Waseem Hussain 2541
Deacons School 22321

Task 1
Using Search Engines

Introduction

In this task I have been asked to research for a website by using a search engine that I think is best suitable for the research. In this research I will be finding a weather station website that contains forty years of data on rainfall. The reason for why I want this is because I need to see whether there has been a decrease or an increase in rainfall. In order to do find the website I will have to type in specific words and phrases into the search engine; to tell the search engine what exactly I'm looking for. As part of the task I will also have to use logical operators which are, AND, NOT and OR to search for the website. I will be explaining each of the logical operators in detail below: -

AND: -

In search engines they automatically put this is a search so you don't really need to put it in the search bar. So if you put in a search like 'birds bees,' it will put in AND to make 'birds and bees' and will only bring back websites that have 'birds and bees' in the website.

OR: -

In a search this would bring up more websites. For example if I put in a search like birds or bees, it will bring up sites with just birds in it, websites with just bees in it and websites that have both Birds and bees. So by using OR it brings back more websites.

NOT: -

By using NOT, it will dismiss anything I put after NOT. So for example if I put in a search 'birds NOT bees' it will only bring back websites that only have bird in the address, not bees and not birds and bees.

These logical operators work when they are in a capital.

+: - Using the +, it eliminates pages which do not have the words or phrases when placed in front of it e.g. snake +in +the grass. This search would bring back only pages that do have the 'in the' only. If these were not used, it would bring web pages that could be grass snake, snake grass, grass and snake.

" ": Using " " makes the search more specific and precise. Requires exact phrase in all the pages that the search engine brings back.

Before I start I will also need to consider what search engine I will be using. In order to do this I will compare the three search engines that I think are best suitable for this type of research. Out of them three search engines, I will have to pick one that I think is best suitable out of the three.

Comparison of my three Search Engines

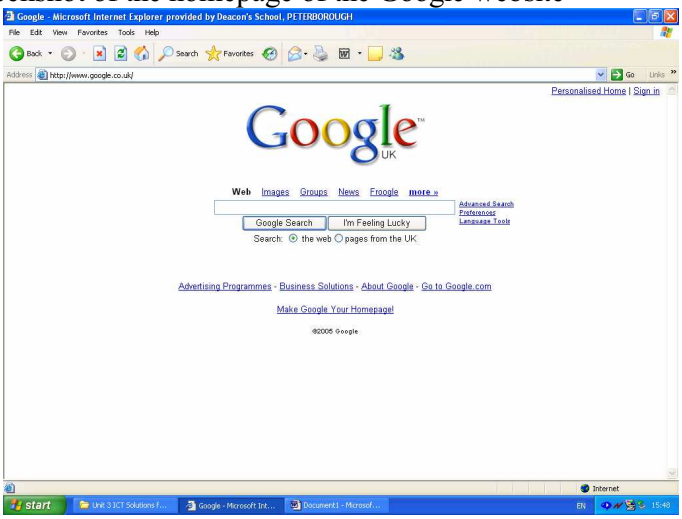
The three search engines that I will be comparing are:

www.google.com
www.yahoo.com
www.ask.com

I will talk about each search engine in depth and will be describing each one of them and comparing them with each other.

www.google.com

Below is a screenshot of the homepage of the Google website

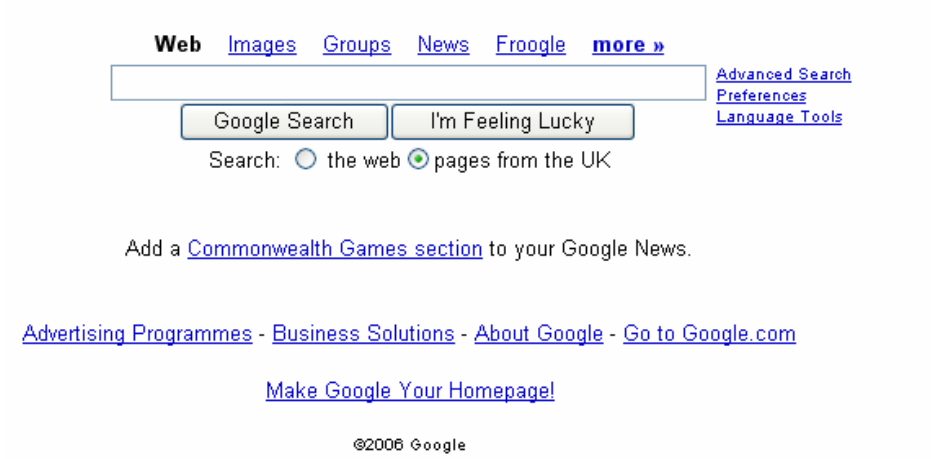


This website is for use of quick searches that can be made very easily and the search engine itself is very simple to use. The Online service is open 24/7 and is very commonly used.

The key feature is that there are no pop-up ads and no untargeted banners.

You see only relevant text ads and links to related web pages of interest.

The website it self is very simple at first but there is further options if someone wants to enhance their search results by clicking on the advanced search hyperlink. This is located near the Google search bar on the right. Below is a screenshot showing the different features that the Google search engine provides.



The search engine also provides users to switch from the google.com search engine to google.co.uk. The screenshot above shows the website on google.co.uk and that is the reaosn for why there is an option for the user to switch from the google.co.uk search engine to google.com. The only difference is that the search result is returned with less pages, when searching on google.co.uk, for the simple fact that the search is made within the websites that are published in the UK only however google.com brings back results from all over the work. Ther is also options of making the search engine as your homepage.

