

Panel Session

Real Life Information Retrieval: Commercial Search Engines

Moderator: Michael Lesk, Bellcore

Panelists: Doug Cutting, Excite; Jan Pedersen, Verity; Terry Noreault, OCLC; Matt Koll, PLS

The world of commercial search engines is surprisingly little covered in the literature, e.g. the devices needed to cope with searching for extremely frequent terms, efficient coding for partial word searching, and fielded searching. This panel is made up of people who have written large search systems and will give them (and the audience) a chance to discuss the technical and practical details of large search systems.

Content representation in large systems is now a major topic as we try to move beyond simple word matching for searching. As the different Web searching systems compete, they try to offer better search quality through a variety of techniques. This includes concept searching using both manual aids and automatic detection. The panelists will be able to discuss how this is done and what kinds of progress are being made. This panel will provide insight into the practical situation in the industry today, and what kinds of technology are used in searching and why.