

A NOVEL RELEVANCE METRIC PREDICTION ALGORITHM FOR A PERSONALIZED WEB SEARCH

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Abstract

Software metrics are the key performance indicators, using which the performance of a system can be assessed quantitatively. Metrics can also be applied for personalized web search which can be used to retrieve relevant results for each individual user depending on their unique profile. Although personalized search based on user profile has been under research for many years and various metrics have been proposed, it is still uncertain whether personalization is unswervingly effective on different queries for different user profiles. We present a framework for personalized search which retrieves result based on user profile and query type. Also we evaluate the performance of proposed system using relevance evaluation metrics.

Keywords:

Personalized Web Search, P-Click, G-Click, Profile Convergence

1. INTRODUCTION

In rapid development of internet technologies, search engines plays pivotal role in information retrieval. Personalized search can be used to provide different search results depending on the user’s preference. Various personalization strategies have been proposed so far, but a significant problem is that most algorithms are applied uniformly to all users and queries. Personalized web search has different levels of effectiveness for different queries, users and context, consequently a single personalization algorithm cannot improve accuracy of ranking for all queries and it may even affect the accuracy of search under certain circumstance. Hence it is substantial to evaluate the performance of various proposed strategies. Metrics can be applied to assess the performance of information retrieval systems and various personalization strategies. In personalized web search it is very essential to measure user satisfaction based on relevance metrics.

Predominantly relevance evaluation is done based on either implicit relevance judgments or explicit relevance judgments. Implicit data can be generated by users’ interaction with their service. Implicit measures are easier to collect and allow us to explore many queries from vast variety of searchers. The trouble-free way to verify whether a result retrieved for a query is relevant to the user is to explicitly ask that user. Explicit judgment allows us to scrutinize the uniformity in relevance assessments across judges in a controlled setting. In the long run, distinct measures, metrics and algorithms been proposed to perform relevance evaluation by taking either implicit or explicit judgments as input. Yet there is no clear guideline regarding the type of evaluation metric to be used under various situations. As a solution to these problems, we develop an evaluation framework to predict the appropriate algorithm to be applied based on different criterion as well as metrics to evaluate the performance of the system. We provide a strategy to:

- i. Gather and model user’s search history

- ii. A rule engine to deduce appropriate metrics and algorithms for each query and each user
- iii. Metrics to evaluate the performance of the proposed system.
- iv. Improve web search effectiveness by using these metrics and algorithms.

2. RELATED WORK

There have been many schemes for building user profiles, re-ranking/personalizing search results and for evaluating the efficiency of such re-ranked results. Most of them model user profiles represented by bag of words without considering term correlations [9, 10]. A simple taxonomic hierarchy considered as a tree structure has been widely accepted to overcome the drawbacks of the bag of words in [11, 12]. Studies [9,10] suggests that relevance feedback and machine learning techniques show promise in adapting to changes of user interests and reducing user involvements, while still overseeing what users dislike and their interest degradation [8].

2.1 PRECISION

Precision is one of the important metrics in the field of Information Retrieval to evaluate the performance of a retrieval system, say Search Engine. The number of documents that are relevant within the retrieved set of results for a given query is called as precision. Precision (*P*) is the fraction of retrieved documents that are relevant. The formula for precision is given as,

$$\text{Precision} = \frac{\#(\text{relevant items retrieved})}{\#(\text{retrieved items})} \tag{1}$$

$$= P(\text{relevant} | \text{retrieved})$$

The contingency table can be given as,

Table.1. Contingency Values

	Relevant	Non relevant
Retrieved	True positives (TP)	False positives (FP)
Not retrieved	False negatives (FN)	True negatives (TN)

So precision can also be represented as,

$$P = \frac{TP}{TP + FP} \tag{2}$$

Seig et al. maintained models of users’ context by building ontological user profiles, which were created using implicitly derived interest scores to existing concepts in domain ontology [3]. The factors considered by them for maintaining user profile

are: (i) frequency of visit to a page, (ii) time spent on a page and (iii) other actions such as bookmarking. They proposed a 'Spreading activation algorithm' to maintain interest score based on user's behavior. Search results were re-ranked based on interest score and semantic evidence in user profile using a re-ranking algorithm. The effectiveness of re-ranking was measured in terms of Top-n-Precision and Top-n-Recall. The precision at top 30 documents is shown to be 0.25. Experimental result shows that in this method, the precision gradually decreases with increasing number of documents.

