

It's Y!ou—Content Optimization at Yahoo!

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The Message

- The Web will be increasingly personalized, but "personalization" will mostly happen within the context of
 - Content optimization
 - Semantic interpretation of web content and user intent
 - Socialization of the web

Content Optimization

- Content
 - Portal content, Search, Social
- Optimization objective
 - Engagement, revenue, retention, `voice'
- Signals:
 - Content features
 - Topic/entity
 - Popularity
 - Links, referrals, clicks, CTRs

 - User featuresContent consumption, social, explicit



Personalization

- Why?
 - Engagement, revenue, retention, `voice'
- Why not?
 - Discovery, privacy, search bias
- Who?
 - User profiles
- How?
 - Algorithms, infrastructure

User Interest Modeling

- User—Topic (entities, categories) affinity
 From logs (clicks, views, purchases, etc.)
- Latent Factor models
 - Topic affinities based on activity of user and "similar" users
- Search history
 - Online and offline
- Responses to recommendations

 Current session history
- Explicit user declaration
 - When and what should we ask users?

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- "Just look at our homepage, for example. Since we began pairing our content optimization technology with editorial expertise, we've seen click-through rates in the Today module more than double. And we're making additional improvements to this technology that will make the user experience ever more personally relevant."
- Carol Bartz, Analyst Call, January 27, 2010

CONTENT OPTIMIZATION FOR PORTALS

Team from Y! Research



Deepak Agarwal



BeeChung Chen

Pradheep Elango





Seung-Taek Park



Raghu Ramakrishnan



Wei Chu





Nitin Motgi







Joe Zachariah



Todd Beaupre

Kenneth Fox

Content Optimization



vs. one size fits all

vs. randomly selected

vs. editor selected

Key Features

Package Ranker (CORE)

Ranks packages by expected CTR based on data collected every 5 minutes

Dashboard (CORE)

Provides real-time insights into performance by package, segment, and property

Mix Management (Property)

Ensures editorial voice is maintained and user gets a variety of content

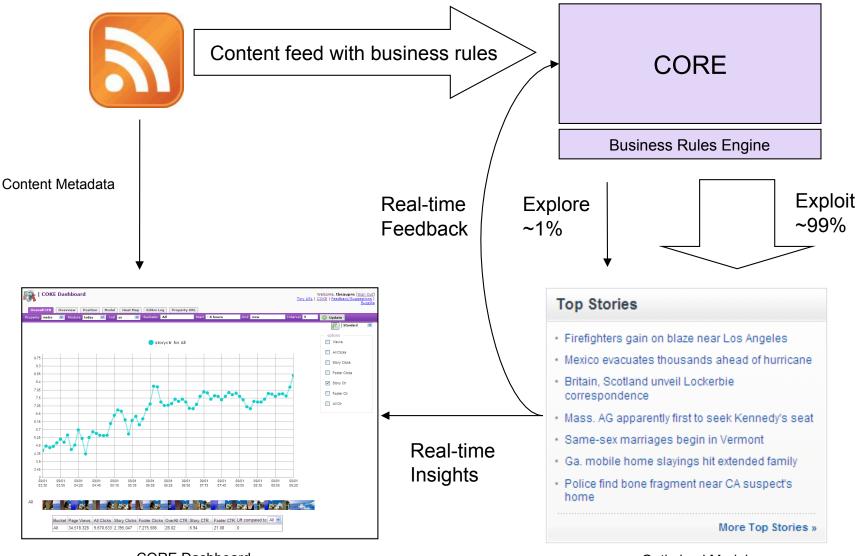
Package rotation (Property)

Tracks which stories a user has seen and rotates them after user has seen them for a certain period of time

Key Performance Indicators

Lifts in quantitative metrics Editorial Voice Preserved

CORE Data Flow



CORE Dashboard

Optimized Module





Estimate Most Popular (EMP)

"What's most engaging overall?"



Behavioral Affinities

"People who did X, did Y"



Attribute Similarities

"Related items with similar metadata"



Social Recommendations

"What are my trusted connections into?"



Business Optimization

"What generates most business value?"



Personalized Recommendations

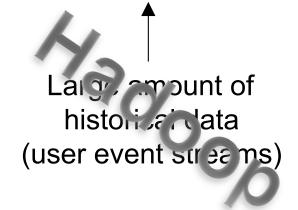
"What's most relevant to <u>me</u> based on my interests, attributes and relationships?"



CORE Modeling Overview

Offline Modeling

- Exploratory data analysis
- Regression, feature selection, collaborative filtering (factorization)
- Seed online models & explore/exploit methods at good initial points
- Reduce the set of candidate items



Online Learning

- Online regression models, time-series models
- Model the temporal dynamic.
- Provide fast learning or per-item models

Neur real-time user feedback

Explore/Exploit

- Multi-armed bandits
- Find the best way of collecting realtime user feedback (for new items)



- Pure feature based (did not work well):
 - Article: URL, keywords, categories
 - Build offline models to predict CTR when article shown to users
 - Models considered
 - Logistic Regression with feature selection
 - Decision Trees, Feature segments through clustering
- Track CTR per article in user segments through online models
 - This worked well; the approach we took eventually

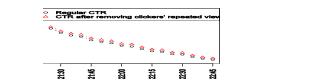


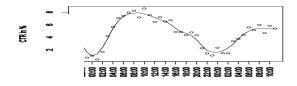
- What is the best strategy for new articles?
 - If we show it and it's bad: lose clicks
 - If we delay and it's good: lose clicks
- Solution: Show it while we don't have much data if it looks promising
 - Classical **multi-armed bandit** type problem
 - Our setup is different than the ones studied in the literature; new ML problem

(Online Models for Content Optimization, NIPS 2008: D. Agarwal, B. Chen, P. Elango, N. Motgi, S. Park, R. Ramakrishnan, S. Roy, J. Zachariah)

