

Bits & Bytes

A Publication of the Kern PC Users Group



June Program

Non-Linear Video Editing

With Val Hemingway

Meeting Time is 8:00 pm, June 14



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by Sam Thompson

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Sometimes it's very difficult to line up speakers on topics of interest, and sometimes speakers just seem to fall into my lap. Lately, we have had more interest from the vendor community than we have had in quite a while.

Those of you who were able to come to the last meeting saw an example. I was contacted by Erin Clerico from Weblogger about possibly presenting to the club, so we were able to schedule an outside vendor at the last minute to deliver a demo of a product I hope you found interesting. This was a topic of interest to me, and that's the gauge I always use to screen potential programs. Unfortunately, I had some personal business come up which prevented me from attending.

Our next two meetings should be going on as indicated previously. Randy Whittle from MGI will be here at our next meeting in May, and Val Hemingway from Panama-Buena Vista School District will be here in June to demonstrate simple non-linear video editing techniques. Of course, July will be our usual potluck and BBQ, but it will be held at a different location. More about that in future issues.

In August, we will have a presentation by 4-D Web Development Tools. For September, John Morgan from Tule Fog User Group in Visalia will be repre-

senting TechSmith and showing two of their products, SnagIt and Camtasia. With SnagIt -- you can basically capture anything from your screen alter it, and print/e-mail/save your captures. Camtasia is for video capture and production. October will be our showcase for Sundial Systems to show their Junk Spy product, which helps to screen junk out of email.

Just a couple of days ago, I received a note from InfoUSA about a program, too. These are the folks who market Select Phone, Powerfinder and Resume Plus. InfoUSA is eager to share their products with us, so November should be productive for all of us. Of course, we have our potluck and holiday party in December, so that means the rest of our calendar year should be set. I just hope everyone is able to live up to his or her commitments.

These are programs designed to appeal to the general computer user. Some will show you new products with which you may not be familiar, while others may demonstrate new ways to use familiar software. If you have interest in learning more about a specific product, I invite you to host a Special Interest Group (SIG) which will allow you to meet with others of

similar interest. Expertise is not required to host a SIG, only interest and enthusiasm.

Right now our most popular SIG is the Tech Talk group. This monthly meeting, held on the 4th Thursday for over four years now, is geared toward the serious enthusiast or computer professional, but all members are welcome. If you have a question or would like to share a new toy or piece of software, you are particularly invited. Although computers are our shared area of interest, there are many more topics discussed throughout the evening. I'm sure you would enjoy yourself, so feel free to join us at 13401 Ascot Court, out in Rosedale.

Ed Note

This article was supposed to go into the April paper. I was ill at that time and Stuart Ree and Bill Peacock pinch hit for me Thanks guys! Bill's new color laser printer sure does a good job. Supplies for this must cost. Hope we are paying you enough Bill! Another note is that Sam went into the hospital for some surgery this week and according to his family , he is doing well. Get well soon Sam!

Searching the Net

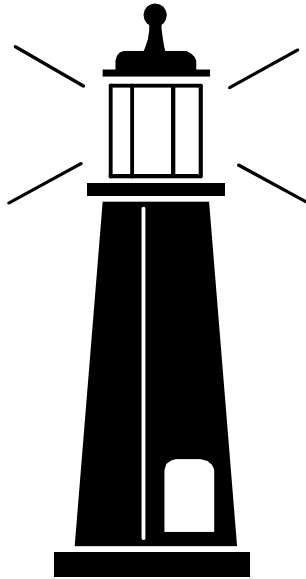
Sarah Perelli-Minetti

Finding what you want on the web can be often be time consuming and cumbersome, at best. Have you wasted a lot of time looking for one subject but when the results page came up on your monitor it had lots of unrelated matches? When I was studying for my CIW Foundations exam at New Horizons (which I passed) one section was on boolean operators and how they can make your search easier on the web. I thought I would pass what I have learned onto you.

First I will discuss search engines and directories. Yahoo is a "directory" that depends on humans to compile their listings. This is one reason why a newly submitted web site isn't listed on these directories quickly. Other search engines, such as Alta Vista, have robot programs or spiders that automatically search the web and indexes web sites. When 24-7 in Toronto, Canada submitted my web site ([Topicals on](#)

[Stamps](#)) almost a year ago to the major search engines it appeared on Alta Vista within a few days. Lycos also uses a spider to locate sites on the web for its database.

By typing in a keyword or phrase a user can find a matching site in the search engine's database containing the title of the page, the URL (uniform resource locator), a short description of its contents and several keywords to aid the search engine to reference the page.



I will first compare how a few of the search engines work using different search methods. How does a trip to Sydney, Australia sound next summer? It will be winter Down Under, a re-

lief from our heat. It is a spectacular city with lots of tourist attractions, the harbor area, friendly people and of course, lots of nightlife. Let's look for a bed and breakfast.

