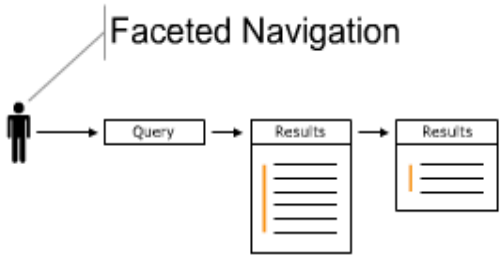
Description of range of search patterns to take into consideration
http://www.slideshare.net/morville/search-patterns

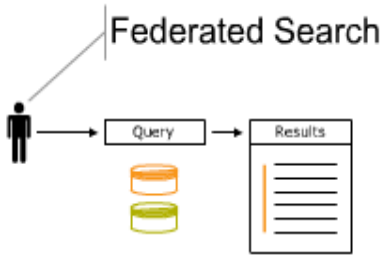
Faceted Navigation

Faceted or "guided navigation" leverages metadata fields and values to provide users with visible options for narrowing or refining their query.



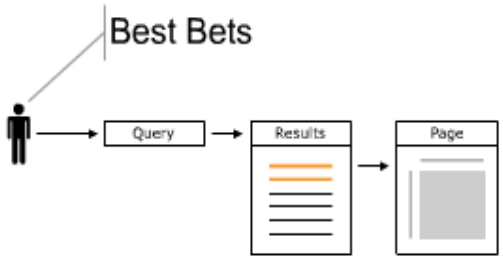
Federated Search

Federated search involves the simultaneous search of multiple databases or collections. It may be necessary when managing dynamic content from multiple sources with different data models, but it does present challenges. It is recognised that performance is notoriously slow as the number and size of collections grow, speed suffers.



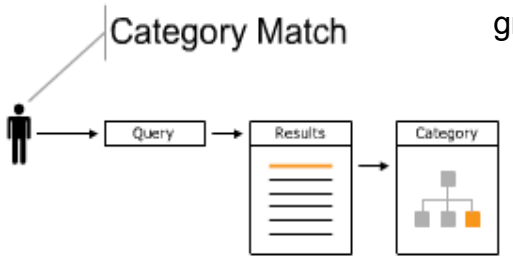
Best Bets

Best Bets is a best practice for large web sites. It can be successfully integrated with other approaches such as autocomplete and faceted navigation.



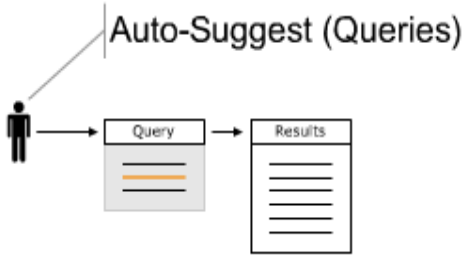
Category Match

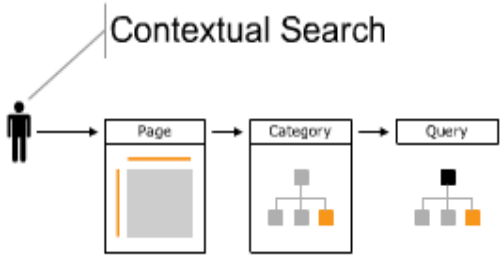
When a query matches (or nearly matches) a category name (e.g., cancer), it's often worth highlighting and linking to that category, in addition to showing individual results.



Auto-Suggest

A dynamic menu that suggests queries by matching what the user has typed so far with that user's recent search history and/or popular queries among users in general.