Challenges in Our Setting

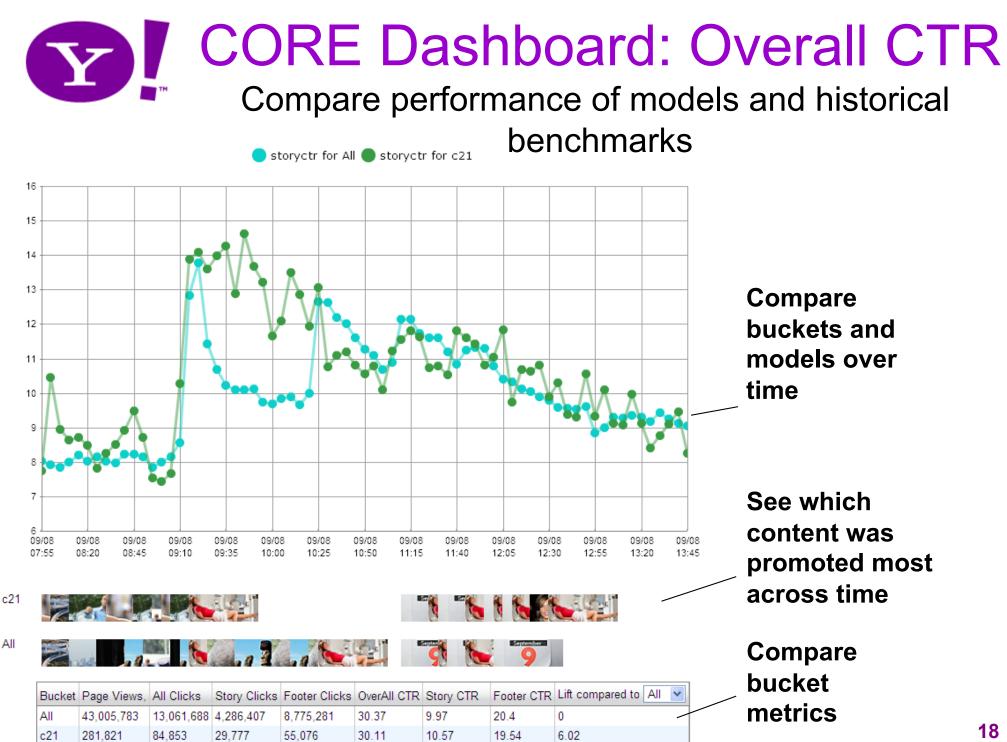
- Dynamic item pools
- Article CTRs decay over time
- Time-of-day /day-of-week effects







- We run multiple experiments (possibly correlated) simultaneously; effective sample size calculation a challenge
- Serving Bias: Incorrect to learn from data for serving scheme A and apply to serving scheme B
 - Need unbiased quality score
 - Bias sources: positional effects, time effect, set of articles shown together
- Incorporating feature-based techniques
 - e.g., logistic regression; tree-based (hierarchical bandit)





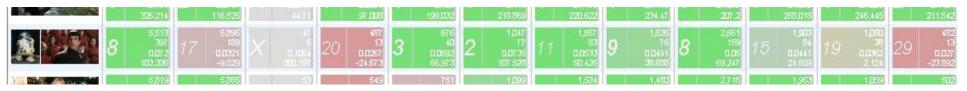
CORE Dashboard: Segment Heat Map

Package	ma		ferr	ale	ОМ	G	BU.	Auto	ΒU	Ent	ΒU	Fin	Hea	alth	ΒU	Sport-	NB/	4	BU	Frav	ALL	
		408,260 18,440 0.0452 8.477		390,404 14,449 0.037 -11.113		270,039 16,940 0.0627 50,661		121,080 7,389 0.061 46,564		270,038 16,940 0.0627 50,661		325,813 20,012 0,0614 47,488		195,796 12,763 0.0652 56.553		350,152 21,454 0.0613 47.152		132,916 9,457 0.07 12 70,879		123,388 7,896 0.064 53,691		923,611 38,457 0.0416 0
	1	8,067 852 0.1056 153,654	1	1,651 674 0.088 111.405	1	5,125 720 0.1405 237.406	1	2,382 296 0.1201 188.362	1	5,125 720 0.1405 237.406	1	6,415 858 0.1337 221,221	1	3,769 532 0.1412 239	1	6,750 917 0.1359 226 <i>.2</i> 12	1	2,585 385 0.1489 257 <i>6</i> 96	1	2,490 330 0.1325 218,294	1	18,137 1,738 0,0958 130,143
	5	9,968 644 0.0646 55.164	3	12,847 777 0.0605 45,296	2	8,569 885 0.1033 148.043	4	3,529 326 0.0924 121,96	2	8,569 895 0.1033 148.043	3	9,7 ++ 922 0.0946 127 .252	3	6,067 643 0.106 154 <i>.53</i> 7	2	10,187 1,004 0,0986 136,702	5	3,820 420 0.1099 164.058	2	4,037 433 0.1073 157 <i>.5</i> 98	4	25,744 1 <i>,9</i> 95 0.062 48.798
12	2	3,326 249 0.07 49 79.8	5	3,954 212 0.0536 28.769	5	2,521 231 0.0916 120.066	2	1,004 102 0.1016 143 <i>.</i> 995	5	2,521 231 0,0916 120,066	5	3,016 276 0,0915 119,782	5	1,860 186 0.1 140.167	3	3,291 310 0.0942 126,229	3	1,141 136 0.1192 195,264	3	1,039 100 0.0962 131.152	3	8,500 541 0.0636 52,859
	11	2,562 133 0.0519 24.677	13	2,004 81 0.0404 -2.926	3	1,250 122 0.0976 134.403	6	629 51 0.0811 94.73	3	1,250 122 0,0976 134.403	4	1,508 151 0,0939 125,53	2	919 103 0.1121 169.175	4	1,669 154 0.0923 121.604	4	655 74 0.113 171.334	4	591 55 0.0931 123 <i>.</i> 506	10	5,342 252 0.0472 13,295
	3	2,881 206 0.0715 71.727	2	3,242 230 0.0709 70.384	4	2,07 1 196 0.0946 127 ,295	3	949 95 0.1001 140.42	4	2,07 1 196 0,0946 127 295	2	2,614 254 0,0972 133,368	4	1,605 165 0.1028 146.901	5	2,7 40 239 0.0872 109.489	10	1,036 94 0,0907 117,912	9	958 78 0.0814 95.543	2	7,043 493 0,07 68,114
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	10	22,202 1,212 0.0546 31.106	7	23,328 1,200 0.0514 23.543	6	15,593 1,299 0.0827 98.535	5	6,552 533 0.0813 95.374	6	15,593 1,299 0,0827 98,535	7	17,652 1,376 0,078 87,214	8	10,797 915 0,0847 103,532	7	19,050 1,522 0,0799 91,882	9	6,639 604 0.091 118.498	7	6,435 552 0.0858 106.018	6	52,978 2,186 0.0526 26,299
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	4	7,745 518 0.0669 60.628	26	1,202 185 0.0257 -38.308	13	4,898 322 0.0651 51.889	15	2,308 148 0.0641 54.007	13	+,898 322 0.0657 57.889	11	6,051 423 0,0699 67, <i>8</i> 91	19	3,652 235 0.0643 54.544	9	6,436 506 0.0786 88.82	2	2,962 308 0.1202 188.726	12	2,359 169 0.0716 72.057	7	17,235 834 0.0484 16.217
NFL	7	1,699 460 0.0597 43.495	29	7,201 169 0.0235 -43,635	11	4,809 340 00700 69.8	10	2,269 158 0.0696 67.239	11	4,809 340 0,0707 69,8	9	6,004 433 0,0721 73,205	14	3,544 243 0,0686 64,674	10	6,247 475 0,076 82,615	6	2,482 257 0.1035 148,682	11	2,329 167 0.0717 72,211	12	17,169 783 0.0456 9 <i>.</i> 529
an Gain	12	1,688 393 0.0511 22.11	9	7,229 336 0.0465 11.628	9	4,785 363 0 <i>0</i> 7 <i>5</i> 9 82.196	17	2,290 139 0.061 46.418	9	4,785 363 0.07 <i>5</i> 9 82.196	12	6,D37 403 0.D668 60.324	13	3,501 245 0.07 68.069	11	6,319 430 0.068 63.431	15	2,397 182 0.0759 82.355	15	2,312 152 0.0651 57.895	8	17,275 833 0.0482 15,809





