
LET ME LIBRARIAN THAT FOR YOU

TIPS AND TRICKS TO IMPROVE YOUR GOOGLE-FU



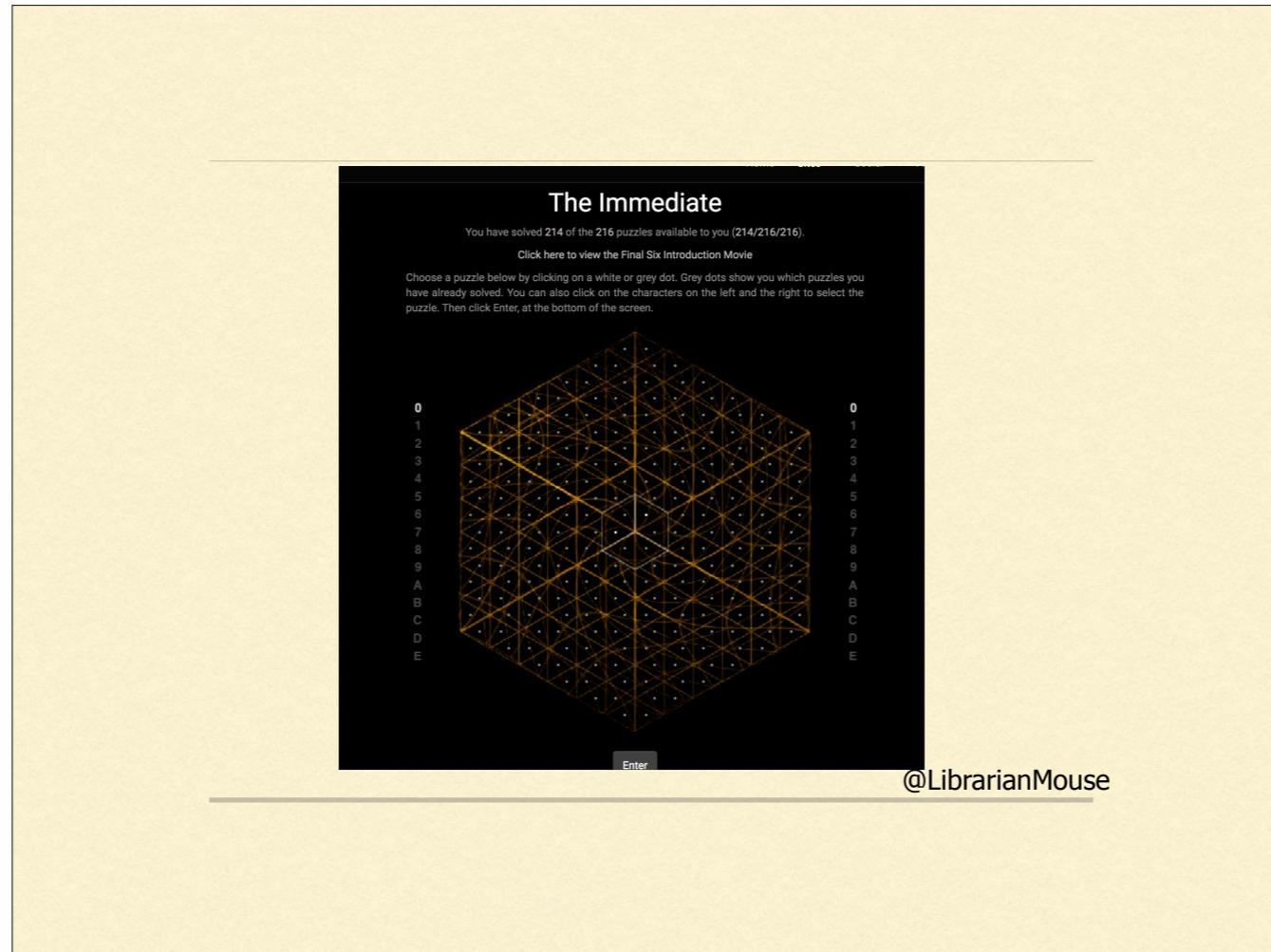
ABBIE WEINBERG

FOLGER SHAKESPEARE LIBRARY TWITTER HANDLE: [@LibrarianMouse](https://twitter.com/LibrarianMouse)

Take-Aways

- How to search (more) effectively
- How to evaluate what you find
- Where else to look when Google doesn't have the answer

