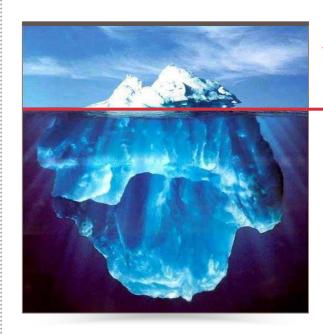
Common barriers to web search engine crawling

Barriers to web search engine crawling

What can make a site effectively invisible to search engine users

- Content "hidden" behind search forms
- Non-HTML links
- Outdated robots.txt crawling restrictions
- Server errors (crawler times out when fetching content)
- Orphaned URLs
- Rich media: audio, video
- Premium content



WEBSearchable

DEEP WEBNot searchable

Purpose of illustrations

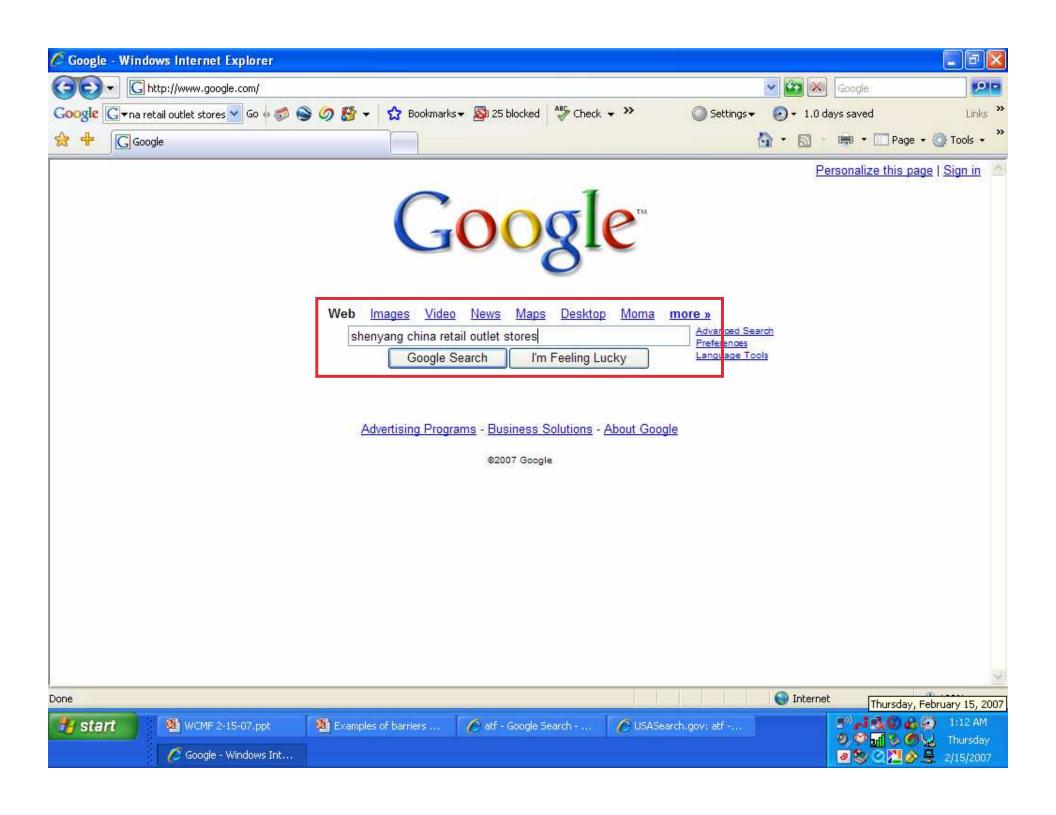
- The following illustrations identify barriers to web search engine crawling common to government websites
- Such barriers are found on the majority of federal agency and inter-agency sites
- Illustrations:
 - Business professional seeking export opportunities
 - Local historian researching World War II
 - Entrepreneur seeking ATF's program for small businesses
 - Representative federal agency's sitemapping target list

