Search engine fatigue?

--By P. Gavin Ferriby, Ph.D.
University Librarian

Searching Google is the biggest single way that most SHU students find information. Is it the most reliable? Is it really the most helpful?

Take a look at a typical Google results screen. If you search “used cars,” you get results like this:
Search: used cars

Obviously, there’s a lot of money in used cars. Almost all the links on the first page are to ventures that want to sell you a car. The link to Edmunds.com is far down the page, and a link to Consumer Reports doesn’t appear on the first page of search results. Google reports about 39 million results. Who care about more than the first ten or twenty?

How do those links get on to the first Google page?
Answer: they pay.

Increasingly, political groups and commercial firms are manipulating Google search results. (Try searching “tea party” and see.) They have discovered ways to generate lots of hits on sites, which increases a site’s visibility in the Google search algorithm. Google promises “don’t be evil,” but in fact the search results are, if not evil, heavily manipulated. More and more, Google results are like the ads you see in Facebook—carefully chosen to appeal to your known interests and habits.

The library’s approach to information is very different. Go to Credo Reference and search “tea party”—the information is reliable and is designed to help you understand, not sell you a point of view.

How do you escape the fog of Google’s search results?
Use different tools—ones that match your student needs.
Contact the library for help:
Credo Reference
Enterprise (library catalog)
Ebsco’s Academic Search Premier
Mergent.com

New Extended Library Hours

Responding to the request of the Student Government, the library has opened for regular extended hours every day of undergraduate teaching, Spring Semester 2011.

The library hours are now:
Sundays—Thursdays 8:00 AM – 3:00 AM
Fridays—Saturdays 8:00 AM—9:00 pm

Reference hours stop at 11:00 pm. Sundays—Thursdays and at 6:00 p.m. Fridays and Saturdays.

As a security precaution, you will have to use your SHU swipe card to enter the library these hours:
Sundays—Thursdays 11:00 p.m.—3:00 AM
Fridays—Saturdays 6:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.

The swipe card reader is located near the library’s front door, on the column in back of you as you face the east (right-hand) doors. This is the same swipe card access used for residence halls, the Pitt Center, the Academic Building, and elsewhere.

--by Gavin Ferriby
The library is scheduled for significant renovations during the Summer of 2011. In order to make those renovations secure against the weather, the library’s roof will be renewed starting April, 2011.

Upper-floor (or 3rd floor) users will notice some sounds of roofing work during the daylight hours. In addition, workers will be exploring what’s above the ceiling tiles at various times, especially on the main (2nd) floor. The library regrets the occasional noise—all in the good cause of a renovated, beautiful library main floor opening in September 2012.

The library is also planning how to maintain library services for summer students, faculty, and staff, and more details will be coming out this Spring. Certain staff offices will be relocated either for Summer 2011 or for the year 2011-2012.

--by Gavin Ferriby

University Library Joins PORTICO

It used to be: the library subscribed to printed journals, carefully received and noted them, bound them into large volumes stored downstairs until… nearly forever.

What happens with digital journals?

Digital preservation is a leading concern for librarians and scholars. Prof. Productive publishes an article in a print-journal-turned-digital: how long will it be available? Where will it be stored? What happens if the publisher goes bankrupt? What happens if the journal is deleted from all academic databases?

Portico was formed as an answer to these questions, by the same people who formed JSTOR. It preserves digital collections for libraries and publishers, so that scholarly content published today will continue to be available for many, many tomorrows—no matter what happens to the publisher or the journal. If a library cancels a digital subscription, the content the library previously paid for will continue to be available. Certain other “trigger” events (such as natural disasters or ceasing publication) will make the Portico “dark” archive (normally unavailable) come into the light of accessibility.

The library joined Portico for 2011 and henceforth as vital digital insurance. Over the past ten years the library has spent well over $1 million for digital subscriptions. Insuring continuing access to these University resources is one of our most important library tasks. The University Library is pleased to join with over 700 libraries around the world to share this digital preservation strategy.

RefWorks has come to SHU, and already has garnered over 100 users—those intrepid early adopters.

RefWorks is “bibliographic citation software”—a fancy way of saying that it helps you keep track of your book, article, web site, and other citations. You can sort them into lists, adjust how they display, how to include them in a paper, a resources lists—in APA style, AMA style, Chicago, MLA, or as you wish. You can share references with others, whether they are also RefWorks users or not.

So how do you use RefWorks? Gavin Ferriby, University Librarian, has scheduled these learning events each about 55 minutes:

- Basic Refworks: how to get started:
  - Monday, Feb. 7 at 12:30—1:30 Location TBA
  - Wednesday, Feb. 9 5:00—6:00 pm, Cambridge 1-P-13
  - Wednesday, March 2 at 2:00—3:00 Library Information Literacy Room (upstairs)

- Advanced Refworks: How to organize, format, and share citations
  - Tuesday, March 8 at 2:00 Cambridge Commons
  - Monday, March 21 at 12:30 Location TBA
  - Monday, March 21 at 5:00 Cambridge 1-P-13

You can also visit RefWork’s own training site when you open a RefWorks account: http://libguides.sacredheart.edu/refworks/ --the library guide will show you the way, and how to find all kinds of RefWorks help.
Editorial Policy

Submission of articles or opinion letters:
All submissions of articles or opinion letters must be sent to the editor via e-mail at cioffim@sacredheart.edu for publishing consideration. Submissions must be received by deadline date to be considered for upcoming publication.