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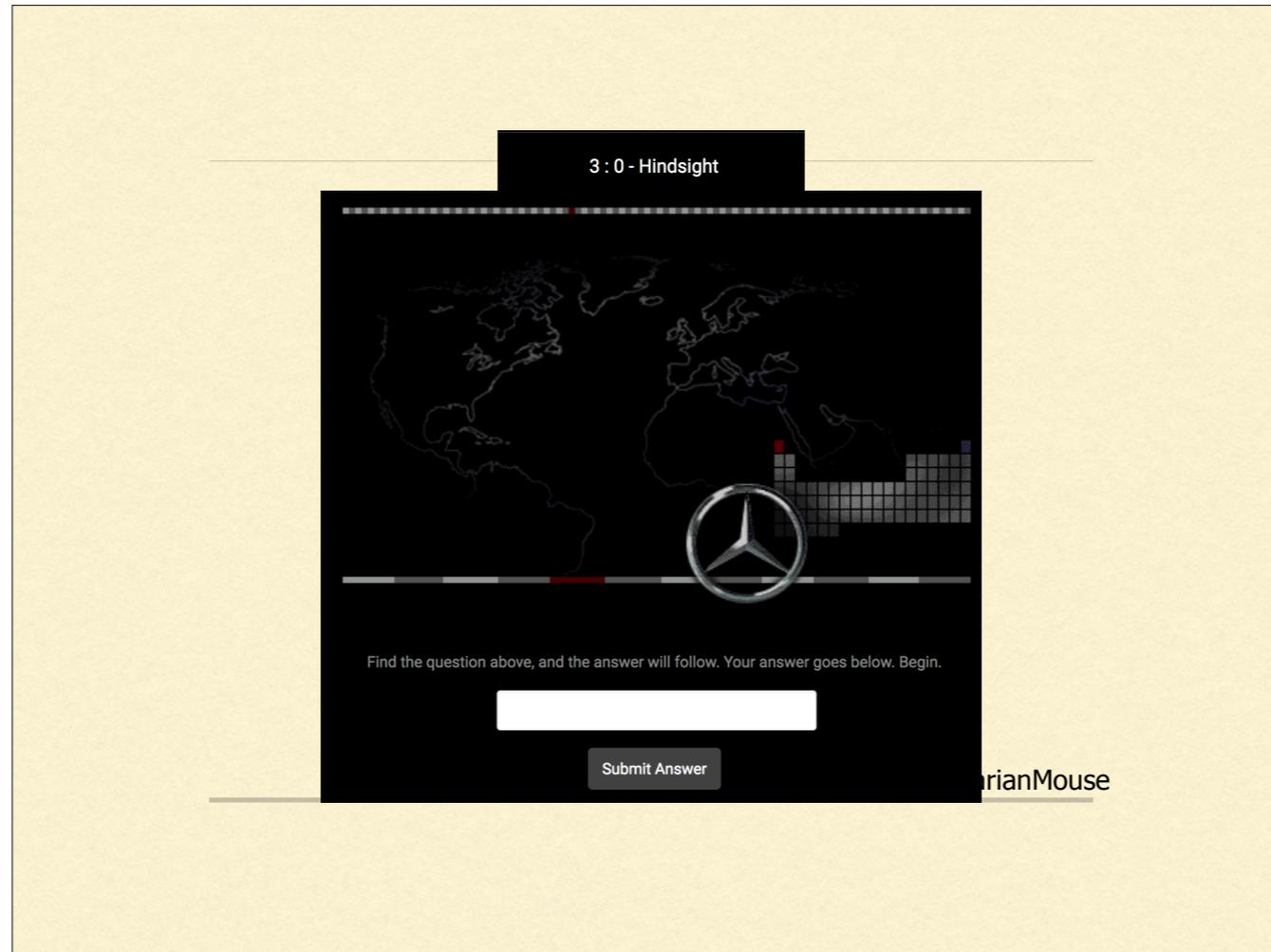


Does this mean anything to anyone?

From an online puzzle game call The Stone, ran for a decade between 1997-2007.

(No longer active on the original site, but was ported to a new site <https://www.scarecrowfield.com/> —creating a login gets you access to both the original puzzles and the fan-created ones! Enjoy!)

Visual puzzles that could be solved by searching all around and finding the one particular piece of information that it was looking for.



3:0 Hindsight

Answer: lakehurst

Close: hindenber, hindenburg

Clever: new jersey

So why am I showing this to you? Aside from being fun, it also demonstrates the basic thought patterns needed to search effectively.

Effective Searching:

Try, Try Again

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Effective searching can be summed up in one phrase: “try, try again”

Most searching is an iterative process.

How You Search

1. (whether you know it or not)
Think about what you want to know: come up with keywords
2. Try searching for it
3. See what results you get: were you close?
4. Modify keywords
5. Repeat steps 2-4 as needed

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Unless you're looking for one very specific fact (e.g. some kind of number (date, height, amount)), you have to keep going around and around. Sometimes this involves figuring out how other people want to phrase something or what others might call it. Which brings me to my next point...

Keywords

Po-tay-toh, Po-tah-toh

Let's call the whole thing mashed

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Keywords are really the crux of effective searching. The better your search terms are, the faster you'll find what you're looking for.

Do

Be specific with your terms

Use multiple terms

Include OS, Version Number

Think of multiple ways to describe the
problem you're seeing

Don't

Search complete sentences

Use general/generic terms

Give up quickly

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Some general dos and don'ts for creating keywords:

The more specific about the problem you can get, the better your chances of finding a solution

Searching "mac 10.13.4 outlook 2016 categories" will get you much closer than searching "outlook categories"

Think about ways to describe the problem you're seeing—both the obvious issues and the possible underlying causes (windows outlook asking for pw after AD pw change; if it were Mac would say keychain issue; keychain—>password caching—>"Credential Manager")

No complete sentences—unnecessary extra words clog up search

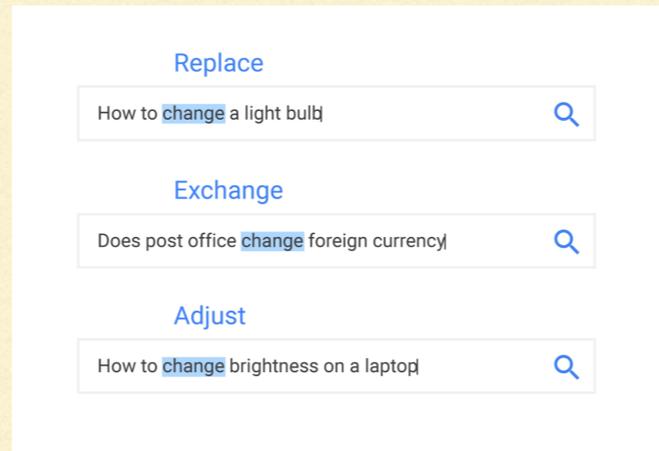
Searching takes time and patience. Don't give up if your first two searches don't get you anywhere. Step back and reevaluate what you're looking for.

Using Google's Tools: What They Do For You

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There are some things that the google search engine does automatically for you.
Helpful to know what those are so you can adjust your searching accordingly.