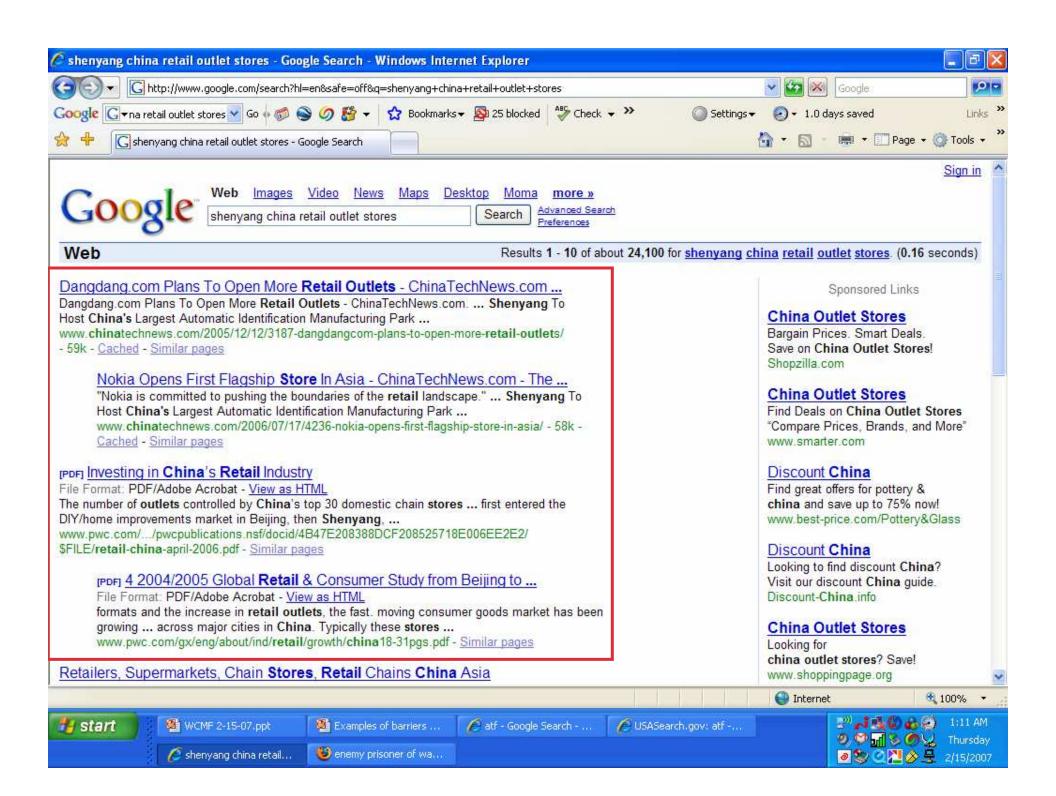
Business professional seeking export opportunities

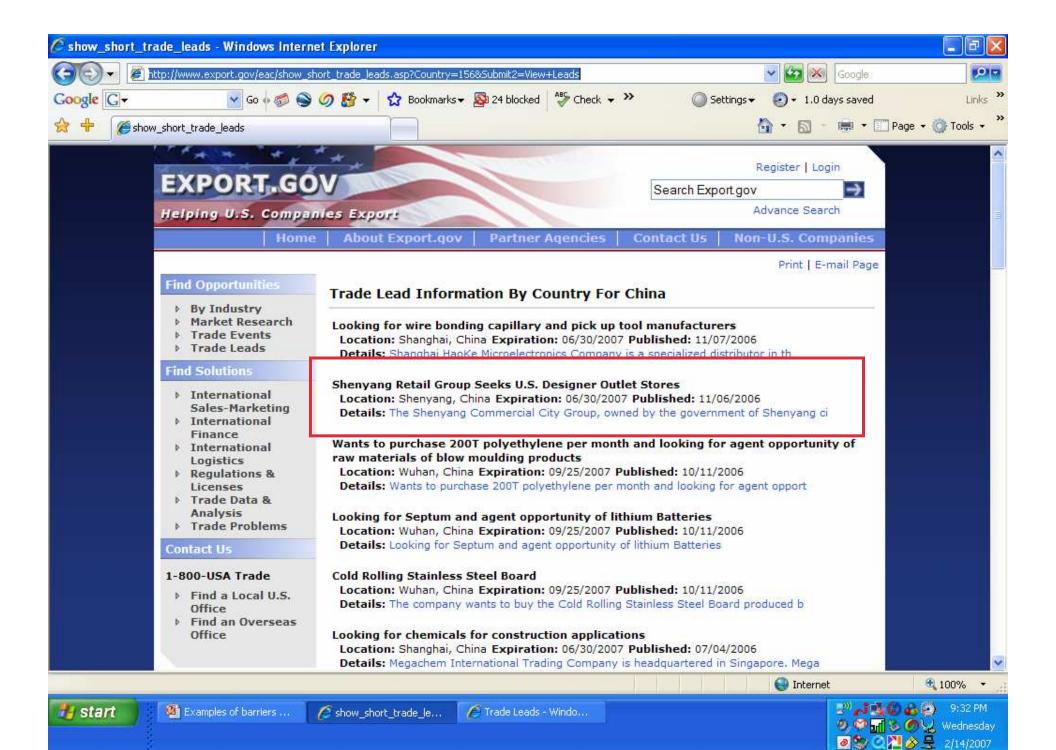
Sample search on Google Web Search: [shenyang china retail outlet stores]