Liu et al. maintained two categories of profiles namely user profile and general profile. User profile and search history is maintained in the form of Document-Term, Document-Category and Category-Term matrix [2]. General profile is maintained based on concept hierarchy from ODP category. General profile has interests of all users, which is useful when some users have new interests. They proposed a method in which when user issues a query, it is matched to a category based on user profile and general profile. Then the categories are re-ranked in descending order of similarity. Top three categories will be displayed to the user from which the user can select the category of their interest. If the user is not satisfied with top three categories, the next three categories in the list will be displayed. This mode is called as semi-automatic mode. When the top category is chosen by the system automatically then it is called as automatic mode. The main factors considered in maintaining user profiles are the query issued by the user, documents viewed by the user for that particular query and the ODP category of those documents. When compared to baseline mode, the retrieval effectiveness of automatic mode improved by 13 percent ($P = 0.49$) and that of semi-automatic mode by 25.6 percent ($P = 0.55$).

The relevance feedback given by the user for a set of documents returned by the search engine for a query issued by the user can be used to improve retrieval effectiveness. Lv and Zhai [5] proposed an adaptive relevance feedback method to predict an optimal balance coefficient between query and feedback information using machine learning. They also proposed three heuristics to characterized feedback coefficients:

- i. Discrimination of query,
- ii. Discrimination of feedback documents and
- iii. Divergence between query and feedback documents, for each of which several measures are proposed to quantify them.

Query length, Entropy of query and Clarity of query for discrimination of query; Feedback length, feedback radius, entropy of feedback documents and clarity of feedback documents for discrimination of feedback documents; Absolute divergence and Relative divergence for divergence between query and feedback documents. Logistic regression model is used as learning algorithm to combine all the above measures to generate a score for predicting feedback coefficients. The experimental results shows that the precision of AdaptFB method to be 0.552.

Kajaba et al. proposed a method in which personalization is done by augmenting the query with additional keywords, extracted from Interested Person's (IP) profile, which is represented by a set of weighed keywords called as keyword

cloud. In order to maintain the size of the profile, it is updated at regular intervals using an algorithm [4]. They proposed a middleware called "Finder", which augments the query with keywords from IP's profile and also suggests keywords to IP that can be added to original query. Profile is updated based on behavior of user. Main factor considered is the clicks made by the user. The precision of the system is shown to be 0.87 from the experimental results made by them.

One of the personalization method used by Dou et al. is L-Topic, which is based on long-term topical interest of the users. The user interest is represented as a vector of 67 predefined topic categories [7]. Each web page, returned by the system for a query issued by the user is mapped to a category vector. Using cosine similarity, the similarity between user profile vector and page category vector can be computed. User profile is based on past clicks made by the user. The similarity between user interests and a web page is used to re-rank search results [6]. The precision of L-Topic is shown to be 0.8917.

Advantage - It doesn't require any estimate of the size of the set of relevant documents.

Disadvantage

- Precision is least stable.
- It doesn't average well since total number of relevant documents for a query has a strong influence on precision at k .

2.2 DISCOUNTED CUMULATIVE GAIN (DCG)

Two main factors to be considered while examining the ranked result list of a query are:

- Highly relevant documents are more valuable than marginally relevant documents and
- Greater the ranked position of the relevant document, less valuable it is for the user since the probability of user viewing the document is less.

In cumulative gain, each document is rated according to the gain values/relevance score from 0-3, where 3 indicates highly relevant and 0 completely irrelevant. A discounting function is needed which gradually reduces documents score as its rank increases but not too steeply for allowing user persistence in viewing further documents. The formula for DCG is given by,

$$DCG_r = REL_1 + \sum_{i=2}^r \frac{REL_i}{\log_2 i} \quad (3)$$

where, REL_i -Relevance of the document at rank i .

$$\frac{1}{\log_2 i} - \text{Discount factor}$$

In [11, 12] NDCG is used for performance evaluation. DCG is widely used for evaluating performance of systems with explicit feedback.

3. PROPOSED METRIC SUITE

We propose an evaluation framework which can automatically identify the type of relevance metric and algorithm to be applied based on various criterions that contribute to the rank score of the result.

3.1 PROFILE CLASSIFICATION

We classify user profile into three categories:

- Converged profile
- Semi-converged profile
- Non-converged profile

Converged Profile (CP):

A profile is said to be converged if the ratio of repeated queries are very higher than the ratio of unique queries.