Google's thesaurus in their own words:

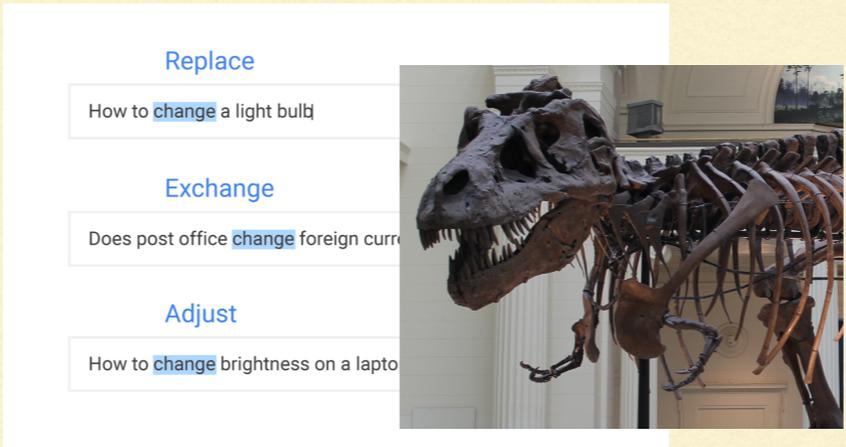


<https://www.google.com/search/howsearchworks/algorithms/>

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Auto-thesaurus (should either be a dinosaur or a transformer...): can be helpful if you're not sure how other people might have phrased something, but can be super frustrating if you're trying to find a specific term (tho there are ways to help with that)

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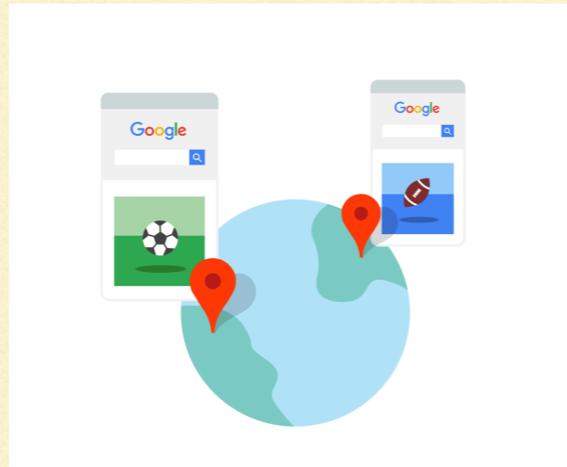
The image shows a screenshot of Google's auto-thesaurus for the word "change". It features three categories: "Replace" with the example "How to change a light bulb", "Exchange" with "Does post office change foreign currency", and "Adjust" with "How to change brightness on a laptop". To the right of the text is a photograph of a large dinosaur skeleton, likely a Tyrannosaurus Rex, displayed in a museum setting.

<https://www.google.com/search/howsearchworks/algorithms/>

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Context Matters



<https://www.google.com/search/howsearchworks/algorithms/>

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Google also geolocates (unless you work really hard to have it not): will use your location to provide more contextual answers (e.g. football will get you different results depending on where you are)

Google also automatically truncates, so if you search for “fish” you’ll get results with the words “fishing” “fished” (past tense) or “fisherman” in them. Again, sometimes helpful, sometimes super frustrating.

Using Google's Tools: What You Do Yourself

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-
- “Quote marks” (or ” or « »): searches as a phrase (mostly)
 - Use a minus sign (-): this is a NOT symbol, with all the dangers therein
 - Asterisk (*): a wildcard within phrase searches
 - Site:yoursite.com will search within that site only

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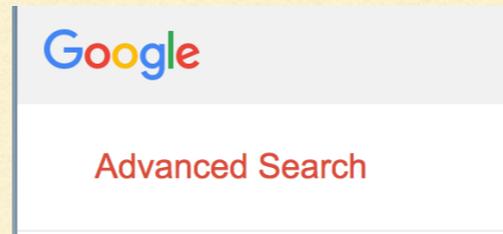
Quote marks (of whatever flavor) to search on an exact phrase (or single word—this is how you get around some of the “helpfulness” mentioned earlier)

Not symbols are dangerous: will eliminate potentially helpful sites because it is excluding a word (search jaguar speed -car, might eliminate any page that has the word car on it) Also makes it hard to search for strings of code

Wildcard within a phrase search is WEIRD. (search for “something * this way comes” and you get all sorts of fun variants)

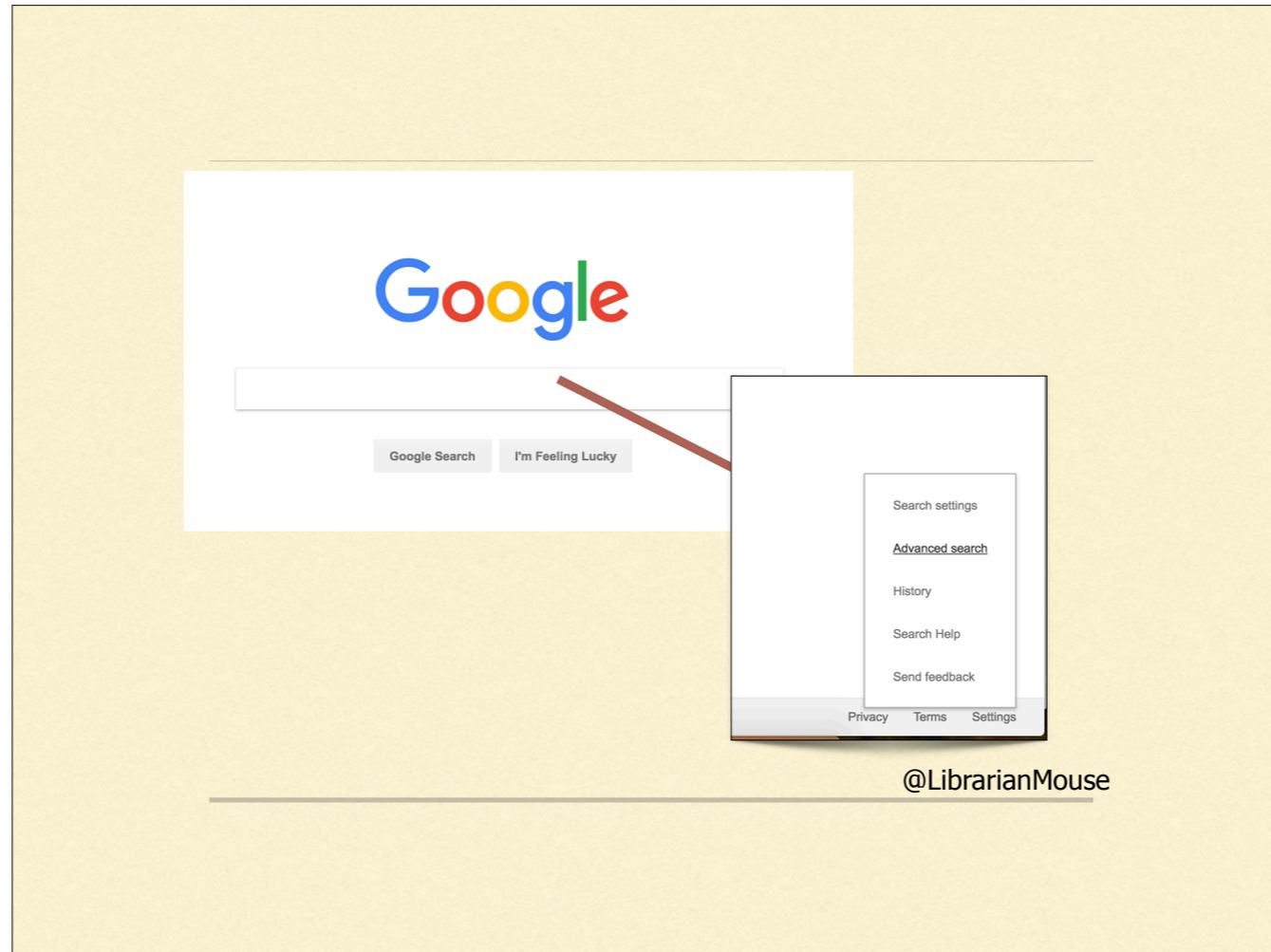
Site search is most useful if a site’s built-in search sucks

