

CSE 7/5337: Information Retrieval and Web Search

Introduction and Boolean Retrieval (IIR 1)

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These slides are largely based on the slides by Hinrich Schütze
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<http://informationretrieval.org>

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Take-away

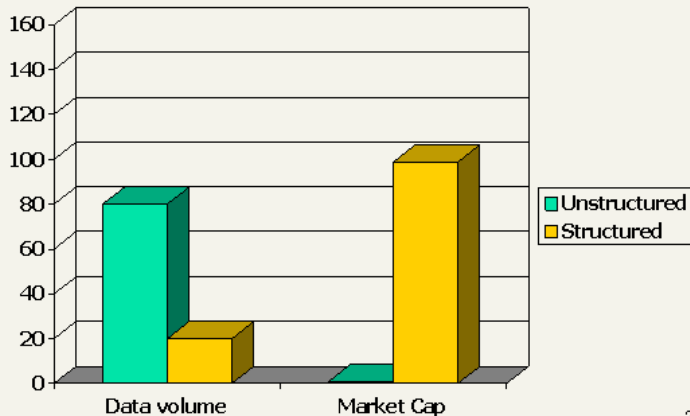
- What is Information Retrieval?
- Boolean Retrieval: Design and data structures of a simple information retrieval system

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Inverted index
- 3 Processing Boolean queries

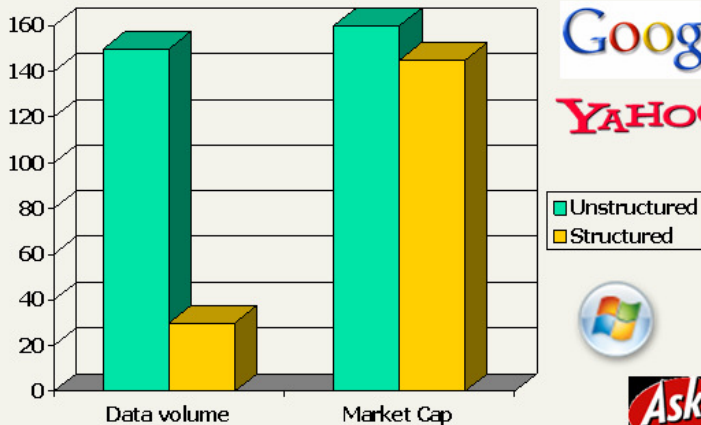
Definition of *information retrieval*

Information retrieval (IR) is **finding** material (**usually documents**) of an **unstructured** nature (usually text) that satisfies an **information need** from within **large collections** (usually stored on computers).

Unstructured (text) vs. structured (database) data in 1996



Unstructured (text) vs. structured (database) data in 2006



Google™

YAHOO!



Boolean retrieval

- The Boolean model is arguably the simplest model to base an information retrieval system on.
- Queries are Boolean expressions, e.g., CAESAR AND BRUTUS
- The search engine returns all documents that satisfy the Boolean expression.

Does Google use the Boolean model?

Does Google use the Boolean model?

- On Google, the default interpretation of a query $[w_1 w_2 \dots w_n]$ is w_1 AND w_2 AND \dots AND w_n
- Cases where you get hits that do not contain one of the w_i :
 - ▶ anchor text
 - ▶ page contains variant of w_i (morphology, spelling correction, synonym)
 - ▶ long queries (n large)
 - ▶ boolean expression generates very few hits
- Simple Boolean vs. Ranking of result set
 - ▶ Simple Boolean retrieval returns matching documents in no particular order.
 - ▶ Google (and most well designed Boolean engines) rank the result set – they rank good hits (according to some estimator of relevance) higher than bad hits.

