tineye.com/multicolr/>

“Search 10 million Creative commons Flickr images by colour.” You can specify more than one colour and move the the dividing bar between two colours to increase/decrease their prominence within the image. Click through to the original Flickr image to double check the license.

**14. Company Check** <http://www.companycheck.co.uk/>

Company Check repackages Companies House data and provides 5 years of accounts, and graphs for some financials free of charge. It also lists the directors of a company. Click on a director's name and you can view other current and past directorships for that person. It provides more free information than Companies House but you have to register (free) to gain full access. Additional information such as credit risk, CCJs, credit reports, and many Companies House documents are priced or available as part of a subscription.

**15. Guardian Data Store** <http://www.guardian.co.uk/data/>

For datasets and visualisations relating to stories currently in the news. As well as the graphs and interactive maps the source of the data is always given and there are links to the original datasets that are used in the articles.

**16. Zanran** <http://zanran.com/>

This is a search tool for searching information contained in charts, graphs and tables of data and within formatted documents such as PDFs, Excel spreadsheets and images. Enter your search terms and optionally limit your search by date and/or format type. One delegate said “It has changed my life!”. (We think/hope she meant her working life.)

**17. Keep up to date.**

Keep up to date with what the search engines are up to, changes to key resources and new sites. Identify blogs and commentators that are relevant to your research interests and subject areas, and follow them using RSS or email alerts.

## Getty Images is NOT making all of its photos freely available

My Twitter feed and other social media were recently full of posts and updates saying that Getty Images is making all of its images freely available. It is not. Read the “Embedded Viewer” section of its Terms and Conditions at <http://www.gettyimages.co.uk/Corporate/Terms.aspx> for what you can and cannot do.

They are making a limited selection of images available for “*editorial purposes (meaning relating to events that are newsworthy or of public interest).*”

“*Embedded Getty Images Content may not be used: (a) for any commercial purpose (for example, in advertising, promotions or merchandising) or to suggest endorsement or sponsorship.*”

Getty also reserve the right “*to place advertisements in the Embedded Viewer or otherwise monetise its use without any compensation to you.*”

Ignore these T&Cs at your financial peril!

## Business information key resources

On one of my recent workshops I was asked if I used Google as my default search tool, especially when conducting business research. The short answer is “It depends”. The long answer is that it depends on the topic and type of information I am looking for. Yes, I do use Google a lot but if I need to make sure that I have covered as many sources as possible I also use Google alternatives such as Bing, Millionshort, Blekko etc. On the other hand and depending on the type of information I require I may ignore Google and its ilk altogether and go straight to one or more of the specialist websites and databases.

Here are just a few of the free and pay-per-view resources that I use.

### Information on industry sectors

My favourite collection of guides on industry sectors is the British Library Business Information and IP Centre’s industry guides (<http://www.bl.uk/bipc/dbandpubs/Industry%20guides/industry.html>). These highlight relevant industry directories, databases, publications and web sites and are excellent starting points if you are new to a sector

### Statistics

There are at least a dozen statistics sites that I use on a regular basis but if I’m unsure of where to look or want to make sure I haven’t missed anything I use OFFSTATS – Official Statistics on the Web at <http://www.offstats.auckland.ac.nz>. A great starting point for official statistical sources by country, region subject or a combination of categories. All of the content in the database is in the public domain and available through the Internet and has been quality assessed by staff at The University of Auckland Library.

### Official company information

If I want to confirm the existence of a company or obtain filings and accounts I usually go direct to the relevant official company registry. I have a list of the registries that can be searched online at <http://www.rba.co.uk/sources/registers.htm>. As many of my enquiries are for UK companies I am a frequent visitor to Companies House at <http://www.companieshouse.gov.uk/>. Some information is free but filings and accounts are priced. There are several companies that repackage Companies House data and sometimes make extra data or analysis free of charge for example Company Check at <http://www.companycheck.co.uk/>, which enables you to search by company or director’s name. Risk reports, information on CCJs, and some official filings are priced if you do not have a subscription to the full service.