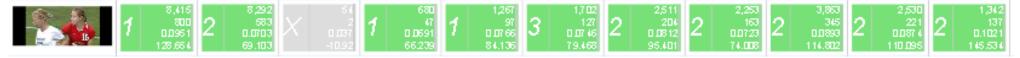
 ACQUISITION: A "Star Trek" package was #3 with 18-20 demo, #2 with 21-24 demo, but #9 overall. We can acquire younger audiences with targeted content like this.



 ENGAGEMENT: "Kobe's astonishing shot" was #25 with women, but #5 with men. We can better engage men (or sports fans) by showing more like this, women by showing less.



 REACH: A package about a hair-pulling soccer player was just plain interesting to everyone (#1-3). We can maintain reach by programming content for the mass audience.







Most Popular Most engaging overall based on <u>objective</u> metrics



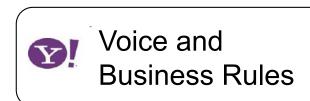
Most Popular + Per User History Engaging overall, and <u>aware of what I've already seen</u>



Light Personalization More relevant to me based on my <u>age, gender and property usage</u>



Deep Personalization Most relevant to me based on my <u>deep interests and relationships</u>









We learn how user attributes correlate with engagement for each item

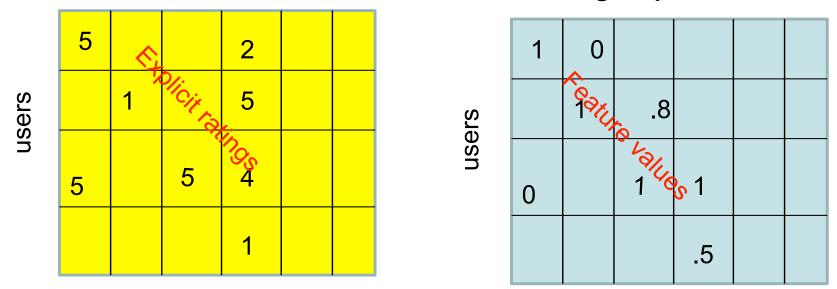
Default	Male	Female	18-24	25-34	Heavy Sports
7.1	-0.4	+0.4	+0.3	+0.1	-0.5
6.8	+1.0	-1.0	+0.2	+0.3	+2.1
6.5	-0.6	+0.6	+0.5	+0.3	-0.8
6.2	0	0	-0.7	-0.5	-0.3
5.9	-1.1	+1.1	-0.5	-0.2	-0.2
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We compute rankings for each user based on his/her attributes





User features e.g. ?sports, ?music,

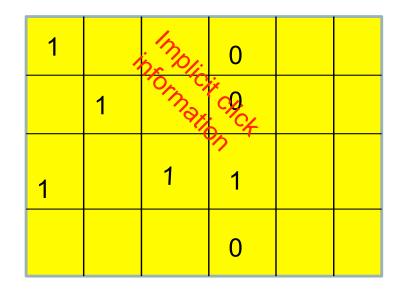


Q: Can we use additional feature information to better predict explicit ratings?

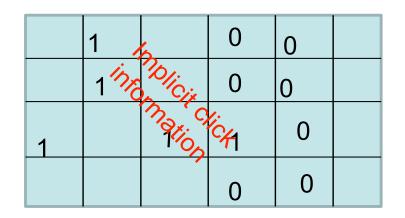
Feature information maybe incomplete, uncertain



Articles on Yahoo front pg



Articles on Yahoo news



Users in two contexts are different but some are common

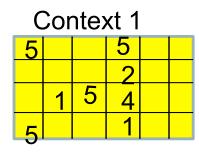
Articles in the two contexts maybe different with no overlap

Q: Can we make click prediction better in both contexts?

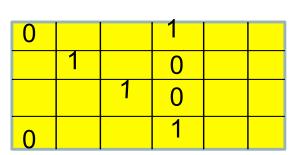


Problem Setup

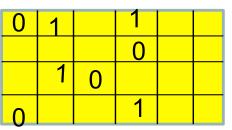
User x item matrices in n different contexts



Context 2



Context 3



- Items
 - Item-ids, feature values
- Response/ratings
 - Explicit/implicit ratings, feature values
- Matrices could be incomplete/complete



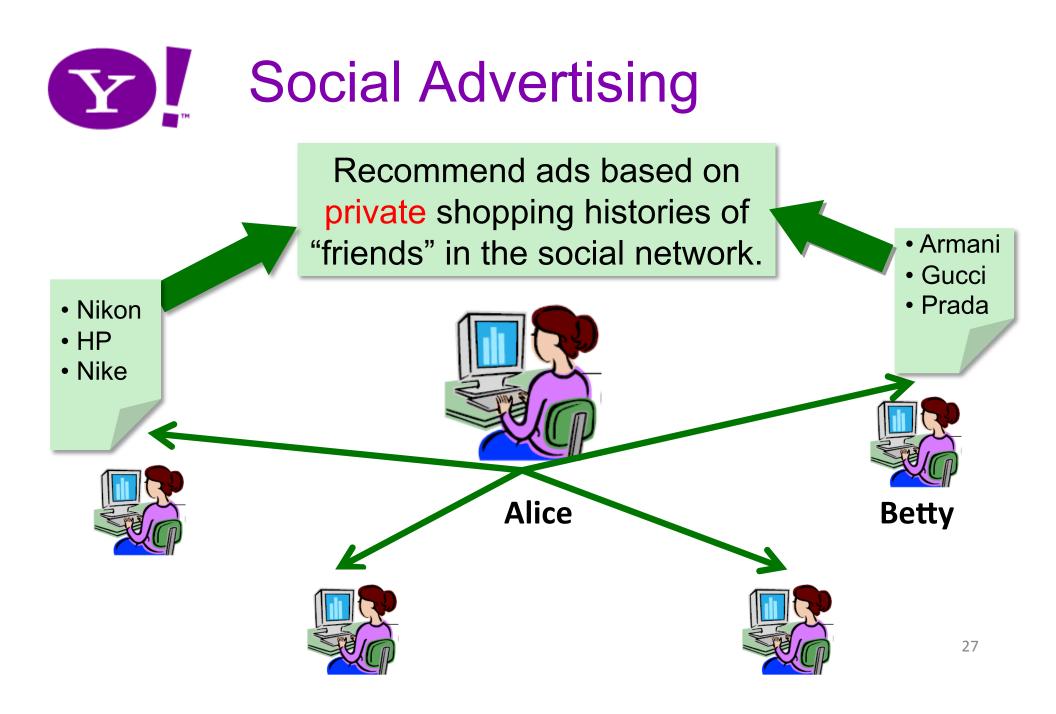
 Assume a joint distribution on user factors across contexts