Outline

- 1 Introduction
- 2 Inverted index
- 3 Processing Boolean queries

Unstructured data in 1650: Shakespeare



Unstructured data in 1650

- Which plays of Shakespeare contain the words BRUTUS AND CAESAR, but NOT CALPURNIA?
- One could grep all of Shakespeare's plays for BRUTUS and CAESAR, then strip out lines containing CALPURNIA.
- *Why is grep not the solution?*
 - ▶ *Slow (for large collections)*
 - ▶ *grep is line-oriented, IR is document-oriented*
 - ▶ *"NOT CALPURNIA" is non-trivial*
 - ▶ *Other operations (e.g., find the word ROMANS near COUNTRYMAN) not feasible*

Term-document incidence matrix

	Anthony and Cleopatra	Julius Caesar	The Tempest	Hamlet	Othello	Macbeth	...
ANTHONY	1	1	0	0	0	1	
BRUTUS	1	1	0	1	0	0	
CAESAR	1	1	0	1	1	1	
CALPURNIA	0	1	0	0	0	0	
CLEOPATRA	1	0	0	0	0	0	
MERCY	1	0	1	1	1	1	
WORSER	1	0	1	1	1	0	
...							

Entry is 1 if term occurs. Example: CALPURNIA occurs in *Julius Caesar*.

Entry is 0 if term doesn't occur. Example: CALPURNIA doesn't occur in *The tempest*.

Incidence vectors

- So we have a 0/1 vector for each term.
- To answer the query BRUTUS AND CAESAR AND NOT CALPURNIA:
 - ▶ Take the vectors for BRUTUS, CAESAR, and CALPURNIA
 - ▶ Complement the vector of CALPURNIA
 - ▶ Do a (bitwise) AND on the three vectors
 - ▶ $110100 \text{ AND } 110111 \text{ AND } 101111 = 100100$

0/1 vector for BRUTUS

	Anthony and Cleopatra	Julius Caesar	The Tempest	Hamlet	Othello	Macbeth	...
ANTHONY	1	1	0	0	0	1	
BRUTUS	1	1	0	1	0	0	
CAESAR	1	1	0	1	1	1	
CALPURNIA	0	1	0	0	0	0	
CLEOPATRA	1	0	0	0	0	0	
MERCY	1	0	1	1	1	1	
WORSER	1	0	1	1	1	0	
...							
result:	1	0	0	1	0	0	

Answers to query

Anthony and Cleopatra, Act III, Scene ii

Agrippa [Aside to Domitius Enobarbus]: Why, Enobarbus,
 When Antony found Julius Caesar dead,
 He cried almost to roaring; and he wept
 When at Philippi he found Brutus slain.

Hamlet, Act III, Scene ii

Lord Polonius: I did enact Julius Caesar: I was killed i' the
 Capitol; Brutus killed me.

Bigger collections

- Consider $N = 10^6$ documents, each with about 1000 tokens
- \Rightarrow total of 10^9 tokens
- On average 6 bytes per token, including spaces and punctuation \Rightarrow size of document collection is about $6 \cdot 10^9 = 6$ GB
- Assume there are $M = 500,000$ distinct terms in the collection
- (Notice that we are making a term/token distinction.)

Can't build the incidence matrix

- $M = 500,000 \times 10^6 =$ half a trillion 0s and 1s.
- But the matrix has no more than one billion 1s.
 - ▶ Matrix is extremely sparse.
- What is a better representations?
 - ▶ We only record the 1s.

Inverted Index

For each term t , we store a list of all documents that contain t .

BRUTUS →

1	2	4	11	31	45	173	174
---	---	---	----	----	----	-----	-----

CAESAR →

1	2	4	5	6	16	57	132	...
---	---	---	---	---	----	----	-----	-----

CALPURNIA →

2	31	54	101
---	----	----	-----

⋮


dictionary


postings

Inverted index construction

- 1 Collect the documents to be indexed:

Friends, Romans, countrymen. So let it be with Caesar ...

- 2 Tokenize the text, turning each document into a list of tokens:

Friends Romans countrymen So ...

