

Giggle: Search Engine for Kids

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A child searching for information on the Internet often attains results that are not meant for them; either too hard to read, written in the wrong language, or merely inappropriate for their age group (e.g. pornography, violence, racism). Also, current tools for Internet traversal do not adequately correspond to the capabilities nor the domain knowledge of a child.

In short, our investigation has lead us to the following conclusion. In order to support a child in their search on internet, they not only seek a search engine that will find information appropriate to their needs and interests, but they need a tool they feel comfortable with and attracted to, a tool that has been specifically built for children. The overall challenge that the user has is to specify a good query, the second is obtaining a manageable and relevant answer. Driven by these issues we completed an extensive investigation and now come with a breakthrough: a self-learning information retrieval system that meets the wishes and needs of our target group (children aged 8 to 12). This fully-automatic software system features a visual representation for navigating through cyberworld, aids in spell checking, expanding and tuning a search query, and yields results that beter adhere to a child's information need. A prototype has been built to demonstrate and test the power of these ideas, including its social relevance.

This thesis describes not the scientific research which forms the fundamental basis of the project and the process with which we created our product.