RESEARCHING

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Researching Online

Fourth Edition

David Munger

Shireen Campbell

Davidson College

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Preface

The process of writing this edition of *Researching Online* brings to mind a traditional story from Italy. A young tenor was performing a difficult aria in an opera house known for its demanding audiences. To his surprise, the audience's thunderous applause brought him back to the stage for encore after encore. After his fifth performance, he told the audience that he appreciated their gratitude, but his voice was failing and he could sing no more. A disgruntled voice from the back of the hall retorted, "You're going to do it until you get it right!"

With *Researching Online,* we feel fortunate to have the opportunity to try to get it right once a year. Because not only the Internet, but also the level of sophistication of its users, changes so rapidly, a new edition each year—a rarity in the textbook industry—enables us to update, add, and adapt at a pace that *almost* approaches that of technology.

Researching Online shows students how to do research on the Internet in an easy-to-follow, step-by-step format. It's written in plain English, with clear examples of the types of materials students may encounter in their own research. The Internet is presented in the order that students will most likely encounter it: first, they learn how to get online. Then they learn about Internet resources like e-mail, real-time discussion, and the Web. Finally, they get clear, easy-to-follow instructions on creating their own Web pages. This edition features expanded discussions of research ethics, real-time discussion, and copyright, as well as updated examples throughout.

Everything about *Researching Online* has been designed to make it the most useful possible tool for anyone doing research on the Internet. Its compact size allows it to consume little desk space in crowded computer labs. Specialized vocab-

ulary is **bold and underlined** to alert readers to terms defined in the glossary. Text users must input is displayed in a `special typeface` to make it easy to recognize. URLs are displayed in ***bold italic*** and without confusing angle brackets. Most importantly, critical concepts are both explained in the text and reinforced visually with real-world examples.

Features in this edition

- A new co-author, Shireen Campbell, Associate Professor and Director of the Writing Center at Davidson College, who works with faculty and students in applying technology to writing across the curriculum.
- A revised opening chapter that simplifies the Internet, makes it easy for students to get started, and adds additional information on evaluating online sources.
- A revised organization that sequences classroom applications more logically by moving coverage of real-time discussion from Chapter 6 to Chapter 3, and integrating the information in Chapter 7 on Telnet, FTP, and Gopher throughout the book where it is needed.
- A greater emphasis on classroom applications of asynchronous and synchronous communication, including a discussion of the ichat interface standard for Addison Wesley Longman Companion Web sites.
- An updated discussion of copyright laws that includes not only text and images but also audio and video sources.
- Updated examples and URLs throughout the text.
- A completely revised literature case study chapter with a new sample research topic on Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*.

Acknowledgments

This book evolved out of the groundbreaking book *Teaching Online* by Daniel Anderson, Bret Benjamin, Christopher Busiel, and Bill Paredes-Holt. Connie Wessner and Jeremy Campbell provided a great sounding board for the HTML chapter. Jimmy and Nora Munger continue to demonstrate how easy computers can be to use and learn from. Lynn Huddon and Donna Campion at Longman were rock-solid in their support of this book. Jennifer Ahrend provided brilliant copyediting. Finally, our gratitude goes to this text's reviewers, Daniel Anderson, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; and Craig Branham, St. Louis University

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Chapter 1

The Internet Step by Step

Five ways you can use the Internet to improve your work

You knew you could use the Internet to shop, book travel researvations, and read movie reviews, but you may not have known that you can also use it to conduct serious academic research. The same features that make the Internet easy to use for buying CDs also make it a tremendous tool for college researchers. For example:

- You are giving a report on Toni Morrison in Contemporary American Fiction in six and a half hours and want to double-check the year in which she won the Pulitzer Prize, but at 2:00 A.M., the university library is closed and your mom is in bed.
- Your Psychology 101 class requires you to participate in one experiment as part of the subject pool. To decide which one you want to be part of, you need to read the experiment descriptions and then sign up for the one that interests you most.
- Studying abroad in Italy, you have time to visit only the Uffizi Gallery or the Galleria dell'Accademia in the next week and need to ask your former Art History professor which one you should go to.
- You are working on a Chemistry lab report, and you need to know the boiling point of nitrogen dioxide.

- You're not sure about the reliability of a source you want to use in an oral presentation about the conflict in Chechnya, but it's too new to have published reviews.