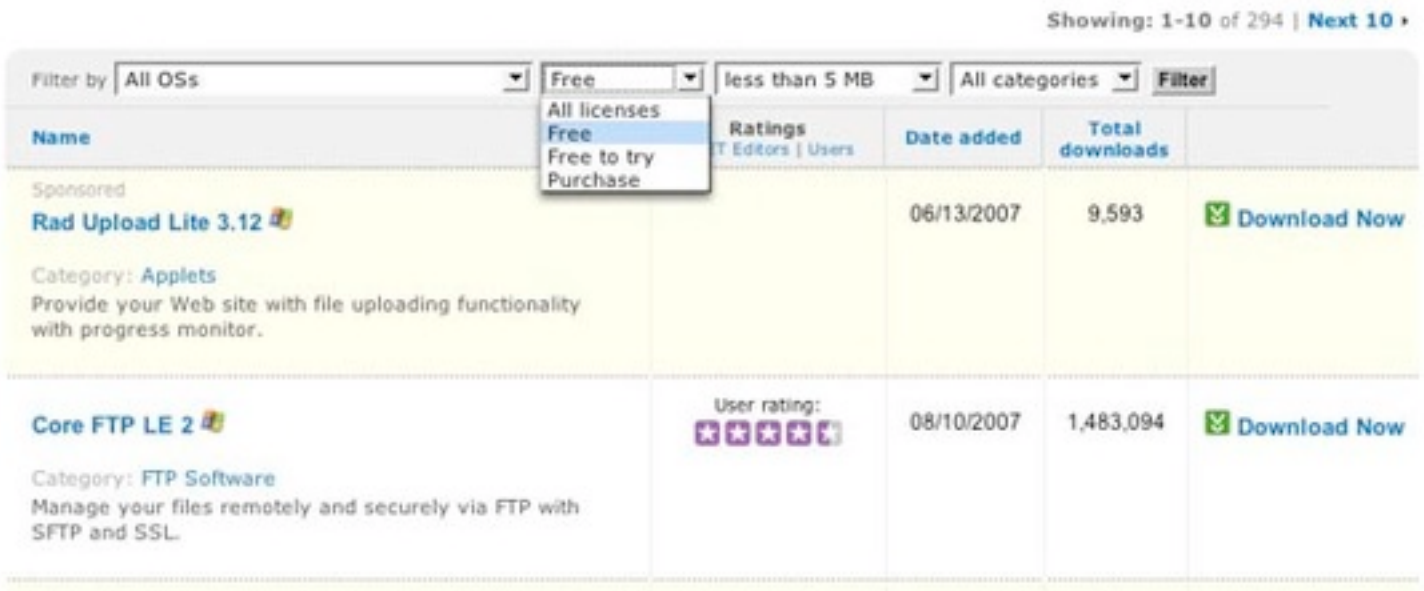
Contextual Search

If we know information about a user's history can we guess their search intent? We may, for instance, default to a scoped search for the category they've found. This will not always be correct so, we would must make the settings visible and provide a manual override. This

Types of Search

1) Table Filter - see http://ui-patterns.com/patterns/TableFilter for further details

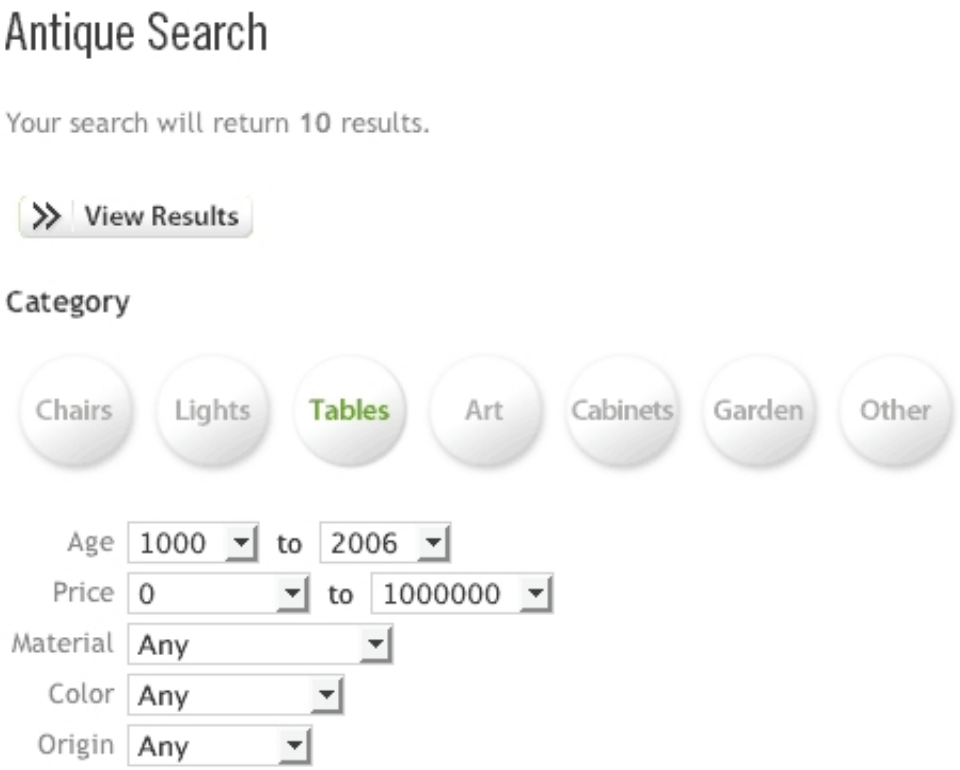
To be used when the user wants to narrow down the search results shown in a table by specific columns. This is a similar layout and workflow to trac.