I will first demonstrate how to look for information without using keywords. Yahoo (www.yahoo.com) is one of the oldest search engines and is set up on a hierarchical subject guide.

At the www.yahoo.com homepage I click under [Travel](#). Located beneath recreation and sports on the middle of the page. I then clicked [Australia Listings Only](#) to narrow down my search further and come up with a list of [Bed and Breakfasts](#) (14). The number, 14, represents how many directories are located under the bed and breakfast folder. At this point click [Directories](#) (14) and a list will come up with subdirectories as varied as a link to bed and breakfasts for people who have disabilities to farm stays in Northern Queensland in the tropical region of the country. I clicked on [Web Directory: Australian Bed & Breakfast Directories](#) and found a website with lots of information for the traveler. You can also type in Sydney bed and breakfast and another way through the path of directories is shown, [Business and Economy > Shopping and Services > Travel and Transportation > Lodging > By Region > Countries > Australia > Complete List Bed & Breakfast Sydney Harbour](#) - offers a fully restored heritage mansion at The Rocks.

At Go, another search engine, at www.go.com I will search for the same topic, Sydney, Australia bed and breakfast, using the general search mode, which offers comprehensive

query results. I had 15 sponsored search results provided by GoTo. I then typed in "Sydney, Australia bed and breakfast", creating a search string, using quotation marks, narrowing my search down further as the phrase has to come up to be counted.

I will do the same search in Alta Vista (www.altavista.com). First I will do a search without the quotation marks. I had a staggering word count: Sydney Australia: 326014 bed and breakfast: 1725168 Sydney: 6051935. As you can see different words and phrases were counted separately in the search. With the quotation marked added there were "Australia bed and breakfast," 51 Sydney: 6051935 breakfast: 7102585 bed: 11440398 Australia: 23109769. This time the 51 hits included all the words. Of course, the other ones don't apply to our search.

At Excite (www.excite.com) there are 10 web site results per page out of 2,050, 750. When I did the search for "Sydney, Australia bed and breakfast" 60 websites were found, quite a difference.

Still there were lots of sites to wade through. Is there a way to narrow you site down further? Yes, using boolean

operators, AND (+), (&), OR (-), or NOT operators. When using boolean logic for searches the NEAR operator is available. The general rules are that AND must include both words, OR must include one of the words, + must include this particular word, - must exclude a particular word

Let's say you are looking for a printer because your five-year-old printer is so slow and you know there are faster printers out on the market with much better printing capabilities.

When I first typed in only printers on the Excite search engine I received 1,644,447 hits. When I searched for printers AND inkjet only 12,400 were found, far fewer. When I added AND NOT Epson, I had 10,095. If I add HP to the search string I get 845. Using these booleans can help you narrow your search. In Excite all boolean operators must be in capital letters.

In the Alta Vista search engine I will use the + and - booleans. In Alta Vista they have to be attached to the beginning of the word it is requiring or excluding. This time I will search for the "Paris hotel" +pool 411,822

pages were found. I will get results from websites that have information regarding hotels in Paris or the Paris hotel in Las Vegas that have swimming pools or billiards tables. If I add -"Las Vegas" to the search string I will eliminate all references to the Paris Hotel in Las Vegas and click the search within these results button I receive 665 responses. Now I will use the advanced search in Alta Vista to use the AND OR. I typed in the Boolean search area Paris hotel AND (pool OR spa) AND NOT "Las Vegas" and had 807 pages found.

Hopefully these tips will help you along your way to finding what you really want on the web.

Thanks Sarah! Your article filled a void in a timely manner Dave

Some Technical Support Items gleaned off the web

- **Customer:** "Memory? Is that the RAM stuff?"
- **Customer:** "...I just had 60 more of them RAMs installed..."

Circa 1997:

- "My computer has 6 gigs of memory."

I had called the electronics department of a chain department store to ask how much their RAM was. The clerk who answered the phone asked me, "Is that that CD-RAM stuff?" I decided it was better to drive over there and see for myself.

- **Customer:** "I just put on DOS/Windows 6.0, and my memory crashed the system."
- **Tech Support:** "How much RAM do you have in the computer?"
- **Customer:** "32 megs."
- **Tech Support:** "Are you using any RAM doubling software?"
- **Customer:** "Yes."
- **Tech Support:** "So you have 16 megs of actual, physical RAM?"
- **Customer:** "No. I have 8 megs. I installed [a RAM expanding product], and that gave me 16. I liked it so much I went out and

got [another RAM expanding product]. So now I have 32."

- **Customer:** "How much will 16K of conventional memory cost?"
- **Customer:** "Can you send me a disk to increase my RAM to the 64 meg maximum?"