Meet Google's Advanced Search



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Wait what? Yes, google actually has an advanced search. But they hide it really well.
To find it...



You click in the oh-so-logical place of “Settings” in the bottom right corner of the main google page.

Find pages with...

all these words:

this exact word or phrase:

any of these words:

none of these words:

numbers ranging from: to

To do this in the search box

Type the important words: tricolor rat terrier

Put exact words in quotes: "rat terrier"

Type OR between all the words you want: miniature OR standard

Put a minus sign just before words you don't want: -rodent, -"Jack Russell"

Put 2 periods between the numbers and add a unit of measure: 10..35 lb, \$300..\$500, 2010..2011

Then narrow your results by...

language: Find pages in the language you select.

region: Find pages published in a particular region.

last update: Find pages updated within the time you specify.

site or domain: Search one site (like wikipedia.org) or limit your results to a domain like .edu, .org or .gov

terms appearing: Search for terms in the whole page, page title, or web address, or links to the page you're looking for.

SafeSearch: Tell SafeSearch whether to filter sexually explicit content.

file type: Find pages in the format you prefer.

usage rights: Find pages you are free to use yourself.

[Advanced Search](#)

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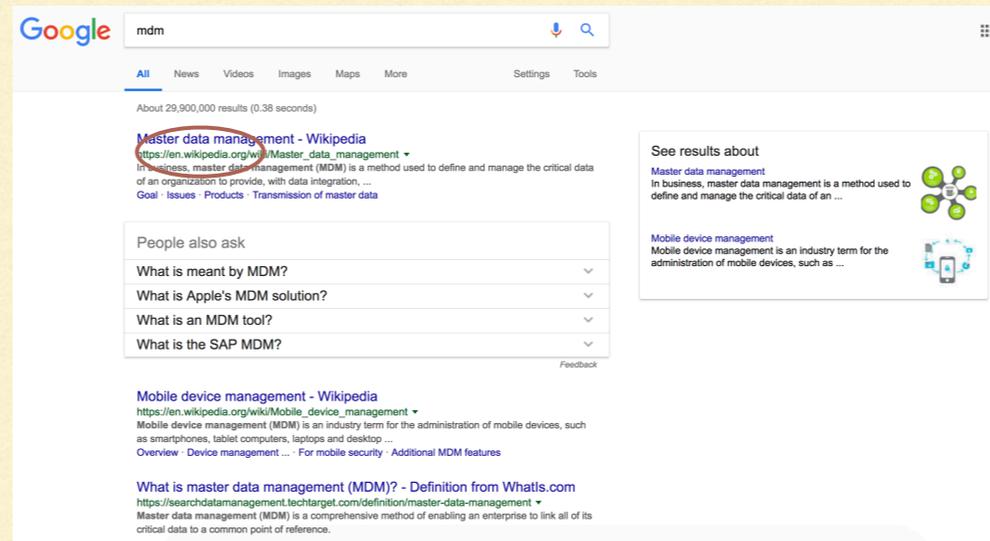
Which brings you to a page with all sorts of options. As you can see, the top part of the page features many things that I showed you how to do from the basic search page using various commands.

The bottom half of the page lets you refine your search in other ways.

Reading Google's Results Page

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So you've figured out what it is that you're looking for, you've put some keywords into google and now you're starting at a mere 150,000 results (if you're lucky). What now? How do you make sense of all of the information in front of you?



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Google results pages can look rather cluttered, but at least they're consistently cluttered.

Across the top, just below the search bar, you'll always have the option to jump to certain types of results: videos, images, news, etc.

Often, a Wikipedia article will be the first result (the result of a partnership which I suspect Wiki is now regretting—they're losing page hits)

