

What is a search engine?

- A search engine is a web-based tool that enables users to locate information on the World Wide Web.
- Popular examples of search engines are Google, Yahoo!, and MSN Search. Search engines utilize automated software applications (referred to as robots, bots, or spiders) that travel along the Web, following links from page to page, site to site. The information gathered by the spiders is used to create a searchable index of the Web.
- A web search engine is a software system that is designed to search for information on the World Wide Web.
- A search engine is a web site that collects and organizes content from all over the internet.

How do search engines work?

- Web search engines catalog the World Wide Web by using a **spider**, or **web crawler**. These web-crawling robots are created for indexing content; they scan and assess the content on site pages and information archives across the web.
- We enter a search term and it brings up a number of pages from its database which it thinks are applicable to your search term.
- It uses the keywords to search for documents that relate to these key words and then puts the result in order of relevance to the topic that was searched for.

Types of Search Engine

- Crawler based search engines
- Directories
- Hybrid search engines
- Meta search engines

Crawler Based Search Engines

- Are search engines that use software programs that are called “spiders”, “crawlers”, “Robots”, “bots”. These programs can access the web pages to categorize, analyze and then add them in the search engine data base, where any user can find them when searching. The crawler based search engines are constantly updated with new webpage that would be available in their database.

Examples:

1. Google
2. Yahoo
3. Ask.com

Directories

- Are hierarchical list of subject categories -- assembled by people ("humanly-compiled").
- Are websites sectioned in specific categories by human editors and are then placed in the "Directories", database.

Examples:

1. Yahoo Directory (www.yahoo.com)
2. Open Directory (www.looksmart.com)

Hybrid search engines

Are search engines that use both crawler based searches and directory searches to obtain their results.

Examples:

1. Yahoo.com
2. Google.com

Meta Search Engines

- Are the search engines that combine all the result from other search engines into one big list.
- A [search engine](#) that queries other search engines and then combines the results that are received from all. In fact, the user is not using just one search engine but a combination of many search engines at once to optimize Web searching.

Example:

1. Dogpile

Advantages of Search Engines

- Enable to quick search to vast amount of information from one search box.
- Search on a specific type or piece of information is possible.
- Search Engines are important, because with over 8 billion Web Pages available, it would be impossible to search for the information that is specifically needed.
- Easy to acquire different information from different topics.

Disadvantages of Search Engines

- Creates information overload
- Privacy and security is of concern
- Makes everyone dependent

Reference

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