

Search Analytics Survey—Summer, 2006

To help us (Lou Rosenfeld and Rich Wiggins) gather information for our forthcoming book on local site search analytics, we invited 206 people to complete a brief survey. The survey ran from June 12 to July 24, 2006, and received 134 responses. We asked respondents the following four questions:

1. *Where did you learn about analyzing queries produced by a site's search system?*
2. *We're surprised at how few people and organizations analyze their own site's search queries. If you agree, why do you think it's so uncommon?*
3. *Can you recommend any useful articles, book chapters, or books that are related to analyzing search queries?*
4. *Can you recommend any useful web sites or other web-based resources that are related to analyzing search queries?*

Our main goal was pretty simple: we hoped to learn about the main sources of information on search analytics. With an admittedly leading question (#2), we also wanted to see if many people would challenge our assumption that search analytics is a rare pursuit (only 5 of 134 did) and learn what the barriers were to taking advantage of search analytics. Full results are listed below.

To comment on these results, visit the survey's entry on our book's blog:

http://www.rosenfeldmedia.com/books/searchanalytics/blog/search_analytics_survey_result/

To learn more about our forthcoming book, visit:

<http://www.rosenfeldmedia.com/books/searchanalytics/>

You can also subscribe to the book site's RSS feed:

<http://feeds.rosenfeldmedia.com/searchanalytics/>

Please address questions to lou@louisrosenfeld.com.

<i>n</i>	Where did you learn about analyzing queries produced by a site's search system? (134 responses total)
55	Just did it myself / on the job (unspecified) / just common sense.
11	From Lou Rosenfeld / At Argus / <i>Information Architecture for the World Wide Web</i> / Quiet User Study.
7	From 2002 IBM research / working w / IBM market research & search tech. teams / at IBM in 1995, 2000-2 / at IBM's UX team / from Jayee Hegde .
7	From speaking with peers, colleagues.
5	From Avi Rappoport
5	Longer ago than I can remember.
4	From articles read in library school 1994 / analyzing OPAC query logs / Information retrieval courses.
4	From Rich Wiggins / Accidental Thesaurus / blog.
3	From usability community blogs and articles.
3	From working on Ultraseek / from Walter Underwood .
3	From Martin Belam's (currybet.net) work at BBC / At BBC.
3	From 2003 IA Summit (forget presenter and university) / 2002 IA Summit / ASIST IA summits.
2	From SIGIA / information architecture community.
2	Interest sparked by Google / Urchin
2	From HP Lab engineers / http://hp.com .
2	At Mondosoft since 2000 / Mondosoft whitepaper.
2	From Step Two Designs report on improving intranet search.
2	From industry conferences / since 1998.
2	Design work on HotBot 7-8 years ago / HotBot.
2	At Yahoo! UK & Ireland / At Yahoo.
2	At JPL.
2	From industry magazines, trade papers, Gartner.
1	From Bill Spence at Information Today.
1	From Verity search rep - wasn't helpful
1	At local agency that did analytics
1	From SEO consultant Will Wydman .

1	From Don Bennett .
1	From Marcia Bates , late 1980s.
1	From WebTrends software.
1	Implementing WebCrawler as Boeing's first intranet search engine.
1	From conversations with search and analytics vendors (unspecified).
1	At http://www.yellowpages.com.au in 1995.
1	Rolled out Google Search Appliance at work and corresponding internal search reporting strategy.
1	At Cisco, since 1997.
1	At the lobby bar at Internet World, 1994.
1	From doctoral advisors, Jean Tague-Sutcliffe , Michael J. Nelson , late 1980s, U of Western Ontario.
1	Over 10 years ago.
1	From discussions with my colleague Maxine Armitage .
1	From Chris Grant / internal to Enlighten experts.
1	From conference talks: 'don't do redesign until you check search logs to find out what people are really looking for.'
1	From following log analysis in the security world, most notably Bruce Schneier's company, Counterpane.
1	From David Larson , the IA at Caterpillar.
1	Being involved in web development since 1995.
1	From <i>Website Measurement Hacks</i> (O'Reilly) ISBN: 0-596-00988-7.
1	At ProQuest Information and Learning.
1	At Wired / Hotwired.com, 1994.
1	At the library where I work.
1	At Kanisa.
1	From recent webinar (Taxonomy community of practice, http://www.earley.com/events.htm).
1	At Stratigent.
1	From Searchtools.com.
1	At Export Development Canada (http://www.edc.ca). Used Omniture's Web Analytic solution.
1	From doing a major customer analytics consulting project for Social Security Administration.