Space availability will be considered when deciding whether to incorporate an article. Byline of the author submitting article or opinion letter will be published.

Submissions without bylines will not be published.
Any submissions by a group or a committee must have all the members’ names on the piece.

Content:
Submitted articles can deal with any number of issues either controversial or not.
The editor reserves the right to deem an article inappropriate for publication, if it is used for personal attacks or complaints.
The editor also reserves the right to edit either the style or length of any submitted article.

New Titles: Oxford Journals

SHU Library users now have access to Oxford Journals, a premier collection of over 230 high-quality academic journals from over 100 society partners (who publish academic journals). A full title list can be found here: http://www.oxfordjournals.org/our_journals/index.html

These journals are very high quality: a 2008 study of “journal impact factors” found that 25% of Oxford Journal titles are in the top ten percent of their subject categories, and 75% of the titles in the top half—all for the lowest price per page and the lowest price point per impact factor, according to a 2006 study at Loughborough University, Leicestershire, UK.

In addition, Oxford Journals have initiated an “open access” (non-subscription) model of publication with full participation of six scholarly journals, and partial participation (at the option of a article’s author) for over 20 other journals. This is an important innovation for a major academic publisher, and experience with such a model helps to build a business case for open-access publication—see http://www.oxfordjournals.org/oxfordopen/open_access_titles.html

More information about open-access publishing can be found at two organizations of which the University Library is a member: the Public Library of Science (PLoS) (http://www.plos.org) and the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition, SPARC (http://www.arl.org/sparc/).

Library Staff News and Notes

Gavin Ferriby was named University Librarian in early October, 2011. He has previously served as Associate University Librarian 2006-2009 and Interim University Librarian 2009-2010. Gavin writes a blog The Extensible Librarian at http://sacredheartuniversity.typepad.com/universitylibrarian/—collecting various thoughts, insights, and questions from reading both in and beyond the field. He also contributes to Books, Etc.: Books, Resources, and Links @ The Library, at: http://sacredheartuniversity.typepad.com/LibraryBooks.

Cindy Li has spent much of January in Albania, working to create a digital library of resources for post-secondary students there, a project supported by The Republic of Albania and The World Bank. This is an immense honor for Cindy, and reflects increasing external recognition of this university’s (and library’s) expertise regarding digital libraries, digitization, and library applications of information technology.

Ekaterina Ginzburg has been named Instructional Designer and began to work full-time for the Office of Instructional Technology on November 1, 2011. Her work has greatly expanded with new refinements to CoursEval, the online course evaluation system. Ekaterina has worked for OIT and the University since 2006, and previously served Fairfield University.

Beverly Lysobey expanded her cataloging work to full-time on January 3, 2011. She has taken over primary responsibility for the University’s Digital Commons site, http://digitalcommons.sacredheart.edu Beverly has worked for the University Library since 2007 as cataloger, and has served at the Reference desk and taught Information Literacy 101.
The Library welcomes Two New Librarians

Jeff Orrico as the new Health Sciences Librarian. Jeff began work on Monday, December 20, 2010, and has already moved ahead with library research service to the University community.

Jeff holds degrees from Western New England College in Springfield, Mass., and Southern Connecticut State University. He has worked for LexisNexis, the University of Bridgeport (where he worked with business and health sciences faculty as Reference Librarian and then as Head of Reference/Access Services), and the University of Phoenix, Fairfield Campus, in Norwalk. Some at this University may recall Jeff’s work as Reference Librarian on evenings and week-ends at Ryan-Matura Library, 2004-2006.

Jeff lives in Bridgeport with Tracey (wife) and Penelope (daughter). At work, Jeff will be dividing his time between the Cambridge Campus Resources Center and the Ryan-Matura Library on the Fairfield campus.

Amanda Timolat as Archivist and Special Collections Librarian. Amanda began work on January 3, 2011, and will be organizing, processing, and curating collections such as the Gloria Naylor archive, the DeLong-Lodge book research archive, the University Special Collection of printed materials, the University Archives, and the like. Amanda will be on campus in this part-time capacity regularly on Mondays and Wednesdays.

Amanda holds degrees from Marist College, Southern Connecticut State University, and New York University, and has also studied Spanish intensively at ILEE in Buenos Aires, Argentina. She is a fully qualified archivist, and has previously organized and curated collections for Bank Street College of Education, New York, N.Y. and Hostos Community College, Bronx, New York. Amanda is also familiar to many at SHU in her continuing work as an adjunct instructor of Information Literacy 101.

Amanda is also a professional equestrian, and competes in dressage. She hails from the “upper left-hand corner” of Connecticut, so she has substantial trip to campus.

Upcoming Events

Charles Hartman - Poet and Translator

Date: March 31, 2011
Location: Sacred Heart University - Ryan-Matura Library
Time: 3:30 PM

Ellen Litman - Short Story Writer

Date: April 7, 2011
Location: Sacred Heart University - Ryan-Matura Library
Time: 3:30PM

Marla Miller - Historian at the University of Massachusetts Amherst

Date: April 18, 2011
Location: Sacred Heart University - University Commons
Time: 3:30 PM