

## Everything End Users Always Wanted to Know but Didn't Even Know You Should Ask about Property Searches in MOSS 2007

The search engine in MOSS 2007 is much improved over the search engine in the previous version of SharePoint. However, the syntax is not always consistent in the property based searches so it can be very confusing for the end user.

I'm sure (well, I hope) there is some logic behind how the various searches work, but for now, some of that logic eludes me. So, I've spent hours and hours testing the out of the box searches that I would find most useful as an end user. I've tested these searches at three different implementations to make sure that I wasn't finding errors caused by data or site developers. I will continue to update this document as I learn more, but for now, here are my best tips for leveraging MOSS 2007 search to find what you are looking for on your portal.<sup>1</sup> At the end of this document, there is some information on how your SharePoint administrator could configure some of these out of the box searches to improve your search experience.

### Simple Search

The general syntax for simple searches using properties is <property name>:<value>. The property search assumes "contains" is the operator, in other words, <property name>"contains"<value>. Only "managed" properties are available to be used in searches. Your portal administrator can customize the managed properties for your implementation. In this document, I'll only talk about the "out of the box" managed properties.

1. Title:<value>
  - a. Searching for Title seems to be the most reliable way to find documents in SharePoint when you know some or the entire name of the document (either the Title or file name).
  - b. If the value is has more than one word and is expressed in quotes, SharePoint looks for both words in the quotation marks to appear in the Title of the document or any other type of content in SharePoint that has a Title property (for example, Announcements). For example, title:"cat dog" looks for both cat and dog in the Title. Without quotes, title:cat dog looks for either cat or dog in the title.
  - c. If the Title of a document is blank, search looks in the filename (which is what SharePoint recognizes as the Title of a document if there is no Title in the Office document properties).
  - d. If the multi-word title has any one of the words that SharePoint ignores (including: of, for, to, and), the search string in quotes is not recognized. For example, a search for Title:"how to scan and fax" returns no values but *Title:how to scan and fax will* return the document called <how to scan and fax.doc>.
2. Contenttype:<value>
  - a. If the Content Type has more than one word in the name, use quotation marks to find exact values. For example: contenttype:"Event Photo"
  - b. If you want to find all content types that have the word Photo in the name, type contenttype:photo. This will return items with a content type of Event Photo or Show Photo or General Photo, etc.

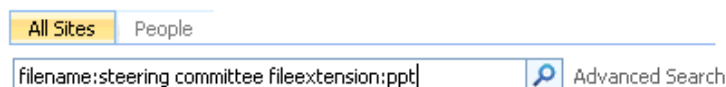
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<sup>1</sup> If you find errors in this document or additional tips that you think should be added, please send them to me at [sue@susanhanley.com](mailto:sue@susanhanley.com).

3. Fileextension:<value> or filetype:<value>
  - a. Enter the file extension (doc, pdf, xls, ppt) with no period. (I.e., “doc,” not “.doc”)



4. Author:<value><sup>2</sup>
  - a. Enter the search terms using quotes to find the exact Author name.
  - b. Note that Office documents may record Author name using a different convention from Active Directory so you may need to search for Author:”John Smith” and Author:”Smith, John” to find all content uploaded by John Smith.
  - c. The Author search property is looking at the Author in Office document properties to find the Author of an Office document and in the Created By field to find Author of non-Office content.
5. Filename:<value>
  - a. Filename is mapped to the name property within a URL so finding a specific item based on the filename property is not particularly useful unless you have some idea of what you are looking for. Searching by Title is much more reliable.
  - b. If you are looking for a document (Word, PowerPoint, Excel), enter as many words of the file name as you know without quotes. Document results should appear at the top of the list but you may also get other items as well.
  - c. If you use quotes for a multi-word value, you may not get any document results. In my tests, searches using filename:<value> returned only non-documents (for example, Announcements) when using quotes around the words in most cases but in others, it returned some but not all documents that matched the search criteria.
6. Combining Property Searches
  - a. You can string property searches together with a space between each combination of property name:<value>.
  - b. For example, to find a PowerPoint presentation with the words “steering committee” in the file name, enter: filename:steering committee fileextension:ppt



## Advanced Search

1. Author
  - a. SharePoint assumes that the Author of an Office document is the user name found in the Office property called Author<sup>3</sup>. However, in many organizations, documents may be

<sup>2</sup> SharePoint assumes that the Author of a document is the user name in the Author property of an Office document. If this field is blank, SharePoint assumes the Author is the “Created By” user. If there are different values in the Office property for Author and in the Created By value in SharePoint, the Author search will find the document and associate it with both users.

