

Enhanced Basic Search

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1. MOTIVATION

The basic idea is to combine the ease of use of basic search with some semantics with the help of autocomplete and some other interaction techniques.

Basic premises:

- users would always prefer to use basic search unless there are special circumstances that would require them to use other type of search (advanced or facet).
- one of the reason why basic search is popular is because it requires almost no learning curve. In fact, ease of use is the number one reason why this type of search is used, this trend will likely not change.
- users already have specific meaning in mind when typing certain query word(s). but this information is lost in the search process because of the input interface, thus leaving the system to make guesses and just do a syntactic match on all exact literal match.

2. SOLUTION

Enhanced basic search is basic search with several extra interaction functionality that improves query specification with out sacrificing ease of use.

Type of enhancements:

- autocomplete
- watermark template
- pull down menu to let users specify their search mode, thus specifying the watermark template.

The key to this interface is to give a certain "template" query. Whenever a user specify that he is looking for a "place", "person", "object", "document", "homepage", the templates changes accordingly, leaving the users to insert the information he knows on the right template.

There may well be a case when the "property" is too many or unspecified before hand. in this case there should be a category "<other>", and let the users either specified it if he wants to or just treat it as a string.

Acknowledgements: this blue note was inspired by various working autocompletions out there.

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Looking for:

a place ▾ <place type><area code> Search

Looking for:

a place ▾ <Al><area code> Search

Alcatraz
Alaska

Looking for:

a place ▾ <Alaska><9960> Search

99602
99603

Looking for:

a person ▾ <first name><last name> Search

Looking for:

a person ▾ <Alia><Ami> Search

Amin
Amit

Figure 1: The Enhanced Basic Search