

Re: now ~CT-infested -- Re: Q: For Sy Liebergot (Yeah, it's new safe CT-free topic fodder!)

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Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.space.history/2005-05/msg00589.html>

- *From:* Andrew Gray <andrew.gray@xxxxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* 8 May 2005 20:17:17 GMT
-

On 2005-05-08, Stuf4 <tdadamemd-spamblock-@xxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

>> Yeah. Is NASA's job to get Google, or Yahoo, or Inktomi, or whoever,
> to
>> crawl it's material? Nope. NASA's job is to get that material
> published.
>> Last I checked, it was published.
>
> The issue was regarding *how* NASA published it. Here is the link for
> "NASA Documents Online":

(...)

I do honestly think you mis-understand how the publication of material works. Once it's put up, that's NASA's job done. They aren't reasonably expected by anyone to make sure it gets crawled, or scraped, or anything of the form – if someone who wants to find it finds it, their job is done.

And as is shown below, that someone can.

>> I never suggested someone "do a search". There are other ways to
>> extract information.
>
> ...and those ways are more difficult and take more effort. They
> introduce a certain amount of resistance in the flow of information.

I pity the librarian who has to deal with you, really I do.

> But you have made it quite clear that you do not share a desire to have
> the Apollo 13 report made available in more accessible format.

I think you may be projecting the desires you would like me to have, here.

> – In order to open the pdf document, you first have to know that the
> report exists, that it is available in pdf, and at what site it is
> available at.

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>

> Books are very 20th century. Indexes worked ok in the 20th century.

> But I'm sure we can agree that we've progressed way beyond that.

You'd be amazed how few professionals in the field actually believe that; the assumption that "everything can be digital" is at best currently a minority one, and most of the time is blatant handwaving.

The digital revolution has happened and rolled through for journal literature; it's hovering for most grey lit. Books are waiting for someone to find the key to making them comfortably usable – and no-one really knows what that key will be. I expect the revolution will have happened before too long – before my children ever have to use a university library, say – but it sure as hell hasn't happened yet.

(And I say that as someone who's worked at a place in the forefront of digital and off-site provision; even there, the electronic provision of a chapter of a single specific book was still a project that anyone I mentioned it to recognised)

Books may, and likely will, be obsoleted for some roles. It just hasn't really happened yet, outside of certain specific niches. (and none of those niches are really "35-year-old greylit"; it's the regular-updating stuff where the work is, serials and ephemera and the like)

>> Because, Lord knows, anyone who wants to do moderately detailed
>> research into Apollo 13 wouldn't ever have thought to go looking for
>> a copy of the accident report.

>

> Perhaps here you (or someone else) would like to demonstrate the
> minimum number of steps it might take for someone who has never seen
> the report to get to this one page (or a website with similar info):

>

> <http://history.nasa.gov/ap13rb/ap13index.htm>

Sure. As it so happens, I spent quite a bit of time being taught how to train people in doing just this sort of thing...

Our hypothetical researcher wants to read something formal about Apollo 13. She doesn't know of the existence of the Commission (although it wouldn't have been hard to do so with some background reading) but she is marginally competent at using Google. So what do we need? We need to plan the search. (Because, of course, just throwing in keywords isn't that helpful – it's not psychic)

First, obviously, our search term is looking for Apollo 13:

["apollo 13"]

Some kind of formal publication. Hmm. "report" is usually a good term.

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["apollo 13" report]

It's NASA, right? If it's hosted by them, it must be the reliable version:

["apollo 13" report site:nasa.gov]

The URL for that search (removing the []s) is:

<http://www.google.com/search?q=%22apollo+13%22+report+site:nasa.gov>

The exact site you stipulated is #2, and it seems clear from the title that it's probably what she'd be looking for, even though she didn't originally know the name.

(Alternately, five minutes reading around would tell her about the Commission, and plugging [Cortright Commission] into Google gives you that page as the first hit. But that was outside the scope of your question.)

Certainly the search above is what I'd have told a student who came to me to do; helped them work through the choice of terms, even. But, to coin a phrase, it's not rocket science.

> And it's become quite clear that the vocal majority of this forum does > not share any desire to "see that fixed".

I think the majority of this forum is torn between being amused by the foot you have in your mouth, and a desire that you remove it in order that you can *close* said mouth...

>> (And on the matter of being bothered to read things, some indication >> that you'd noticed the 300-line answer to your complaints about bad >> documentation of abort decisions might not go amiss. Even if you just >> searched through it...)

>

> I read your post the day that you posted it. If you are impatient with > my lack of reply to date, I suggest you try engaging in a discussion > where you hold one position and dozens of people argue against that. > There are certain limits to one person's time and energy.

Oh, please don't bother responding to it; I've decided I don't agree with half my numbers in there anyway, and hopefully will re-analyse it over the summer. :-)

But I hope it will stop you complaining about ill-documentation; the decisions seemed well enough documented post-flight to me.

And now I think I had best stop posting to this thread; I have a mounting pile of work to hand, and time spent on this is time I can ill-afford. (Someone do slap me if I relapse, please...)

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—Andrew Gray
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• **Follow-Ups:**

- ◆ **Re: now ~CT-infested -- Re: Q: For Sy Liebergot (Yeah, it's new safe CT-free topic fodder!)**
 ◇ From: Scott Hedrick
- ◆ **Re: now ~CT-infested -- Re: Q: For Sy Liebergot (Yeah, it's new safe CT-free topic fodder!)**
 ◇ From: Stuf4

• **References:**

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 ◇ From: Stuf4
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- ◆ **Re: now ~CT-infested -- Re: Q: For Sy Liebergot (Yeah, it's new safe CT-free topic fodder!)**
 ◇ From: Rusty
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- ◆ **Re: now ~CT-infested -- Re: Q: For Sy Liebergot (Yeah, it's new safe CT-free topic fodder!)**
 ◇ From: Pat Flannery
- ◆ **Re: now ~CT-infested -- Re: Q: For Sy Liebergot (Yeah, it's new safe CT-free topic fodder!)**
 ◇ From: Jorge R. Frank
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- Prev by Date: *Re: Starry Night*
- Next by Date: *Re: now ~CT-infested -- Re: Q: For Sy Liebergot (Yeah, it's new safe CT-free topic fodder!)*
- Previous by thread: *Re: now ~CT-infested -- Re: Q: For Sy Liebergot (Yeah, it's new safe CT-free topic fodder!)*
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- Index(es):
 - ◆ *Date*
 - ◆ *Thread*