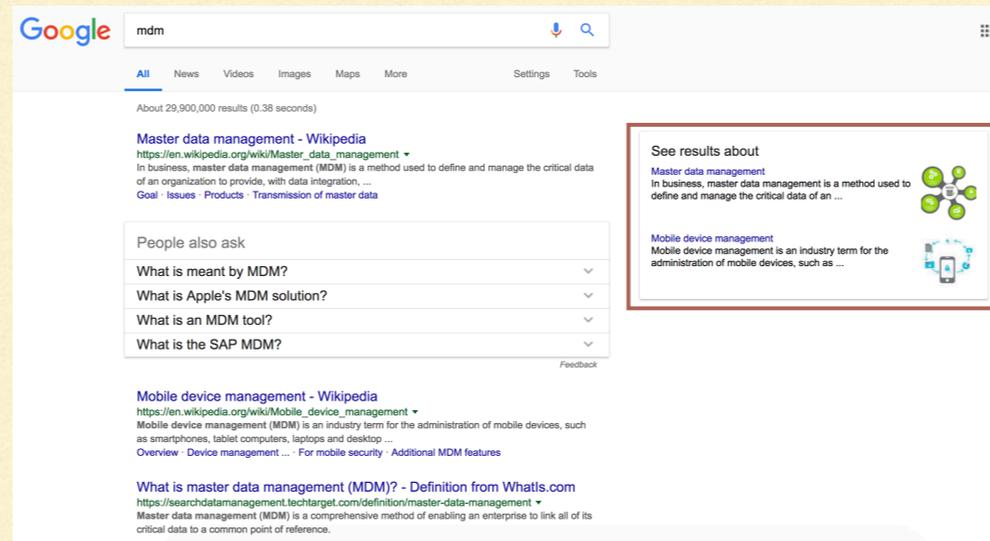
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There will often be ads as the top results too—very small little notice of that below the text blurb. Pay attention.

On the right side is a call out box explaining the two main meanings of MDM and giving me the option to get more info about one or the other

"People also ask" — other common searches that people have done. Will give you the top result from that search. So great, now you have better context for this term

AND better search terms to put in and get more info.



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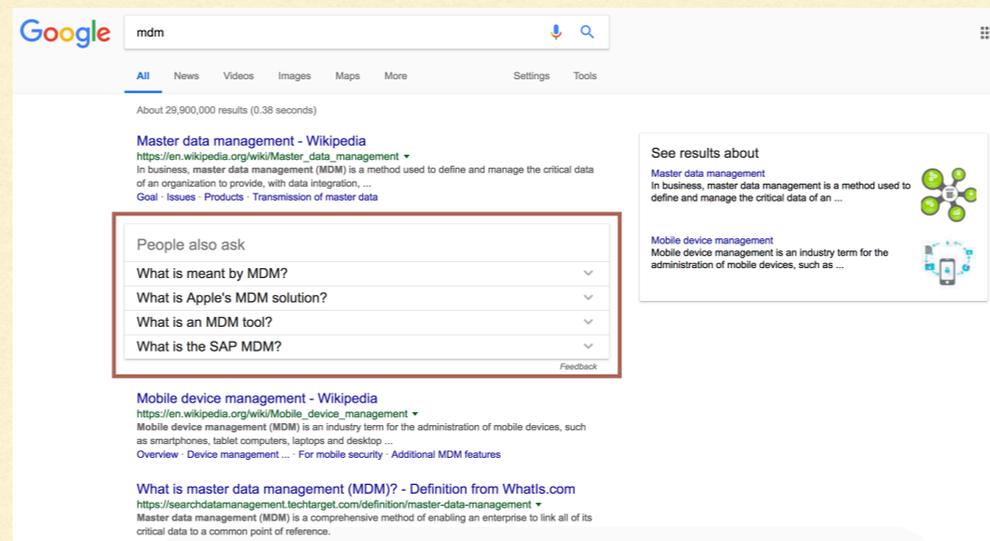
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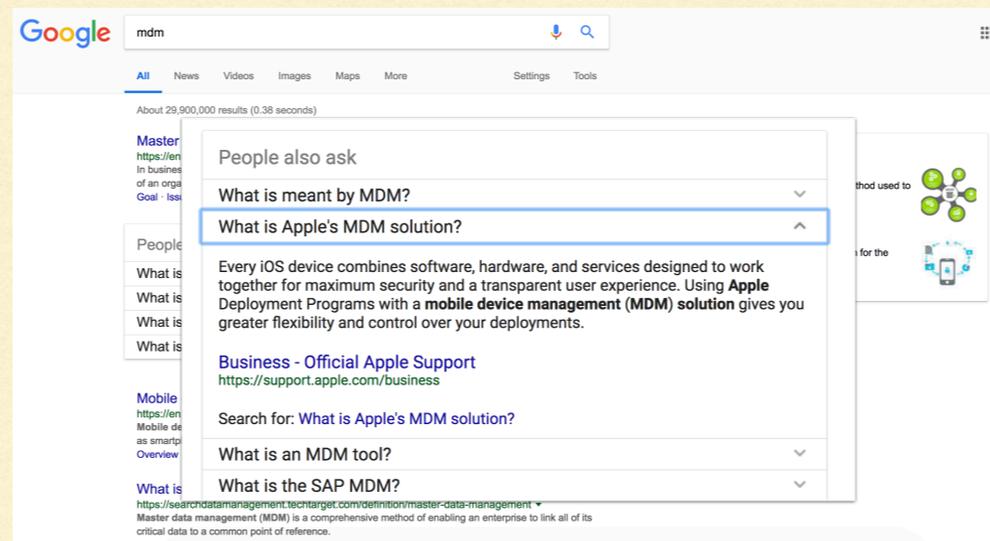
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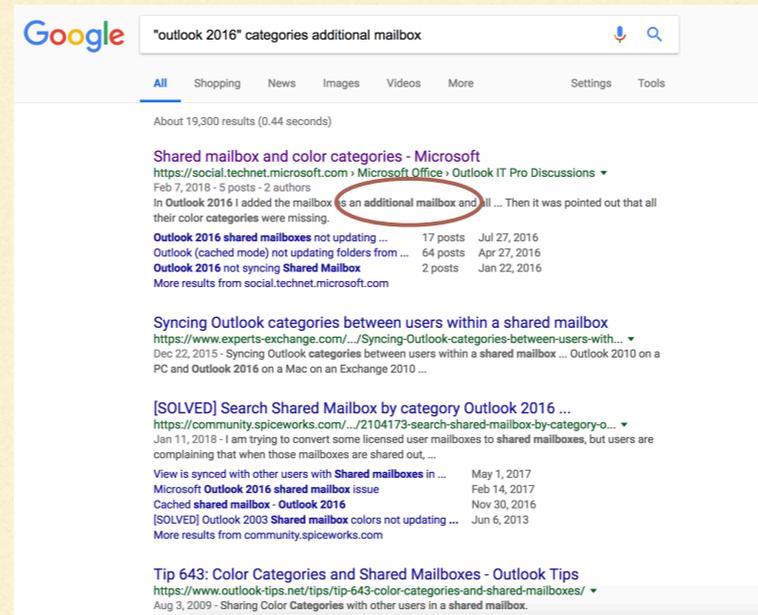
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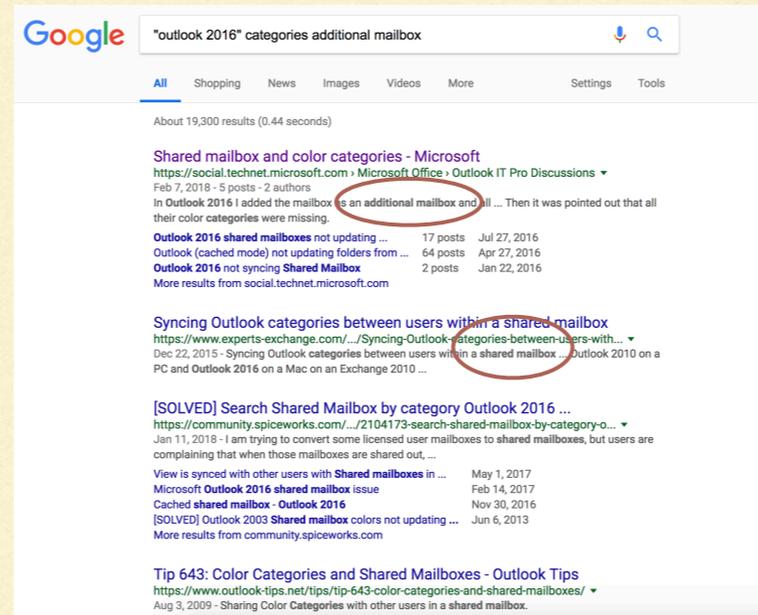
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You'll also note this is a pretty broad search. I didn't specify what the issue was—that's because negatives are hard to search for—which makes troubleshooting a challenge! But again, that's something I might try on a subsequent search

