

The River Cities DAILY TRIBUNE

'Living In a Tech World' Column

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New Ways to Search Our Tech World

When my kids were young we would venture out for a family meal but because I can be indecisive I wouldn't pick a destination but just drive until something looked like what we wanted. My kids would moan, "This isn't going to be another In Search Of trip is it?" I still love going 'In Search of' to see what is out there but now I do it more on my computer.

I think it is fair to say that without Google, the Internet would not be the great tool it is. But long before Google, Yahoo started as the preeminent search website. Actually it was not so much search as a catalog of websites. As you can see in this original 1996 yahoo page (<http://web.archive.org/web/19961017235908/http://www2.yahoo.com/>) all you could do is narrow down to a subject. This was done by the founders in their dorm room and eventually by volunteers. But since then, many have built true search engines. There are general search services, Meta search services (which allow you to search more than one search engine at a time) and many specific subject search sites. I have bookmarks for 52 that I could count easily, though I know I have some others saved under specific subjects. I've picked a few of the more unique ones to share with you.

Cataloged Search

Under the "more things change the more they stay the same category", you should visit **All My Faves** (<http://www.allmyfaves.com/>) which is reminiscent of the original Yahoo. This is the site to use when you know the subject but don't have a specific keyword in mind. The first page is a matrix of website icons. Down the left side is the subject such as News, Travel, Games, and Magazines - 45 in all. Each subject then has 10-12 websites to choose from. At the top of the page, tabs take you deeper into a subject. For instance, the Entertainment tab takes you to 26 subjects that include TV show websites broken down into type of show. If you are in an exploring mood, you can go to the Weekly Faves which are the new finds that may be any subject. It is a great discovery tool.

Music Sites

I am a big music fan with a wide taste in music. If you like discovering new artists or just want some different music take a look at these two, **Musicplasma.com** (<http://www.musicplasma.com/>) and Musiccovery.com (<http://www.musiccovery.com/>). At musicplasma you enter the name of an artist or band and it charts that musician's influential artists. You get back a map of those who were influences and those influenced. At musiccovery.com you create a radio station based on your mood. A gadget on the site allows you put in your relative mood from calm to energetic and from dark to positive.

(More)

Then you choose one or all of 20 genres of music, classical to funk, and you get a colorful interconnected chart of songs and artists. You can sit back and listen or pick the songs you want to hear. If you register you can customize the experience.

Paranoid Search

If privacy is an issue be aware that Google catalogs every search you make by your IP address. If you don't like that you can use **Ixquick Metasearch** (<http://www.ixquick.com/>). This site searches using 9 search engines and returns well organized lists and does not index your IP address. Since Google is one of the search engines used its returns are similar and in some cases I have thought more on target.

Travel Search

If you have done any travel planning online you know the basic fare search engines; Yahoo, Orbitz, Expedia and the others. Next time you may want to try **Kayak.com** (<http://www.kayak.com/>). They search 140 sites at once. You put in the same familiar information (*origination, destination, dates*) and get back your options. You can also request the results be compared by the sites they originated from. You can also search for hotels and rental cars as well as Deals.

Searching is probably the most generally used tool on the Internet. If you want some other suggestions including the best site to do an authoritative search of a subject go to our website and click on today's column. Or search for 'search engines' and see where it takes you.

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