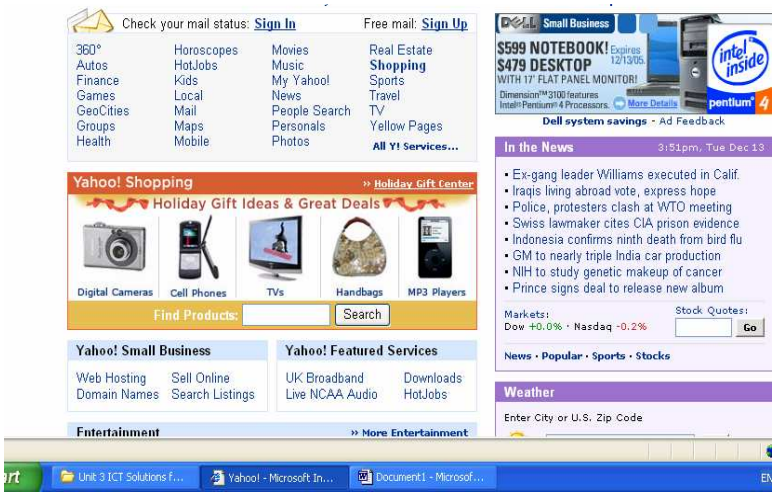
The search engine itself is very simple quick and easy to use. The search reults are returned very quickly and efficiently. Another feature that I liked about this search

engine is that it corrected whatever I would spell wrong in the searh engine or I had an option of leaving the word as it.
Most of the searches that I made and I wanted information on were on the first page of the google search result, however when searching on Yahoo.com and ask.com I had to click through pages and pages to find exactly what I wanted. The search results were very accurate. As I have already mentioned that the google search engine has adbanced search option too that makes life much easier and is also very easy to use. The seach engine supplies links to help and instructions on how to do things on Google. The main feature of the search engine is that you can split the search into different results such as images, groups, news. Etc. The homepage is not so attractive but on the other hand it is straight forward and doesn't put peope off by looking at other stuff on the search homepage.

www.yahoo.com

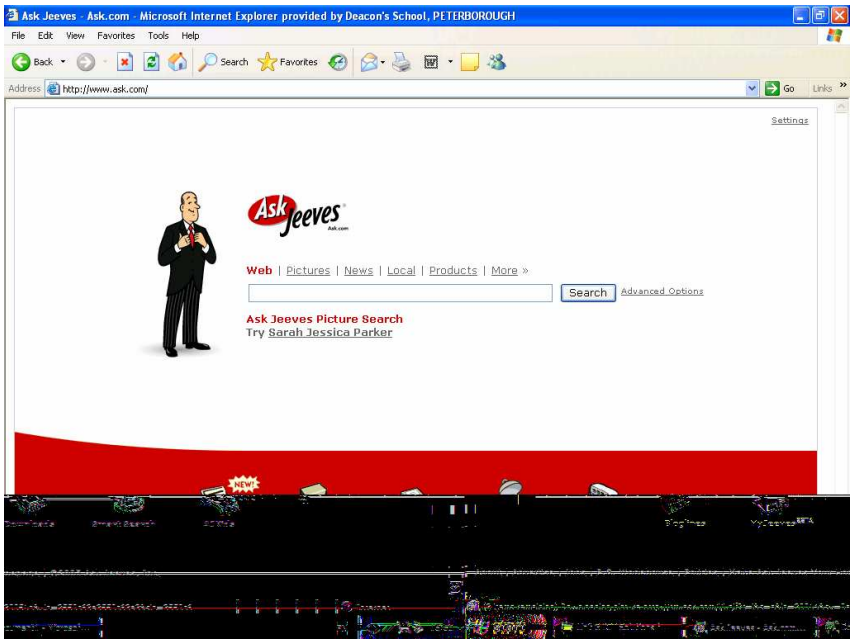
On the left is a screenshot of the Yahoo Search Engine Homepage website.
This search engine is very commonly used and is one of the top ten search engines services on the Internet server. There are a lot of Media used on this website and has a lot of different text to read and links to other website that are also related to Yahoo. This is changed every week and I thought this was a very good idea. However looking at the Google Search Engine Website the situation is totally different. It is constantly the same everyday.
There are a lot of languages spoken around the world therefore Yahoo provides yahoo search results for all people around the world making it simple and easy to read. Of course in order to understand the way to get around the website, the people need to understand the language that is written. So this is the only website that gives you an option of the type of language you want the website to read. It has a scroll down menu where there is an option of 40 different languages that the website could be translated into. However the Google Search Engine website does provide this service but no to many foreign languages. I thought this was a very good idea as there would be a lot of users using this website worldwide where there would be people from different countries speaking different languages using the website. It is also one of the most popular search engine services being used worldwide.
But bearing this all in mind this does not affect me so therefore I would not take this into consideration as I will only be reading and searching upon one language which is English (UK). The homepage is very similar to the way Google website is set out as it has different search methods such as pictures videos etc, but I would not recommend my self to use this search engine over the Google one because the search results are not enhanced and they do no return with what I wanted and if it does it would be on the third or fourth page of the search results. The homepage of the search engine is full of information that is not necessary to most of the people that would have a task

that is set like mine. It puts me off for when I have to search for something as I get dragged into other stuff that is not so important to what I had to do.
The search results were not as accurate. I compared the search results on the first page of each search engine Google.com and yahoo.com to see where results were best and the information that I was looking for. In this case most of the search results that I had tend to be using were from the first page of Google.com search engine.
I would prefer to use Google.com rather than yahoo.com, as results and the layout are much better than yahoo.com search engine.