• E.g. k = 2:
$$\mathbf{Z}_{i1} \sim \text{iid} \text{MVN}(\begin{array}{c} \mathbf{0} \\ \mathbf{0} \end{array}, \begin{array}{c} \sigma_{z,1}^2 I & \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{12} \\ \boldsymbol{\Sigma}_{12}' & \sigma_{z,2}^2 I \end{array})$$

Factor covariance

- Estimate factor covariance from data and borrow information across contexts through conditionals
 - Amount of information borrowed depends on covariance
 - Measurement error taken care of through joint modeling

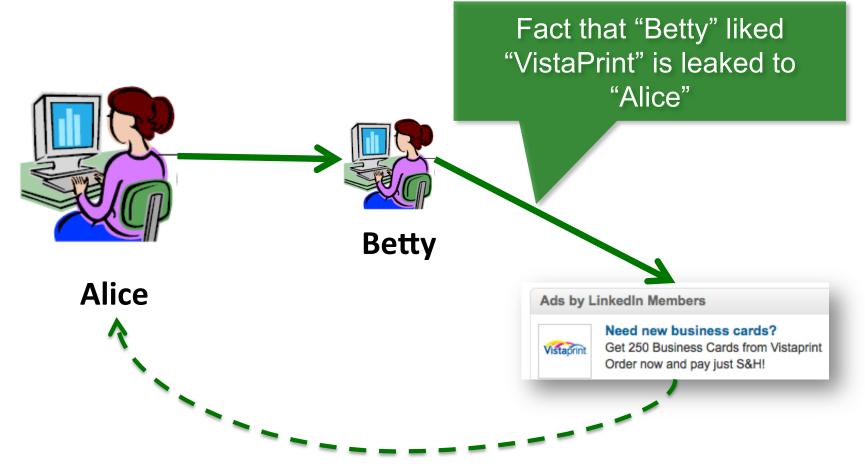
(Localized Factor Models: Agarwal et al., KDD 2011)



(Personalized Social Recommendations: Machanavajjhala et al., VLDB 2011) 27

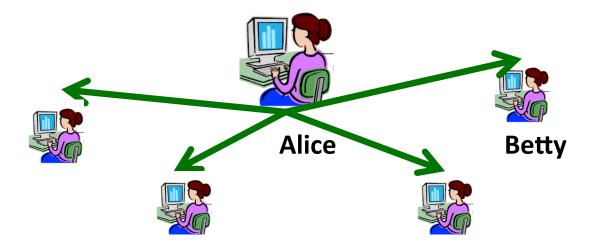


Items (products/people) liked by Alice's friends are better recommendations for Alice





Alice is recommended 'X'



Can we provide *accurate* recommendations to Alice while ensuring that Alice *cannot* deduce that Betty likes 'X'?



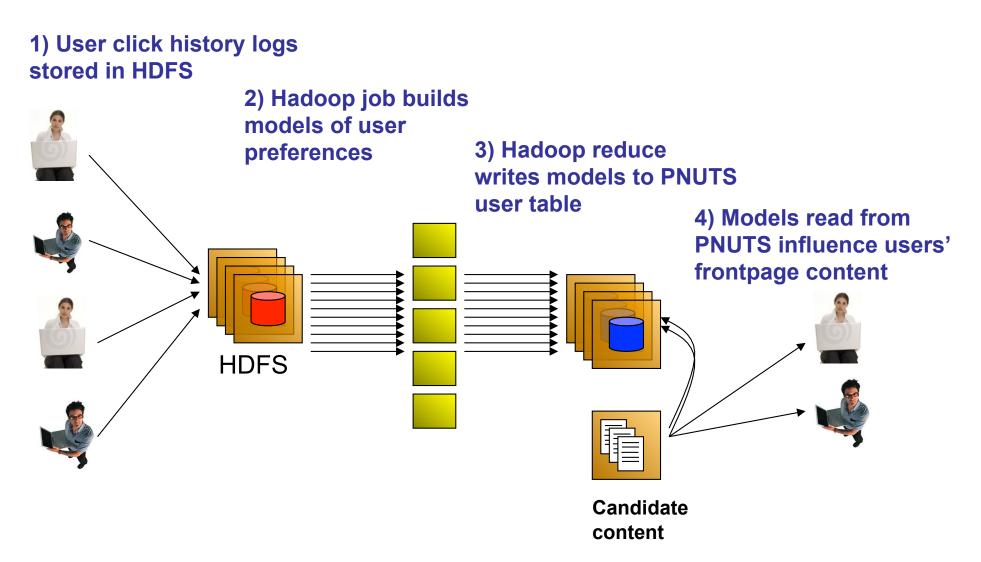
Takeaway ...

- "For majority of the nodes in the network, recommendations must either be inaccurate or violate differential privacy!"
 - Maybe this is a "bad idea"
 - Or, Maybe differential privacy is too strong a privacy definition to shoot for.



- Highly dynamic system characteristics:
 - Short article lifetimes, pool constantly changing, user population is dynamic, CTRs non-stationary
 - Quick adaptation is key to success
- Scalability:
 - 1000's of page views/sec; data collection, model training, article scoring done under tight latency constraints