1	From OutSell.
1	At Lycos, 1998-2001. When we acquired Hotwired, we gained even more subject matter expertise and applied it.
1	At AskJeeves UK, as a relevancy manager.
1	From our search vendor, AskJeeves / Knova.
1	As a development producer for two years at the BBC on the http://bbc.co.uk search engine.
1	At Interwoven.
1	At Business.com.
1	Article in <i>Searcher</i> magazine a few years ago.
1	http://www.onlamp.com/pub/a/onlamp/2003/08/21/better_search_engine.html moved me to build a database to view search queries on a small university department website I designed
1	At Moreover.com when we were providing news search to Microsoft.
1	From Jared Spool .
1	From Danny Sullivan .
1	From Peter Morville .
1	From Adaptive Path.
1	From a web metrics ‘chat room’ facilitated by Jim Sterne and Eric Petersen .
1	Zeitgeist 2001.
1	From Clickz.com
1	From CHI presentations by people at eBay.
1	At Digital Equipment, Corp, 1986-94, search engine vocabulary was modified weekly by adding terms from user searches that were mapped into the schema.
1	In 1996 I began market/usability research for Ford’s web sites. I found a site (now forgotten) that did analysis of click patterns, referrals, etc.
1	Work with Jim Novo .
1	From Omniture’s Web Analytics Summit.
1	From Enquiro Search Solutions.

We're surprised at how few people and organizations n analyze their own site's search queries. If you agree, why do you think it's so uncommon? (134 responses total)	
27	Not having or making the time or budget to do the analysis.
24	Lack of easy and popular tools.
23	Tension or incompatibility between those interested in analyzing content (librarians, IAs, usability folks) and IT personnel who could deliver tools or data.
19	Not knowing how illuminating or useful search queries can be.
14	SA is intimidating or overwhelming or dull.
11	Not knowing what or how to analyze / too many choices.
11	Not knowing that search logs can be analyzed to make the search engine or web site more efficient.
10	Not knowing it is possible to analyze search data; not knowing how much reporting is available.
9	The risk of discovering things about your site you don't like or want to know or will have to do.
8	SA requires continuously funding a human being to do the analysis rather than a one-time tool purchase
7	Not wanting to spend time proactively on search if it's working.
7	People don't have information professionals around to educate them / general lack of expertise in the field.
6	With a dynamic system like a search engine (quality differs based on every query), it is hard to gauge the ROI of doing the manual work of analyzing queries.
6	The search system is hidden from the site, set up and then forgotten.
5	DISAGREE
5	Confusion between transaction logging and search logging; doing neither!
4	People are boneheads / bone lazy.
4	People are not held accountable to do it
4	Few organizations think about how others view their content findability, viewing content primarily from an internal POV.
4	Needing to know about the context of the searcher and that might be difficult, or seen to be difficult or disappointing and / or unusual results (of analysis)
4	An attitude that "our search engine is so good that people can always find what they are looking for." / Lack of awareness that site has a search problem, if users don't provide feedback.

