



**IF** you type **Youth Work** into Google you will immediately have access to thirty four million nine hundred thousand pages! Certainly enough reading to keep you busy for the weekend. Weird too when I think that I used to have and NEED a whole office of resources, images, media and the like to support my youth ministry role and now all I need is a telephone socket or a Wi-fi hotspot!

Pretty Cool and slightly weird (I reckon we should have a "*National Stop taking technology for granted and get awestruck day!*") It is obvious though that when faced with 34,000,000 pages it may be paralysing rather than a handy source of information. Monitoring the "searches" that have signposted people onto the Youthblog side street of the super highway, it becomes obvious that not everyone is using search engines to their full capability! For the more geekily endowed it's time to duck out now, but if you are just typing a string of words into Google and hoping, then you **may** want to press **continue reading** as I've written some stuff on how to more fully use search engines!

If you type *youth work* into Google it will immediately throw back at you all the sites (a lot of them) that mention both youth and work, some of these will be youth work and some will be about employment of young people!

Straight away we can improve the search by using quotation marks! If you now search for "*youth work*" the number of sites has been reduced considerably because it is now searching for these two words together as a phrase not just the presence of both of them.

You can now refine the search further with the use of + and of -

*"youth work" +resources*

will look for the phrase youth work and ONLY sites that also mention resources! You can also eliminate key words by using -

*"youth work" UK +resources -training*

will look for UK resources without throwing up pages that are talking about training! Google is only as good as the information that you give it, so thinking about what key words you do AND don't want will give you the most useful sites. It's also worth remembering that it can be hard work finding sites that give you good youth work/youth ministry resources so when you find them then add them to your favourites!

If you are looking for particular types of sites via Google you can include the word *intitle:* in the search, this will then only deliver sites that have your key word in the title, e.g. *intitle:youthwork* inurl: works in exactly the same way for the web address.

### **SEARCHING for images**

IN December I had loads of hits from people looking for *Nativity .jpg* and then trawling through the web pages (Youthblog included) HOWEVER simply clicking on "images" above the Google bar rather than just the web search which is the default would have given you immediate access to 63,000 Nativity images!

**This has been kindly donated by Ian McDonald, Youth Officer for Oxford Diocese. You can find his Youthblog at: [www.oxford.anglican.org/youthblog/](http://www.oxford.anglican.org/youthblog/)**