Can the Internet answer all of your research questions? Well, it doesn't contain the entire archives of the Library of Congress or even every back issue of the *New York Times* (not yet, anyway). It can't perform original research experiments or help you communicate with someone who doesn't have Internet access. And while it can help you reach people and resources on the other side of the world, it's certainly no substitute for live, one-on-one interaction with real people and real things.

The Internet is at its best when it helps make your research experience easier, more thorough, and more collaborative. At other times, you may need to rely on the permanence and authority of resources found in traditional libraries. This book will help guide you through the process of integrating online sources into your research.

Connecting to the Internet

Connecting via the campus network. Most colleges and universities have a network of computers that is connected to the Internet. In many cases, computers are available for student use in computer labs, the library, or in dorms. The software you need to access the Internet has been installed; all you need to do is learn to use the software on those computers, and you're in business (see Chapters 2–6). For e-mail, you'll need to establish an e-mail account—usually handled through your campus computer services department.

Connecting using your own computer. If you have your own computer, getting connected to the Internet is a little more complicated—but once you're connected, it's a lot more convenient than relying on public computers. If you have a brand-new computer, all the software you need is already installed on your computer. If you have inherited an older computer, especially one that has never been connected to the Internet, you may have to do a bit of scrambling to obtain the software you need. At the bare minimum, you need a connection program (usually a PPP program and a TCP/IP program), and a **Web browser**. An easy way to get all this software is to upgrade your computer

to the newest operating system—either Windows or Mac—which will include Internet connectivity software. If you need to subscribe to an Internet Service Provider for Internet access (see below), the software is often provided as part of your subscription cost. Your campus computer services or information technology department may also offer free Internet access software.

Direct Access. Many institutions offer direct access to the Internet in campus dorms. If you live on campus and your campus offers this service, it's worth it to buy any equipment you need to connect directly—the connection will be much faster and more reliable than any other means of Internet connection. Usually all you'll need is an Ethernet card and a login name and password. Before you buy anything, double-check with your campus computer services department to see what equipment you need.

Remote Access. If you don't live on campus, or if your dorm isn't wired for direct access, then you probably need to connect via a commercial **Internet service provider** (ISP). Some colleges have made arrangements with Internet Service Providers to provide free or low-cost access for off-campus students, but most students are on their own when it comes to Internet access. There are now several different types of Internet service available, but these services will typically offer a flat monthly rate for unlimited Internet access. Depending on your budget and what's available in your area, you may choose **cable modem** access, **direct subscriber line** (DSL), **satellite** access, or **dial-up** access. To help determine which of these services is right for you, consult Table 1.1.

How the Internet works

Once you're connected, you can begin to explore the Internet. The Internet is a worldwide network of computers that are connected to each other in many different ways. Each of these different sorts of connections is useful for different kinds of work. The most important Internet services are listed below.

World Wide Web. Now the most important part of the Internet, the Web allows you to quickly and easily navigate through millions of **hypertext** sites containing images, text, sound, motion pictures, and even databases.

E-mail. E-mail allows you to quickly exchange messages and computer files with anyone connected to the Internet.

Service	Speed/Cost	Requirements/ Contact info
Cable modem	256–2000 kbps $40–70/month $100–300 for equipment/ installation	Ethernet card, cable modem. Your building must be wired for cable. You may be required to purchase cable TV. ***http://www.rr.com/*** *or contact your local cable company.*
Direct Subscriber Line (DSL)	256–1024 kbps $50–100/month $100 for installation	Ethernet card, DSL modem.You must live within 1–2 miles of a telephone office. *Contact your local phone company.*
Satellite	56–400 kbps $30–50/month $200-300 for equipment/ installation	Windows computer, satellite dish, satellite modem, Ethernet card, modem, phone line. ***http://www.direcpc.com/***
Dial-up	56 kbps $10-30/month	Modem, phone line. ***http://www.earthlink.net/*** ***http://www.att.com/worldnet/***

Table 1.1: **Internet access options. With Internet access, you generally get what you pay for. Speed is measured in kbps—the bigger this number, the faster your connection.**

IRCs and MU*s. These are services which allow you to communicate with other users in real time.

Usenet newsgroups. Newsgroups are a vast collection of specialized electronic bulletin boards where (usually) anyone can post or respond to a message.

Listservs. A specialized type of e-mail, listservs are moderated or unmoderated discussion groups on specified topics.