4	AGREE - no other data.
4	You need to have a preoccupation with terminology, user behaviour and search optimization to even consider using search logs, which usually requires a lot of effort.
4	Organizations do not consider it important enough to learn how to do it. Most consider their Web sites as necessary, but do not view themselves as Internet businesses.
3	Ignorance of the usability / HCI issues related to search.
3	Search has been an afterthought for most organizations.
3	Management more interested in site hits / unique visitors, CPC performance.
3	Huge gap between what is deemed best practice and what is felt can actually be achieved; varying degrees of SA are carried out.
3	Immaturity of industry / software tools are replaced rather than maintained, monitored and fine-tuned.
3	Poorly implemented or flawed search product.
2	NOT SURE it's frequently used, but is frequently not discussed.
2	PARTIALLY AGREE - depends on the industry. Heavy retail and transaction online properties are more likely to. / Companies starting to pay attention to SA.
2	People focus on the system, not the user.
2	Ignorance about search: knowing system code isn't knowing findability.
2	Privacy issues.
2	Without an integrated, systemic approach to marketing or continuous improvement in an organization, data is examined in isolation.
2	Value of logs only obvious once they have been created; therefore hard to fund / chicken-and-egg problem.
2	My profession (library studies) is not very scientific; SA is very geeky.
2	Marketing personnel, who would most benefit from SA tend to most like to broadcast AT people rather than listen / lack of sophistication in online marketing.
2	No perception of websites as evolving things which need to respond to changing needs to remain relevant.
2	No culture of testing the success of projects; so no interest in finding out where a site might be failing.
2	Analysis tools don't break out queries from the world separately from queries from the site; people don't have a quick breakdown by default of their different query sources.
2	Feeling - rightly or wrongly - that a particular organization doesn't get enough traffic on a site to be able to make reliable measurements.
1	NOT SURE, but never considered SA on our sites. We take care setting them up and are satisfied with functionality, rarely receiving any feedback. If it ain't broke, don't fix it.

1	PARTIALLY AGREE - can only speak from own experience.
1	Too much emphasis on teaching people how to use (library) catalogs; systems should be self-explanatory.
1	Split between business (usability) and IT (building things to spec).
1	Clients are not as excited about including internal search as they used to be, and understand the risks of a flawed or incomplete search system.
1	Systems choose additional user-facing functionality over the ability for non-developers to view logs.
1	UED teams prefer to test on small groups of 'real' people rather than analyze user data.
1	Tools and software can fool the user into thinking analysis should be simple and fast, but that approach leads only to shallow insights of little value.
1	False perception that SA requires additional licenses or an admin to do it; people don't realize they can use the same application to track internal and external traffic.
1	Standard of work in my organisation is mediocre generally.
1	Organizations have no way of placing logs in context: no metrics, no way to differentiate a successful search from unsuccessful one, to analyze the sequence of a single visitor's searches ...
1	Weak or flawed eMetric capabilities.
1	An organization can have a hard time getting buy-in (from different departments within the organization) for what the search parameters should be including.
1	A common misconception is that search data is full of folks not knowing what to look for, or just scanning a site, with no real business interest. Data from that type of casual user dilutes the serious user.
1	(Mistaken) belief that site navigation is the primary way that users find content.
1	SA is not a task that contributes or impacts bottom line business. It's analogous to the legacy IT system that is never improved. The cost of improving it is higher than the potential benefit.
1	If many companies use vendor-hosted search solutions, maybe the vendors are not providing the query logs to their clients?
1	Too obvious.
1	Non-technical managers responsible for outsourcing, design, management of corporate web sites.
1	It takes a focus on language and metrics (not skills usually found in one person).
1	Difference between providing search to generate revenue vs. 'finding stuff'.
1	Sites don't have search engines on them.
1	Well I am surprised because I guess most sites would normally want to depend on existing search engines like Google or MSN to do the searching part for them.