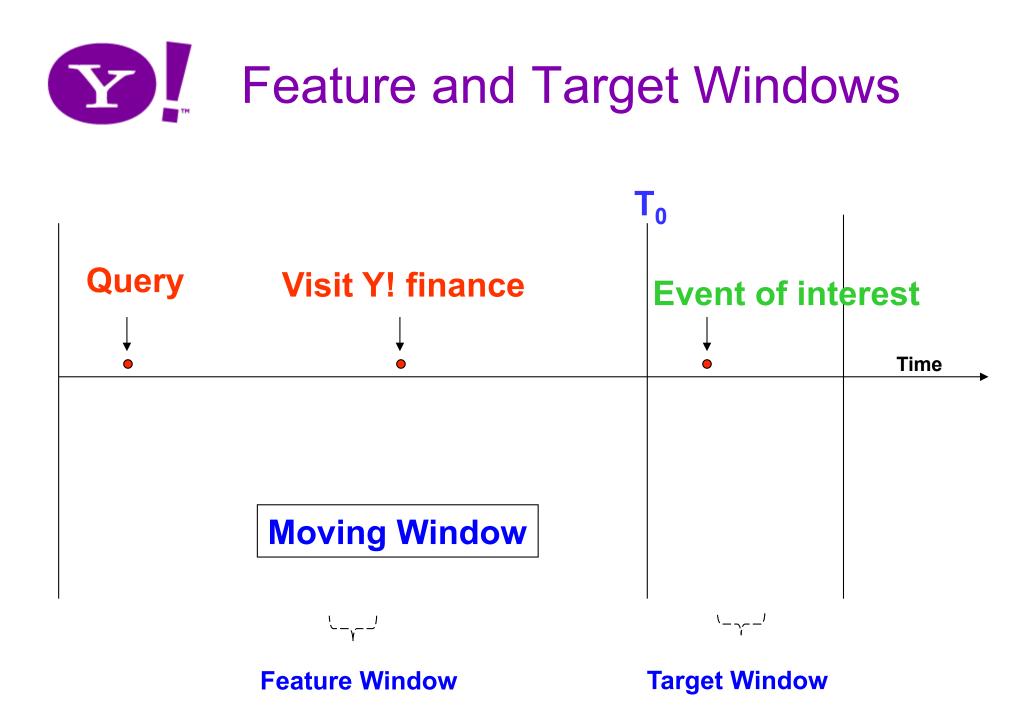




User Activity Modeling

- Large dimensionality vector describing possible user activities
- But a typical user has a sparse activity vector

Attribute	Possible Values	Typical values per user
Pages	~ MM	10 – 100
Queries	~ 100s of MM	Few
Ads	~ 100s of thousands	10s





User Modeling Pipeline

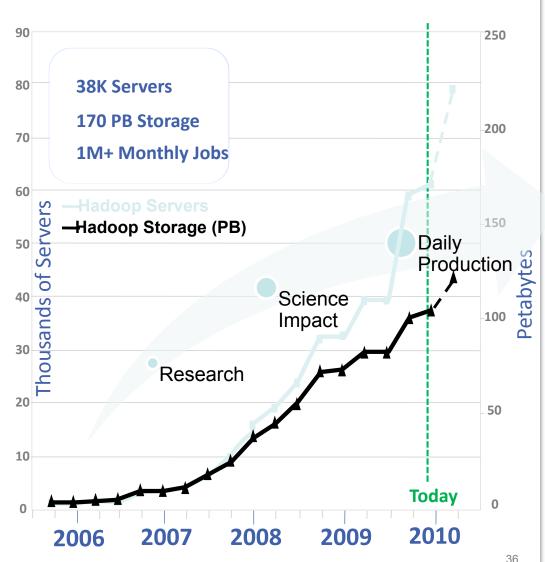
Component	Data Processed	Time
Data Acquisition	~ 1 Tb per time period	2 – 3 hours
Feature and Target Generation	~ 1 Tb * Size of feature window	4 - 6 hours
Model Training	~ 50 - 100 Gb	1 – 2 hours for 100's of models
Scoring	~ 500 Gb	1 hour



Hadoop powers the Yahoo! Network: must be rock-solid

We fix bugs before you see them

- We run very large clusters
- We have a large QA effort
- We run a huge variety of workloads
- Recent spinoff
 (HortonWorks)





Related Work

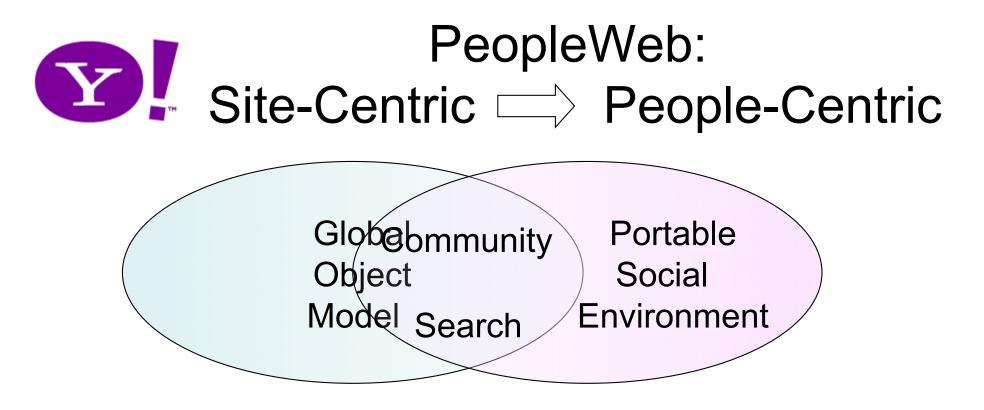
- Amazon, Netflix, Y! Music, etc.:
 - Collaborative filtering with large content pool (see KDD Cup, 2011)
 - Achieve lift by eliminating bad articles
 - We have a small number of high quality articles
- Search, Advertising
 - Matching problem with large content pool
 - Match through feature based models



- Offline models to initialize online models
- Online models to track performance
- Explore/exploit to converge fast
- Study user visit patterns and behavior; program content accordingly

The Social Web

Social networks and online communities will result in personalized experiences in a number of ways



- Common web-wide id for objects (incl. users)
- As users move across sites, their personas and social networks will be carried along
- Increased semantics on the web through community activity (another path to the goals of the Semantic Web)

(Towards a PeopleWeb, Ramakrishnan & Tomkins, IEEE Computer, August 2007)



- Flickr community phenomenon
- Millions of users share and tag each others' photographs (why???)
- The wisdom of the crowds can be used to search
- The principle is not new <u>anchor</u> text used in "standard" search

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	Photos: Explore Flickr • Learn More	flickr	
	Tags / jaguar / clusters	jaguar SEARCH (Or, try an <u>advanced search</u> .)	
		car, cars, auto, etype, automobile, classic, vintage, autoshow, red, show See more in this cluster	
		<u>zoo, animal, cat, animals, bigcat, seattle,</u> woodlandparkzoo, sleep, edinburgh, <u>caged</u> <u>See more in this cluster</u>	
		<u>guitar,</u> <u>fender</u> ❤ <u>See more in this cluster</u>	
		<u>aircraft</u> , <u>raf</u>	
Т	hese are the most recent photos tagged with jaguar. See more		