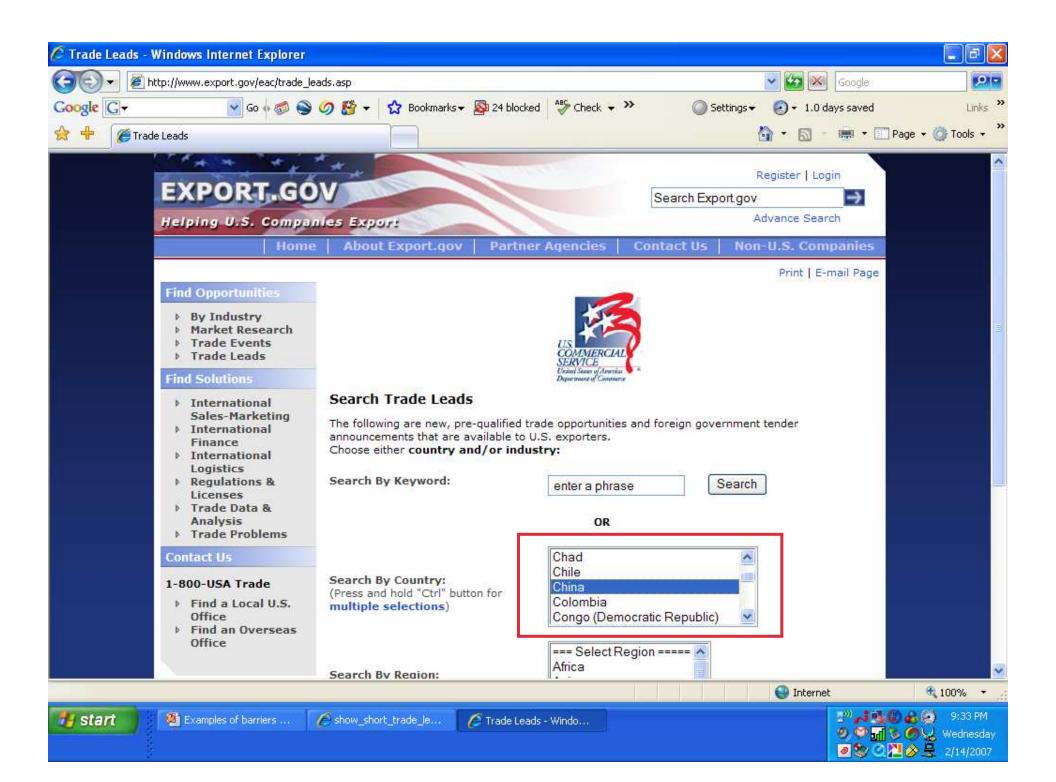
(http://www.google.com/search?hl=en&safe=off&q=shenyang+china+retail+outlet+stores)

- What a search engine user does not find:
 http://www.export.gov/eac/show_short_trade_leads.asp?Country=156&Submit2=View+Leads
- Reason: Drop-down menu/underlying database renders Export.gov/US Commercial Service Trade Leads database uncrawlable: http://www.export.gov/eac/trade_leads.asp