The screenshot on the left is showing the unnecessary data that is not relevant for users like me, that need a search engine just to search on, but nothing else. However when I used this search engine I got dragged into the entertainment section of the website and started playing games so therefore I wouldn't use this search engine to research on my ICT work.

www.ask.com



Above is a screenshot of the ask.com search engine homepage.
This search engine is totally different to the other two search engines in many ways. The search results are also different. There are fewer amounts of search result pages that are returned back when I typed in a search and also the results were mainly retuned with answers to questions when I didn't want that. I think this search engine is

best suitable for users that have any questions. The search engine also has different sections to what you want to search for. Such as pictures, news, local. The search engine is similar to the Google.com search engine as the homepage is also straight forward and to the point. It hasn't got any advertisements or anything else that can put you off. However when searching for anything there are pop ups that are not relevant to the search. This is the main difference between this search engine compared with the Google.com search engine. With Goggle.com search engine you can download the Google toolbar which allows users to have a choice on weather to block pop ups totally or to block the ones that are not necessary or there is also an option to block pup ups totally.
I typed in cricket football in all three different search engines just to see the difference including the number of hits. Below are screenshots of the main data from the search results that I considered were useful for comparing, from each search engine.

Google search engine

Yahoo search engine

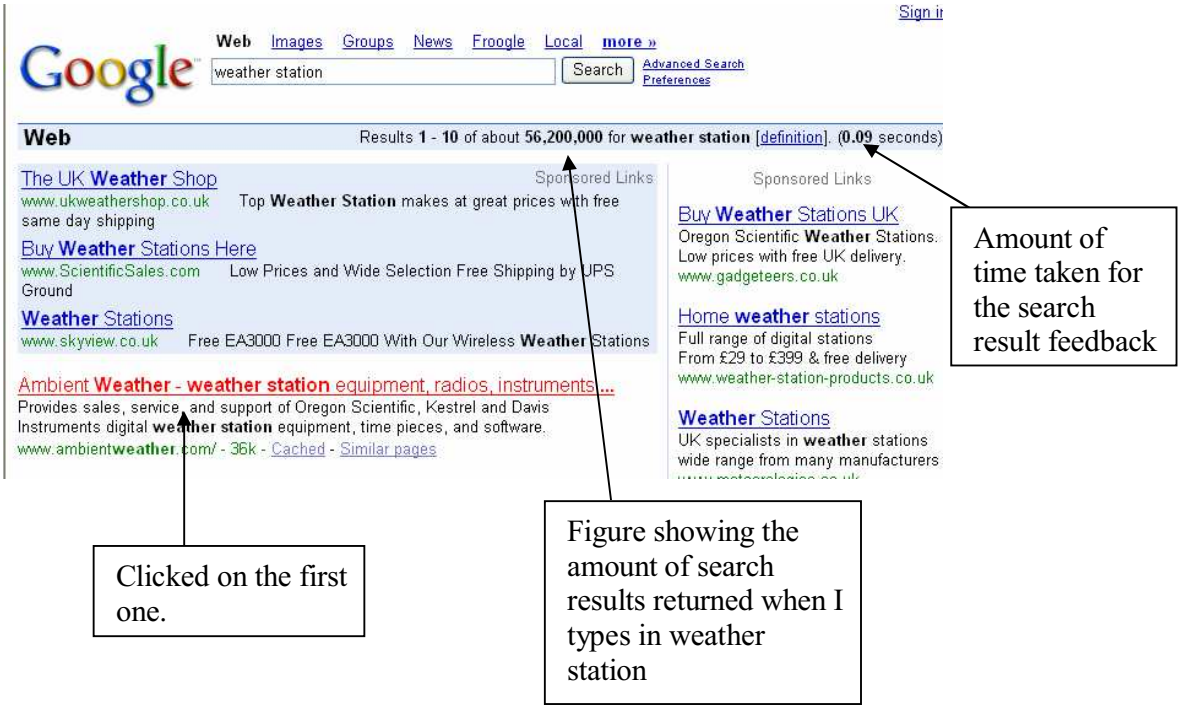
Ask search engine

Below is a table comparing differences including hits through different search engines.

	Google	**Yahoo**	**Ask**
Layout	Google layout was simple and straightforward. Everything was simplified and there was no confusion	After searching for 'cricket football' the layout of the search results was confusing as there were other stuff around the results that were putting me off.	Similar to Google, however one major difference was there was no search bar at the bottom of the page.
Search results (hits)	Returned with 72,400,000 search results. The highest out of the three search engines considering I typed the same thing in each search engine	Next highest hit was 37,600,000.	This search engine returned with 5,864,000 results.
Pop ups	No pop ups appeared during this search	During the process of the search a lot of pop ups appeared which were not even related about the search I typed in. e.g. car insurance	No pop ups appeared during this search.
Speed	It took 0.26 seconds for Google to collate all the information.	0.13 seconds	No time stated Rough estimate: (0.29)
Over all rating /10	9	6	5

Over all I decided to go for the www.google.com search engine as it suitable for the research that I will be carrying out.
I have already given the reasons for why I have chosen to use the Google.com search engine.

I will be giving screenshots and I will annotate the screenshots explaining what exactly I did to find the data.



