V. Explore Internet Resources

The Internet contains a huge number of electronic documents created by individuals and institutions that reside on computers (servers) world wide and are linked by hyperlinks.

1. Structure and attributes

There is no organizational structure to the Internet. When searching for a particular subject, it is important to use a search engine. These are discussed below. When finding information on the internet, keep in mind that information you find may not be reliable. The databases the library offers on the internet are screened and edited.

2. Search Tools for the Internet

Search engines are used to search for vast amounts of resources on the Internet. These engines are very useful when searching unique words or phrases. When choosing a search engine you should keep in mind that each engine searches a different way. For general information on search engines go to http://searchendinewatch.com. Although there are many search engines, the following four engines should help you in your research.

a. Google (www.google.com)-- This crawler-based service provides comprehensive and relevant coverage of the web. When you begin your search of the Internet, it is highly recommended that you start with Google.

b. AllTheWeb.com (http://www.alltheweb.com) – is an excellent crawler-based search engine. It provides comprehensive coverage as well as outstanding relevancy. After Google, this would be the next search engine you should try.

c. Yahoo (www.yahoo.com) – is one of the oldest search engines. It was started in 1994. In 2002, Yahoo began to use crawler-based searching. Yahoo is important because it enhances Google's listings with information from its own directory, which make search results more readable. Yahoo will help you to narrow and refine your query.

d. Search Engine Tip

Each search engine has its own set of searching techniques. Therefore it is advisable to use the help feature. This help feature will enable you to search efficiently.

Search Features

Search Engine Math Commands are as follows:

Command	How	Supported By
Must include Term	+	All engines
Must exclude Term	_	All engines
Must include Phrase	' "	All engines
Match all Terms	Automatic at	All engines

Try to be specific when you are using a search engine. For example, imagine you want to find pages that have references to both rain forests and ecology on the same page. You could search this way by using the + symbol:

            +rain forests+ecology

You will find pages that contain these two words. This type of search is helpful if you want to refine your search.

You may want to use quotation marks to multiply terms through a phrase search and retrieve only pages that have all the words in the exact order you want. For example,

            "rain forest conservation"

will retrieve pages that use "rain forest conservation" in the exact order of the words.

3. Types of Web Sites

The Internet offers a vast number of web sites that provide varied information such as news, advertisements, entertainment, and personal data. You can distinguish the nature of web sites by looking at their URL (uniform resource locator) domains. The URL is an Internet address which tells a browser where to find resources. For example, the URL for the library is http://www.tnstate.edu/library.

There are four broad categories of web sites you can distinguish by their URL domain. They are:

Education Institutions: Domain: .edu (http://www.tnstate.edu)

Government site: Doman: .gov (http://www.senate.gov.)

Organizations or associations: org. (http://www.ala.org)

Commercially based sites: .com   (http://www.cbs.com)

4. Categories of Information on the Internet

a. Web Sites which contain valuable information

You should begin your research by using the library's electronic and print resources accessible from the library's home page. Next, the following categories of web sites may be helpful.

1. Current Company Information – You can read information about a company from its web site. However, the information you obtain may be slanted to favor that company. You can use the search engines or directories
on the Internet to find information you need.

2. Current Events or Topics – The web is very useful in finding information about current events because it provides immediate information on very recent events.

3. State and Federal Government Information- Most state and government agencies have their own web sites that provide information about their offices, policies, census data, congressional hearings, etc.

4. Information about and from Associations, Organizations and others-
If you are looking for information about an association such as and address,
phone number or personnel, you may want to go to the organization's
web site.

5.   WWW Resources at TSU

1. Virtual Reference
2. Tennessee Resources
3. Government Resources

6.   Web Sites in Biological Sciences

1. American Institute of Biological Sciences (http://www.aibs.org)
2. Biology Online (http://www.biology-online.org)
3. Institute of Biological Sciences (http://www.iob.org)