Semi-Converged Profile (SCP):

A profile is said to be semi-converged if the ratio of repeated queries and unique queries are more or less equal.

Non-Converged Profile (NCP):

A profile is not converged if the ratio of unique queries is very higher than that of the repeated queries.

3.1.1 Profile Transformation:

At certain point of time, there are chances that a semi-converged or non-converged profile can shift into a converged profile and vice versa, upon long time usage or repeated issue of queries by the users. So when the profile type changes, the type of metric to be applied will also be changing accordingly. The formula for predicting the point of transformation (PT) of a user's profile from one type to another is,

$$PT_i = \frac{\text{Queries with } RPq > 10\%}{\#(\text{unique queries}_i)} * 100 \quad (4)$$

where, # (unique queries_i) - Total count of unique queries in user profile *i*.

where if,

- $PT_i > 15$ - Converged profile;
- $7 \leq PT_i \leq 15$ - Semi-converged profile;
- $0 \leq PT_i \leq 6$ - Non converged profile.

3.1.2 Repetition Percentage of a Query (rpq):

The number of times a query is repeated by a user is indicated by repetition percentage of a query.

$$RPq = \frac{NR_i}{\#(\text{Queries}_i)} * 100 \quad (5)$$

where, NR_i - Number of re-occurrence of query *q* in profile *i*.

(Queries_i) - Total number of queries in the profile *i*.

3.2 QUERY CLASSIFICATION

Queries are classified into following categories:

- i. Type-1: Self-Repeated Query (SRQ)
- ii. Type-2: Repeated Query (RQ)
- iii. Type-3: SRQ-RQ

Self-Repeated Query (SRQ):

When a user issues a query which is previously issued only by that user and which is not issued by any other user then it is a Self-Repeated Query.

Repeated Query (RQ):

If a query issued by a user is not in that user's search history but in the search history of other users, then it is a repeated query.

SRQ-RQ:

If a query issued by a user in the search history of both the current user and other users, then it belongs to this type.

3.3 METRICS

The two metrics used for ranking search results are:

- i. P-Click
- ii. G-Click

P-Click:

The formula for calculating P-Click [7] score is:

$$P-Click_{Doc_n}(q, p, u) = \frac{|Clicks(q, p, u)|}{|Clicks(q, \blacksquare, u)| + \beta} \quad (6)$$

where, $|Clicks(q, p, u)|$ - number of clicks on web page *p* for the query *q* by the user *u*

$|Clicks(q, \blacksquare, u)|$ - total number of clicks for query *q* by *u*

β - smoothing factor.

G-Click:

The formula for calculating G-Click is:

$$G-Score_{Doc_n} = \frac{\sum_{i=1}^N (P-Click_{Doc_n})_i}{N} \quad (7)$$

where, $(P-Click_{Doc_n})_i$ - P-Click score of Doc_n of user *i*

N - Total number of user profiles which contains Doc_n .

3.4 RELEVANCE METRIC PREDICTION ALGORITHM

When a user (for example A), issues a query (say, python), as a first step the algorithm checks the profile type of A and then the query category under which the issued query falls. If A's profile is identified to be converged, then the query is classified as per the rules specified. If,

- Type 1: P-Click value is sufficient enough to rank the retrieved result list.
- Type 2: G-Click value is used for ranking the results.
- Type 3: Top results are listed using P-Click score and remaining results based on G-Click score of the user.

If A's profile is classified into Semi-converged profile, then for,

- Type 1: If the query is repeated twice at the minimum by the user, then P-Click value is used. Else normal ranking is used.
- Type 2: G-Click value is used for ranking the results.
- Type 3: If the query is repeated no less than three times by the user, then P-Click value is sufficient enough to rank the retrieved result list. Else G-Click score is used.

If A's profile is non-converged, then for,

- Type 1: P-Click for top results and normal search for remaining results.
- Type 2: G-Click value is used.

