

THE ELECTRONIC TRAIL

4Rs of Computer-Assisted Journalism

- Computer-Assisted Research
- Computer-Assisted Reference
- Computer-Assisted Rendezvous
- Computer-Assisted Reporting

Search Tools

- Search engines
- Web directories
- Metasearchers
- Invisible Web

Search Engines

- Google—www.google.com
- Hotbot—www.hotbot.com
- Altavista—www.altavista.com
- InfoSeek—www.infoseek.com
- Northern Light—www.northernlight.com
- All the Web - www.alltheweb.com
- Teoma - www.teoma.com

Web Directories

- Yahoo!—www.yahoo.com
- Librarians' Index—www.lii.org
- Infomine—www.infomine.ucr.edu
- About.com—www.about.com
- Tanikalang Ginto—www.filipinolinks.com
- Orientation Philippines—ph.orientation.com/

To find more specific directories

- Go to any of the subject directories. Look for your subject. Keep eyes open for sites that look like directories ("Directories," "Gateway Pages").
- In Yahoo! or Google, add the terms "web directory" to your subject keyword term (e.g. weddings web directory)

Metasearchers

- Go2Net—www.go2net.com
- Ask Jeeves—www.askjeeves.com
- Dogpile—www.dogpile.com
- Profusion—www.profusion.com
- Ixquick—www.ixquick.com
- MetaCrawler—www.metacrawler.com

Searching the Invisible Web

- Look for searchable databases within a site.
- In Google and other search engines, type the subject term and the word "database." This also works for Yahoo!
- Try the following:
 1. The Invisible Web Catalog—www.invisibleweb.com
 2. IncyWiny—www.incywincy.com
 3. Complete Planet—www.completeplanet.com

TIP

- Nothing beats a focused search for very specific information as it produces more exact results.
- Boolean Searching
 1. and, or, not (e.g. investigative and reporting)
 2. +, - (e.g. investigative + reporting)
 3. " type a phrase" (e.g. "investigative reporting")
- Use the Advanced Search!

Computer-Assisted Reference

- Internet Public Library—www.ipl.org
- Libraries Online—www.libraryspot.com/librariesonline.htm
- Research-it—www.iTools.com/research-it
- Britannica—www.britanica.com
- GuruNet—www.gurunet.com

Joining a Listserv

- Look for a mailing list that suits you by sending email to one of those listserv masterlists (listserv@listserv.net).
- Visit the following Web sites:
 1. Tile Net—www.tile.net
 2. Liszt—www.liszt.com
 3. Egroups—www.groups.yahoo.com

Journalism Listservs

- Send the following message to the email address
subscribe list_name your_name
e.g. subscribe IRE-L yvonne chua
- Examples
 1. IRE-L (Reporting)—listproc@lists.missouri.edu
 2. IREPhus-L (Investigative Reporting)—majordomo@ire.org
 3. SPJ-L (General Journalism)—listserv@lists.psu.edu
 4. NICAR-L (Computer-assisted Reporting)—listproc@lists.missouri.edu
 5. CARR-L (Computer-assisted Reporting)—listserv@ulkyvm.louisville.edu

Joining a Newsgroup

- Look for a newsgroup that suits you.
- Visit Google—www.groups.google.com

Other Useful Services

- Locating People
 1. www.people.yahoo.com
 2. www.anywho.com
 3. www.whowhere.com
 4. www.infobel.com
 5. www.whitepages.com
- Locating Companies
 1. www.teldir.com
 2. www.yellowpages.com
 3. www.infospace.com
 4. www.sec.gov
 5. www.freedgar.com
 6. www.hoovers.com
- Locating Experts
 1. www.allexperts.com
 2. www.profnet.com
 3. www.facsnet.org
 4. www.usnewswire.com/links/slink.html
 5. npc.press.org/newssources/index.shtml
- Locating Search Engines
 1. www.searchenginecolossus.com
 2. www.searchenginewatch.com

Evaluating Online Information: Check the URL

- What's the top-level domain?
 1. com—for commercial organizations
 2. edu—for educational organizations
 3. gov—for government organizations, non-military
 4. org—for other organizations
 5. net—for network resources
 6. mil—for military (army, navy, etc.)
- What's the country domain?
- Who's the publisher?
- Is it a personal page?

Look for a personal name following a tilde (~) or the word "users" or "people."
- Who owns the domain name? (www.whois.net, www.alex.com)

Evaluating Online Information

- Check for
 1. Authority/Credibility
 2. Accuracy
 3. Objectivity
 4. Coverage
 5. Currency
 6. Irony
- Check what others say

Email (Listserves and Newsgroups): A Few Reminders

- Identify yourself
- Verify who the author is and the information that's posted
- Don't quote without permission
- Cite the source

Computer-Assisted Reporting

- database software to build original collections of information
- spreadsheet programs for complex calculations
- statistical programs for analysis of large data sets