**Mandl, T. (2008). Recent developments in the evaluation of information retrieval systems: moving towards diversity and practical relevance*. Informatica*, 32(1), 27-39.**

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Information retrieval is the basic technology behind Web search engines and an

everyday technology for many Web users. It deals with the storage and representation

of knowledge and the retrieval of information that is relevant to a specific user problem.

Queries, typically composed of a few words in a natural language are used to retrieve

the information. The query is then compared to document representations that were

extracted during the indexing phase. The documents that are most similar to the query

parameters are presented to the users who must then evaluate the relevance with

respect to their information needs and problems.

The author reviews the history of information retrieval form the 1960s through 2003, discussing the automatic indexing methods for texts developed to the partial matching models to Boolean methods. The growing amount of machine-readable documents available requires more powerful information retrieval systems for diverse applications and user needs.

The basic measures of information retrieval are recall and precision. Recall refers to the ability of a system to find relevant documents, while precision measures how good a

system is at finding only relevant documents without returning many unnecessary results. Recall is calculated as the fraction of relevant documents found among all relevant documents, whereas precision is the fraction of relevant documents in the result set. The three major evaluation initiatives of information retrieval systems are Text Retrieval Conference (TREC), Cross-Language Evaluation Forum (CLEF), and the National

Institute of Informatics Test Collection for IR Systems (NTCIR). ImageCLEF began in 2003 to evaluate the retrieval of images. A collection of historic photographs and medical images was assembled for the evaluation process. A video evaluation track has been put into place as well as one for the retrieval of audio data. An evaluation track has even been developed for music that enables users to perform a query by humming or playing similar music. GeoCLEF has also been set up to retrieve news stories with a geographical focus. Retrieval of opinions found in blogs has also been a new focus of evaluation.