

Getting valid web searches and avoiding sites that contaminate web searches

Source:

<http://www.tech-archive.net/Archive/Excel/microsoft.public.excel.newusers/2006-06/msg00247.html>

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Getting valid web searches and avoiding use of "Forums" that contaminate Google web searches by including newsgroups postings.

Newsgroups postings can be searched using Google Groups, and such postings should NOT show up on a typical web search. For more information on (Excel) Newsgroups see <http://www.mvps.org/dmcritchie/excel/xlnews.htm>

WEB SEARCHES:

Using a Google web search is about the usual way you can get to web sites with Excel information. There are other search engines available but Google is the most popular, and probably still has the most links.

The problem with web searches is the contamination from spammy sites. Just like there are many degrees of spam the same can be said of spammy sites, so most of what you are seeing fits under the radar of measurements. Just like off topic posts to multiple newsgroups is frequently off the radar of spam measurements, even though that was the original definition of spam. Google and others will usually catch spam directed to thousands of servers/newsgroups as you can somewhat see in your ISPs spam folders.

But the sites I am saying that contaminate the Google web search results are those that attract people to post questions through their site when in fact all they are doing is passing the postings on to actual newsgroups, and then those plus all responses end up on their website to attract more users doing web searches.

One way to eliminate a lot of such webpages is to include negatives on a web search -htm -site:excelforum.com -site:exceltips.com unfortunately you would need over eighty such items that are even more generic than those. And Google only allows you about 30 items. Along these lines are 3 google search forms on my search.htm page.

A better way is to use Firefox and install "Customize Google" and create your filter of sites you do not want to visit. Unfortunately for my own filter, it is only for Excel and as you can only have one filter, so I would have to turn

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off the filter for searches when I want to see forums for applications that don't make much use of newsgroups (i.e. help with Firefox).

Sites that I filter out are those that regurgitate newsgroup postings, and sites that are more interested in advertising than in providing free useful Excel information. More information on my Firefox page in this section (has links, including to my filter) Note my filtering works for me, others may want to be more specific in their choices.
<http://www.mvps.org/dmcritchie/firefox/firefox.htm#customizegoogle>

The quickest way for many would be to search only certain websites for Excel information -- these would be fairly much weighted toward present and past Excel MVPs which is not a bad place to start but for specialized material for a specific vocations you could be missing lot of really valuable information. See Ron de Bruin's site
<http://www.rondebruin.nl/Google.htm> for Google Search Excel Add-in

By posting your own questions directly to a newsgroup instead of through a web site, you are not enabling such sites. Exceptions of web pages that will not add to the problem are Google Groups and Microsoft Communities (discussions), that specifically exclude themselves from Google web searches.
<http://www.mvps.org/dmcritchie/excel/xlnews.htm>

If you are not behind a firewall you can post directly to a newsgroup with Outlook Express, or through your browser, paste the following into your browser's address bar (location bar)
<news://msnews.microsoft.com/microsoft.public.excel.newusers>

ISPs used to help you with newsgroups, that seems to be pretty much a thing of the past.

For tips on using Outlook Express see
<http://www.mvps.org/dmcritchie/oe/oe6.htm>

footnote:

This was getting much too specific about working with newsgroups so started this post more or less as a continuation from:
<http://groups.google.com/groups?threadm=ekWqn9QhGHA.4104%40TK2MSFTNGP04.phx.gbl>

HTH,
David McRitchie, Microsoft MVP – Excel [site changed Nov. 2001]
My Excel Pages: <http://www.mvps.org/dmcritchie/excel/excel.htm>
Search Page: <http://www.mvps.org/dmcritchie/excel/search.htm>

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HTH, (Hope This Helps)
David McRitchie, Microsoft MVP – Excel [site changed Nov. 2001]

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