The search results returned with websites to various weather stations across the world.
The search result for when I typed in 'weather station' was not what I wanted so therefore I had to make my search more specific by having more words and by using efficient search methods such as logical operators.
For this search the amount of hits that were returned were 56,200,000.
The search result turned out to come from everywhere around the world and I looked at pages from 1-10 to see weather or not the website with the data that I was looking for was there.
However the data that I am looking for is for East Anglia, which was not in that search and this is situated in the UK (East Anglia). So therefore in my next search I will type in: -
'Weather station East Anglia'
Also, I will make sure that I select pages from the UK, as this will narrow the search down making it easier for Google to understand what exactly I am looking for.
I am hoping in the next search that I will get the data that I am looking for.

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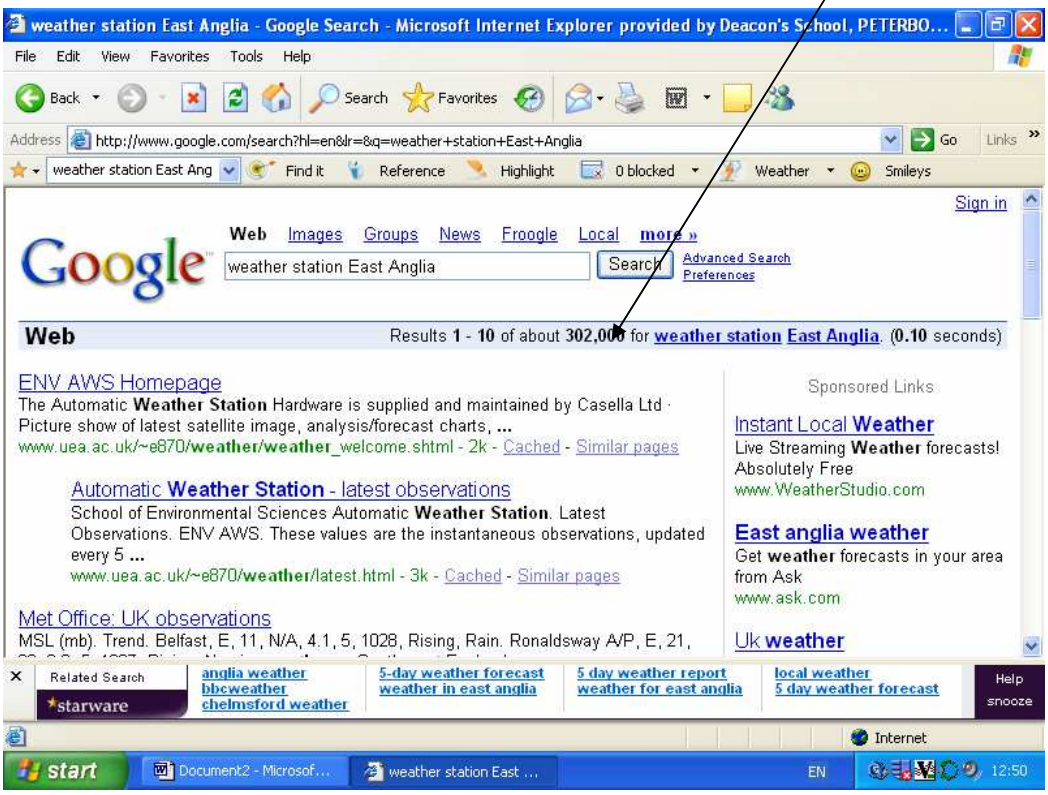
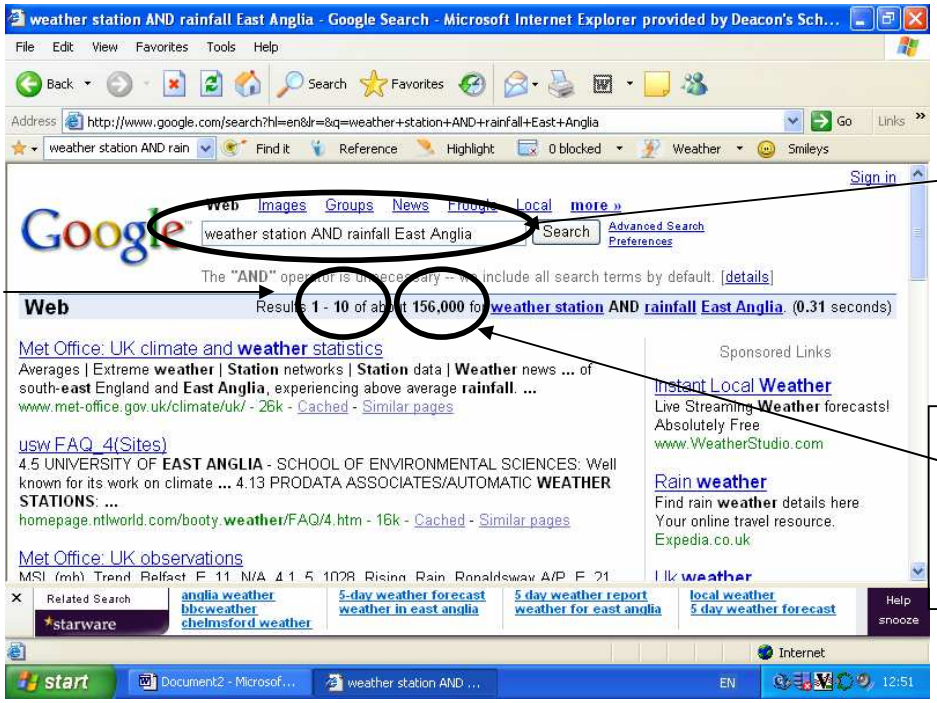
As you can see this time the Figure showing the amount of search results returned was fewer than the previous search. This is because I typed in East Anglia, so therefore the search brought back websites, which have the word Weather station East Anglia.