So you've got a results page, how do you know what's helpful and what isn't?

First, look at the site the results appear on. The tech forums for the company that produces the product are often a really good place to start.

Next, look at the date. Are you running the most recent hardware or software? If Yes, be wary of any pages that are more than a few years old, but use your judgement based on what you know about the product/OS. Know your environment—if you're running older hardware/software, that result from 2009 might actually BE what you're looking for.



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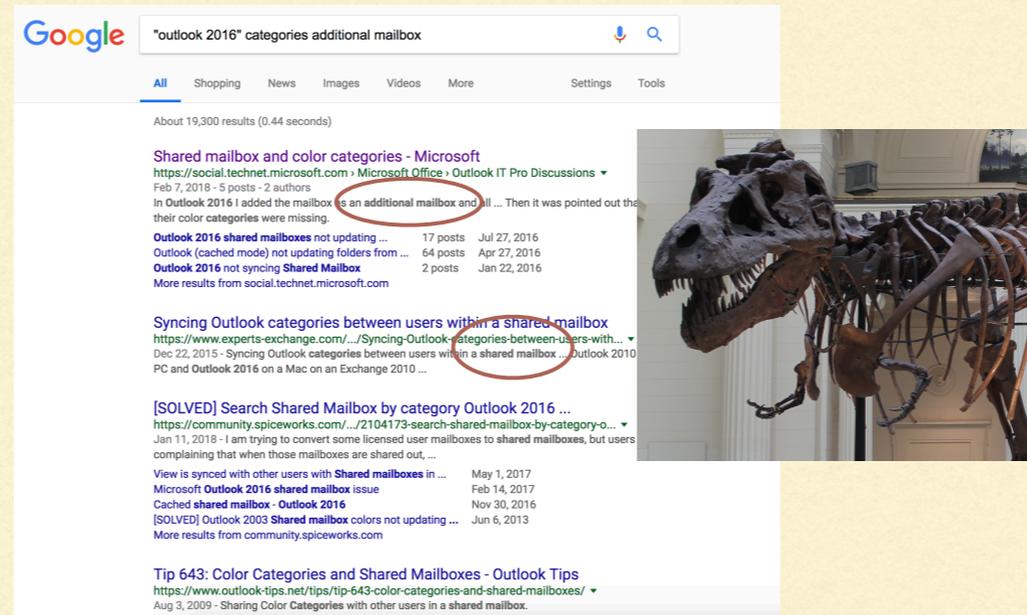
