

Internet Research Problems ¹

RESOLVING RESEARCH PROBLEMS ON THE INTERNET
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PURPOSE: While the Internet may assist the researcher to resolve many problems, not everything can be solve by the Internet. This seminar has been established to assist those involved in family history research to resolve problems, or to recognize when the problem can not be resolved.

STEPS OF EFFECTIVE RESEARCH — Research is a personal and unique experience. Each research project is unique because of the information being reviewed, the results of the initial inquiry, and the information needed by the researcher. The personal preferences of each researcher will determine the scope of the project. Based upon these differences, the basic steps necessary to complete a research project are:

1. Determine what you HAVE.
2. Organize and Review – Determine PROBLEMS and CONCERNS.
3. Determine NEEDS, WANTS, and DESIRES.
4. Determine where the information can be FOUND.
5. LOOK.
6. Evaluate the RESULTS.
7. LOOK Again.
8. Let the SPIRIT be your GUIDE.
9. Remember, the desired information MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE.

BASIC INTERNET RESEARCH: USING SEARCH ENGINES. For the most part, basic Internet research involves the use of search engines. There are many, many search engine, each which may find different information. There are basic and advanced types of searches on each site. Understand what can be found, and what is available is the first step to effective use of search engines.

A Basic Tutorial on Searching the Web
<http://www.sc.edu/beaufort/library/bones.html>

A Consumer's Guide to Search Engines
<http://www.imagescape.com/helpweb/www/seek.html>

Employing Traditional Research Techniques on the Web
<http://www.llrx.com/columns/flash.htm>

Archival Research Techniques & Skills
<http://www.arts-scheme.co.uk/studenthome.htm>

Research Technique Notes
<http://www.hiraeth.com/alan/topics/res-tech/res-notes.html>

Searching the Internet / University Libraries, University at Albany.
<http://library.albany.edu/internet/searchnet.html>

BASIC Genealogy Search Guidelines for using Search Engines: Once there is an understanding of search engines and how they can be used, it is necessary to apply them to genealogical research. To accomplish the implementation, it is recommended that each family history research project begin with the following steps:

1. Search the SURNAME in the various search engines – use special words to limit results. A single word (name) will result in too many sites to be able to review them all. It is recommended that additional (multiple) words be included in the search (i.e. “Moore genealogy” rather than “Moore”). To search a phrase, include the phrase within quotation marks (“ ”). Follow up with searching TOPICS and other KEY WORDS to find pertinent information.
2. Review PRIMARY RESEARCH SITES – [FamilySearch](#), [Cyndi's List](#), [USGenWeb](#). These sites will provide a vast array of information which can assist in the research process.
3. Commercial Sites / DATABASES – There are many commercial genealogy sites which provide access to extensive databases. Many of these have indexes which can provide access to their databases. While there may be a charge to access these databases, the fee is generally nominal and the results may be well worth the cost. CAVEAT: Be careful not to duplicate databases. Many sites may contain the same information and may not provide access to new information.

INTERMEDIATE INTERNET GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH, Looking Above and Beyond: Many sites have information which can give you directions and/or support the information you have found. These sites, while not primary genealogical research sites, may provide valuable information. Information may not be consistently available, but can provide information which may lead to in other directions.

Second Generation Searching the Web
<http://library.albany.edu/internet/second.html>

Four NETS for Better Searching
<http://webquest.sdsu.edu/searching/fournets.htm>

Alternate Sites: Non-Genealogy Sites:

Newspapers: <http://www.newspapers.com/index.htm>

Utah Digital Newspapers: <http://www.lib.utah.edu/digital/unews/>

Magazines: <http://www.metagrid.com/>

Government: <http://www.firstgov.gov/> ; <http://www.fedworld.gov/>

State Government: <http://library.stmarytx.edu/acadlib/doc/us/states/>

Historical Data

US Historical Census Data Browser: <http://fisher.lib.virginia.edu/census/>

History Pages: <http://www.historyplace.com/>

<http://www.historychannel.com/>

http://www.hyperhistory.com/online_n2/History_n2/a.html

Language Translation & Geographical Sources: Importance to understand specific words which doing genealogical research, together with the translation of web pages and information when researching a country which speaks a foreign language.

<http://babel.altavista.com/tr>

<http://www.freetranslation.com/>

<http://www.cooklib.org/Genealogy/2geography.htm>

Land Records – usually the oldest and most complete source of historical data.

