

Boston KM Forum

Finding Knowledge Assets

How web search behavior can be applied to the Enterprise Intranet

Feb 18, 2010



Specialist in Search, SEO and
Social Networking strategies

Lexington eBusiness Consulting

Mark@MSprague.com
781-862-3126 P
339-223-0500 C

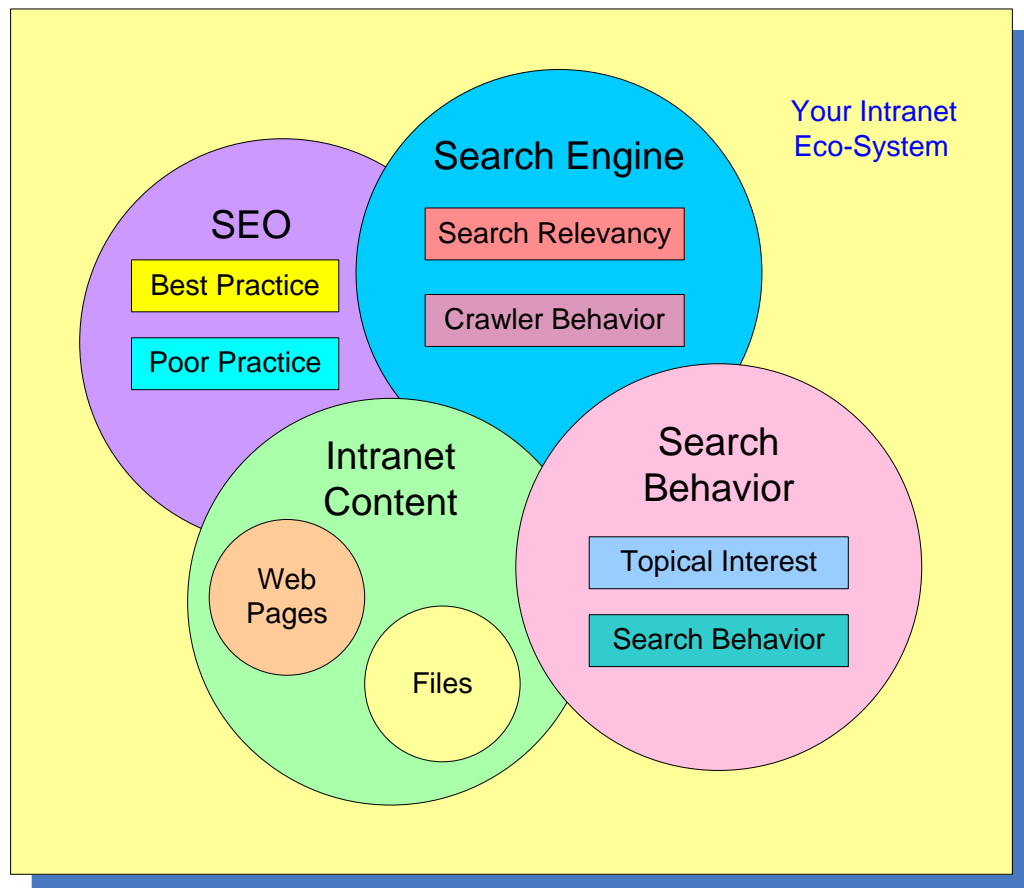
MARK SPRAGUE
580 Lowell Street
Lexington, MA 02420

SEO, Content, Search and Human Behavior

Preparing content so that it can be found easily by people requires the understanding and interactions of three disciplines augmented by a fourth – understanding how people find and consume content. Though clearly in a symbiotic relationship, Search Engine Optimization (SEO), Content and Search Engines are often dealt with as if they are stand-alone disciplines. For example:

1. Content can be developed without the understanding of how it will be positioned within a website.
2. Websites can be designed and developed without a coherent initial SEO / search strategy – SEO experts are brought in after the site is completed to optimize the best that they can.
3. SEO / content experts can know about search, but often don't really understand in any depth how search relevancy works and how it impacts their content in search results.

SEO, Content and Search need to be thought about in a unified way to generate the most benefits for your consumers. The graphic below is a very useful way to view how it falls together at a very high level. In this session I will deal with Human Search Behavior.



Human Behavior

The following is an example of how to transform Internet-based human search behavior into an Intranet content model. This scenario is applicable in a human resources web site that has a lot of HR related materials available for employees. Let's consider the hypothetical employee (Bob) who is complaining that "my co-worker is a real jerk, what can I do about this?"