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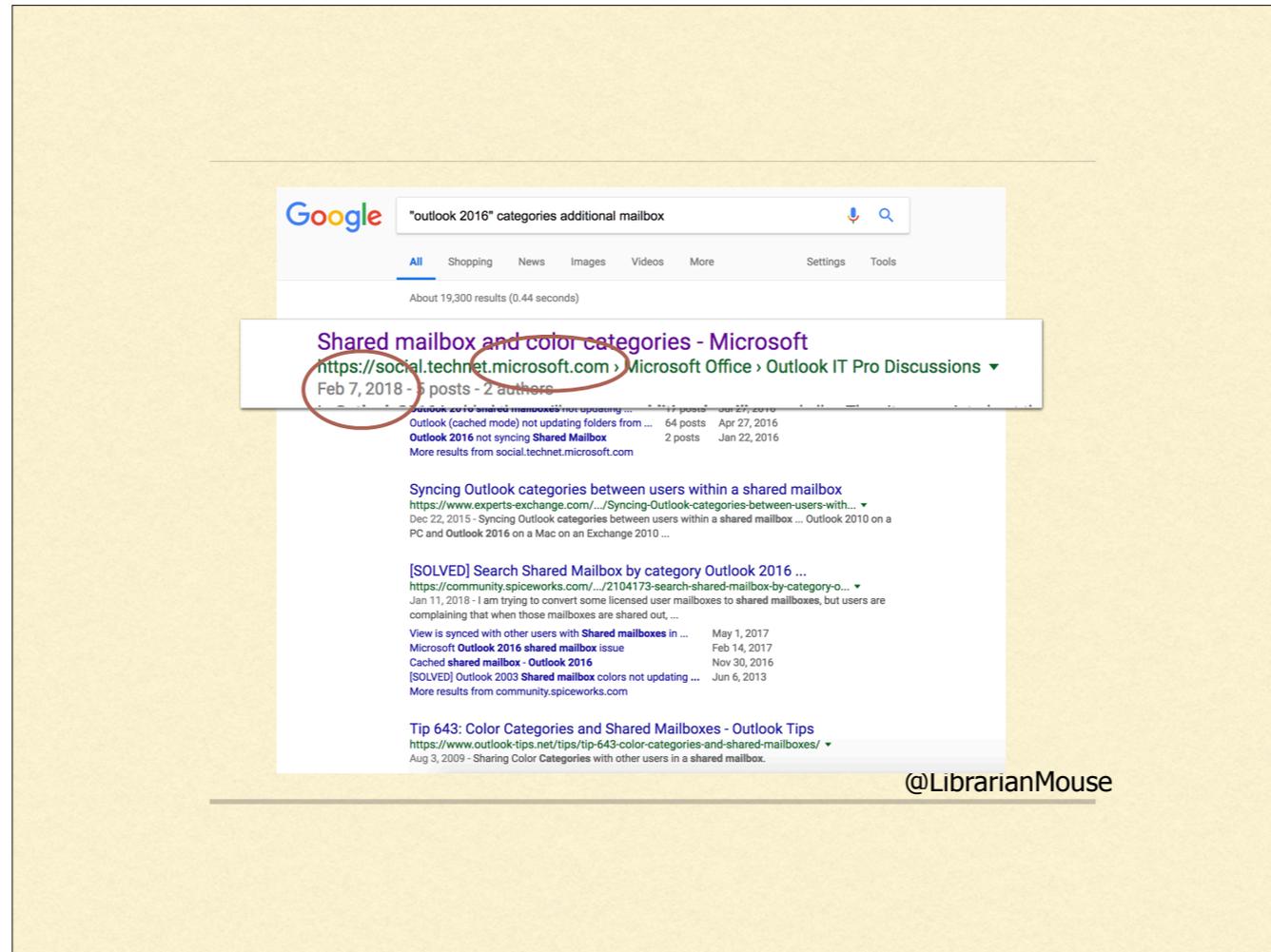
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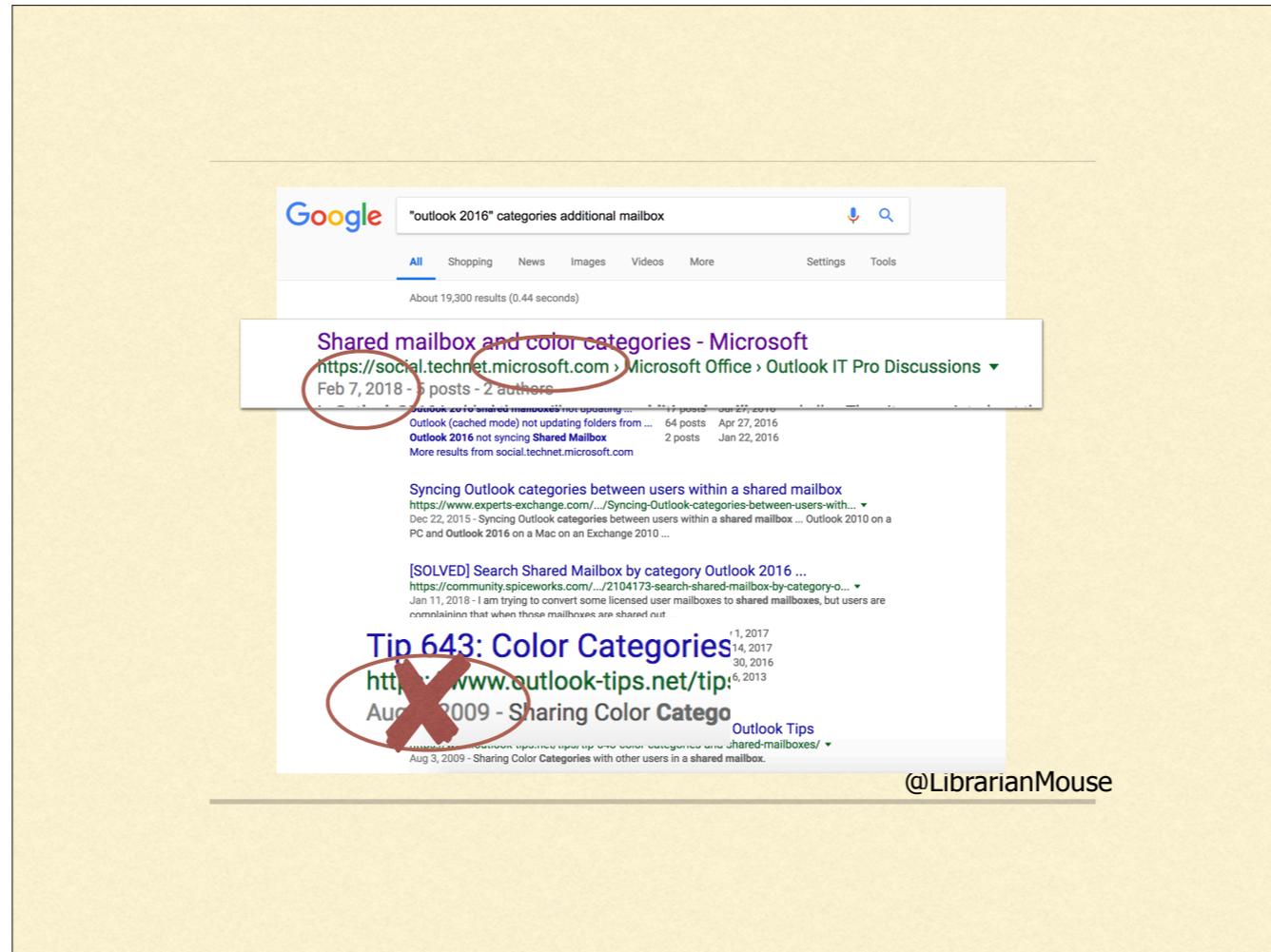
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Know Your Field

[Use FileVault to encrypt the startup disk on your Mac - Apple Support](https://support.apple.com/en-us/ht204837)

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Dec 18, 2017 - If you forget your account password or it doesn't work, you might be able to reset your password. If you want to change the recovery key used to encrypt your startup disk, turn off FileVault in Security & Privacy preferences. You can then turn it on again to generate a new key and disable all older keys.