Web Search Results for Lisa

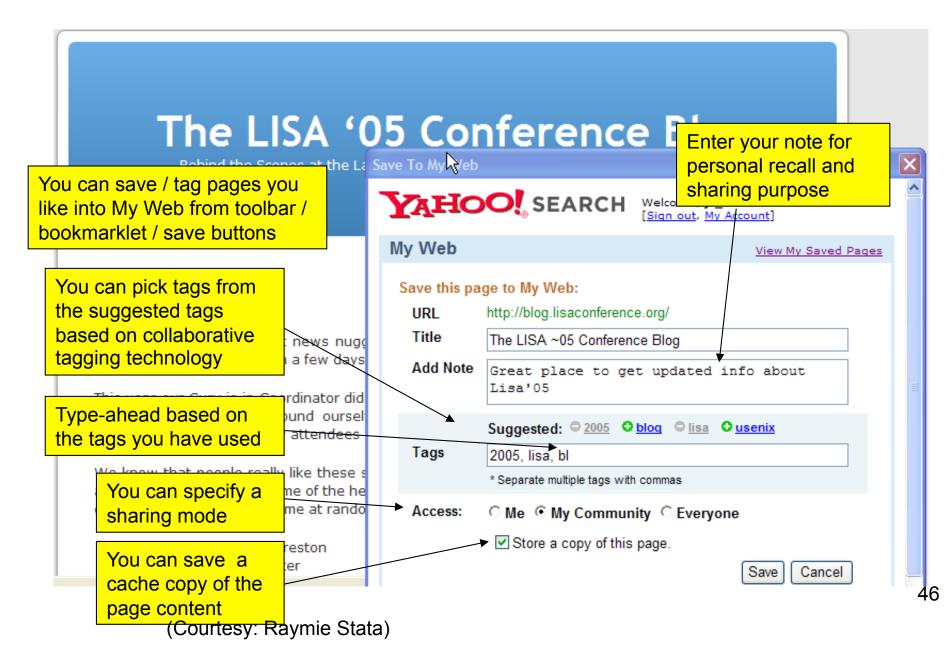
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My Web BETA My Search History OFF On	Search Services Adv
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Also try: Iisa lynnette clark, Iisa loeb, Iisa raye, mona Iisa More	
Y News Results for Lisa Lisa Lynn Sargeson (Olsen) Marsolek - Independent Record - 4 minutes ago UCLA's Lisa Willis Named Women's Basketball Pac-10 Player of the Week ←ac By LISA MEYER TRIGG Editor - Banner Graphic - Nov 23 11:37 AM Yahoo! Shortcut - About	Latest news results for "Lisa". Mostly about people because Lisa is a popular name
My Web Results for Lisa (41) 41 results from My Web! The Localization Industry Standards The Localization Industry Standards Remember me. Quick Links. Welcome to LISA. Becoming a global enterprise is of challenges that your organization will ever face. There is no one right way to do it, reinvent the wheel LISA is the leading international forum for organizations doin Category: Software > Translation RSS: View as XML - Add to My Yahoo! 	but you should not have to
 www.lisa.org - More from this site - Save - Block 2. Laser Interferometer Space Antenna [™] The Laser Interferometer Space Antenna is a mission that will detect and study grasources involving massive black holes and galactic binaries Download new LIS PDF file) LISA is a joint mission between the European Space Agency and NASA (Structure and Evolution lisa.jpl.nasa.gov - 19k - Cached - More from this site - Save - Block 	Web search results are very diversified, covering pages about organizations, projects, people, events, etc.
3. <u>ESA Science & Technology</u> : LISA THE MISSION: LISA is an ESA-NASA mission involving three spacecraft flying kilometres apart in Letter of Intent to Participate in LISA data processing study sci.esa.int/science-e/www/area/index.cfm?fareaid=27 - 31k - <u>Cached</u> - <u>More from t</u>	
4. a modern girl 电	

"Social" Search Results for Lisa

YAHOO! SEARCH Lis	;a [My Web (beta)	Search t	he Web]
My Web 2.0 BETA		<u>Home</u> Ir	nvite Contact	s Add Pa	ge <u>Tools</u>
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Search Results	Results 1 - 10 of	41 for Lisa shared	by your conta	cts and thei	r contacts.
Related tags: lisa, 2005, usenix, blog More	<u>3</u>				
My Community's Results (41)					
 and network systems on behalf of anot Saved by: <u>Zhichen Xu</u> ☺ and 1 other 1 Tags: <u>blog</u>, <u>lisa</u>, <u>usenix</u> http://sagewire.sage.org/article.pl?sid= 2. <u>The LISA '05 Conference Blog</u> 록 Behind the Scenes at the Largest Syst (here's another burning-hot news nugge days) Saved by: <u>Jianchang (JC) Mao</u> ☺ 10:0 Note: Official Lisa conference blog. Tags: <u>2005</u>, <u>blog</u>, <u>lisa</u>, <u>usenix</u> 	tem Administration Conference in the World. Nove tet that will be posted on the official conference site	og. David N. Excellent results fro embe because a	m my con a couple o nmunity ar in Usenix	nmunity of people re	
skills, learn new techniques, debate cu Saved by: <u>Jianchang (JC) Mao</u> 🞯 on N	vels of expertise meet at LISA to exchange ideas, urrent issues, and meet colleagues and friends. November 26, 2005 - <u>Details</u> . Excellent system conferece. Dates: Dec 4-9,	•			



