



**AT A GLANCE:** Is Search or Enterprise Search the answer to the ever-accelerating expansion of electronic information?

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Q Daring to Go Where No Search Engine Has Gone Before

Search

# Enterprise Search:

## Daring to Go Where No Search Engine Has Gone Before

Depending on who you talk to, the power of Search has been overestimated or underestimated, coming into its own, or on the way out. At the same time, the need for a tool that will allow law firms and lawyers to find what they need when they need it has grown exponentially as information has expanded. The expansion of information continues to accelerate as new electronic publications, Web sites, and databases are created. Given that growth, is Search or Enterprise Search the answer?

### Yesterday and Today

In the mid 90's, law firms had access to Westlaw®, Lexis, Dialog, and a few CD-ROMs that may or may not have worked effectively on their networks. Today, the landscape is entirely different, with Westlaw, Lexis, Dialog, CCH, BNA, various SEC services, multiple public records services, numerous patent and trademark services, various company information services, and hundreds of individual sources that have moved to electronic format. In the 90's, law firms used

Word or WordPerfect and possibly e-mail. They also used accounting software, with records management and conflict modules that came with systems they had purchased. HR may have used a database for tracking employees and payroll, and document management may have been deployed in some firms.

Today, law firms operate with office suites and accounting, document management, HR, conflicts, docketing, CRM, litigation support, records management, case management, and knowledge management

systems. As more information-based systems have come into being, the need to search and retrieve information has been expected and, to some extent, accomplished. As more systems were introduced, it seemed logical that users would not want to search each one separately if similar information could be found in multiple systems. Enter the Enterprise Search Engine. Today, many law firms are looking to use enterprise search engines to connect information with the people who need it, across systems and applications.

Evaluating Web search engines back in the mid 90's was simple. The criteria and basic capabilities might have included:

- Natural query language
- Boolean operators (AND, OR, NOT)
- Proximity operators
- Phrase searching
- Thesaurus
- Concept searching
- Wildcards
- Exact match
- Fuzzy match
- Numeric operators
- Range operator
- Fielded searches
- Query by example
- Platform
- File types (what type of document could be indexed)
- File location (does it support more than one location or multiple collections)
- Relevance ranking
- Hit-to-hit navigation
- Navigation from one document to another in a result set

Today these basic criteria are still relevant, but, in addition, the following should also be considered in an enterprise search engine (along with other questions not listed):

- Does it index databases as well as unstructured documents? Can users search both simultaneously?
- Which languages does it support?
- Does it support metadata input/assignment, search and display?
- Does it allow users to personalize their interface and save searches?
- Does it honor the native security in the systems that it is indexing and searching?
- What kind of usage reports can be developed?
- How much customization is possible?
- Does it provide automatic categorization and summarization?
- Does it provide faceted navigation?
- If a taxonomy is part of the system, how is it developed and maintained?
- Does it fit into the business processes used in the firm?

### Web Search vs. Enterprise Search

Will the Web search engine you have in place on your intranet today work for enterprise purposes? Probably not. Michelle Hope responded to that same question in her article in the March 7, 2005, issue of *Network World*, "IT Revs up Search Engines." She stated that, "The ability to process a company's structured

and unstructured data, stored in a variety of formats, is what separates enterprise search tools from more public Web search engines, according to analysts. Structured data exists in database tables, usually associated with a company's ERP, CRM, or custom database systems. Unstructured data can take the form of e-mails, Microsoft® Office-type files, Adobe PDFs, and a host of other current or legacy file types scattered throughout a typical corporation."

### What's Available?

CMS Watch ([www.cmswatch.com](http://www.cmswatch.com)) in its July 2005 *Enterprise Search Report* provides a list of 35 potential candidates. While many of the vendors are new to the search scene, it is interesting to see some of the vendors that made similar lists in the mid 90s. They break their list into several categories: The Big Four, Specialized High-End Players, Infrastructure and ECM Suite Vendors, Mid-Tier Challengers, Search Appliances, Hosted Services, Lower Cost, Web-Oriented, and Open Source. Hummingbird and Isys are two vendors on the list that many law firms may already have in house. Two that did not make the list are two legal market vendors: Recommind and Onward Technologies. Both vendors have worked with large law firms to develop searching across the enterprise. Corpora Software, a relatively new vendor in the U.S. market and new to the legal arena, has text analytic capabilities that look useful and should be explored.

As I began writing this article, I expected to find a number of firms that had already implemented, and were using, Enterprise Search. What I found was a small number who have made the plunge, and many more who are exploring, or in the proof of concept phase. What has kept the numbers low? In "A Year in Search: A Real

Market”, KMWorld, April 2005, Alkis Papadopoulos, director of linguistic technologies at Convera, noted that, “People hope they buy search that will mesh well

with their business processes. That isn’t quite happening yet, but search vendors are much closer to that (perception) than ever before.” Why is that important? It

will allow us to put content into context and move from information to knowledge.

### CMS Watch Enterprise Search Vendor List

#### The Big 4

Traditional, publicly held enterprise search vendors with six-figure pricetags and a variety of add-on modules.

**Autonomy** - IDOL Server

**Convera** - Retrievalware

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**Fast Search & Transfer** - Enterprise Search Platform (ESP)

- Related: articles(0) news(1)

**Verity** - K2 Enterprise

- Related: articles(0) news(3)

#### Specialized High-End Players

The pricier offerings in the market can also deliver decent ROI by focusing on specific use cases for embedded search, such as e-commerce and CRM.

**iPhrase** - OneStep

**Stratify** - Discovery System

**TeraText** - TeraText Suite

**Lextek International** - Onix

**Endeca** - Profind

**InQuira** - InQuira

**Triplehop** - MatchPoint

#### Infrastructure & ECM Suite Vendors

Search is a by-product of larger portal and content management offerings, but don’t count them out.

**Hummingbird** - Hummingbird Search Server

**OpenText** - Livelihood

- Related: articles(0) news(1)

**SAP** - TREX

**Microsoft** - SharePoint Search Services

- Related: articles(0) news(1)

**IBM** - DB2 OmniFind Edition

- Related: articles(0) news(1)

**Oracle** - Oracle Text

#### Mid-Tier Challengers

These vendors offer reasonably comprehensive search services at a lower entry point.

**Speed of Mind** - Speed of Mind Index Server

**Arikus** - Aire

**Coveo** - Coveo Enterprise Search

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**Vivisimo** - Vivisimo Clustering Engine

**ISYS** - ISYS Search Suite

- Related: articles(0) news(2)

#### Search Appliances

Plug-and-play boxes are increasingly popular, but remain best suited for Web search.

**Google** - Google Search Appliance

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**Thunderstone** - Thunderstone Search Appliance

- Related: articles(0) news(1)

#### Hosted Services

Although focused primarily on Web search, these vendors help you avoid investing in costly infrastructure and staff.

**WebSideStory** (formerly Atomz) - Search

- Related: articles(0) news(1)

**CrownPeak Technology** - CrownPeak Search

**Blossom** - Blossom Enterprise Search

- Related: articles(0) news(1)

#### Lower-Cost, Web-Oriented

Inexpensive solutions ideal for searching Web content or other information exposed via Web applications.

**YourAmigo** - YourAmigo Enterprise Search

**Mondosoft** - MondoSearch

**dtSearch** - dtSearch

**Innerprise** - ES.NET 2004

**Verity** - Ultraseek

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#### Open Source

These toolsets are less out-of-the-box than commercial counterparts, but they are typically well-engineered and community-supported.

**ht:Dig** - ht://Dig

**Apache Project** - Jakarta Lucene

**Swish** - Swish-e

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