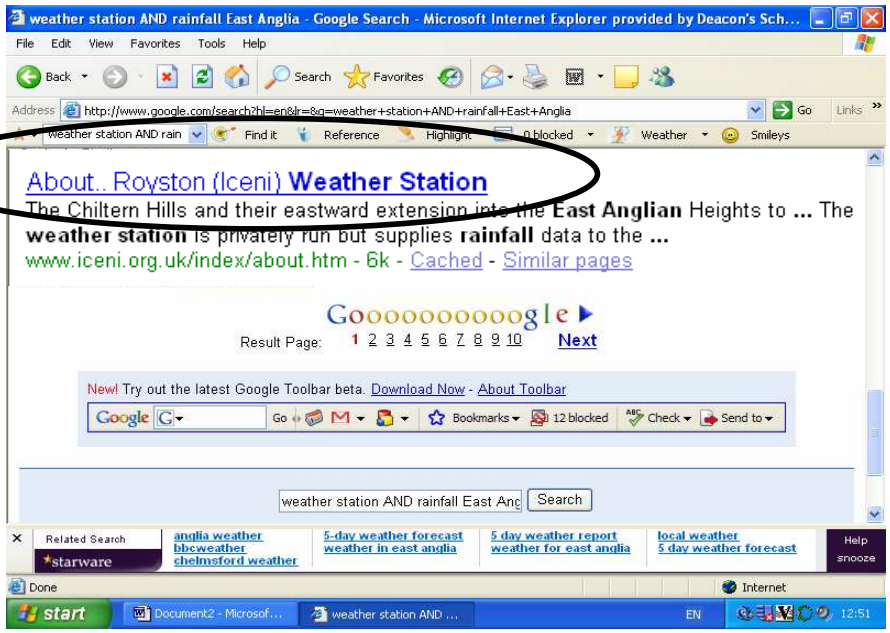


Number of search hits returned was 302,000. However the previous search I made were 56,200,000. The difference is 55,898,000.
The search results returned were about weather station in East Anglia; however there were few websites with rainfall data and the websites which did have rainfall data did not have the past data
Therefore I will have to do another search but this time using logical operators as well.
I will try to make my search more detail by using logical operators such as AND, NOT and OR.
The reason for why I am doing another search is because I want the website to be on the first page of the Google search result.
I realised that in the search results, there were results that were weather observations for a five-day forecast however I was looking for website that had weather observations for the past 40 years.
I have chosen to use one of the logical operators which is AND.

In the next search, where I'm hoping to find the data on the first page of the search result I will type in: -
'Weather station AND rainfall East Anglia'
The reason for why I have chosen to use AND is because most of the search results previously made were returning with only weather as in winter, spring, summer and Autumn but the data I am looking for includes Rainfall, so therefore by typing in 'AND rainfall' would make my search more specific and precise.

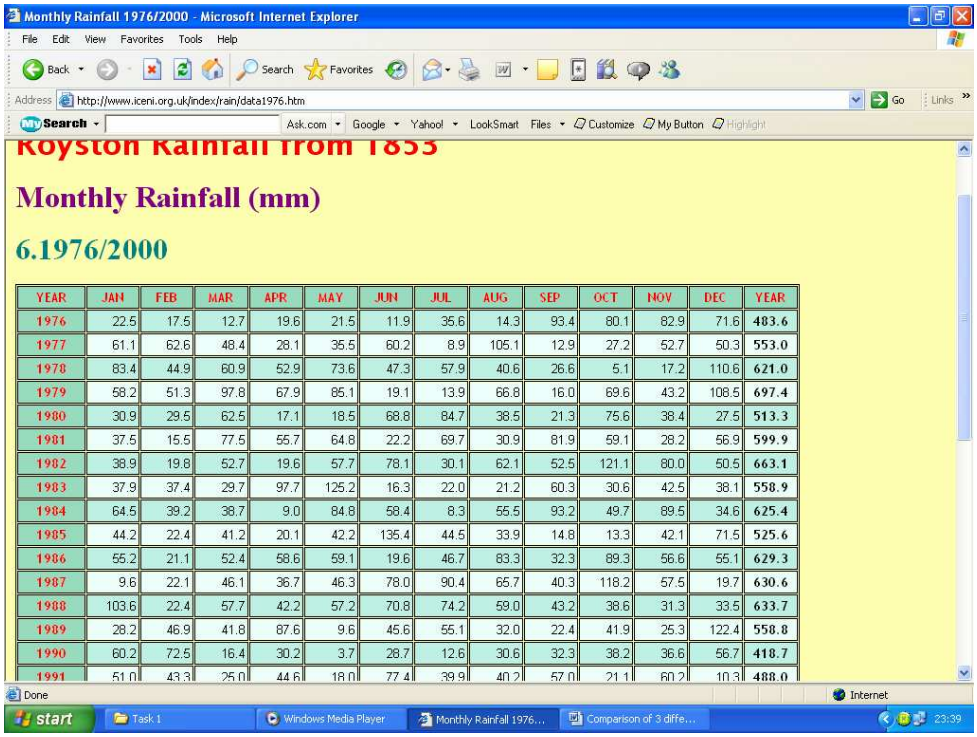


The search result for this search returned with fantastic hyperlinks to website that had the data I was looking for. The above screenshot shows the search results of the first page. When I scrolled down I saw a website link called Royston Iceni. This was also on the first page.
Below is a screenshot of the section linked to the website.