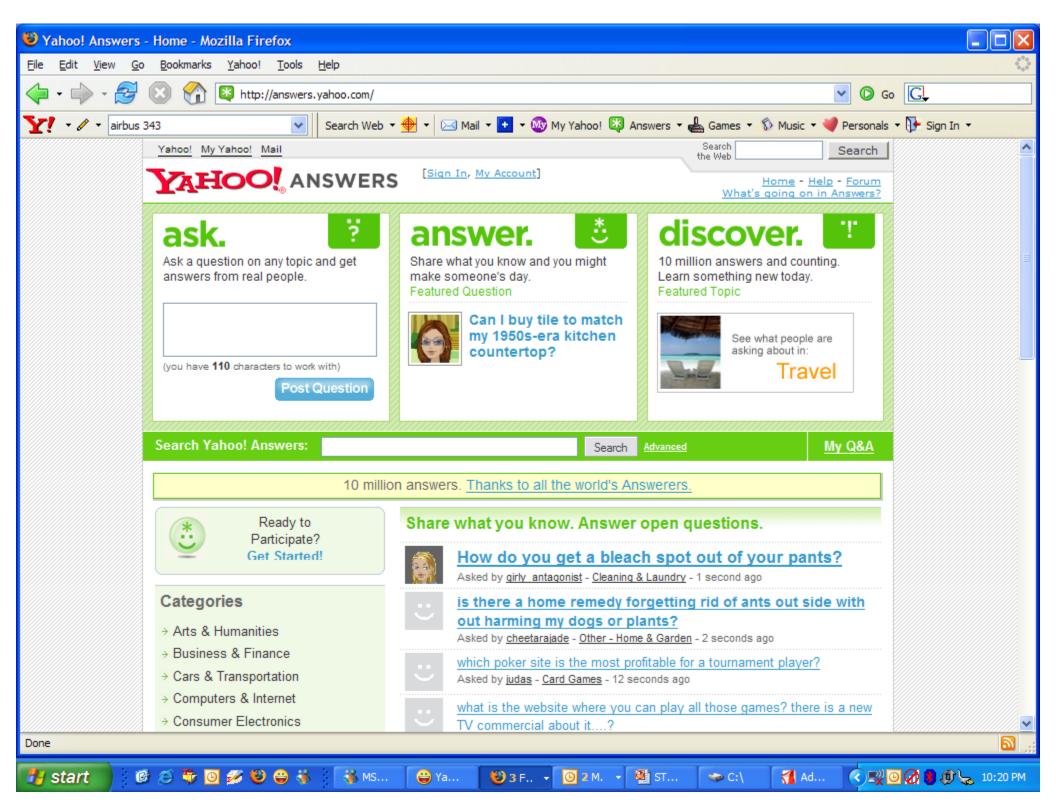






My Web Overlays

Sear	h Results Results 1 - 10 of about 279,000,000 for We	
¥7	<u>News Results for Web 2.0</u> <u>Zoovy, Inc.'s New Web 2.0/AJAX Based Software Boosts Ecommerce Sales</u> - RedNova - Apr 04 4:44 PM <u>Web 2.0 Journal: Intel Focuses on World PC Markets</u> - Linux World - Apr 03 6:55 AM <u>The State of Web 2.0: The Future of Web Software</u> - Slashdot - Apr 03 8:53 AM Yahoo! Shortcut - <u>About</u>	
Y 7	My Web Results for Web 2.0 (1,205) Subscriptions Results for web 2 0 (2)	
1.	Web 2.0 Conference 2006 Image: Speakers, schedule, and other info for the annual Web 2.0 Conference on innovation in the Internet economy. Category: Internet > Conferences and Events Saved by Matt and 74 others - Details Note: Home page of the annual Web 2.0 conferences. The conferences feature presentations by innovators in Internet technology and scholarship. www.web2con.com - 38k - Cached - More from this site - Save	
2.	Web 2.0 Conference Image: Conference Web 2.0 Coverage IT Conversations presents audio archives of the Web 2.0 Conference held October 5-7. 2004 told attendees at the Web 2.0 conference in San Francisco that the Saved by 5 people www.web2con.com/web2con/coverage.csp - 81k - Cached - More from this site - Save	Joining My Web data into Web Search results
3.	UserDriven: Web 2.0 Conference blog roundup Web 2.0 Conference blog roundup. Here are pointers to some of the best of the blog coverage of the Web 2.0 Conference (The official press coverage page is here) Saved by 3 people www.userdriven.com/2004/10/web_20_conferen.html - 16k - <u>Cached</u> - <u>More from this site</u> - <u>Save</u>	
4.	Wikipedia: Web 2.0 Web 2.0 generally refers to a second generation of services available on the World Wide Web that lets contrast to the first generation, Web 2.0 gives users an experience closer Quick Links: Introduction - Market Drivers of Web 2.0 - New web-based communities Saved by Jeremy Zawodny and 71 others - Details Note: good description of web 2.0 ideas	
	en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_2.0 - 50k - Cached - More from this site - Save	47







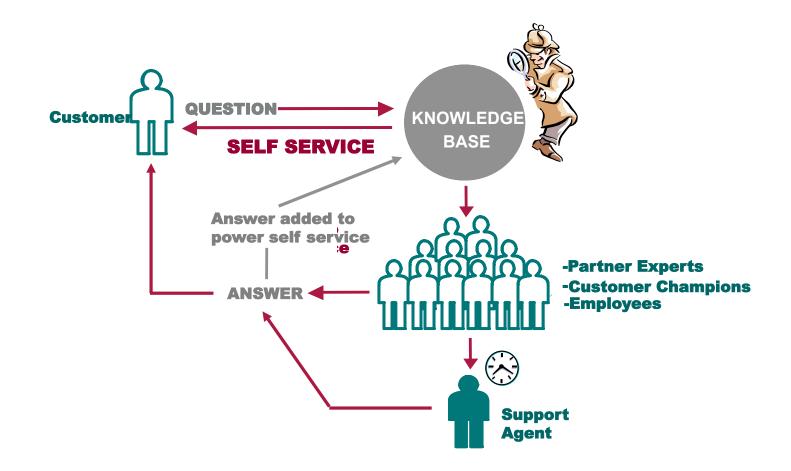


"In newsgroups, conversations disappear and you have to ask the same question over and over again. The thing that makes the real difference is the ability for customers to collaborate and have information be persistent. That's how we found QUIQ. It's exactly the philosophy we're looking for."

"Tech support people can't keep up with generating content and are not experts on how to effectively utilize the product ... Mass Collaboration is the next step in Customer Service."

- Steve Young, VP of Customer Care, Compaq







What is a Relevant Group? (7 M Y! groups)

- A group whose content is relevant to the query keywords.
- A group to which many of my buddies belong.
- A group where many of my buddies post messages.
- A group with some of my preferred characteristics: traffic, membership.

51

Social Search

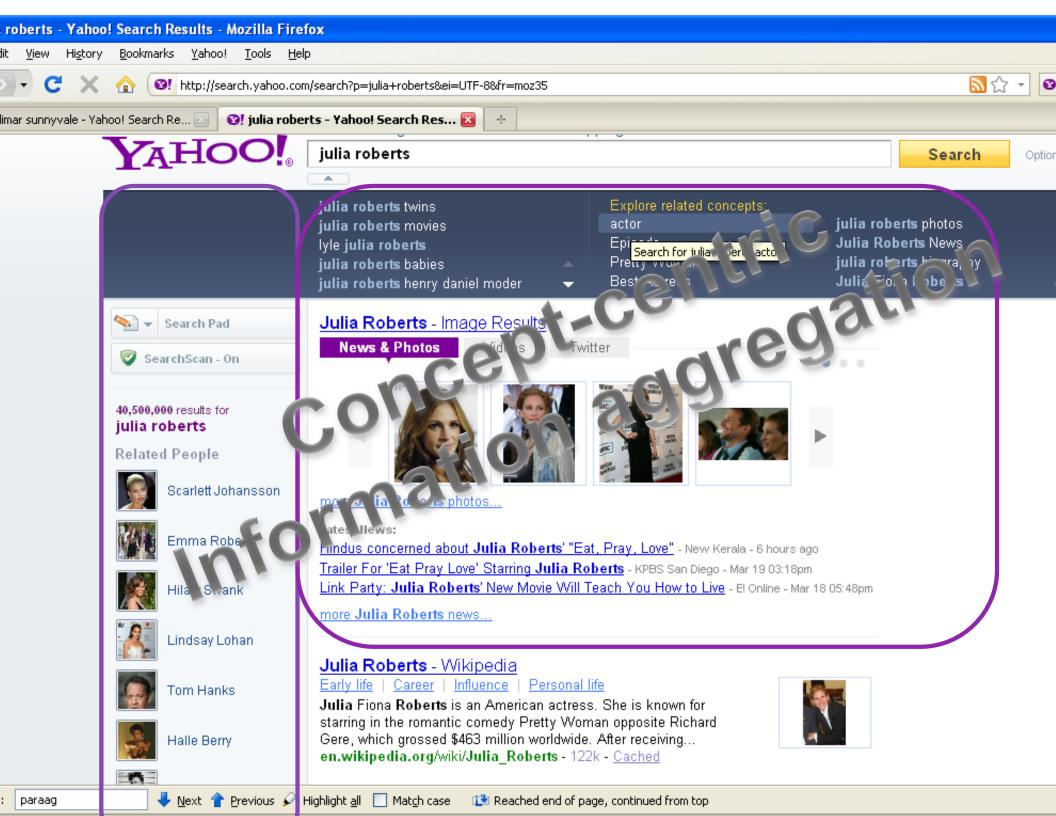
- Explicitly open up search
 - Enable communities, sites and consumers to explicitly redefine search results (e.g., SearchMonkey, Boss)
 - Right unit for a "search result"? Can we "stitch together" more informative abstracts from multiple sources?
 - Creation of specialized ranking engines for different tasks, or different user communities
- Implicitly leverage socially engaged users and their interactions
 - Learning from shared community interactions, and leveraging community interactions to create and refine content
- Expanding search results to include sources of information
 - E.g., Experts, sub-communities of shared interest, particular search engines (in a world with many, this is valuable!)