[Using FileVault 2 recovery keys on FileVault 2-encrypted Macs to ...](https://derflounder.wordpress.com/filevault-2/)

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Feb 23, 2017 - Using FileVault 2 recovery keys on FileVault 2-encrypted Macs to provide access for local admins. You need to provide the password in a non-encrypted format of the account being enabled. You need to provide in a non-encrypted format either a recovery key or the password of another FV 2-enabled account on the Mac.

[macos - Obtain FileVault 2 recovery key with administrator account ...](https://apple.stackexchange.com/.../obtain-filevault-2-recovery-key-with-administrator...)

<https://apple.stackexchange.com/.../obtain-filevault-2-recovery-key-with-administrator...>

2 answers

May 28, 2015 - Look for the section "Managing individual and institutional recovery keys". You can use your FileVault2 password to change the recovery key.

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Next, know your field. If you've been in the business for a while, you may already have a good sense of who the leading experts in the field are. If you're new to the Mac support universe, pay attention to what's going on around you: see if certain names keep coming up over and over in your search results. See where people link to when talking about certain topics.

If you're looking for info on FileVault, guess what? You're probably going to see Rich Trouton's blog come up.

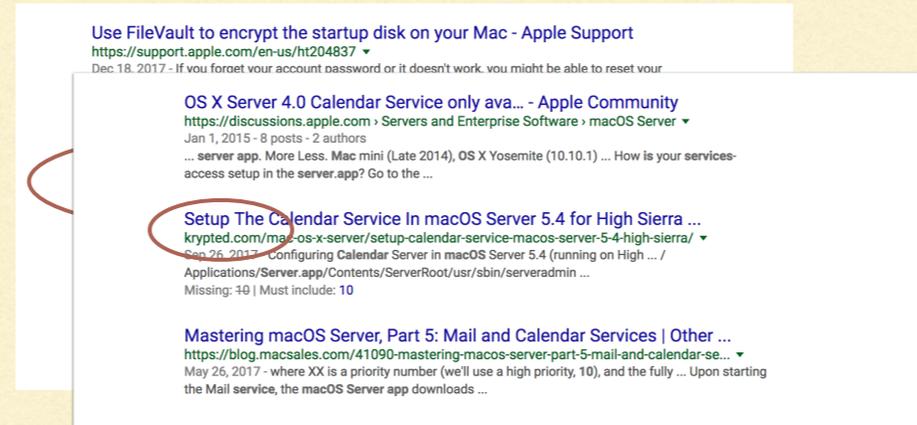
If you're looking for information on setting up the server.app, you'll probably come across Charles Edge's blog, Krypted.

And for many things Jamf related, you may well find yourself on Ben Toms's site, Mac Mule.

There are just three examples, this community is filled with loads of great people who are more than willing to share what they know. So you learn to look for specific names when you're searching, or even to bypass google entirely and search those sites directly.

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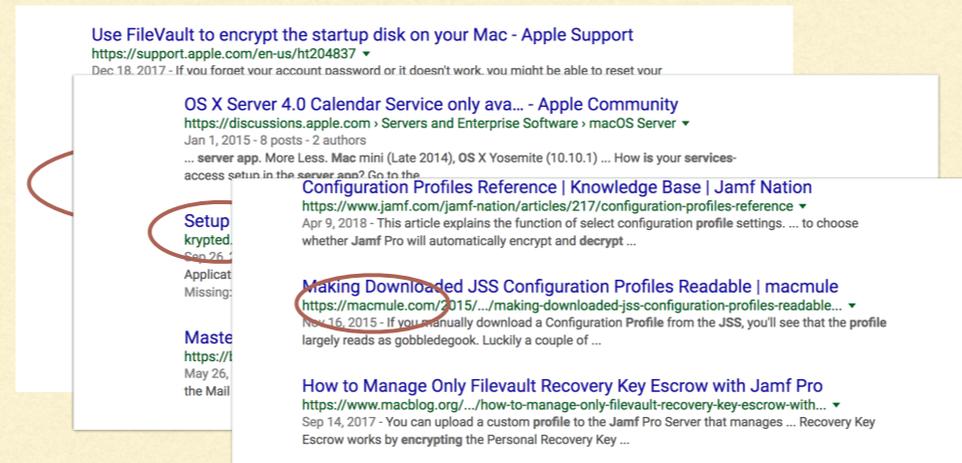
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What to do when your Google-fu fails you?

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- Use your community!

- MacAdmins slack (sign up link: <https://macadmins.herokuapp.com/>)
- Conferences (PSU, JNUC, Mac DevOps YVR, MacDeploy, Mac AD UK, MacTech, X World, MacSysAdmin, and more)
- Mac Enterprise listserv (<https://lists.psu.edu/archives/macenterprise.html>)
- MacAdmins Podcast (<https://podcast.macadmins.org/2017/05/>)

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- Libraries!

- Subscription databases—not crawled by Google
 - Gartner, Hoovers, Mintel, trade journals
- Books (print, ebook): yes, people still write them!
- Librarians: particularly in a larger org, might have one in-house

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All three of these databases provide industry research and analysis. Gartner is particularly strong for the tech industry, white papers, industry analysis; Hoovers does both industry as a whole and company-specific profiles; Mintel is great for market research.

Even public libs might have access to some of these—and if you're near a state university campus, they're probably open to the public also

Books: *Packaging for Apple Administrators* and *macOS Installation* by Armin Briegel; *macOS Support Essentials 10.13* by Arek Dreyer;

- Vendor support

- When all else fails, go directly to the source
- Open a ticket, escalate as needed, even up to the engineers
 - This will often require more work and documentation on your part

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Questions?



Feedback Link: <https://bit.ly/psumac2018-257>

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