

BIS Website: The Hub of Central Bank Websites Develops a Search Facility

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Introduction

Since the BIS website was launched in September 1996, the most frequently received suggestion for improvement has been to introduce a search engine. After the initial technical limitations were removed late in 1999, it seemed an obvious choice to acquire search engine software onto the web server.

Around the time of the June 2000 meeting on Central Bank Websites, which the BIS hosted in Basel, we had become aware of the possibility to outsource the search facility – particularly the crawling, indexing and the storage of the indices. As it was no longer necessary to use one's own web server for searching, our role as a central bank for central banks encouraged us to broaden our thinking and to explore the feasibility of a search facility for the entire central banking community. This idea was received very favourably by the participants of the Meeting on Central Bank Websites. The service provided by Atomz.com is now being configured to become the search engine for the BIS website. In addition, a selection of 10-20 central bank sites has been used to evaluate if the BIS could thereby help central banks in their efforts to make their websites searchable in a thorough and efficient fashion.

Outline

Search engine requirements at the BIS

- Ability to search from PDF files
- Adapting to the look and feel of the BIS website
- Incremental indexing for better efficiency

Using outsourced search by Atomz.com

- Search pages fully customisable
- Results page customisable with templates
- HTML and PDF fully searchable
- Classification of pages into collections

What we need from the Central Banks

- Website contact names
- Website URL information
- Rough file size information
- Information about frequency of updates

What we can offer to the Central Banks

- Search engine for central banks' website free of charge
- Search engine for central bank groupings (CEMLA, SADC, ...)
- Statistics about searches
- More visitors - coming from other central banks' search pages
- Meetings (global or regional) for website experts
- Web-based discussion forum CBWEB