Land Records Reference: <http://users.rcn.com/deeds/landref.htm>

Land Records Database: <http://userdb.rootsweb.com/landrecords/>

On-Line Databases / Original Sources

Public Records Research System: <http://www.brpub.com/>

Repositories of Primary Sources:

<http://www.uidaho.edu/special-collections/Other.Repositories.html>

Archival Internet Resources:

<http://www.tulane.edu/~lmiller/ArchivesResources.html>

INTERMEDIATE Genealogy Search Guidelines

1. Determine special AREAS OF INTEREST. There are many different web sites, many of which are devoted to very specific topics. Consider the ancestor's occupation; how they traveled; whether they were members of fraternal organization, and their military service. Religious and ethics organization are major places of interest.
2. Review the HISTORICAL BACKGROUND for the city, county, and country, together with historical factors which may have affected the family, business, or travel. It is often helpful to review any historical data about the area people resided. Many times this information is found on government web sites. Pay special attention to very early settler in the area. Even if they are not relatives, a web site devoted to this individual may yield interesting information. BIOGRAPHIES are often filled with information and contacts with other individuals.
3. Determine whether there are any ORIGINAL RECORDS or SPECIAL kinds of information available. The Internet is now in its third³ phase of development which now provides extensive information not previously available. During this time, many original records can be accessed.

ADVANCE INTERNET GENEALOGICAL RESEARCH, the Invisible Web: The Internet is expanding and growing at an ever increasing rate. Each day, thousands of pages are added to the Internet. It has grown and developed in way never envisioned by those who created it. As the Internet grows there are pages and sites which are not normally available or discovered through regular search engines. This "hidden web" must be reviewed and may hold data and information pertinent to genealogical research.

Searching "Outside the Box" / Finding the "Hidden Web"

Milner Library Searching the Internet:

<http://www.mlb.ilstu.edu/ressubj/subject/intrnt/search.htm>

The Invisible Web Revealed:

http://library.rider.edu/scholarly/rlackie/Invisible/Inv_Web.html

Uncovering the Hidden Web: <http://teachers.net/gazette/JUL02/eric.html>

What is the Invisible Web: <http://websearch.about.com/library/weekly/aa061203a.htm>

<http://websearch.about.com/library/weekly/aa061903a.htm>

Book: The Hidden Web: Finding Quality Information:

<http://www.unswpress.com.au/isbn/0868405663.htm>

Library Historical Archives:

Scholarly Family History Mega Site of World Wide Internet Resources

<http://www.dcn.davis.ca.us/~vctinney/homepage.htm>

Weeding Through "the Results"

http://www.adelaidehs.sa.edu.au/ahsintranet/Teachers/lq_web/effective_searching_techniques.htm

Your search returns too many hits ...

Make your search strategy more specific - add more terms, or a narrower term

Use quotation marks to limit your search to an exact phrase

Use Boolean operators **and**, **or** and **not**

Use the advanced search option if available
Read the search engine tips

Tips for Searching the Web: <http://www.neci.nec.com/~lawrence/searchtips.html>

ERIC – Educational Resources Information Center, a USA government organisation. The database is international in scope and covers material published from 1966 to present.

<http://library.canterbury.ac.nz/tutorial/eric/lesson1.shtml>

Advanced Web Searching:

<http://www.learnthenet.com/english/html/77advanc.htm>

<http://www.lib.washington.edu/business/classes/elpadvanced.html>

<http://www.thelearningsite.net/cyberlibrarian/searching/ismain.html>

Interpreting Search Results: <http://www.google.com/help/interpret.html>

Looking for the unobvious.

<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet/FacSem.html>

<http://earthlink.ancestry.com/library/view/ancmag/629.asp>

<http://www.quick.org.uk/menu.htm>

ADVANCED Genealogy Search Guidelines:

1. Keep FOCUSED. While using the Internet to expand your family history records can be interesting and rewarding, it can also be frustrating. Don't lose sight of what you are looking for and clues to help you find it.
2. Be CREATIVE. Expand your horizons. There is a lot of information out there. It is important to keep searching.
3. Keep ORGANIZED. The Internet is not just called the "web" because it sounds nice. There are many different ways to get to the same location. Avoiding duplication is essential. Only through a good system of record keeping can you verify whether you have been there before.

END NOTES

1. This presentation supports classroom instruction. The seminar has been established to assist attendees to resolve various problems they have encountered in their genealogical research. The Internet is a great resource for family history information. While not every problem can be solved by using the Internet, many situations can be improved. Student may email specific problems to requests@dwmoore.com. Each request will be reviewed in class. While no promises are made, we will review each problem and make suggestions, if possible.
2. This syllabus is available either on our web site (<http://www.dwmoore.com/gen.html>) or on a cd-rom which can be obtained by contacting the instructor. The cd-rom is a compilation of various syllabuses and other information available on the above referenced web site, including "Technology of Elijah" in both the graphic and non-graphic version. Adobe Reader is necessary to review the information.
3. The **first** phase of Internet development was the early years with its establishment by universities and government agencies. During this time, research was conducted and made available to other educational facilities and government agencies who funded the project. To help facilitate this process, email was created. The **second** phase of the Internet was the creation and expansion of the World Wide Web. Graphic interfaces, known as browsers were established, email was expanded, and business saw the economic power obtained from the Internet. The **third** phase of the Internet has seen it mature into a vast data resource. Government agencies have developed the Internet into a vast database of historical, economic, and geographical information.