How does Bob go about finding information? Bob is not a content expert, nor does he view the world organizationally like the company corporate librarian does. What are the right search terms? Is it "dealing with jerks"? In practice Bob will probably start his search looking for information through Google. He will search iteratively until he strikes gold, or gives up.

There are really two parts to understanding human search behavior...the first is topical in nature – what kind of content are people interested in, and second how do they go about finding the information about their topic. It turns out that the topic (difficult co-workers) is framed within two search phrases that return great search results and high-quality content. These phrases are:

1. [Workplace Conflict](#)
2. [Conflict in the Workplace](#)

Below are the top 25 searches by volume (From Google Adwords)

1. [Conflict in the workplace](#)
2. Resolving [\[conflict in the workplace\]](#)
3. Dealing with [\[conflict in the workplace\]](#)
4. Handling [\[conflict in the workplace\]](#)
5. [\[Workplace conflict\]](#) resource center
6. Types of [\[conflict in the workplace\]](#)
7. [\[Workplace conflict\]](#) Scenarios
8. [Conflict prevention in the workplace](#)
9. [Conflict resolution strategies in the workplace](#)
10. Effects of [\[conflict in the workplace\]](#)
11. Sources of [\[conflict in the workplace\]](#)
12. Cost of [\[Workplace conflict\]](#)
13. Cultural [\[conflict in the workplace\]](#)
14. Avoiding [\[conflict in the workplace\]](#)
15. Solving [\[Workplace conflict\]](#)
16. [\[Workplace conflict\]](#) situations
17. [\[Workplace conflict\]](#) mediation
18. Examples of [\[conflict in the workplace\]](#)
19. [\[Workplace conflict\]](#) video
20. [\[Workplace conflict\]](#) solutions
21. PPT conflict workplace
22. Reasons For [\[conflict in the workplace\]](#)
23. [\[Workplace conflict\]](#) resolution training
24. Understanding [\[conflict in the workplace\]](#)
25. [\[Workplace conflict\]](#) training

A Look at How They Search

Upon examination we see that people are modifying these two primary search phrases to examine different aspects of the problem. They are doing this by adding a third or fourth search term such as:

First, they use search terms that show interest in problem solving scenarios:

- ✚ Secondary search terms: Resolving, Dealing with, Handling, Avoiding and Solving

Second, they are interested in the types of workplace conflict that may exist:

- ✚ Secondary search terms: Types of , Scenarios, Situations and Examples of

Third, they want to identify the root causes of workplace conflict:

- ✚ Secondary search terms: Source, Cultural and Reasons for

Fourth, they want to understand the effect of workplace conflict on the company:

- ✚ Secondary search terms: Effects on and Cost

Fifth, they want to educate and prevent workplace conflict:

- ✚ Secondary search terms: Prevention, Avoiding, Training, Education and Understanding

Sixth, they are looking for specific types of content:

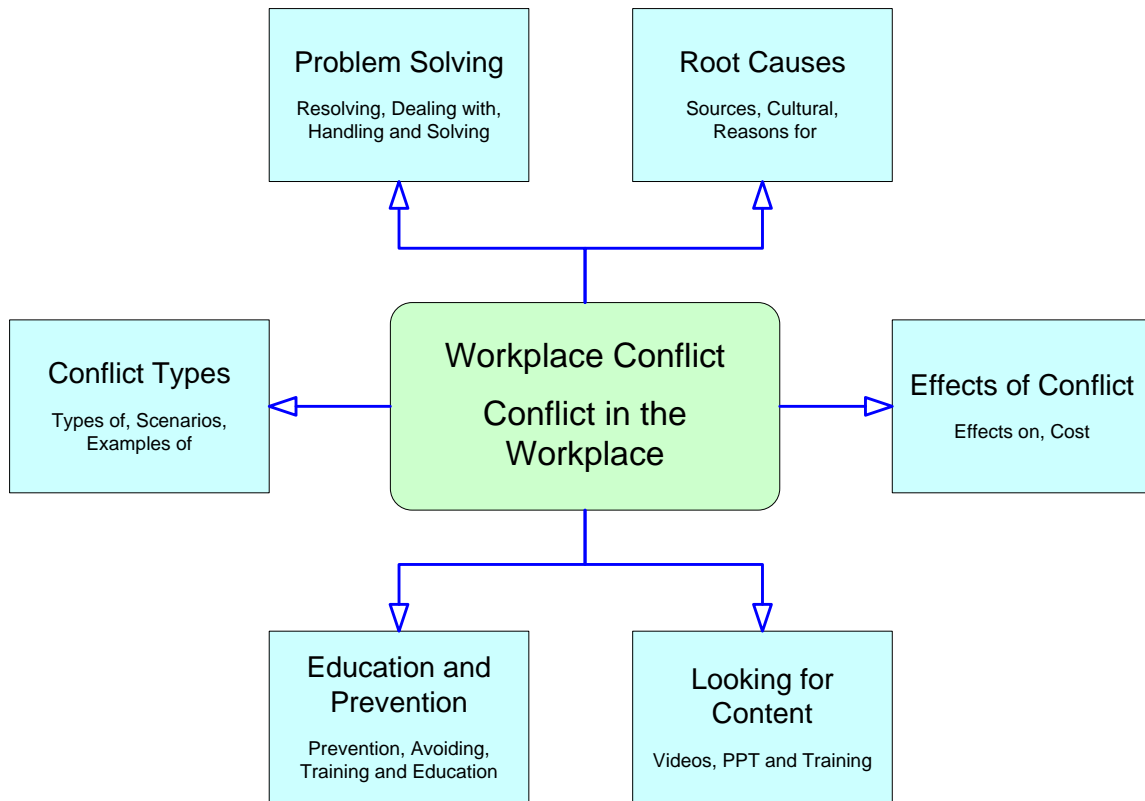
- ✚ Search Terms: Videos, PPT and Training

There is remarkable keyword consistency in how people are conducting their searches in the AdWords data set that contains 200 search phrases that are searched ten million times a month. In this analysis we have identified six search behavior patterns. This knowledge suggests the following content creation strategy for the Human Resources Intranet.

The name of this section should be titled Conflict in the Workplace, and should have a tag line that includes the phrase Workplace Conflict. The document should be organized according to the themes identified above. The five major sections would be:

1. Dealing with workplace conflict
2. Kinds of workplace conflict
3. What causes workplace conflict
4. The cost of workplace conflict
5. Understanding and preventing workplace conflict
6. More content...

See the graphic on the next page.



This analysis would also suggest that the Conflict in the Workplace website content be repurposed as a Power Point presentations, videos and PDF documents.

Keep in mind that this analysis deals with just the top 25 searches by volume. If the analysis was expanded to the top 100 or 200 phrases more content opportunities would likely be available.

SEO suggestions

The *Conflict in the Workplace* title should also be in the web pages' URL link (i.e. WWW.MyCompany.com/Human-Resources/Conflict-in-the-Workplace). The phrase "Workplace Conflict" should be used in the Title and Description Tags, and as a major labeling device throughout the web page (H1 tags and Anchors). These primary and secondary terms which reflect real human behavior should be reflected in the body of the text, and in your Intranet SEO keyword strategy for web page optimization.

Identifying how a topic is actually being discussed (the terms and phrases) requires research and thoughtful analysis. Doing this provides the basis for developing focused content that people actually search for and consume. For example, it is very useful to take a look at the secondary terms that are being used to see what else they can tell us about search behavior. When you resolve an AdWords data set for secondary terms it provides a different view of human search behavior. It shows that the entire discussion can be reduced to ten to twenty terms, and it shows which of the terms are the most important. See the table on the next page:

Top Secondary Terms by Volume

The way to think about this table is that the terms Resolution and Resolve appeared in 894,079 search phrases in a single month. Clearly when it comes to Workplace Conflict users are overwhelmingly interested in managing and resolving workplace conflict.

Top Terms by:	Volume
Resolution / Resolve	894,079
Manage / Management	242,104
Communications	85,700
Strategies	30,547
Mediation	23,860
Skills	23,143
Training	22,860
Negotiation	21,610
Interpersonal	19,638
Motivation	18,100
Styles	17,522
Handle / Handling	16,040
Organizational	14,800
Team	14,800
Dealing	14,400
Techniques	14,240
Solve / Solving	12,073
Relationship	12,000
How to	11,455
Avoiding / Avoidance	6,673
Situation	5,473
Personality	4,058
Constructive	3,600
Compromise	2,900
Problem Solving	2,900
Dispute	2,020
Example	1,999
Types of	1,428
Causes	910
Definition	693

See the accompanying spreadsheet for the full analysis.