- Type 3: If the query is repeated no less than three times by the user, then P-Click value is sufficient enough to rank the retrieved result list. Else G-Click score is used.

```

Input: Query, user profile
Pre-Condition: User must be logged in
Output: Relevant metrics
Input query Q
Check User Profile (UP) type and query (Q) type
If ((UP ∈ CP) && (Q ∈ Type 1)) then P-Click
    Else-if (Q ∈ Type 2) then G-Click
    Else P-Click and G-Click
    If ((UP ∈ SCP) && (Q ∈ Type 1) && (RPq >10%))
    then P-Click
        Else-if ((Q ∈ Type 3) && (RPq > 10%))
        then P-Click
            Else G-Click
            If ((UP ∈ NCP) && (Q ∈ Type 1)) then P-Click
            Else-if (Q ∈ Type 3) && (RPq >10%)
            then P-Click
            Else G-Click
End
    
```

Fig.1. Prediction Algorithm

The next step is to predict the appropriate relevance evaluation metric to evaluate the performance of proposed metrics. For converged profiles, vast details of click-through data and relevant documents will be available i.e. implicit content about users' usage of result list will be available. In such cases, it is feasible to use precision for evaluating the performance of metrics used for converged profile. For semi-converged and non-converged profiles, appropriate implicit data will not be available. In such cases, obtaining explicit feedback from the user about result list will be much suitable for evaluating the performance of relevance metrics. Hence for type 2 and type 3 profiles DCG can be used to evaluate the performance of the metrics.

4. EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

4.1 DATA SET

For a period of 30 days, 30 users were made to use the proposed search system for searching various queries. The click-through data, queries issued by the users, P-Click and G-Click scores and repetition percentages of each query and profile convergence level of each user was maintained. Table.3, Table.4 and Table.5 contains a sample for Converged, Semi-Converged and Non-Converged user profiles respectively. Table.6 shows the sample values for G-Click scores of few links.

Table.2. Sample Data Set

Item	Nos.
#days	30
#users	30
#sessions	900
#converged profile	10
#semi-converged profile	10
#non-converged profile	10
#queries	100

4.2 PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

The Fig.2 shows the performance of proposed system for all three types of queries based on profile convergence level of the users. The system performance is comparatively high for Type-1 and Type-3 queries rather than Type-2 queries. Fig.3 shows the overall performance of the system irrespective of query type. The experimental results show that the system gives better performance as the convergence level of user profile increases.

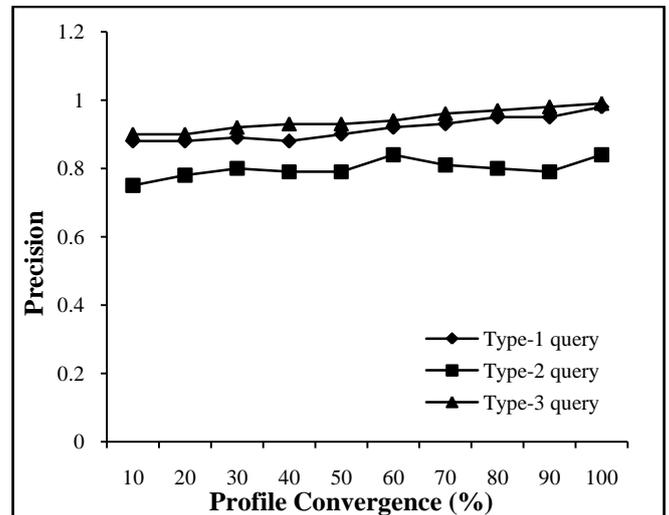


Fig.2. Precision for different query types

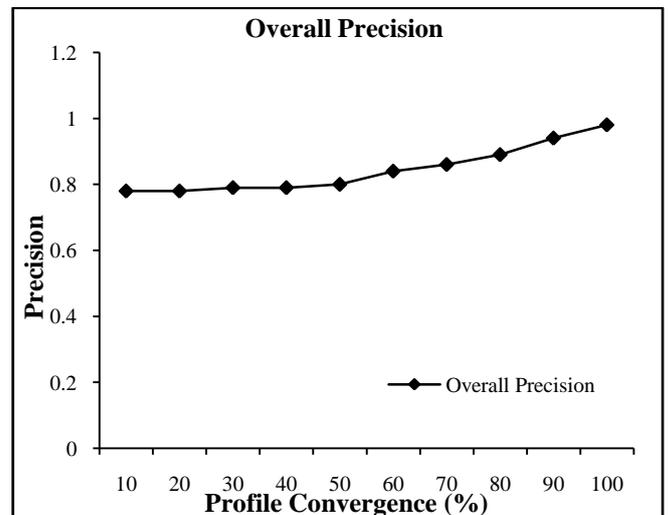


Fig.3. Overall precision of the system for different levels of profile convergence

5. CONCLUSION

In this paper, we have proposed an evaluation framework for prediction of metrics and algorithms to be applied for retrieving relevant web search results for individual users. We further proposed techniques and strategies for classifying user profiles and queries. Metrics for updating user profile category has also been proposed. This approach would be useful to improve search accuracy and for retrieving relevant results for each individual user depending on their preference. Performance of the proposed system is also evaluated using relevance evaluation metrics.