- 3 Do linguistic preprocessing, producing a list of normalized tokens, which are the indexing terms: friend roman countryman so ...

- 4 Index the documents that each term occurs in by creating an inverted index, consisting of a dictionary and postings.

Tokenization and preprocessing

Doc 1. I did enact Julius Caesar: I was killed i' the Capitol; Brutus killed me.

Doc 2. So let it be with Caesar. The noble Brutus hath told you Caesar was ambitious:



Doc 1. i did enact julius caesar i was killed i' the capitol brutus killed me

Doc 2. so let it be with caesar the noble brutus hath told you caesar was ambitious

Generate postings

Doc 1. i did enact julius caesar i was
killed i' the capitol brutus killed me

Doc 2. so let it be with caesar the
noble brutus hath told you caesar was
ambitious



term	docID
i	1
did	1
enact	1
julius	1
caesar	1
i	1
was	1
killed	1
i'	1
the	1
capitol	1
brutus	1
killed	1
me	1
so	2
let	2
it	2
be	2
with	2
caesar	2
the	2
noble	2
brutus	2
hath	2
told	2
you	2
caesar	2
was	2
ambitious	2

Sort postings

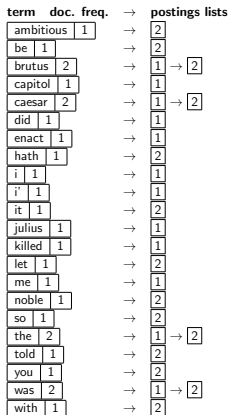
term	docID	term	docID
i	1	ambitious	2
did	1	be	2
enact	1	brutus	1
julius	1	brutus	2
caesar	1	capitol	1
i	1	caesar	1
was	1	caesar	2
killed	1	caesar	2
i'	1	did	1
the	1	enact	1
capitol	1	hath	1
brutus	1	i	1
killed	1	i	1
me	1	i'	1
so	2	it	2
let	2	julius	1
it	2	killed	1
be	2	killed	1
with	2	let	2
caesar	2	me	1
the	2	noble	2
noble	2	so	2
brutus	2	the	1
hath	2	the	2
told	2	told	2
you	2	you	2
caesar	2	was	1
was	2	was	2
ambitious	2	with	2



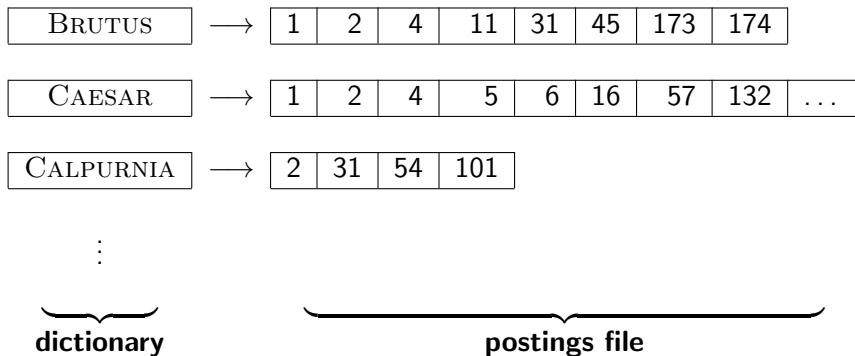
Create postings lists, determine document frequency

term docID

ambitious 2
be 2
brutus 1
brutus 2
capitol 1
caesar 1
caesar 2
caesar 2
did 1
enact 1
hath 1
i 1
i 1
i' 1
it 2
julius 1
killed 1
killed 1
let 2
me 1
noble 1
noble 2
so 2
the 1
the 2
told 2
you 2
was 1
was 2
with 2



Split the result into dictionary and postings file



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Simple conjunctive query (two terms)

