Search solutions 2016, tutorial proposal submission

Name of presenters: Paul Clough (University of Sheffield) and Martin White (Intranet Focus Ltd)

Title: Enterprise search evaluation – good practice in action

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Tutorial Abstract: Search is a core component in many applications, including in the enterprise. Central to developing and managing search systems are questions of evaluation. After all, without evaluation we cannot quantify the performance of a search system or its value to end users and service providers. Although there has been a significant amount if research into the evaluation of information systems and search applications the outcomes are often not scalable to enterprise situations where there are a range of search applications, complex user requirements and constraints on staff resources. This tutorial will provide an overview of approaches commonly used to evaluate search systems with particular focus on the enterprise. We are developing an evaluation framework that combines the best of academic research with the realities of enterprise search management. At this workshop we will present the framework that offers practice guidance on enterprise search evaluation and gather feedback from delegates for peer review and enhancement.

Type of tutorial: Half day

Target audience: This tutorial will be aimed at people involved with the management of internal search applications, including managers of enterprise search systems, ICT staff, and anyone responsible for quantifying the success of a search solution or service in the enterprise. The tutorial will be accessible from people with a range of backgrounds and no prior knowledge is assumed or necessary.

Learning outcomes: This tutorial will provide delegates with a grounding in the core elements of information systems and search evaluation, give them the ability to contribute their experience to the development of a novel approach to search evaluation that we are developing, and provide an opportunity to test out a beta version of the framework in their own organisations.

Outline of tutorial: The tutorial will take the following structure (assuming 3 hours and allowing 30 minutes for breaks – this will need to fit with existing schedules):

The tutorial will open (30 minutes) with PC providing an overview of the most important information systems and search evaluation models. MW will then look at the challenges faced by search managers (20mins) in optimizing the resources spent on search evaluation without compromising the veracity of the outcomes. There will then be a round-table session that gives delegates a chance to exchange views on how they currently evaluate search applications. (30 mins). After a (20 mins) break PC and MW will then co-present the framework they have been developing for enterprise search evaluation. (30 minutes). The model will be open to review and comment from delegates (40 mins). There will then be a final session to integrate the comments into the next version of the framework, which will then be offered to delegates for a period of testing.

Tutorial description: This tutorial aims to provide a practical and accessible introduction to evaluation of search in the enterprise for people involved with the management of internal search applications. We aim to provide delegates with a practical approach to evaluation in the enterprise that is based on existing tried and tested evaluation methodologies. Parts of the tutotial will be based on a lecture given by PC to postgraduate students from the Information School as part of an introductory lecture on Information Retrieval. This also formed the basis of the Search Solutions 2015 tutorial by PC on search evaluation that attracted a maximum number of delegates, thereby highlighing the importance of the topic. (Further details see description above.)

Bio of presenters:
Paul Clough is Professor in Information Retrieval at the Information School, University of Sheffield. He received a B.Eng. (hons) degree in Computer Science from the University of York in 1998 and a Ph.D. from the University of Sheffield in 2002. Prior to joining Sheffield he worked for British Telecommunications Plc.

His research interests mainly revolve around developing technologies to assist people with accessing and managing information. In particular Paul has published work in the areas of multilingual information retrieval, information access to digital cultural heritage, evaluation of IR systems, geo-spatial search, text-based image retrieval, plagiarism detection, text re-use, and search analytics. Paul is co-author of a book on multilingual information retrieval and contributed to over 100 peer-reviewed publications. He is head of the Information Retrieval group at Sheffield and Programme Coordinator for a new MSc in Data Science. Paul has been lecturing at Sheffield for over 10 years and most recently gave a tutorial at the European Summer School in Information Retrieval (ESSIR) 2013 on multilingual search and a keynote at the Forum for Information Retrieval Evaluation (FIRE) 2014 in Bangalore.

Martin White, Managing Director, Intranet Focus Ltd., is an intranet, enterprise search and information management strategy consultant, founding Intranet Focus Ltd in 1999. An information scientist by profession he has been a Visiting Professor at the Information School, the University of Sheffield since 2002. He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Chemistry (RSC) in 2006 for his work in information management for the pharmaceutical industry and was a member of the RSC Publications Board from 2006 to 2015. Martin is also a Member of the British Computer Society and the Association for Computing Machinery (USA), and is an Honorary Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals. Martin has written books on information consultancy, the selection of content management software, intranet management and managing enterprise search applications. In October 2015 the second edition of Enterprise Search – Enhancing Business Performance was published by O'Reilly Media. He has been a member of the editorial board of the International Journal of Information Management since 1999. Martin writes a monthly column on enterprise search for CMSWire. Over the last five years he has been a key-note speaker at conferences in the USA, Canada, the UK, France, Germany, Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, and Australia.

Relevant publications/articles

Clough, P. and Sanderson, M. (2013) Evaluating the performance of information retrieval systems using test collections, Information Research, Volume 18(2), paper 582.

White, M. (2015) Enterprise search: enhancing business performance (2nd Ed), O'Reilly. http://shop.oreilly.com/product/0636920035657.do