APPENDIX

Table.3. Sample for Converged user profile (80%)

Query	Repetition Percentage	Doc	P-Click
Computer science	23	D1	0.424242
		D2	0.363636
		D3	0.181818
Operating system	27	D1	0.4186
		D2	0.32558
		D3	0.23256
Software	34	D1	0.44444
		D2	0.4
		D3	0.13333
Algorithms	56	D1	0.51429
		D2	0.34286
		D3	0.11429
AI	78	D1	0.412026
		D2	0.35897
		D3	0.20513
Hardware	65	D1	0.38596
		D2	0.31579
		D3	0.28070
Graphics	32	D1	0.41026
		D2	0.30769
		D3	0.25641
Programming	45	D1	0.51852
		D2	0.29629
		D3	0.14185
HCI	65	D1	0.45714
		D2	0.28571
		D3	0.22857

Data Communication	43	D1	0.40678
		D2	0.33898
		D3	0.23729
Mobile computing	23	D1	0.46154
		D2	0.35897
		D3	0.15385
Security	76	D1	0.4
		D2	0.35556
		D3	0.22222
IDS	56	D1	0.46154
		D2	0.30769
		D3	0.20513
Internet	55	D1	0.51429
		D2	0.28571
		D3	0.17143
Malicious software	34	D1	0.43243
		D2	0.32432
		D3	0.21622
VPN	27	D1	0.4
		D2	0.25455
		D3	0.32727
Cryptography	67	D1	0.41026
		D2	0.30769
		D3	0.25641
Biometrics	89	D1	0.37288
		D2	0.33898
		D3	0.27119
Hacking	55	D1	0.39024
		D2	0.34146
		D3	0.24390
Firewall	41	D1	0.42105
		D2	0.31579
		D3	0.21053
Authentication	31	D1	0.46154
		D2	0.30769
		D3	0.15385
Honey pots	71	D1	0.44444
		D2	0.22222
		D3	0.22222

MAC OS	72	D1	0.53333
		D2	0.26667
		D3	0.13333
Java	62	D1	0.54545
		D2	0.18182
		D3	0.18182
MIS	4	D1	0.44444
		D2	0.22222
		D3	0.22222
Chats	5	D1	0.36364
		D2	0.36364
		D3	0.18182
Forums	7	D1	0.44444
		D2	0.22222
		D3	0.22222
Open source	8	D1	0.44444
		D2	0.22222
		D3	0.22222
Dot net	6	D1	0.44444
		D2	0.22222
		D3	0.22222
Asp.net	9	D1	0.4
		D2	0.35556
		D3	0.22222

		D3	0.22222
Soap	36	D1	0.43243
		D2	0.32432
		D3	0.21622
Cryptography	78	D1	0.4
		D2	0.25455
		D3	0.32727
Multimedia	98	D1	0.41026
		D2	0.30769
		D3	0.25641
Asp.net	73	D1	0.37288
		D2	0.33898
		D3	0.27119
Firewall	42	D1	0.39024
		D2	0.34146
		D3	0.23729
Biometrics	72	D1	0.46154
		D2	0.35897
		D3	0.15385
Authentication	63	D1	0.4
		D2	0.35556
		D3	0.22222
Email	31	D1	0.46154
		D2	0.30769
		D3	0.20513
Animation	91	D1	0.51429
		D2	0.28571
		D3	0.17143
Framework	53	D1	0.46154
		D2	0.30769
		D3	0.15385
Forums	71	D1	0.44444
		D2	0.22222
		D3	0.22222
Dot net	24	D1	0.53333
		D2	0.26667
		D3	0.13333
Laptops	34	D1	0.54545
		D2	0.18182
		D3	0.18182
Dell inspiron	11	D1	0.44444
		D2	0.22222
		D3	0.24390
Ipad	9	D1	0.42105
		D2	0.31579
		D3	0.21053

Table.4. Sample for Semi-Converged User profile (60%)

Query	Repetition Percentage	Doc	P-Click
VPN	25	D1	0.36364
		D2	0.36364
		D3	0.18182
Hacking	45	D1	0.44444
		D2	0.22222
		D3	0.22222
Web service	65	D1	0.44444
		D2	0.22222
		D3	0.22222
C #	43	D1	0.44444
		D2	0.22222
		D3	0.22222
Open source	21	D1	0.4
		D2	0.35556