### Share price information

For free share price information I use Yahoo Finance (<http://uk.finance.yahoo.com/>) and Google Finance (<https://www.google.co.uk/finance>). Both of these services provide charts and news on shares on the major stock markets. Google’s graphs are ‘annotated’ with labels that link to news articles listed to the right of the graph, so you can see whether or not a particular event or announcement has affected a share price. Both offer free, daily historical share prices in figures. As well viewing historical graphs for share prices you can download the data as a spreadsheet.

### News alerts

For news alerts I use a mixture of bookmarked searches, Google email and RSS alerts, and RSS feeds from a wide range of blogs and news sites. I find that Google alerts are erratic and unreliable but they do sometimes pick up something unique so I still include them in the mix. RSS feeds are my main source of current awareness and when a news feed is rather broad in coverage I use my RSS reader’s search function to identify the articles that are of interest to me. I use a desktop reader call RSSOwl (<http://www.rssowl.org/>) but Inoreader (<http://inoreader.com/>) is a web based service that offers similar features and options.

## Who is behind a site?

If I am to use any information from the web for business purposes I need to know who is behind the website. DomainTools <http://www.domaintools.com/> is one of many services that will tell who owns a domain name, unless they are hiding behind an agent or privacy protection service. There is also a Whois+ extension for Chrome (my default browser) that can be used to run a quick and easy check on the domain name of a displayed page.

## Workshop

If you are interested in finding out more about business information resources I am running a workshop for TFPL in London on June 6<sup>th</sup>. Details are on the TFPL website (<http://courses.tfpl.com/services/coursedescribe.cfm?id=TR945&did=2>).

## 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 un-shortened the shortened URLs.

### Feb 6th

AlisonMcNab @AlisonMcNab

The UK Government Looks to Double Dip to Pay For its Open Access Policy:

<http://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/2014/02/06/the-uk-government-looks-to-double-dip-to-pay-for-its-open-access-policy/> via @scholarlykitchn

### Feb 16th

SpireWeather @SpireWeather

Met Office graphic showing UK rainfall in January compared to 1981-2010 average. Easy to see how wet S. Eng. was... <http://twitpic.com/dvq5r5>

### Feb 17th

Paul Lewis @paullewismoney

NICE resists govt instruction to take account of person's economic value when making drug decisions <http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/health/news/article4007774.ece>

### Feb 25th

Nazlin Bhimani @NazlinBhimani

Publishers Springer & IEEE withdraw more than 120 gibberish papers: Nature News & Comment <http://www.nature.com/news/publishers-withdraw-more-than-120-gibberish-papers-1.14763>

Tom Roper @tomroper

Trials in PubMed to link to systematic reviews

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmedhealth/blog/2014/02/trials-in-PubMed/>

### Feb 27th

Anne Kail @Anne\_Kail

JSTOR. Good enough for Russell Group, good enough for your school! Try out the Secondary School Collection <http://www.jcsonlineresources.org/newsletters/february-2014-newsletter#jstor>

### Mar 9th

Paul Lewis @paullewisemoney

Self employment myths - low earnings, not in jobless figures, but in employment stats. Women particularly badly hit <http://www.theguardian.com/society/2014/mar/08/women-self-employed-gender-pay-gap-jobs>

### Mar 17th

Richard Poynder @RickyPo

An Epidemic of Journal Subscription Cancellations

<https://www.mysciencework.com/news/11109/an-epidemic-of-journal-subscription-cancellations> via @mysciencework

Karen Blakeman @karenblakeman

Paying twice or thrice? Open access publishing in a global system of scholarly knowledge production & consumption <http://blogs.lse.ac.uk/impactofsocialsciences/2014/01/30/paying-twice-or-paying-thrice-brienza/>

### Mar 20th

Karen Blakeman @karenblakeman

"New Study Diagnoses Why Google's Flu Trends Are Always Wrong"

<http://searchenginewatch.com/article/2335251/New-Study-Diagnoses-Why-Google-Flu-Trends-Are-Always-Wrong>

Nazlin Bhimani @NazlinBhimani

Twitter's latest experiment hints that it will remove @ replies from its service via The Next Web

<http://thenextweb.com/twitter/2014/03/20/twitter-latest-experiment-hints-that-it-will-remove-replies-from-its-service/>

### Mar 26th

Rayner Lucas @raynerlucas

Uh oh. Twitter now has photo tagging, and it defaults to anyone being able to tag you. To turn it off go to Settings->Security and privacy.

