

5 Tips for Better Website Search

By [Anders Hoff, NetLife Research](http://www.netliferesearch.com) (www.netliferesearch.com)

1. Go through your search log and make sure the 100 most searched words or phrases have excellent results

- Every month, take a look at the log of most searched queries and test that each one of them points to the most relevant page for the topic. If not, contact the search engine administrator in order to improve the search results.

1 currency
2 exchange
3 rate
4 calculator
5 press release ceo
...

2. Make sure your search supports misspellings

- Around one in every 3-5 search queries contain misspellings. Did you know that Google supports [592 misspellings](#) of Britney Spears?

You searched for "brittany spears".
Did you mean [Britney Spears?](#)

3. Support different ways of navigating search results

- There are three types of search. Depending on the type, the user might need different ways of navigating the search results:



Narrowing down:
the user needs ways of reducing the number of hits, using clickable filters, categories or similar.



Expanding:
the user does not know exactly what he/she is looking for, and needs suggestions, similar searches and sitemaps.



Straight to target:
the user knows exactly what page/document he/she is and needs advanced search tools for defining the query in detail, e.g. exact phrases.

Narrow down the search:

[People \(4\)](#)
[Press releases \(14\)](#)
[Documents \(3\)](#)

See also:

[Our employees](#),
[Sitemap](#)

Advanced search:

Date: 14. February 2009
Title contains "new technology"

4. Always have clickable solutions on the "no result"-page

- Do not overload the "no result"-page with help text, the user will not read it anyway. Instead, suggest various ways of continuing the search, using links

Found no results for "curency rate"

-Did you mean "[currency rate](#)"?
-Try to split the words: [currency\(3 hits\) rate\(4 hits\)](#)
-See our [site map](#)

5. Include pictures and icons where helpful

- Use icons for displaying file types that needs to be downloaded.
- Include pictures when displaying search results of people.

1. [Anders Hoff](#)



E-mail: anders@netliferesearch.com

2. [New technology \(Press release\)](#)

(PDF, 100 kB)