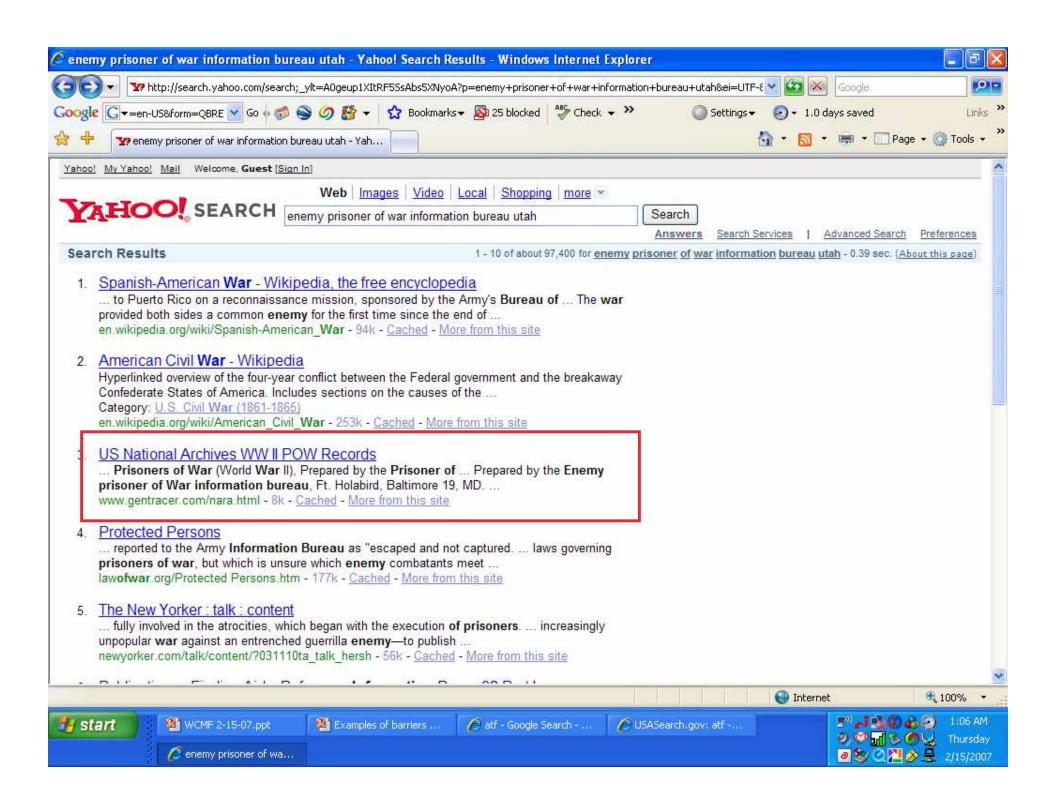


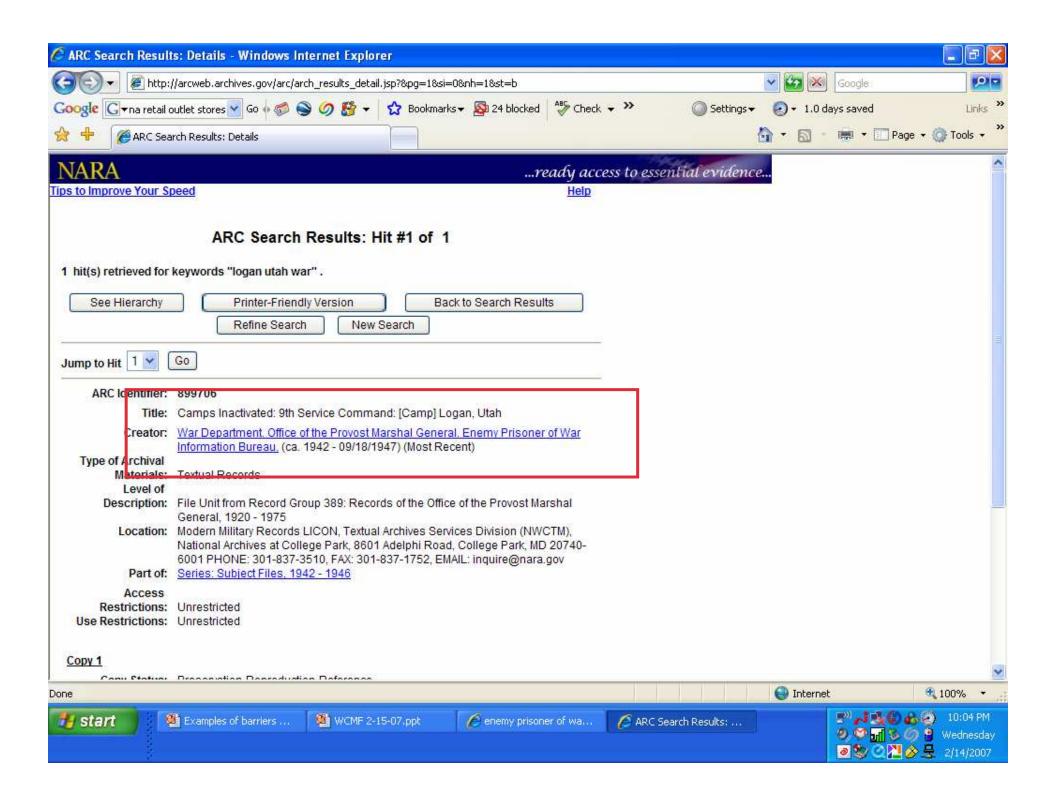
Local historian researching World War II