- Consider the query: BRUTUS AND CALPURNIA
- To find all matching documents using inverted index:
 - 1 Locate BRUTUS in the dictionary
 - 2 Retrieve its postings list from the postings file
 - 3 Locate CALPURNIA in the dictionary
 - 4 Retrieve its postings list from the postings file
 - 5 Intersect the two postings lists
 - 6 Return intersection to user

Intersecting two postings lists

BRUTUS \longrightarrow 1 \rightarrow 2 \rightarrow 4 \rightarrow 11 \rightarrow 31 \rightarrow 45 \rightarrow 173 \rightarrow 174

CALPURNIA \longrightarrow 2 \rightarrow 31 \rightarrow 54 \rightarrow 101

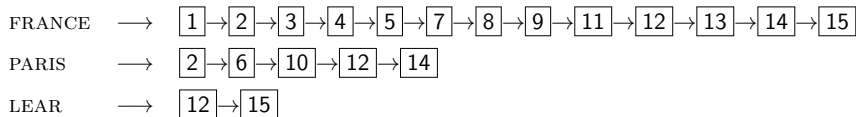
Intersection \implies 2 \rightarrow 31

- This is linear in the length of the postings lists.
- Note: This only works if postings lists are sorted.

Intersecting two postings lists

```
INTERSECT( $p_1, p_2$ )
1   $answer \leftarrow \langle \rangle$ 
2  while  $p_1 \neq \text{NIL}$  and  $p_2 \neq \text{NIL}$ 
3  do if  $\text{docID}(p_1) = \text{docID}(p_2)$ 
4      then  $\text{ADD}(answer, \text{docID}(p_1))$ 
5           $p_1 \leftarrow \text{next}(p_1)$ 
6           $p_2 \leftarrow \text{next}(p_2)$ 
7      else if  $\text{docID}(p_1) < \text{docID}(p_2)$ 
8          then  $p_1 \leftarrow \text{next}(p_1)$ 
9          else  $p_2 \leftarrow \text{next}(p_2)$ 
10 return  $answer$ 
```

Query processing: Exercise



Compute hit list for $((\text{paris AND NOT france}) \text{ OR lear})$

Boolean queries

- The Boolean retrieval model can answer any query that is a Boolean expression.
 - ▶ Boolean queries are queries that use AND, OR and NOT to join query terms.
 - ▶ Views each document as a [set](#) of terms.
 - ▶ Is precise: Document matches condition or not.
- Primary commercial retrieval tool for 3 decades
- Many professional searchers (e.g., lawyers) still like Boolean queries.
 - ▶ You know exactly what you are getting.
- Many search systems you use are also Boolean: spotlight, email, intranet etc.

Commercially successful Boolean retrieval: Westlaw

- Largest commercial legal search service in terms of the number of paying subscribers
- Over half a million subscribers performing millions of searches a day over tens of terabytes of text data
- The service was started in 1975.
- In 2005, Boolean search (called “Terms and Connectors” by Westlaw) was still the default, and used by a large percentage of users . . .
- . . . although ranked retrieval has been available since 1992.

Westlaw: Example queries

Information need: Information on the legal theories involved in preventing the disclosure of trade secrets by employees formerly employed by a competing company

Query: "trade secret" /s disclos! /s prevent /s employe!

Information need: Requirements for disabled people to be able to access a workplace

Query: disab! /p access! /s work-site work-place (employment /3 place)

Information need: Cases about a host's responsibility for drunk guests

Query: host! /p (responsib! liab!) /p (intoxicat! drunk!) /p guest

- Proximity operators: /3 = within 3 words, /s = within a sentence, /p = within a paragraph
- Space is disjunction, not conjunction! (This was the default in search pre-Google.)
- Long, precise queries: incrementally developed, not like web search
- Why professional searchers often like Boolean search: precision, transparency, control
- When are Boolean queries the best way of searching? Depends on: information need, searcher, document collection, ...

- What is Information Retrieval?
- Boolean Retrieval: Design and data structures of a simple information retrieval system

- Chapter 1 of IIR