

Notes, Boston KM Forum, Aug. 5: Tapping the Well - What Knowledge Resources Do You Find the Most Productive

This meeting was an opportunity for us to share our top choices for learning about a new topic. Here's how the group summed up their favorite resources and reasons:

1. <http://www.Google.com> was the top choice; everyone mentioned it although it was not always number one. Reasons:
 - a. to get background information on a topic
 - b. to find the names of experts on a subject
 - c. organizations that publish specialized content
 - d. Scholar for free content that is primary source or substantive
 - e. to find term definitions (e.g. *define:ontology*)
 - f. to find images (e.g. type *taxonomy* and click on *images* to find pictorial examples of taxonomy lists).
 - g. to get the latest news headlines or search for news stories using the *news* tab.
 - h. to get started on a topic and then branch from there, checking the sources of the content for validity
 - i. to find vendor Web sites for technology being sought or to find the site of a product owned for help using it
 - j. Google desktop searching was a favorite by at least two in the group who like its indexing of all content on the desktop including e-mail.
2. <http://www.Copernic.com> was favored over Google by at least one person for desktop searching although most had never tried it
3. Targeted listservs were cited as a good source of information on specialized topics or technical areas where a community of information exchangers is mature
4. <http://www.u-w.com> I a categorized Web site for the University of Washington
5. <http://www.techtarget.com> for focused information technology information
6. Business Week on-line (free)
7. Federal register (<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/fr/>) for government notices requesting public response or agencies requesting assistance (requests for information or requests for proposals)
8. <http://www.Wikipedia.org> : open source encyclopedia
9. Delphion for technical patent information (\$200/year for unlimited searching)
10. Knowledge Express for pharmaceutical related information (cheaper than Dialog from Thompson)
11. Internal experts are still a valued resource for getting information that individuals can't find themselves or to get started on a new subject.
12. http://ep.espacenet.com/search97cgi/s97_cgi.exe?Action=FormGen&Template=ep/EN/home.htm (European patent Office, worldwide patent searching)
13. <http://www.USPTO.gov>, U.S. Patent and Trademark Office
14. <http://www.arma.org> for archival resources
15. <http://www.archives.gov> for U.S. Archives plus other countries' archives for foreign information

16. <http://askjeeves.com> has been helpful in finding answers to questions when Google results are too numerous to go through
17. Federal agency web sites of all types – they are full of information but often difficult to use
18. <http://www.cNet.com> for technology product evaluations and help using technology

Where we need to go: Semantic Search and Knowledge Portals were suggested.

Hardest information to find: Hard data, statistics, metrics, substantive case studies