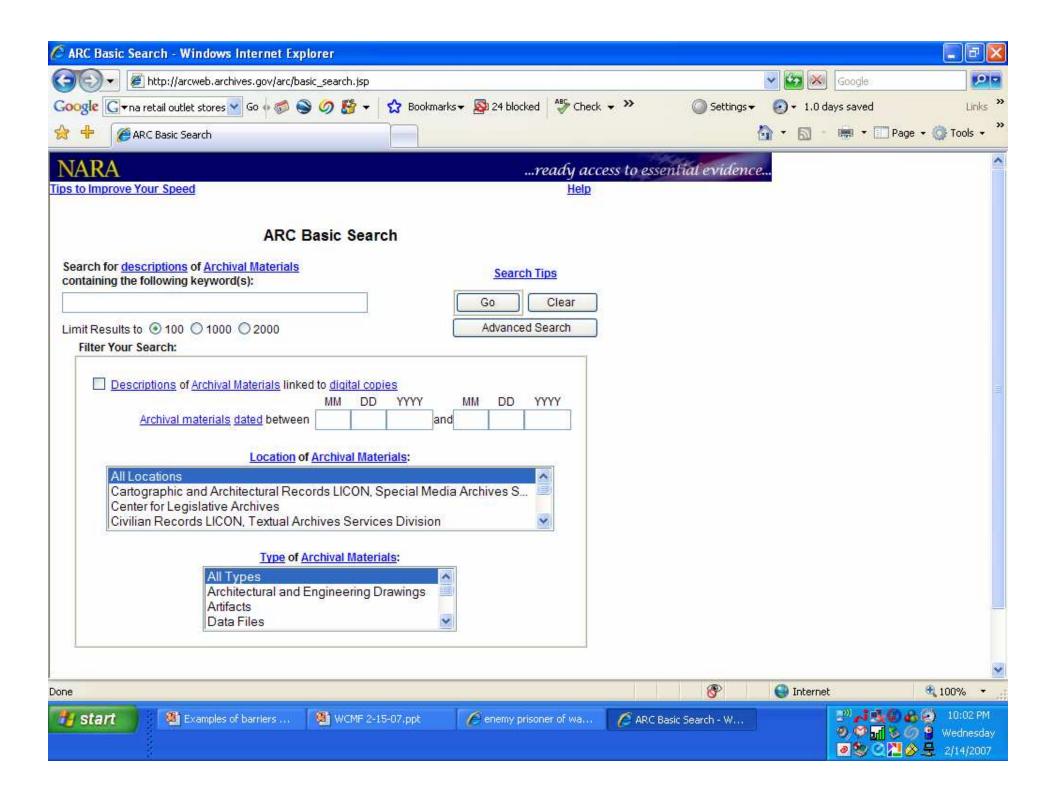
Sample search on Yahoo Search: [enemy prisoner of war information bureau utah]

