

# After the Harvest: Getting Excited About Infoseek

---

Prepared for InForum '98

Marsha Luevane & Joe Chervenak  
National Renewable Energy Laboratory



NREL/PR-24404

# History

- Harvest
- Research and evaluation - round 1
- Excite
- Research and evaluation - round 2
- Infoseek Ultraseek



# Objective

- Select a new search engine for this large document collection that indexes, searches, and displays documents well



# Document Collection

- Index documents from these sites
  - NREL Web site
  - NREL Intranet
  - Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy Network (EREN)



# EREN

- Official DOE/EE Web site
- Gateway to selected energy efficiency and renewable energy resources
  - 400 sites indexed
  - DOE, Labs, other domains



# Vendors

- AltaVista
- Excite
- Fulcrum
- Infoseek
- Open Text
- PLS
- Thunderstone
- Verity



# Requirements

- Must run on SUN Solaris O/S
- Robot
- Configurable
- Stable vendor
- Scalability



# Scalability

- Search a site
- Search all sites within a domain
- Search all sites within DOE complex
- Search all government sites
- Search the Internet



# Evaluation

- Vendor
- Implementation
- Indexing
- Searching
- Administration



# Selection Process

- Evaluated Web versions of major search engines
- Compiled list of required and desired features
- Contacted vendors
- Conducted further research



## Selection Process (continued)

- Narrowed field to Infoseek and Verity
- Obtained evaluation copies, installed, tested
- Evaluated reference sites provided by vendors
- Networking with other labs, sites
- Selected Infoseek
- Negotiated pricing



# Infoseek Implementation

- Installation - fast and easy
- Customized search form and display
- Determined strategy for indexing gateway sites and fed 400 site URLs into robot queue
- Set up custom searches for individual sites



# Infoseek Administration

- Programmer support
- Maintenance
- Document count report
- Robot activity
- URL status



# Infoseek Administration (continued)

- Documentation
- Vendor support
- Query logs
- Working with vendor on enhancements



# Lessons Learned

- Salespeople “sell”
- Excite was a good interim measure
- Infoseek installation and set up was easier than expected, administration is harder than expected
- Anything can -- and will -- happen when you index other people's sites



## Lessons Learned (continued)

- Search engine that indexes, searches, and displays well teaches you a lot about your pages
  - Retrievability
  - Content
  - Page titles
  - Headings
  - Summary



# Future

- Will continue to monitor site search engine developments
- Will maintain relations with vendors of other search engines
- Want to index databases, more types of documents
- Learn more about incorporation of PDFs
- Incorporate new features as become available