1 Most people think that if you solve for external search that you automatically solve for internal search.

Can you recommend any useful <u>articles, book chapters, or books</u> that are related to analyzing search queries? (115 responses total)	
37	No, I wish I could!
10	<i>A Guide to Analyzing and Optimizing Website Search Engines</i> , by Hurol Inan
5	Spink, A., & Jansen, B. J. (2004). <i>Web Search: Public Searching of the Web</i> . Berlin: Springer.” / Other papers by Spink and Jansen / Papers by Spink.
4	<i>Web Analytics Demystified</i> , by Eric Peterson ; and <i>Web Site Measurement Hacks Hacks #64 & 65</i> ; and <i>The Big Book of Key Performance Indicators</i> , by Eric T. Peterson .
4	Martin Belam’s blog: http://www.currybet.net/articles/audiences/index.php , http://www.currybet.net/articles/day_in_the_life/index.php , http://www.currybet.net/articles/dalek/ , and http://www.currybet.net/articles/fine_tune/index.php
4	Chapter in <i>Information Architecture for the World Wide Web</i> (Louis Rosenfeld, Peter Morville).
3	James Robertson of Step Two Design: http://www.steptwo.com.au/products/search/index.html , http://www.steptwo.com.au/papers/kmc_fixingsearch/index.html , and Step Two Designs report on improving intranet search.
3	Avi Rappoport’s PowerPoint presentation “Search tools for web sites and intranets.” http://www.searchtools.com/
2	<i>Web Metrics</i> , by Jim Sterne
2	There is very little literature out there related to this kind of thing. / It’s still a mix between linguistics and statistics / math. Clustering of queries, disambiguation, content matching etc.
2	SEO books. / There are no good books. Most Search Engine Optimization is marketing based rather than information needs based work.
2	Jared Spool . “Why On-Site Searching Stinks.” http://www.uie.com/articles/search_stinks/ and “Getting Them to What They Want” by Jared Spool and Erik Ojakaar .
2	Ashley Friedlein <i>Maintaining and Evolving Successful Websites</i>
1	Wolfram, D. (2003). <i>Applied informetrics for information retrieval research</i> . Westport, CT: Libraries Unlimited. The focus was not on specifically on data or text mining, but there are common areas of interest between informetrics and data mining.
1	Wolfram, D. (2000). “A Query-Level Examination of End User Searching Behaviour on the Excite Search Engine.” http://www.slis.ualberta.ca/cais2000/wolfram.htm
1	Wolfram, D. (1999). “Term co-occurrence in Internet search engine queries: An analysis of the Excite data set.” <i>Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science</i> . 24(2/3), 12-33.
1	Eric Peterson , <i>Website measurement hacks</i> (O’Reilly) ISBN: 0-596-00988-7

1	Waiting for your book!
1	Vendor material (maybe from WebSideStory who have both search and analytics applications)
1	Training in linguistic theory.
1	This article by Bruce Schneier talks about log analysis - http://www.schneier.com/blog/archives/2004/10/security_inform.html
1	The algorithm by Larry Page to develop the search engine.
1	Steve Arnold books.
1	SIGIR conference proceedings.
1	Search IEEE electronic libraries.
1	Ross, N. C. M., & Wolfram, D. (2000). "End-user searching on the Internet: An analysis of term pair topics submitted to the Excite search engine." <i>Journal of the American Society for Information Science</i> . 51(10), 949-958.
1	Ricardo Baeza-Yates. "Query Usage Mining in Search Engines." In <i>Web Mining: Applications and Techniques</i> , Anthony Scime, editor. Idea Group, 2004, 307--321.
1	Ricardo Baeza-Yates. "Excavating the Web" (in Spanish), <i>El Profesional de la Informaci3n (The Information Professional)</i> 13, Jan/Feb 2004, 1-10.
1	Ricardo Baeza-Yates. "Applications of Web Query Mining." In <i>European Conference on Information Retrieval (ECIR '05)</i> , D. Losada, J. Fernandez-Luna (editors), Springer LNCS 3408, Santiago de Compositely, Spain, March 2005, 7--22.
1	Ricardo Baeza-Yates, Barbara Poblete, "A Website Mining Model Centered on User Queries," <i>European Web Mining Forum</i> , B. Berendt et al, editors. October 2005, Oporto, Portugal, p. 3-15. Revised version to appear in Springer, 2006.
1	Recommend broader research on marketing trends - because you must think about search analytics with a marketing mindset. Sergio Zyman's <i>The End of Marketing as We Know It</i> , for an industry viewpoint on data and its importance to marketing in general.
1	Peter Morville , <i>Ambient Findability</i>
1	Peiling Wang and Dietmar Wolfram are currently working on a nationally funded project examining search query regularities in several environments.
1	Stephen Spainhour and Robert Eckstein , <i>Webmaster in a Nutshell</i>
1	On search query regularities: Wang, P. Berry, M. W., Yang, Y. (2003). "Mining longitudinal Web queries: Trends and patterns." <i>Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology</i> , 54 : 743-758.
1	Mike Kuniavsky , <i>Observing the User Experience</i> .
1	No specific techniques for this task, but encourage people to read some of the research literature, particularly that on categorising different search tasks.
1	Mondosoft whitepaper