(http://search.yahoo.com/search; ylt=A0geup1XltRF5SsAbs5XNyoA?p=enemy+prisoner+of+war+information+bureau+utah&ei=UTF-8&fr=yfp-t-501&x=wrt)

- What a search engine user does not find:
 http://arcweb.archives.gov/arc/arch results detail.jsp?&pg=1&si=0&nh=1&st=b
- Reason: NARA Archival Research Catalog (ARC) database uncrawlable: http://arcweb.archives.gov/arc/basic search.jsp







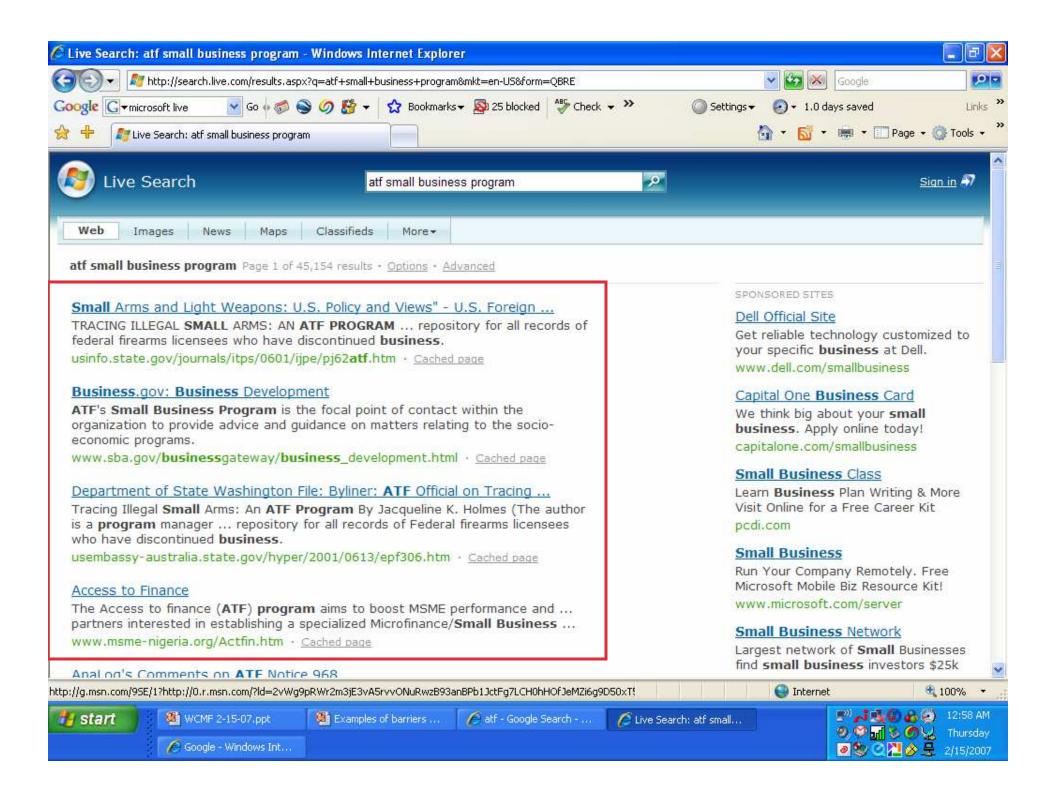
Entrepreneur seeking ATF's program for small businesses

