



Effective Internet Search Techniques - Deep Web "Cheat Sheet"

(excerpted from the "2009 Attorney's Information Forensics Handbook")

SEARCH ENGINES

Google.com - A great resource for finding everything from pictures to emails. Make sure to verify search settings to turn off "Search moderation" or your results will be filtered. If you will have to do a site visit, street view and other satellite tools can be very useful to remotely "scope" an area out.

Search.Yippy.com - Uses a search technique that will display results by subject "clusters". Great for identifying and refining searches and seeing information relationships you may have missed before.

JWebnet.net - Contains useful information to construct your own searches. At the bottom of the index page there is a link to "Advanced Google Search Tips". This is an area that shows different searches and techniques that others have used.

Hackersforcharity.org - Contains useful information for building your own Google search strings. At the top of the page there is a button labeled "GHDB". The different methods for refining Google searches are broken up by category.

PEOPLE SEARCHES

Pipl.com - Utilizes various database and "deep web" database queries to present aggregated search results by category. Can also be used for email, phone and relational searches.

iSearch.com - Searches specifically for people. Can identify alternate names, relatives, addresses and other information.

123people.com - Similar to Pipl.com in that it utilizes various "deep web" database searches to present information.

zoominfo.com - Great for beginning a search on a company, but most results can be returned by using the appropriate Google advanced technique. Where this really shines is on the refined search where you can turn up additional information.

peoplefinders.com - This site will charge if you go too deep, but a superficial search can be a rich resource for ages, previous addresses, relations and other names used.

zabasearch.com - Unpaid search can reveal known relatives. Useful only for crosschecking other site information, but amount of information is limited.

SOCIAL NETWORK SITES

This category of sites involves information that has been entered by the user of the site themselves. You can still pick up valuable information left by the user, as well as information regarding people “in their networks”. Look for other sites used, other usernames and identities on other resources to search. As of this writing all of the sites listed in this category are indexed by Google and can be singled out by using “site:”, “inurl:” and “intitle:” modifiers to the search. Normal search caveats apply.

Sites include:

LinkedIn.com

Twitter.com - Note: As of this revision, if a user deletes a message (called a “tweet”) from their timeline it is **NOT** deleted from the actual Twitter search feature.

Myspace.com

Facebook.com

PLACES

Zillow.com - Good for financial overview and demographic opinion regarding a specific address.

BUSINESS

zoominfo.com - Great for beginning a search on a company, but most results can be returned by using the appropriate Google advanced technique. Where this really shines is on the refined search where you can turn up additional information.

netsol.com - Use the “Whois” option to lookup registration information on domain names. In some cases you will be referred to additional sites for the complete Whois info. Cases have been solved/won because of domain created dates and other information contained here. Can also reveal additional emails, phone numbers and people associated with a company.

archive.org - The “Wayback Machine” is an incredible research to view past information about a site that has been removed or altered on the web. There is no guarantee that the site will have been archived by the Wayback machine, but if it has it can be a rich resource for identifying supplemental information.

GENERAL

Public Records Resource: ***publicrecordswire.com***

County clerk, Tax assessors: You can often google for the geographic area + “Tax assessor” or “County Clerk” to find the relevant local gov’t. site.

Example: Voter registration is often online and can produce other registered voters at the same address.

Business and Property Tax records are another great resource.