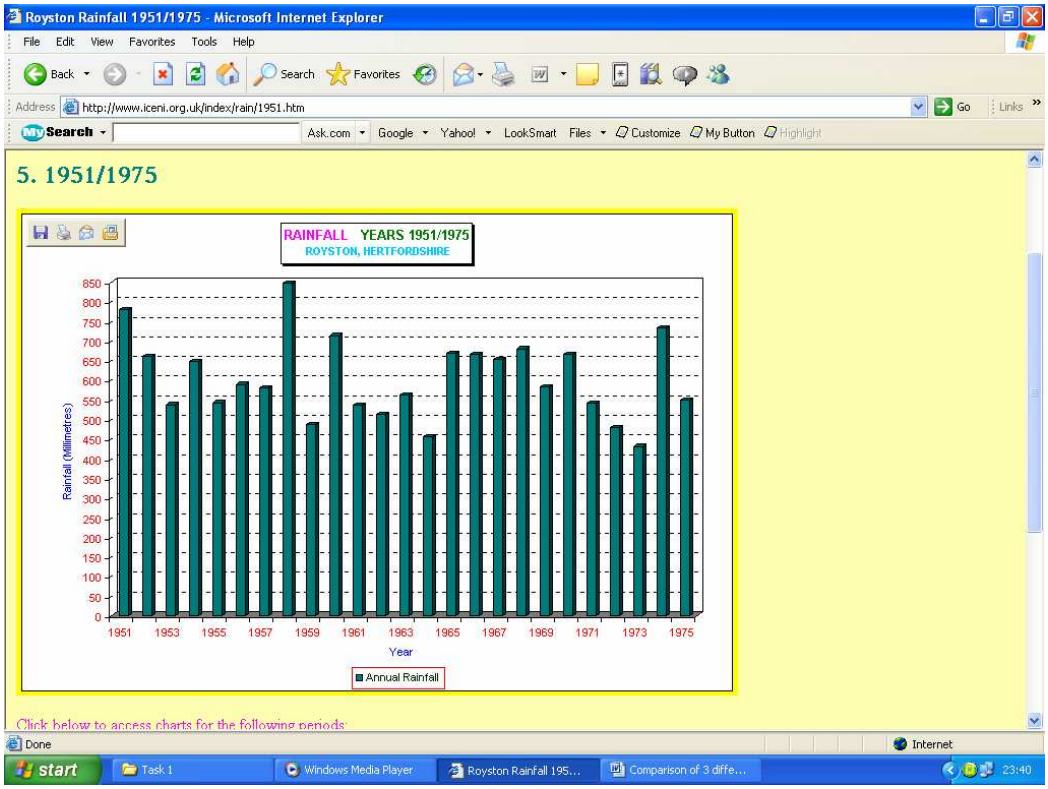
I clicked on the link and I had search through the website to get to the data I was looking for. Below is another screenshot of the website homepage.

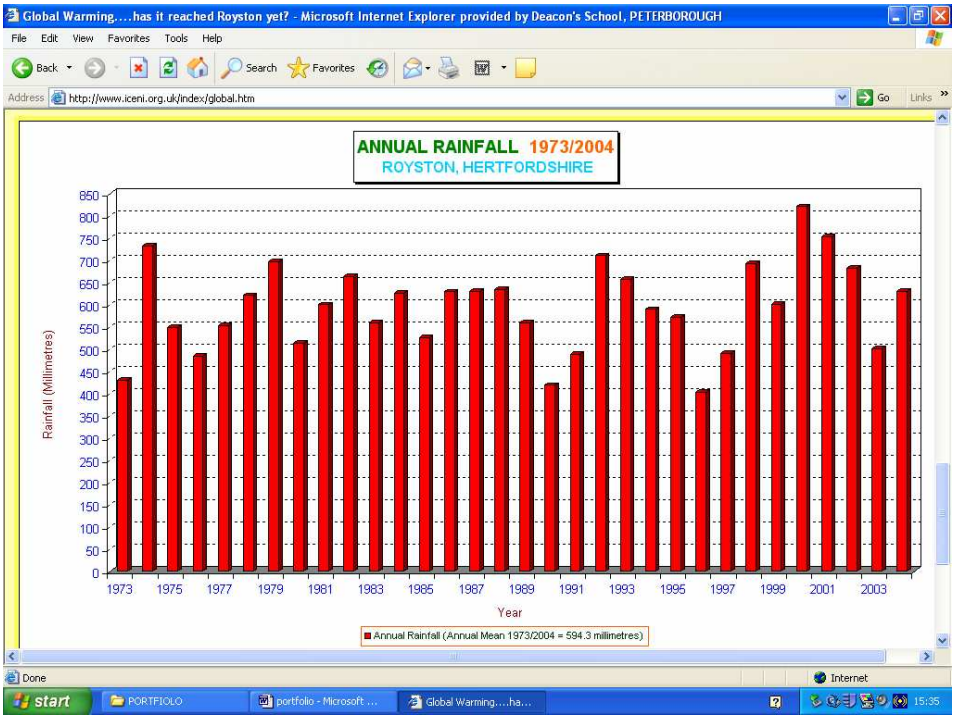
I also found the data from this website. Below is a screenshot of the data I was looking for.