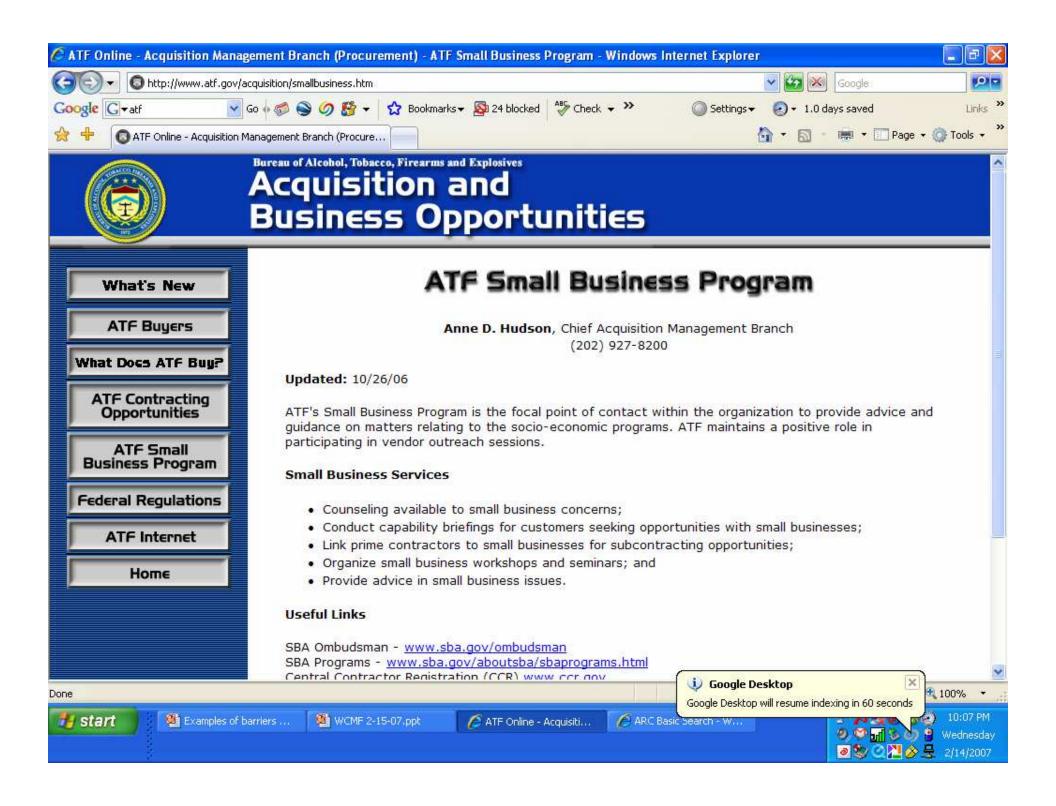
Sample search on Microsoft Live Search: [atf small business program]

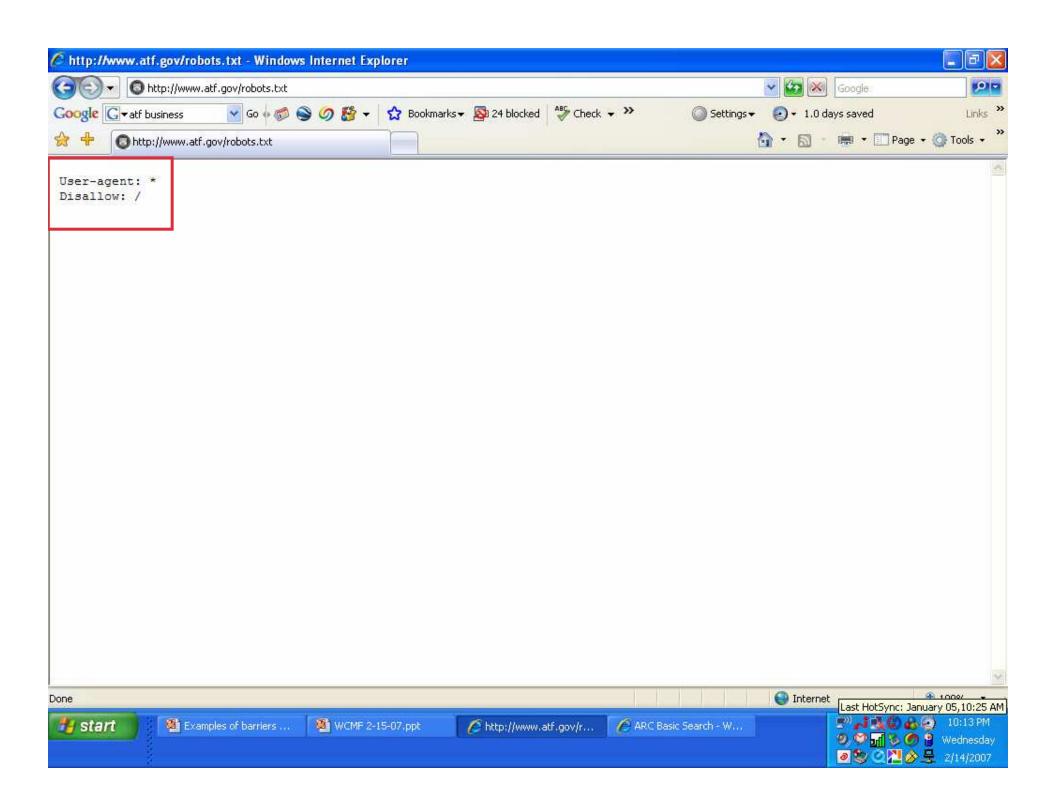
(http://search.live.com/results.aspx?q=atf+small+business+program&mkt=en-US&form=QBRE)