1	Latest Forrester report on enterprise search: http://www.forrester.com/Research/Document/Excerpt/0,7211,38355,00.html
1	Jansen, B. J. Forthcoming. Search log analysis: What is it; what's been done; how to do it. Library and Information Science Research. http://ist.psu.edu/faculty_pages/jjansen/academic/pubs/jansen_tla_02.pdf
1	InfoWorld article back in 1997 about how IBM redesigned its search engine in response to an analysis of search terms.
1	http://www.ultraseek.com/articles/archives/2005/06/relevance_and_u.html
1	http://www.steptwo.com.au/papers/cmb_searchreports/index.html and http://www.steptwo.com.au/papers/cmb_bestbets/index.html and http://www.steptwo.com.au/papers/cmb_searchmagic/index.html
1	http://www.marketingsherpa.com/barrier.cfm?contentID=2596
1	http://www.enterprisesearchcenter.com
1	http://www.econtentmag.com/Articles/ArticleReader.aspx?CategoryID=18&ArticleID=6877 http://www.econtentmag.com/Articles/ArticleReader.aspx?ArticleID=14886&CategoryID=18 and http://www.econtentmag.com/Articles/ArticleReader.aspx?ArticleID=14538&ContextSubtypeID=12
1	General reading: <i>Information Today's</i> publications, <i>Outsell's</i> , <i>ASIS&T's</i> , etc. Don Kraft is (was?) the editor of <i>JASIS&T</i> .
1	Gregg Notess. "Search engine showdown: The Users' guide to web searching" http://www.searchengineshowdown.com/
1	Danny Sullivan , ed. <i>Search engine watch: The Source for search engines marketing.</i> http://searchenginewatch.com/
1	<i>Clickstream Data Warehousing</i> - 0-471-08377-1 and <i>Search Engine Marketing, Inc</i> - 0-13-185292-2
1	C. J. van Rijsbergen. <i>Information Retrieval.</i> 2nd edition. London: Butterworth, 1979. http://www.dcs.gla.ac.uk/Keith/Preface.html
1	As a great explanation of information theory and a thrilling read on the information research in the fertile world of Bell Labs, I loved <i>Silicon Dreams: Information, Man, and Machine</i> by Robert Lucky , a Bell Labs veteran.
1	Any book that discusses information theory will discuss Zipf curves, which are a great concept for understanding search behavior.
1	Ajiferuke, I., Wolfram, D., & Famoye, F. (2006). "Sample size and informetric model goodness-of-fit outcomes: A search engine log case study." <i>Journal of Information Science</i> , 32(3), 212-222.

Ajferuke, I., & Wolfram, D. (2004). "Informetric modeling of Internet search and
1 browsing characteristics." *Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science*, 28(1), 1-
16.