Samsung	4	D1	0.46154
		D2	0.15385
		D3	0.30769
Cadburys	7	D1	0.22222
		D2	0.44444
		D3	0.22222
Breaking dawn	3	D1	0.44444
		D2	0.22222
		D3	0.22222
DELL	7	D1	0.54545
		D2	0.18182
		D3	0.18182
Sony vaio	8	D1	0.42105
		D2	0.31579
		D3	0.22222
Apple laptops	14	D1	0.38596
		D2	0.31579
		D3	0.28070
Twilight	17	D1	0.41026
		D2	0.30769
		D3	0.25641
HP laps	8	D1	0.51852
		D2	0.29629
		D3	0.14185
Diary milk	13	D1	0.45714
		D2	0.28571
		D3	0.22857
Lenovo	18	D1	0.40678
		D2	0.33898
		D3	0.38596

Table.5. Sample for Non-Converged profile (30%)

Query	Repetition Percentage	Doc	P-Click
+2 results	45	D1	0.28571
		D2	0.17143
		D3	0.46154
English serials	87	D1	0.30769
		D2	0.15385
		D3	0.44444
Kai po che	48	D1	0.22222
		D2	0.22222
		D3	0.53333
Tamil Nadu govt logo	55	D1	0.26667
		D2	0.13333

		D3	0.22222
Twitter	64	D1	0.44444
		D2	0.22222
		D3	0.30769
Mathematics	4	D1	0.20513
		D2	0.51429
		D3	0.56432
TMB	8	D1	0.36364
		D2	0.36364
		D3	0.18182
Chart tools	1	D1	0.44444
		D2	0.22222
		D3	0.22222
Samsung	9	D1	0.44444
		D2	0.22222
		D3	0.22222
MIS	14	D1	0.44444
		D2	0.22222
		D3	0.22222
Java	34	D1	0.4
		D2	0.35556
		D3	0.22222
Sony	56	D1	0.43243
		D2	0.32432
		D3	0.21622
Smart draw	19	D1	0.54545
		D2	0.18182
		D3	0.18182
Nokia	2	D1	0.44444
		D2	0.22222
		D3	0.24390
SBI	7	D1	0.42105
		D2	0.31579
		D3	0.21053
KVB	8	D1	0.46154
		D2	0.15385
		D3	0.30769
LVB	59	D1	0.44444
		D2	0.22222
		D3	0.22222

IOB	78	D1	0.54545
		D2	0.18182
		D3	0.18182
Linked In	11	D1	0.42105
		D2	0.31579
		D3	0.22222
HCL	13	D1	0.38596
		D2	0.31579
		D3	0.28070
tngov.in	12	D1	0.41026
		D2	0.30769
		D3	0.25641
Face book	17	D1	0.51852
		D2	0.29629
		D3	0.14185
Flowers	16	D1	0.45714
		D2	0.28571
		D3	0.22857
Images for white flowers	2	D1	0.40678
		D2	0.33898
		D3	0.38596
Top 10 Hindi movies	4	D1	0.28571
		D2	0.28571
		D3	0.28571
Melody songs	7	D1	0.36364
		D2	0.18182
		D3	0.36364
Board examinations	9	D1	0.28571
		D2	0.36364
		D3	0.36364
TV serials	5	D1	0.28571
		D2	0.28571
		D3	0.36364
Software	4	D1	0.22857
		D2	0.40678
		D3	0.33898
AI	3	D1	0.38596
		D2	0.22857
		D3	0.40678

Table.6. Sample for G-Click scores

Query	Link	G-Click
java	http://www.Cjava2snet.edu.aspx	0.537349
java	http://www.javas2server.com	0.42035
java	http://www.javaenters.net.aspx	0.319693
Mail server	http://www.mailservers.edn.aspx	0.4492064
Mail server	http://www.mailservers.net	0.4492064
Mail server	http://www.mailservers.ip.aspx	0.4644689
Mail server	http://www.mailservers.ips.aspx	0.4078144
soap	http://www.soapipserver.com	0.615392
soap	http://www.webservices.edu.aspx	0.6512987
framework	http://www.framework.edu.aspx	0.4644689
framework	http://www.framework45.edu.aspx	0.6507985
java tutorial	http://www.Cjava2snet.edu.aspx	0.7555556
C sharp	http://www.csharp45.edu.aspx	0.7111111

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