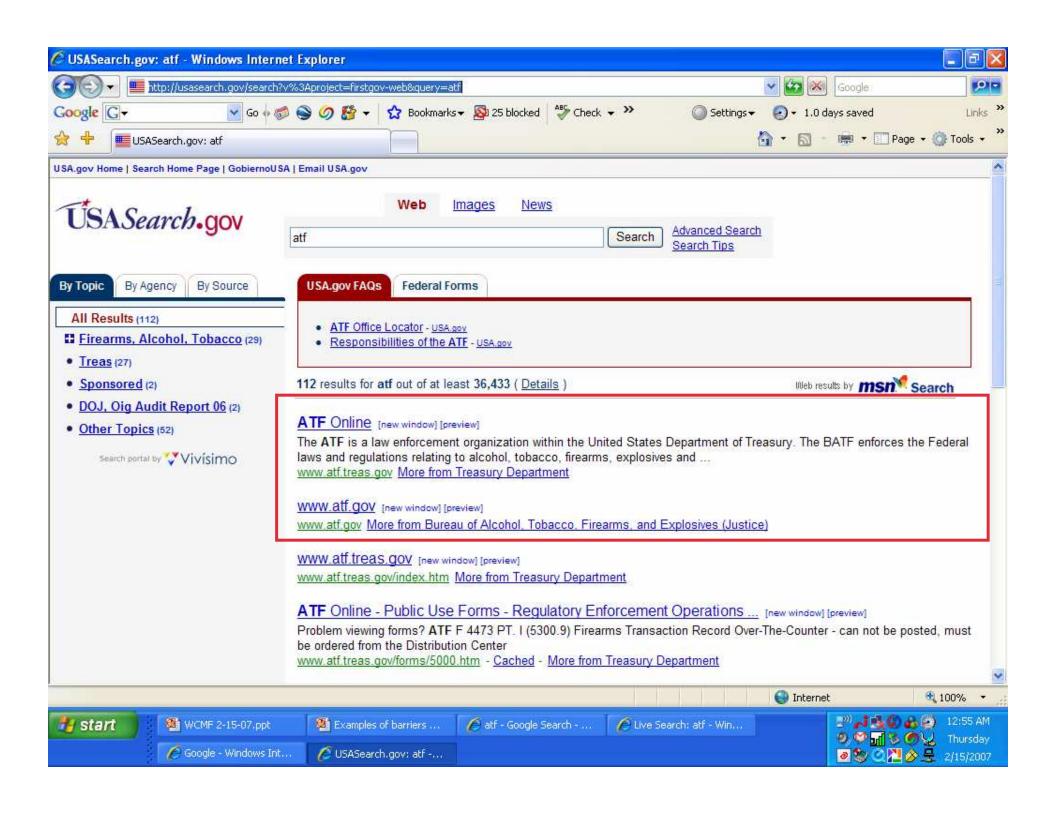
- What a search engine user does not find:
 http://www.atf.gov/acquisition/smallbusiness.htm
- Reason: Robots.txt restriction renders ATF site uncrawlable: http://www.atf.gov/robots.txt
- Lack of sitemap/web search management also accounts for outdated link to ATF's previous identity as Department of the Treasury agency in USA.gov (MSN) search results:

http://usasearch.gov/search?v%3Aproject=firstgov-web&query=atf









Representative federal agency's sitemapping target list

• Sample list of sites with uncrawlable elements: http://spreadsheets.google.com/pub?key=pUb62ZKHnzgqEoGF4LFf3Gw