Can you recommend any useful <u>web sites or other web-based resources</u> that are related to analyzing search queries? (111 responses total)	
29	No, I wish I could!
9	http://searchenginewatch.com/individualblogs on searchenginewatch.com
5	The Web Analytics Association: http://www.webanalyticsassociation.org/ section: Using Internal Search as a Marketing Tool.
4	I remember Avi Rappoport defining some good things to measure in your blog! http://louisrosenfeld.com/home/bloug_archive/000222.html and 000290.html .
4	clickz.com / Bryan Eisenberg articles on ClickZ / http://www.clickz.com/experts/crm/analyze_data/article.php/3590841
3	http://webmasterworld.com
3	http://www.kaushik.net/avinash - see right navigation, with links to other Analytics folks. / http://www.kaushik.net/avinash/2006/06/top-ten-signs-you-are-a-great-analyst.html
3	Actually analysing search logs itself / doing activities like personas, mental models and other such research tends to lend itself to suggesting ideas and solutions.
2	Folks at WebTrends, Google Analytics, Omniture, commerce search / categorized search. Recommend soliciting them in return for mention in the book for studies done, etc.
2	http://searchtools.com/ / http://www.searchtools.com/slides/ess05/search-log-analysis.htm
2	Step Two's report : "Improving Intranet Search" http://www.steptwo.com.au/products/search/index.html
2	Use Hitwise.com to compare internet keyword trends to my site's search queries to find what's unique about my site, my customers, and how their expectations of search are changing / HitWise blogs.
2	http://www.ideaeng.com claims to be experts but work only with the big Information Retrieval tools like Verity and FAST / http://www.ideaeng.com/optimize/?source=google&query=track
2	http://www.stratigent.com has done some focused work on search analytics. http://www.stratigent.com/Web%20Analytics/ossnewsletter.php
2	http://SEMPO.org
2	http://www.google.com/support and http://www.google.com/press/zeitgeist.html
1	scattered
1	Vivisimo's site.
1	Web Analytics @ Digital Web Magazine: http://www.digital-web.com/topics/web-analytics/

1	http://www.kottke.org/03/02/weblogs-and-power-laws
1	http://wwwconf.ecs.soton.ac.uk/archive/00000563/
1	http://www.infotoday.com/searcher/oct02/wiggins.htm
1	http://www.tbray.org/ongoing/When/200x/2003/07/30/OnSearchTOC and in particular, http://www.tbray.org/ongoing/When/200x/2003/11/13/ResultRanking
1	http://www.deyalexander.com.au/resources/uxd/search-logs.html
1	http://www.freepint.com/issues/080905.htm#tips http://www.iawiki.net/BestBets
1	http://www.unc.edu/~fergusje/instructions/search_term_frequency.html
1	http://pandia.com
1	Attend SIGIR06 to pick the brains of the world's leading IR researchers.
1	Mondosoft
1	Most Web sites are either superficial or trying to sell a service. Pulling this work away from SEO might help its legitimacy. Offer a chance to win a free book for taking the survey?
1	Interview with Usama Fayyad - Chief Data Officer at Yahoo. It looks like Yahoo is doing Analytics Gone Wild: http://www.kdnuggets.com/news/2005/n20/3i.html
1	No. Search behavior is swayed by context and nature. If I can't use emetrics or understand / recognize user patterns, no website, consultant or software will be able to solve my problem.
1	http://www.nrel.gov/interlab/interlab02/docs/marsha_luevane.ppt shows what we did with search log info. Steps 11 and 12 pertain to search log analysis. PS-the 'geothermal cars' search on slide 26 always gets a laugh.
1	http://adaptivepath.com/publications/reports/search
1	An excellent discussion on why less is more can be found here: http://www.itconversations.com/shows/detail252.html
1	http://www.targeting.com/
1	http://www.asist.org and their virtual library at Wiley / proceedings of ASIS&T Information Architecture summits.
1	http://www.boxesandarrows.com/view/four_modes_of_seeking_information_and_how_to_design_for_them#comment_2754
1	Jared Spool often addresses the role of search in UX. Not always about search queries, but about search as a part of overall UX: http://www.uie.com/brainsparks/2005/12/07/scent-search-user-happiness/
1	We have been looking at some of the content analysis, and concept clustering tools (InXight, Attensity, others) in the context of getting a better handle on the language used for search.