<sup>3</sup> The managed property “author” maps to these crawled properties in SharePoint:

- mail:6(Text)
- Office:4(Text)
- OWS\_AuthorUserID(Text)

created by one person and re-used by another so the Author property does not always have the correct value for the Author of a given document. This happens a lot with PowerPoint presentations where you might start with a presentation created by someone else and then customize it for your use. Unless you explicitly change the Author property of an Office document in Office, the Author will be associated with the first person who created that document, not necessarily the person uploading that document to SharePoint.<sup>4</sup>

- b. For non-Office content or where Author is blank in an Office document, the Author property returns values from the Created By field in ANY type of item on the portal – for example, announcements, discussions, custom lists, etc.
- c. You can enter multi-word values but may not use quotes.

## 2. Description

- a. This search looks for the “out of the box” description property that is available in many SharePoint items. If you are not using the out of the box description property with your documents, the Portal Administrator needs to replace this property with the property that is being used in your portal to describe documents.
- b. This search will also look at the values in Site Descriptions and the values in the About Me section of a person record.

## 3. Name

- a. You can enter multi-word values in the Name search but you cannot use quotes but SharePoint appears to exclude documents in results when you use more than one word.
- b. Do not use quotes in a Name search.
- c. If you want to make sure your multi-word search includes Documents, string your search terms together by including multiple values in separate lines as shown in the example below:
- d. Looks for more than just document Names. Also looks for view names and any other SharePoint item with Name as a property so the results may be initially confusing.

### Add property restrictions...

Where the Property...         [Add Property...](#) [Remove Property...](#)

## 4. Size

- a. Looks for file size in Bytes.
- b. No commas can be entered in the value.
- c. To search for an item that is greater than 10MB, enter information as shown in the example below:

### Add property restrictions...

Where the Property...     [Add Property...](#)

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<sup>4</sup> You could also, of course, create a custom “Author” site column that users could be required to enter. This field could then be mapped to the SharePoint managed property. The challenge, of course, is that users will not like having to enter this value every time they upload a document so you will want to be sure that there is business value in knowing the author of a document with 100% accuracy.

5. Created Date

- a. Enter dates in mm/dd/yy or mm/dd/yyyy format.
- b. Use this search in combination with a search that restricts results to Document (or a specific type of document) or you will not get useful results.

Result **type**

**Add property restrictions...**

Where the Property...     [Add Property...](#)

6. Last Modified Date:

- a. Enter Dates in mm/dd/yy or mm/dd/yyyy format.
- b. Use this search in combination with a search that restricts results to Document (or a specific type of document) or you will not get useful results.

Result **type**

**Add property restrictions...**

Where the Property...     [Add Property...](#)

7. Created By and Modified By

- a. These searches do not work. This has been reported to Microsoft and is being investigated as a bug (as of June 1, 2007).

## Information for Advanced Users

The search schema in MOSS 2007 offers two types of properties: crawled and managed. Crawled properties are discovered when content is crawled. Managed properties are properties that are part of the Search user experience, meaning that they are available for search results, advanced search, and scopes. System Administrators can customize the crawled and managed properties for your portal so that you can change (and improve) your search experience and you can have more searches available than just what is available out of the box.

To make a crawled property available for the Search experience, it must be mapped to a managed property. Mapping the crawled properties to managed properties makes them available for Search queries and makes them appear in Advanced Search and search results. Multiple crawled properties can be mapped to a single managed property, and a single crawled property can be mapped to multiple managed properties.

Administrators can map different crawled properties from different content sources into a single managed property. By mapping the crawled properties to a single managed property, the user does not need to know all the different crawled properties to return the desired result. The end user simply uses the syntax "property:value" where "property" is the managed property, and all the information associated with both crawled properties is returned.