

Section 5 - Search Strategies

Objectives

This section will help you:

- Learn how to combine your keywords/synonyms using Boolean Operators (AND/OR)
- Understand how and when to use truncation
- Understand how and when to use phrase searching

It is important to search through journal databases and catalogues to find relevant articles about markets and companies. These sources may provide other information, such as product reviews, press releases, statistics and analyses from independent sources that will help build understanding of the market and company.

To help find these types of sources, you need to use your keywords and synonyms to develop a search strategy that will help you find the information in the catalogue, databases and the Internet efficiently and effectively. To develop a search strategy, there are several tools that make searching easier. They are:

1. Boolean Operators
2. Truncation and
3. Phrase searching

When using these search tools correctly, you can find information on your topic faster and the information is more closely related to your keywords. We will look at each tool separately.

Boolean Operators

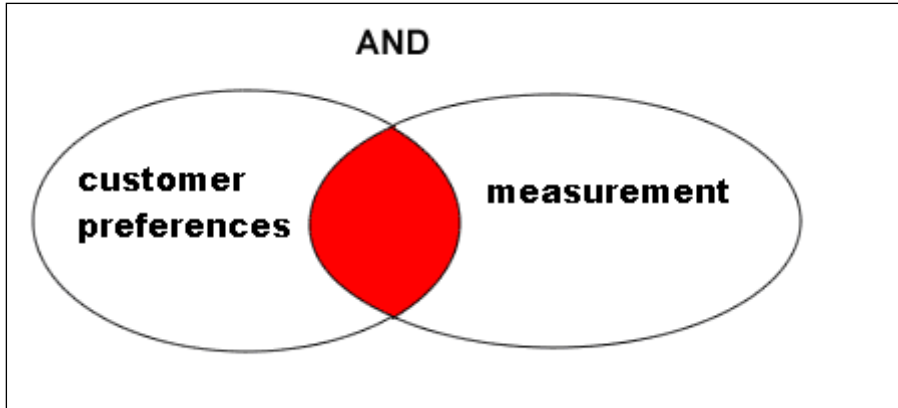
The most common Boolean operators are 'AND', 'OR', 'NOT'

And

When you combine keywords/phrases with “AND” you are searching for records of books, articles, or webpages that include both keywords. Using “AND” allows you to **narrow** your search and gain more specific search results.

Example: “AND” Search

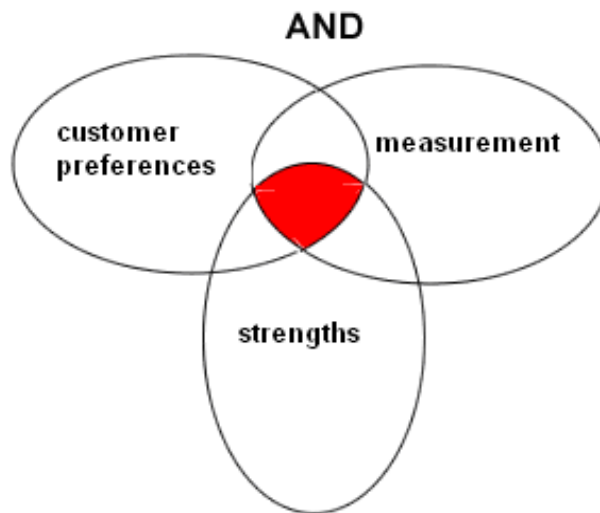
Customer preferences AND measurement searches for all records that contain **BOTH** keywords. These are represented by the red area in the following diagram.



You can combine more than two keywords with “AND” in the following way:

Customer preferences **AND** Measurement **AND** Strengths

This search would retrieve records that include all 3 keywords. This is represented by the shaded area in the following diagram:



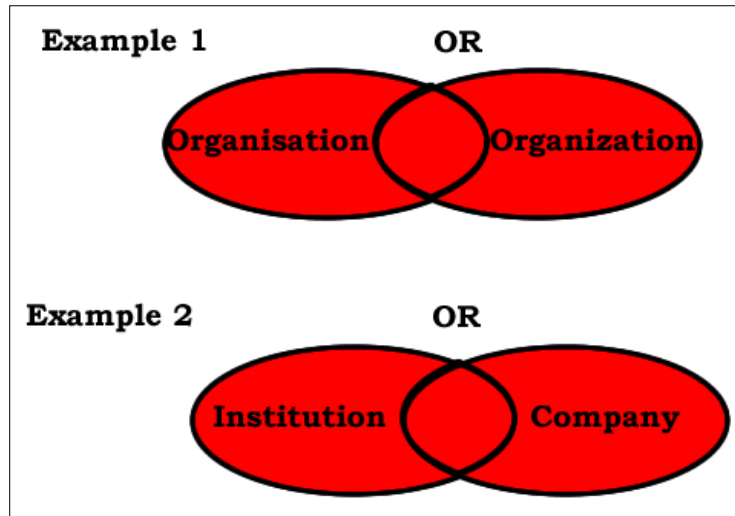
OR

When you combine Keywords with “OR” you are searching for books, articles or web sites that include any of the terms. “OR” is used to combine your synonyms or similar concepts. Using “OR” will broaden your search. It is also useful when there are alternative ways to spell a keyword, eg. **colour OR color**

