Get Some Extra Time This Holiday Season — With Enterprise Search

Article contributed by dtSearch®

So many ideas for increasing office productivity: better Internet, smarter hiring, more durable office supplies, stronger coffee. But what do you really need to get yourself a little extra time during the workday to enjoy a seasonal pumpkin spice beverage? That would be enterprise search.

This is not a "search the whole Internet" search engine to locate that perfect pair of tartan vegan boots. (You certainly don't need me to tell you how to find those!) This is an enterprise search engine to slice through your personal data as well as company archives. To illustrate, I can tell you how an enterprise search engine fits into my day. Granted, I work for an enterprise search company, dtSearch®. But my day-to-day work life is certainly nothing out of the ordinary.

I start with a bazillion new emails each day. For most items, even before I've finished my second cup of coffee, I can pick up the gist of the exchange, and jump right in with an answer. But then there is the correspondent who emails me on a new thread after a 2 month delay, leaving me with no recollection where we left off.

Short of going back in time 2 months to try to remember what the issue is, a search engine is my best option here. With a search engine, I can instantly locate any email from the dawn of email history. After finding the applicable email, I can copy and paste my earlier response and use that as a starting point. Or I can search all company email archives to try to find an even more artfully worded response to the issue than I can come up with on my own.

After I finish with my emails, it is time for some contracts' work. You know how something like painting rewards originality? Contracts' work is the exact opposite of that. You never want to break new ground; you want to do something "tried and true." Again, I use a search engine to comb through company archives to find similar language to what I am trying to achieve and apply that.

Then I need to drop everything and research a prospect that has been dead for 3 years and has now miraculously retuned to life. I apply a search engine to a dataset of document drafts to piece together the relevant background to resume negotiations. Now I believe I have earned myself a premium coffee break with all the time saved in finding the data I need.

So how does an enterprise search engine actually work? An enterprise search engine instantly searches terabytes after first building a search index. If you are thinking that getting

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the search engine to index data is somehow difficult, it is not. Simply point to the folders, email archives and the like you want the search engine to index, and the search engine does everything else. On its own, the search engine will recognize the format of each specific file, whether an "Office" document, a PDF, an email format, a web-based format, etc. And it will use that information to correctly parse the item and index all text and metadata.

You can expect the search engine to be "foolproof." Even if a file has a misapplied file extension like a PDF document saved with a .DOCX file extension, the search engine will not be fooled. Rather, it will use the binary format of the file to figure out the applicable file type. Black text against a black background, white text against a white background and the like that might be nearly impossible to spot in a document's native application is just "text" to a search engine. Similarly, metadata that may take an inordinate amount of clicking around to detect in a file's originating application is immediately available to a search engine. A search engine can further take an email with a compressed ZIP or RAR attachment containing a Microsoft PowerPoint file with an Excel spreadsheet fully embedded inside and parse all of that correctly.

The index stores sufficient data to enable over 25 different types of full-text and metadata search features. You can pile on the Boolean (and/or/not) and proximity operators to make your search request as precise as you want: *hot coffee* within 38 words of *pumpkin spice* (or *hot coffee* but only within 7 words before *pumpkin spice*) in a file that also contains *caffeine* and no mention anywhere of *peppermint cream*. After all that, you can add an extra requirement that *coffee break* appear in subject metadata or at the top of the file.

Or you can dispense with formulating a precision search and just do an "all words" or "any words" natural language search. Fuzzy searching adds on to any of the above search requests, adjusting from 0 to 10 to sift through typographic and OCR errors. If *pumpkin spice* is "mis-OCRed" as *pumplin spice* or *caffeine* is mistyped as *caffeene* in an email (obviously before someone had their coffee), you can still find what you are looking for.

Beyond individual search, your office can enable instant concurrent searching across an indexed dataset. Simultaneous searching can run across a classic Windows network. Or concurrent searching can operate in a web-based environment, either from a local server or from a cloud server such as on Azure or AWS. While indexing is resource-intensive, online search can run in a stateless manner, letting an unlimited number of search threads instantly proceed across terabytes of data. An unlimited number of search threads can instantly proceed across terabytes, each with highlighted hits. Pumpkin spice beverage break for all!

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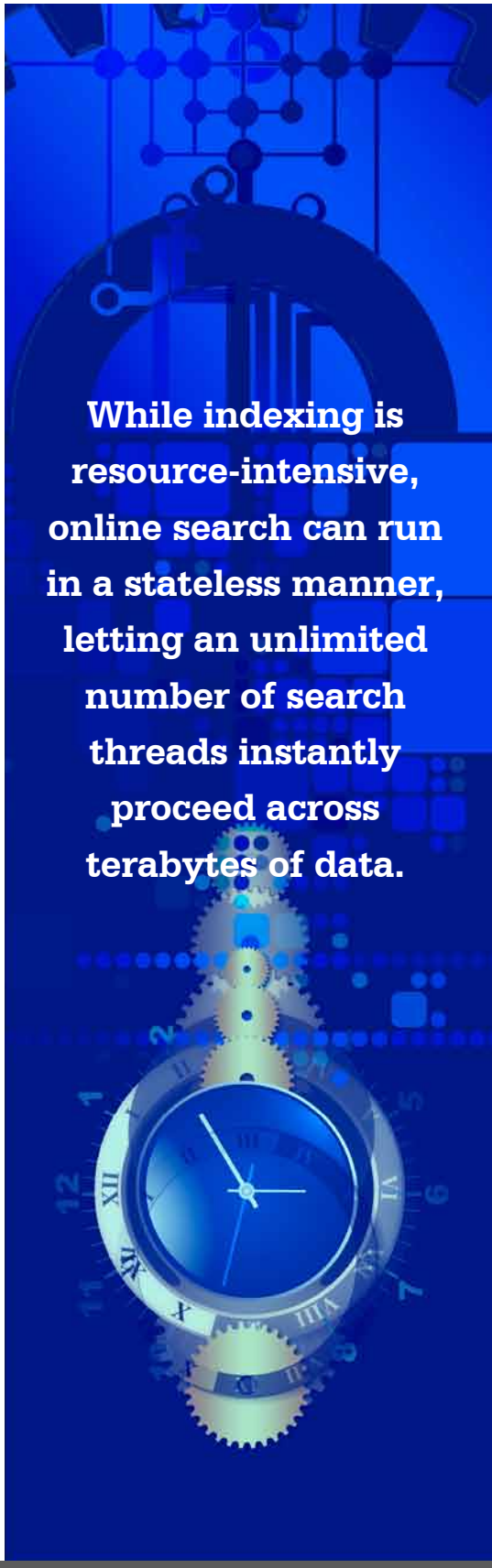

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