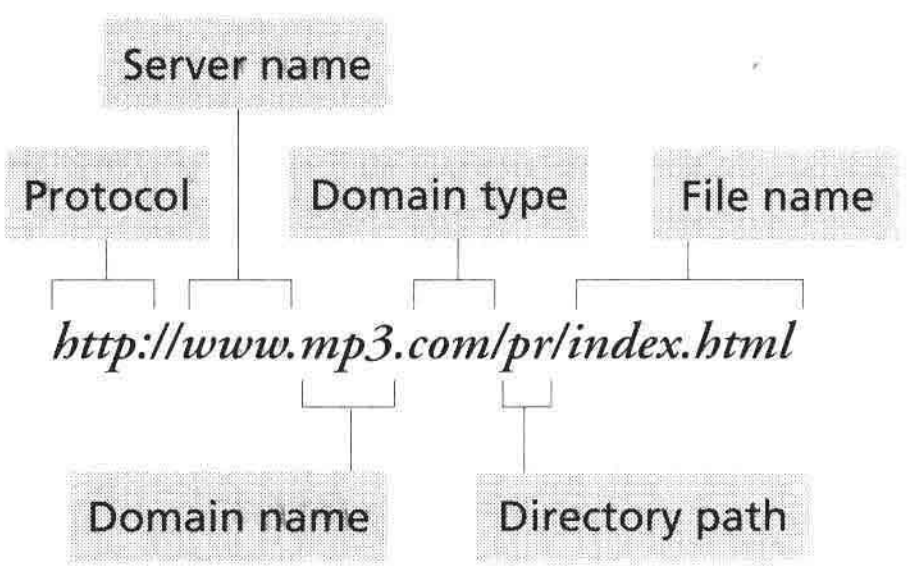
Telnet, FTP, and Gopher. Older parts of the Internet, these are ways of accessing files and programs on distant computers.

For more on how the Internet works, visit Learn the Net at ***http://www.learnthenet.com.***

URLs: Addresses on the Internet

The Internet has no center. There is no single computer or group of computers in the "middle" of the Internet. There isn't even a "map" or physical representation of how all the computers on the Internet are connected. The only thing everyone on the Internet has agreed upon is how resources are named. Every resource on the Internet has a unique name, different from every other resource on the Internet. Once you know a resource's name, you don't need to know where it is, what kind of computer it's on, or how to get there. All the information you need to find every resource on the Internet is included in the name itself.

Names on the Internet are called **URLs** (Uniform Resource Locators). A URL has several parts:



The **protocol** indicates the type of link to be made with the server. In this case, it's *http:*, which stands for hypertext transfer protocol—the protocol used for all resources on the World Wide Web. The **domain** name is registered by the Web site owner, in this case, the mp3.com Corporation. The **server name** (usually *www* for Web sites) refers to the server the site owner uses to host the Web site. The **domain type** indicates what type of organization the owner is, here a commercial organization. The **directory path** reflects the overall organization of the Web site. This resource is located in the *pr* **directory**. The **file name** is the name the site owner has

given to the particular resource you're looking at, here a listing of mp3.com press releases. Note that slashes are used to separate directory names from each other and from the domain name and file name. Two slashes are used to separate the protocol from the domain name.

When you pronounce a URL, you can save time by using a few common conventions. If the person you're speaking to knows you're referring to a Web address, you can leave out the *http://*. Then say, "www dot mp3 dot com slash pr slash index dot html." Make sure you spell out any words with unconventional spellings (in most cases, you can leave out the *index.html* or *index.htm,* too). However, when you refer to URLs in formal research, always give the complete URL.

Use the Internet to inform your research

In one sense, the Internet is an enormous, constantly evolving conversation in which users meet to discuss almost any imaginable topic. You can benefit from using the Internet in dozens of ways; for instance, you can easily:

- Access online resources to support your research, including many resources like databases and live "cams" that aren't available in any other format.
- Communicate with authors of important sources or experts in various fields of study.
- Meet online with other researchers to discuss a common topic.
- Design and publish the results of your research on the World Wide Web, offering an interactive Web site, links to other Internet resources about the topic, video clips of major figures, and forums for conversation among users.

Online versus printed sources

Online sources and printed sources each have strengths and weaknesses. Therefore, deciding when to use which type of source isn't a matter of applying a simple formula. To determine what type of resource will be most valuable for your research project, you'll first need to consider how you are planning on using the source. Table 1.2 summarizes the most important differences between online and printed

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