Example: “OR” Search

1. *Organisation* **OR** *organization* will search for all records which contain **EITHER** of these terms

2. *Institution* **OR** *Company* will search for all records which contain **EITHER**, of these terms

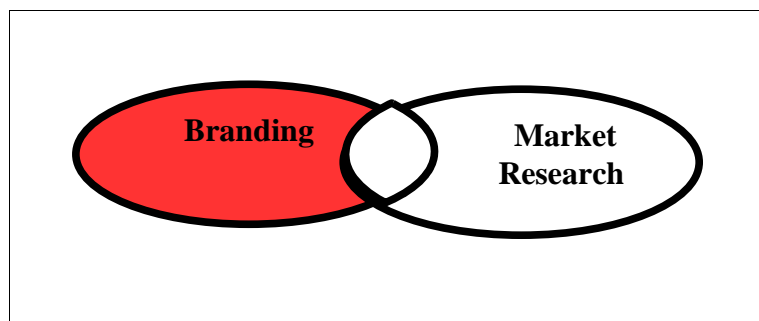


NOT

When you combine Keywords with 'NOT' you are searching for books, articles or web sites that include the first term but not the second term.

Example 'Not' search:

- *branding* **NOT** *marketing research* will search for all records containing the word branding that do not also contain the words market research. The results are indicated in red in the illustration below.





AND/OR/NOT

Sometimes the catalogue, databases or the Internet may use different words or symbols to represent 'AND', 'OR' or 'NOT'. In order to know what to use in your search strategy to combine your keywords, use the “**help**” or “**search tips**” function of the catalogue, database or Internet search engine you are using.



Not all databases and search engines require you to enter the words AND in a search. Google for example automatically inserts the word AND between your search terms. However it is a good idea to **always use AND** as some databases have different rules. For example, some search services automatically use OR between each search term, and in Proquest, it depends how many search terms you use. If you only use two terms in a box, it will automatically look for a phrase, whereas if there are three or more words in a box, AND will automatically be inserted between each term.

Truncation

Truncation is a tool that allows us to find different variations of the same word. For example, the word **advertise** can have the following variations or ‘extensions’:

- advertises
- advertisers
- advertising
- advertisement
- advertisements
- advert
- Ad

Instead of combining all these words with “OR”, we **truncate** the word (sometimes this is referred to as **stemming**). To do this, we type the beginning of the word that is common to all the different variations followed by the truncation symbol (the truncation symbol varies from one database to another – but it is often an asterisk *, eg. **advert***

Using the truncated term **advertis*** will search for all of the above extensions of the word advertise. Notice that the truncation symbol, an asterisk (*) was used in place of the ‘e’. If we had placed it after the ‘e’, the term ‘advertising’ would not be retrieved. I could also use the term **advert*** to find more results, including the American spelling advertize. I have not used ad* as this would bring up too many irrelevant words. You may want to try searching (ad OR advert*) to restrict results to variants of the term ad.

Not all catalogues, databases or Internet search engines allow the use of truncation and sometimes the symbol used may differ from the asterisk (*) symbol. To find out if you can use truncation and what symbol is used, go to the **help** or **search tips** function of the catalogue/database/Internet search engine you are using.

Phrase Searching

Phrase searching allows two or more words to be searched together without separating them. For example, if we wanted to search for **customer preferences**, we need to put double quotation marks (“ ”) around the phrase to force the database, catalogue or Internet search engine to find the words beside each other, eg “**customer preferences**”.

If we didn't use double quotation marks, then the catalogue, database or Internet may separate the words and find **customer** in one paragraph and **preferences** in a separate paragraph further down the page.



Some databases treat any words without AND between them as a phrase automatically, whereas others only find phrases when surrounded by “quote marks”. To avoid falling into traps, a useful habit to get into is to always remember to use AND between any two words that are not part of a phrase and to always remember to use quote marks around phrases. These tools apply as standards to the majority of databases and search engines.

Exercise 7

Identify which boolean operator (OR / AND) to use to combine the following Keywords

- A) Your Lecturer has set an assignment on “”. Which boolean operator would you use to combine the keywords:
 , Theory

- B) Your Lecturer has given you an assignment on Marketing. She has suggested that the following words are related terms for marketing. Which boolean operator would you use to combine these terms:
 Advertise, promote, publicise, market

Exercise 8

Where would you place the truncation symbol (the asterix *) so you can search for all the following variations of the keyword **motivation**:

Motivate
Motivated
Motivating
Motivational

Where would you place the truncation symbol (the asterix *) so you can search for the keyword **family** and also search for **families**



Need more help in understanding Boolean, truncation or phrase searching? Look at the Library's online tutorial "Compass"

<http://facultysite.cqu.edu.au/FCWViewer/view.do?page=6643>