

Re: Java is slower than C++!

Source: <http://coding.derkeiler.com/Archive/Java/comp.lang.java.programmer/2007-06/msg00679.html>

- *From:* "Karl Uppiano" <karl.uppiano@xxxxxxxxxxx>
 - *Date:* Mon, 11 Jun 2007 02:42:33 GMT
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"Twisted" <twisted0n3@xxxxxxxx> wrote in message
news:1181527133.881023.86360@xx

On Jun 10, 5:12 pm, "Karl Uppiano" <karl.uppi...@xxxxxxxxxxx> wrote:

"Lars Enderin" <lars.ende...@xxxxxxxx> wrote in message

news:466C6774.4010604@xxxxxxxxxxx

I made a mistake in my comment. I think you were the one who thought it ridiculous to even try to google for "Ant", and it was in this very newsgroup (comp.lang.java.programmer).

I think the rule should be, Google first, then ask. I am seldom disappointed with Google results, even for obscure references.

Obscure references aren't the problem, if they are just plain obscure, but fairly specific. For those, there's nothing better than Google -- there's a reason "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?" never had a "search Google" lifeline. ;)

Ambiguous references are the problem, especially when there's a) a very common meaning and b) a very obscure one and you're fairly certain the latter is meant. The expectation is that common meaning usages will dominate the search results, and worse, even if various different meanings or usages are apparent from the results, it still may not be clear which of these is the one. On occasion, there are exceptions, but obviously they can't be counted on.

If you know "ant" is Java-related, a search for "ant" may well turn up a reference to the Java-related one as well as the bug, and you can recognize the relevant usage from the two. That apparently does occur,

Re: Java is slower than C++!

but it's the exception to the rule, not the rule. Moreover, the same thing that lets you tell which "ant" results are the "right" results also lets you use a better query to begin with, e.g. "ant java".

If you know very little about "Go", other than that someone didn't apparently mean the usual thing by it, a bunch of Google results some of which refer to travel, some to the board game, and some to who knows what else won't elucidate matters any. In this case, it may be the case that "computer go" would give a useful result set focused around the game; then again it might not, since "go" is such a common word. (An actual test produces mostly references to game software and AI, but there are some unrelated results mixed in as well, in the first ten hits.) Some browsing might reveal that the game software and AI problem are connected, and suggest that it fits in with the computer chess I mentioned, but who has time for that much random link-chasing with precious little indication of what was meant? I for one am not bothered if I say something like I did and someone asks me for clarification! It takes me less time to provide it, civilly at that, than it would probably take them to do a bunch of searches, follow some links, and guess, and they end up with a truly certain answer besides, since it comes from the horse's mouth. Much more efficient use of man-hours.

And of course there's the cases, the vast majority, where it's completely useless. Consider "woody":

Woody Allen – Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Woody – Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
Sheriff Woody, a character in the Toy Story movies; ...

Welcome to the Official Woody Guthrie Website

Official Woody Guthrie web site

Debian GNU/Linux 3.0 "woody" Release Information

WOODY'S TORONTO

Woody Woodpecker DVD

Woody's Office Portal – wopr.com

Woody Harrelson

Woody's Tavern – Ft. Worth, TX

There's a ton of "woody" hits. In the top ten hits, reprinted above, are nine different meanings: three different celebrities, two different fictional characters from animated films, two different bar-type venues in separate cities (and most of the 6.5 billion potential

Re: Java is slower than C++!

searchers are nowhere near either and nowhere near rich enough to travel to either on a whim, besides), one office-supplies company (or something; with a cute War Games reference -- how did they, of all people, manage to snag THAT domain name? Arrrgh! I wanted it), and one piece of software.

If it had come up in a computer discussion, without elaboration, good luck. The Debian distro would probably be the correct reference (and it's the one I was thinking of when I picked it for my test case). It's lucky that Debian Woody is even in the top ten results, given the numerous less obscure meanings of this common English word. The office supplies hit is another candidate, since computers are among the commonest of office tools; if "woody" came up in a discussion around the water cooler or on the internal Usenet server at the office, it would be a strong candidate indeed. And given the penchant people have for slipping pop culture references in all kinds of places however irrelevant they may be there, you'd not be able to discount the celebrities and fictional characters entirely. That means you'd eliminate the tavern and the club and leave 8 possible hits, with 7 different meanings.

Not looking good.

I rest my case.

(Interesting that the slang meaning of "woody" that is R-rated doesn't crop up. Is Google biasing its results for common terms against pornographic results, and perhaps in favor of tech-related results?)

Yeah, I get all that, and I have had some frustration when searching for specific things, but far more often than not, Google does turn up results that answer my question. At worst, it gives me a bunch of interesting links, if I'm looking for some entertaining reading! :-)

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