### Mar 31st

Catriona MacCallum @catmacOA

HEFCE's new open-access policy for post-2014 outputs is significant move for #OA - @MikeTaylor is spot on <http://svpow.com/2014/03/31/hefces-new-open-access-policy-for-post-2014-outputs/>

## Forthcoming workshops and events

**Presentation:** Building an effective search strategy. (Part of the ERA Conference 2014)

**Date:** 30<sup>th</sup> April 2014

**Venue:** Sadler's Wells Theatre, Roseberry Avenue, London, EC1R 4TN

**Organiser:** Executive Research Association

**Presenter:** Karen Blakeman

**Outline:** So you know all about Google and Bing's advanced search commands, and you have a list of alternative search tools under your belt. But how do you put that knowledge into practice? Do you go all out with a complex, nested Boolean search, or do you start with a very simple strategy and adapt and tweak it according to the results? Using real-life examples, this session will look at how to build effective search strategies using advanced commands and different types of search tools. It will include Google and its specialist databases, alternatives to Google, social media and professional networks.

**URL:** <http://theera.org/april-2014-era-conference-2014/>



**Workshop:** Business information: key web sources

**Date:** 6<sup>th</sup> June 2014

**Venue:** London

**Organiser:** TFPL

**Presenter:** Karen Blakeman

**Outline:** To pay or not to pay for business information is a question that faces many users of the Net. This one day course compares what is available for free with pay-as-you-go and subscription services and will examine quality of content, coverage, functionality and price. There will be practical sessions throughout the day and delegates will receive comprehensive notes.

**URL:** <http://courses.tfpl.com/services/coursedescribe.cfm?id=TR945&pageid=-9&cs1=Business%2520information&cs2=a>

**Workshop:** Brave New World of Free, Open Data and Open Access. (BIALL pre-conference workshop)

**Date:** 11<sup>th</sup> June 2014

**Venue:** Harrogate International Centre

**Organiser:** BIALL

**Presenter:** Karen Blakeman

**Outline:** Thousands of data sets of statistics are now available free of charge for us to reuse as we wish. UK publicly funded research must be made available free of charge to anyone who requests access. Many company registries have released some of their information as open data. Google has expanded its free patent search service, and much of the UK government's official information and legislation is free. But everything is not what it seems. Open data is rarely in a user friendly format and often needs "cleaning" before it can be processed into something useful. Many websites present infographics based on this data but can we trust them? The fragmented nature of open access, self-archiving and publisher determined embargo periods means that open access is not always easy access. And what about the reliability of free patent and legal information? This workshop will look at the good and bad of free, open information. It will cover starting points for free, open official information and statistics; tools for locating scholarly literature, grey literature and open access publications; and advanced search techniques for identifying high quality information.

**URL:** <http://www.biall.org.uk/pages/harrogate-2014.html>

**Workshop:** Free resources and search techniques of EU and UK legislation

**Date:** 12<sup>th</sup> June 2014

**Venue:** London

**Organiser:** TFPL

**Presenter:** Karen Blakeman

**Outline:** This one day workshop will look at free resources and search techniques for locating news and information on EU and UK legislation. Such information could be on blogs, websites, in news articles, journals and government reports. The original source of the information may not be in English and assessing authority and timeliness is crucial. Topics will include: how to use advanced search commands to find news and information on legislation; how to use reading level and date ranges to focus the search; searching foreign language pages; options for searching journals, research information, grey literature; alternatives to Google; specialist tools and sites; assessing quality and relevance.

**URL:** <http://courses.tfpl.com/services/coursedescribe.cfm?id=TR3838&pageid=-9&cs1=uk%2520legislation&cs2=a>

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