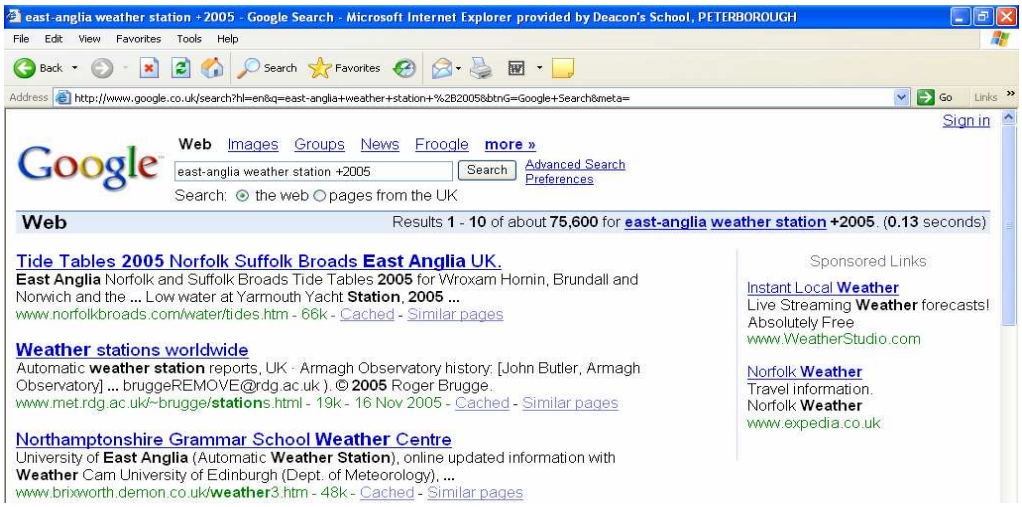
YEAR	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	YEAR
1976	22.5	17.5	12.7	19.6	21.5	11.9	35.6	14.3	93.4	80.1	82.9	71.6	483.6
1977	61.1	62.6	48.4	28.1	35.5	60.2	8.9	105.1	12.9	27.2	52.7	50.3	553.0
1978	83.4	44.9	60.9	52.9	73.6	47.3	57.9	40.6	26.6	5.1	17.2	110.6	621.0
1979	58.2	51.3	97.8	67.9	85.1	19.1	13.9	66.8	16.0	69.6	43.2	108.5	697.4
1980	30.9	29.5	62.5	17.1	18.5	68.8	84.7	38.5	21.3	75.6	38.4	27.5	513.3
1981	37.5	15.5	77.5	55.7	64.8	22.2	69.7	30.9	81.9	59.1	28.2	56.9	599.9
1982	38.9	19.8	52.7	19.6	57.7	78.1	30.1	62.1	52.5	121.1	80.0	50.5	663.1
1983	37.9	37.4	29.7	97.7	125.2	16.3	22.0	21.2	60.3	30.6	42.5	38.1	558.9
1984	64.5	39.2	38.7	9.0	84.8	58.4	8.3	55.5	93.2	49.7	89.5	34.6	625.4
1985	44.2	22.4	41.2	20.1	42.2	135.4	44.5	33.9	14.8	13.3	42.1	71.5	525.6
1986	55.2	21.1	52.4	58.6	59.1	19.6	46.7	83.3	32.3	89.3	56.6	55.1	629.3
1987	9.6	22.1	46.1	36.7	46.3	78.0	90.4	65.7	40.3	118.2	57.5	19.7	630.6
1988	103.6	22.4	57.7	42.2	57.2	70.8	74.2	59.0	43.2	38.6	31.3	33.5	633.7
1989	28.2	46.9	41.8	87.6	9.6	45.6	55.1	32.0	22.4	41.9	25.3	122.4	558.8
1990	60.2	72.5	16.4	30.2	3.7	28.7	12.6	30.6	32.3	38.2	36.6	56.7	418.7
1991	51.0	43.3	25.0	44.6	18.0	77.4	39.9	40.2	57.0	21.1	60.2	10.3	488.0

Below are some examples of the rainfall data from the Royston website presented in graph form.



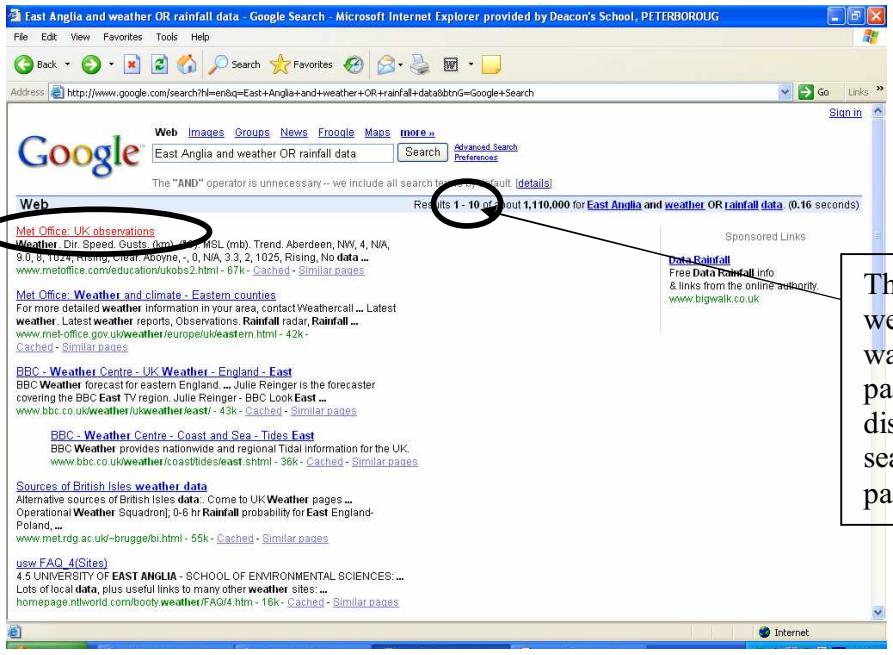


Due to the fact one weather station was not enough I thought I should find more websites by using the '+' '-' operators.
This may bring up with a different website representing the same sort of data. Google ignores common words and characters such as where, the how, and other digits and letters which slow down the search without improving the results. If a common word is essential to getting the results wanted, you have to include it by putting a '+' sign in front of it. (I have to make sure that I leave a space before the + sign.