1	http://www.owen.vanderbilt.edu/mike.shor/diversions/analog/ and http://www.science.co.il/analog/ have a list of referrer templates for parsing out search terms.
1	http://battellemedia.com/ and http://www.mkbergman.com/ and http://glinden.blogspot.com/ and http://blog.outer-court.com/
1	There is a big visual analytics movement now in the homeland security realm, but they don't look at web log file analysis.
1	Perhaps looking into semantic search analysis tools may take us to the next level of understanding meaning more than single-thoughts.
1	ResourceShelf.
1	IBM SEM tool.
1	http://www.outsource2india.com/webanalytics/search-analytics.asp
1	http://www.isys-search.com/solutions/functionalapps/searchanalytics/index.html
1	Yahoo! Buzz http://uk.dir.yahoo.com/buzz/
1	Analytics companies.
1	http://www.reddit.com often has interesting articles on Google and MSN.
1	http://e-consultancy.com
1	Info access vendors. think WCC is very interesting. http://www.wcc-group.com variety of content types, biometric as well as structured to unstructured.
1	http://manojjasra.blogspot.com/2006/06/internal-search-websidestory.html and http://www.websidestory.com/company/news-events/press-releases/view-release.html?id=340 .
1	http://www.webpronews.com/expertarticles/expertarticles/wpn-62-20060719MeasuringVisitorEngagementandBehavior.html

Miscellaneous responses

A number of respondents mentioned that they read through query terms and draw high-level conclusions, or do some very rudimentary programming or scripting to get at what they want.

Does 'site search' include intranets?

A few things that may help change this trend (of not doing SA) are (1) a processing system that groups concepts / ideas to give marketing a feel for generally what is popular by subject area and (2) demonstrated ROI on the use of this data to better target content and services online (3) an increasing focus on the 'science' of marketing and the importance of data in the works for the past 5 years or so now.

The biggest lesson learned (in implementing an analytic tool) was that without organizing the enterprises' content, an analytic tool added little value. The results for search simply returned everything and most documentation was outdated with no version control on working documents. It also illustrated the point that finding information online was extremely difficult and taxing for the end user.

Liked your discussion of using the term search analytics - and based on poor quality of early search log analysis, I'd go with the newer term and hopefully better integration and understanding of real search behavior.

I know more individuals who do it (SA) out of curiosity than organizations who do it for business reasons.

I think it's a natural extension if you've ever done any SEO and analyzed how the public is getting to your site and what they are most commonly searching for.

Through my frustrating experience with search development, I became interested in IA and eventually, targeted content delivery. Now I think that the ideal state for enterprise search is to have content come to the user based on attributes such as role, organization, task, and other tags that tell us about the individual and what they are doing.

I think that search optimization efforts would need to use this (SA) data and create a process in which the task is fully supported to help us understand how people think about information and navigation, but perhaps it may also help us understand a user's level of patience with results.

More firms are outsourcing some of the actionable aspects of their internet presence with regard to what actions should be taken based on web analytics data. For example, PPC search campaign management, keyword discovery, landing page testing and site architecture reviews.

For a long time people didn't understand the importance of search, but now they expect Google to have everything covered anyway. There has been a big chunk of education missed in the middle there.

The SES Latino show in Miami last week showed how the Hispanic market was less likely to use such data.

I was building a website for a client who was using an internal search engine that allowed him to set meta tags on individual pages to control the results. But he was not allowing standard spidered results, ONLY those manually chosen via the hand-entered meta tags. I convinced him to follow the hand-manipulated results by spidered results, so that searchers weren't penalized if they put in terms that weren't in the meta tags. After this I started looking at the internal search queries, and using them in our keyword choices.