



5 New Search Engines

New search technology to watch

SearchMash

(<http://www.searchmash.com/>)

searchmash SearchMash is actually a Google site, to test their latest search innovations. SearchMash follows the basic Google principle - it's cutting-edge, but still plain and simple. When you do a typical web search, you also see image, blog, video and Wikipedia results in the right side of the screen. And there's absolutely no noticeable speed loss, thanks to AJAX. Basically it is a shortcut to reach all the information you need.

The best innovation of SearchMash is perhaps the "More web results" bar. I strongly recommend Google find a way to implement it into their default engine immediately. It makes it much easier to browse the search results. When you need more information, simply click on "More web results" and new results appear at the bottom - enabling you to continue scrolling down on the same page, instead of opening a new page.

SearchMash also allows you to give feedback about the results; this may be a sign of the introduction of power of masses into Google Search.

Live.com

(<http://www.live.com/>)



Live.com, the new internet initiative of Microsoft, had many innovative ideas at the beginning. However as Vista's official release date gets closer, it has become a much more traditional search engine. Besides the technology advances in their algorithms, which Microsoft hopes will enable it to compete with Google, there are/were many UI enhancements as well.

There used to be, for example, an infinite scrollbar in Live.com - but this seems to have been removed for the final public release. Most innovations in the image search interface have been kept though - the tiered zooming feature is the most blatant one. Live's Image Search offers seamless user experience enhancements. The infinite scrollbar functionality fits very well and saves you from the hassle of clicking and waiting. And Scratchpad functionality allows you to pick your favourites and compare them smoothly.

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Intent-Driven Search by Yahoo!

(<http://mindset.research.yahoo.com/>)

 This is a brilliant idea. Yahoo's research project Mindset brings you results according to your search purposes. For instance, when you enter "Rolex Watches" in the search box, you may be willing to buy a Rolex Watch or make an encyclopedic research about the company.

Yahoo's intent-driven search allows you to specify your intent and get the most relevant results. Note that intent-driven search is still in a very early phase, but it's very promising for mainstream users.

Del.icio.us and Power of Masses

(<http://del.icio.us/>)



You may ask, what is del.icio.us doing in between all these search sites - isn't it just a bookmarking system? Well, the answer is both yes and no. While it's true that it's a bookmarking site, Yahoo probably didn't buy them just for bookmarking. Actually del.icio.us is also a great tool that empowers the search results of any search engine. Because when you bookmark a site, this indicates the site is a useful resource - so its "pagerank" should be increased. In other words, del.icio.us can actually be used as a search engine, fueled by the power of masses principle. And del.icio.us is not alone in this - Wink and Snap are also trying to use the power of masses in their search offerings.

NLP (Natural Language Processing) powered Powerset

(<http://www.powerset.com/>)



While still in stealth mode, Powerset has already raised \$12.5M in pre-money valuation from several venture capital companies and angel investors like Reid Hoffman, Luke Nosek and early Googlers Aydin Senkut and Zain Khan.

The difference between Powerset and the traditional search engines is that while typical search engines like Google and Yahoo don't take into account stop words (by, after, the, etc), stop words are a very important part of the engine for Powerset. Why? Because Powerset relies on a semantic capability that can be triggered by using these stop words. So while the "book by children" and "book for children" queries return exactly the same results in Google, Powerset evaluates them separately and somehow cares about your stop words as well.

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