I work for a good-sized company in UNIX systems support. Over the last month or so, we've been upgrading the memory in our older IBM workstations running AIX. This is a simple process: Shut down the system, pop the cover off, stick in four SIMMs, button it up, and flip the power back on. The whole thing usually takes less than ten minutes per machine.

Many of our users seemed surprised that I had to open their CPU box to do the upgrade. More than one said something along the lines of, "Oh, you mean you have to turn the box off to do that?" or, my personal favorite, "You mean upgrading the memory is a hardware thing?" The scary part is that many of the users that were asking these questions are engineers.

A friend of mine, bought a modem for her computer. She rang me because she was having an "Out of Memory" message trying to install the Internet software for it. It turned out she only had 8 megs of memory, and the package required 16. I of-

ferred to help her buy some more memory, open up the computer, and install it for her.

- **Her:** "Oh, is that one of those things which you have to open up and fiddle around inside for? In my opinion you should just be able to buy a disk and run a program to install more memory."
- **Customer:** "Do you people sell them megas?"
- **Salesperson:** "Uh, sure, how much do you need, sir?"
- **Customer:** "100!"
- **Salesperson:** "I can only give you 64."
- **Customer:** "Well, can't you throw in 26 more?"

A woman brought her Macintosh LC520 into my shop to have more memory added. This was all fine, but she said she the computer kept running out of memory at startup. I found this to be rather interesting and decided to fire it up at the counter while she watched.

After plugging in the computer to the wall and a keyboard and mouse I hit the power button. The computer sounded to life and the screen lit with the "Welcome to Macintosh" box on screen. This was immediately replaced by the Mac/OS picture and a status bar that was progressing as the extensions loaded. As the bar approached the end she said, "See the memory is all full." I looked at her rather con-

fused and asked where she would have gotten that idea. Apparently one of the know-nothings at the local computer superstore had said that that was what the progress bar meant.

Needless to say she was rather angry at them for the erroneous information. She ending up not buying the RAM but was thankful for our good service.

Our company had begun to demo its new product, a client-server office suite. It was pretty new to everyone, and there was a lot of groundwork to be done to ensure that the demos would go smoothly and the stories would be compelling. The marketing guys decided to host a three-way question and answer session between the pre-sales people, some of the key developers, and the senior marketing suits. About ten minutes into the session one of the pre-sales guys asked about per user memory consumption at the server end, stating that his tests showed a 32 meg per user minimum (back when 64 meg servers were considered *big*). Before anyone technical had a chance to answer, one of the senior marketing suits piped up and said, in a totally exasperated voice, "It's client-server! You don't *need* memory because it's *in the network!*"

A customer called in at MicroSystems Warehouse and said he needed to speak to a tech immediately. I asked him what the problem was and that I might be able to help. He said, "Are the SIMM slots

located in the back of the computer?" I asked him if he needed help installing the chips. He said, "No. I installed them and the computer just isn't recognizing them." I said to him, "Where did you install the chips?" He said, "I removed my sound card and put them in there."

I got a guy who was trying to remove a 4 meg SIMM from his LC III so he could install an 8 meg SIMM. He complained that he was having trouble with it -- it appeared to be soldered in. I asked him if he had released the SIMM from the clips; he said he had to rip one of them off. He said the ends could wiggle free, but the middle looked like it was soldered in. I tried to understand what the heck was going on in his Mac...the weirdness went on for at least five minutes. Finally, grasping for some semblance of reality, I asked how much memory his LC III had. Four megs. He looked at the directions again -- "Ohhhhhh, you gotta take it out if you have *more* than four megs." He was removing the SIMM *slot*. He asked if he should solder it back down.

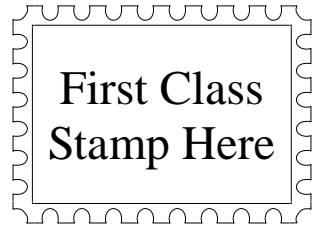
- **Customer:** "You people owe me a new computer."
- **Tech Support:** "You're having trouble with your computer? What seems to be the problem?"
- **Customer:** "Well, I bought some memory from you people, and ever since I installed it into my

computer, it's been doing nothing but making grinding noises, and nothing works anymore!"

- **Tech Support:** "Grinding noises?? It shouldn't be doing that!"
- **Customer:** "I know that! That's why you people owe me a new computer, and I'm going to charge you for lost downtime and my inconvenience."

Grinding noises from SIMMs? This was a new one.

- **Tech Support:** "Sir, did you install those chips yourself or did someone do it for you?"
- **Customer:** "I'm not an idiot! I did it myself. I put them right in that slot in the front of the computer, smart aleck."



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We are on the web at
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Tom Rabe Webmaster

Meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month
at the Kern Superintendents of Schools Building.

17th and L streets Downtown