- Use when you have a very large data set of results that is too large to show in one page
- Use when one or more table columns can easily be summarised into categories to filter by.
- This layout would not necessarily work for searching all of the microscope metadata fields.

2) Live filter - see http://ui-patterns.com/patterns/LiveFilter for further details

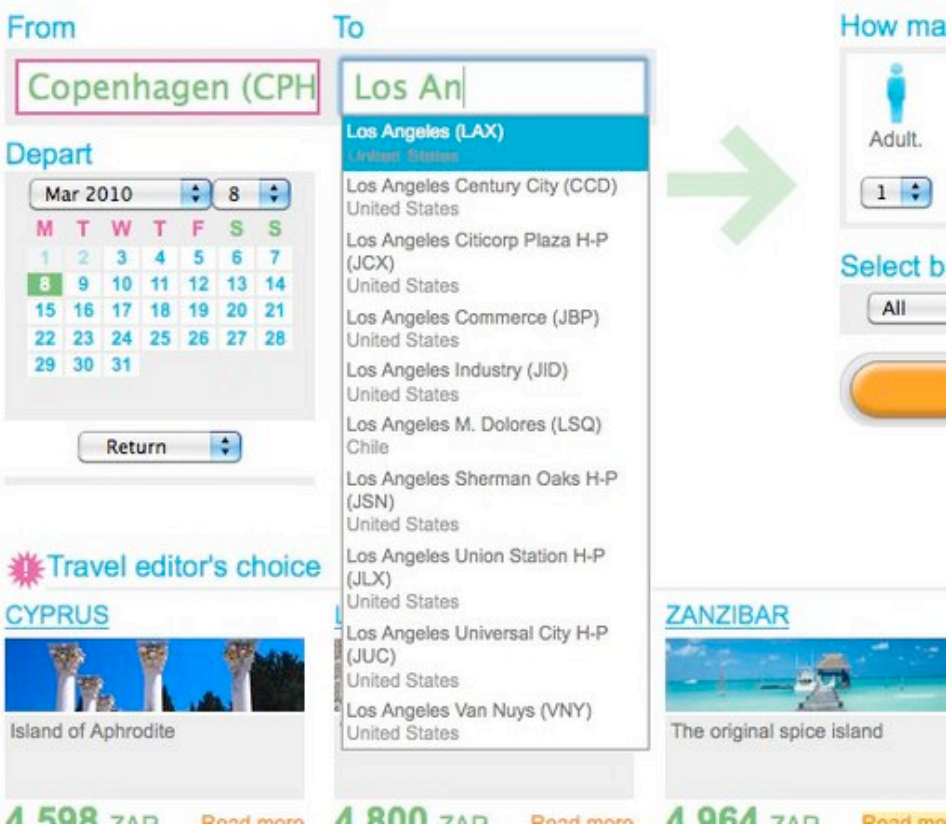
The user wishes to specify a search by different categories to narrow down results



- Use when search results can be so plentiful that getting an overview of all results will last a lifetime
- Use when search results can be categorised into filters: the search most be contextual.
- Do not use when your search is not easily categorised into filters.

3) Autocomplete - see http://ui-patterns.com/patterns/Autocomplete for further details

The user needs to enter information into a text box which is prone to be mis-typed, hard to remember, or ambiguous.



Usage

- Use to help ambiguity-issues, when an item can be entered in multiple ways.
- Use when the type of information entered can readily be matched with a specific piece of information in the system.
- Use when autocomplete suggestions can be pulled from a set of data that is manageable in size.
- Use when input speed is an important goal.
- Use when input accuracy is an important goal.
- Use when the number of items would be too large or inconvenient to display in a standard drop down box.
- Do not use if you want to provide the user an overview of all options available.
- The usage of this has already been identified for improving the tag workflow.