Reputation, Quality, Trust, Privacy



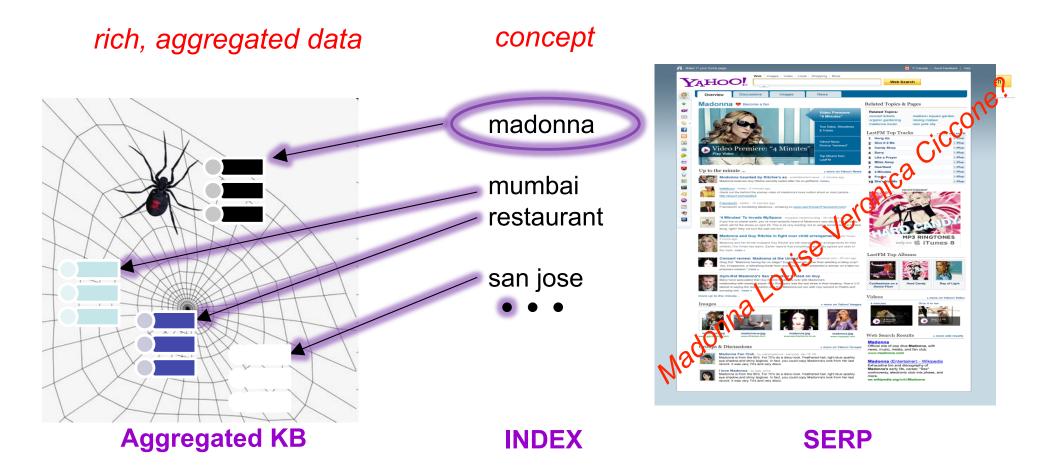
- How do we use annotations for better search?
- How do we cope with spam?
- Ratings? Reputation? Trust?
- What are the incentive mechanisms?

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	30,300 results for eggplant parmigiana:	1 <u>Ciao Bella - Baltimore</u> ★★★★★(1 local.yahoo.com		Z COLORIZA	Clifton Park	
	Show All	(410) 685-7733 - 236 S High St, Baltimor Menu: eggplant parmigiana		F North	147 1 Ave	
	Los Angeles Times	<u>4 Reviews</u>	<u>Direction</u>			
	🛐 Local Business Sites	(410) 528-1096 - 231 S High St, Baltimor Menu: eggplant parmigiana 14 Reviews → Overview → 23 Photos →		ions - E Pratt St	40 OrleansSt	
		 Basticcio ★★★★★ (8) local.yahoo.com (410) 522-7700 - 2400 Boston St, Baltim Menu: eggplant parmigiana <u>5 Reviews</u> ↓ Overview ↓ 3 Photos ↓ 		395 SOUTH BALTI	Eastern Ave	
		Caesar's Den ★★★★★ (7) caesarsden.com (410) 547-0820 - 223 S High St, Baltimor Menu: eggplant parmigiana <u>4 Reviews</u> ↓ Overview ↓ 11 Photos ↓		<u>ns</u> 🗸		

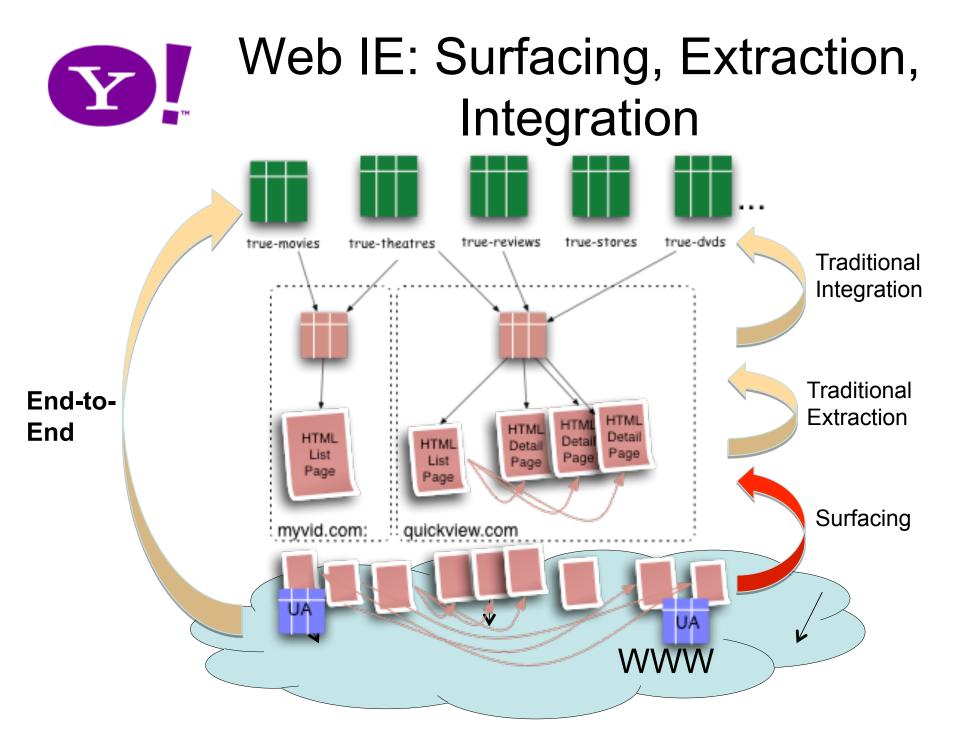


Web of Concepts

Y



The "index" is keyed by concept instance, and organizes all relevant information (data describing the concept instance and its relationship to other instances), wherever it is drawn from, in semantically meaningful ways





Summary

- The Web will be increasingly personalized, but "personalization" will mostly happen within the context of
 - Content optimization
 - Semantic interpretation of web content and user intent
 - Socialization of the web