This didn't bring me with the type of data I was looking for.

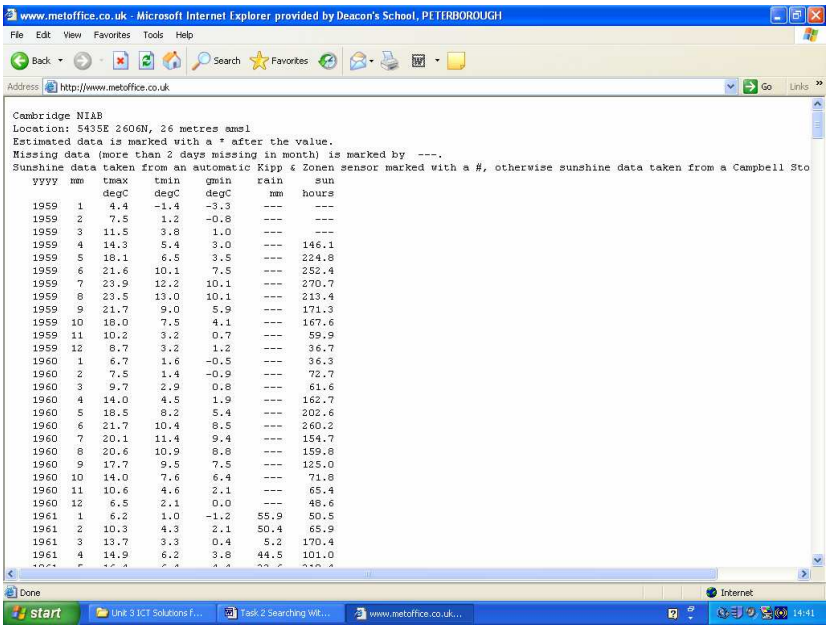
I had to search for another website which would hold the same sort of data. I would then be able to compare the two data, and see what one best match with what majority of the sources say.
Therefore I searched again but this time making the search more complex by adding an OR logical operator.
The search I made was - "East Anglia and weather OR rainfall data"
The first website that I obtained from this search was www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/europe/uk/eastern.html.



This shows that it was on the first search result link.

This proves the website I found was on the first page as Google displays 10 search results per page.

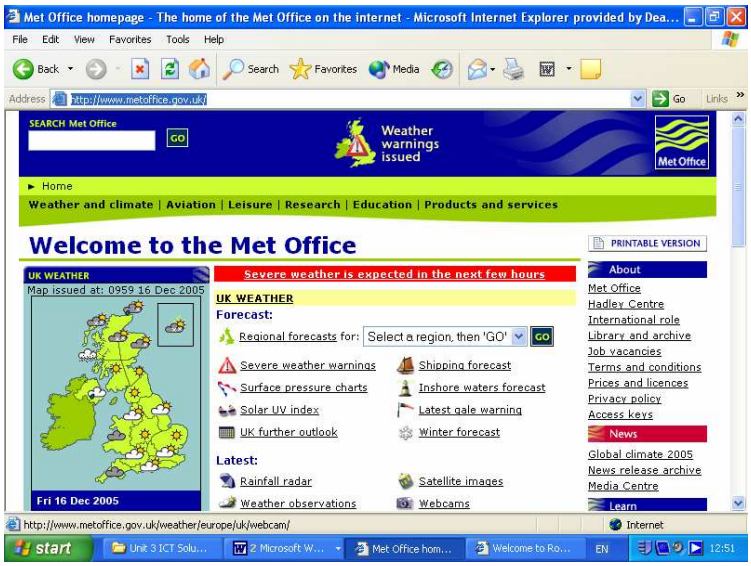
The website that I found was www.meto.gov.uk. The website was also significant as it presented the rainfall data from 1959 – 2005, which exceeds the amount of years I was looking for (40 years). This made me think the website designer must be an experienced person as he/she has been collecting data more than Royston has. Apart from rainfall the website also provides data on sunshine hours and temperatures. This could be useful to people looking for that data as well.



Having finding the data I needed on the first page of the first link meant the search I typed in was precise and accurate. Therefore this resulted in me finding the web link with the data I required on the first page result in the first search results link.

The two website links are below: -
http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/
http://www.iceni.org.uk/

I also found the met office website through searching on Google. Below is a screenshot of the met office website. This website link was also on the first page of the last search I did.



Conclusion

Searching is not always easy. I went through a lot of steps until I got to the website I needed. For example by typing more word the search was narrowed down below is a table showing this.

Words / phrase	Number of hits
Weather station	56,200,000
Weather Station East Anglia	302,000
Weather station AND rainfall East Anglia	156,000

You are most likely to have more websites with words weather station than websites with Weather station AND rainfall East Anglia.