Exploring web archives using Hyphe, a research oriented web crawler



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An open source tool for social scientists to create corpuses of web actors and map the hyperlinks between them hyphe



Methodological principles:

• Web entities: fine definition of actors beyond "websites"



• Prospection loop: iterative curation of discovered actors



• 52 billion URLs, 2 PB of data • Growing with annual crawls of million websites (5.6 mio in 2023) and regular crawls of thematic, event and media focused websites (currently 70,000)

2023		1 012 résultats
2022		650 résultats
2021	·	385 résultats
2020	·	337 résultats
2019		348 résultats
2018		66 résultats

R E S **Connecting Hyphe to web archives, an outcome of the project** ΡΑ DON



Allowing Hyphe to:

- Target a specific date and a time frame around this date
- Browse the archive via a wayback-like system
- Target precise capture dates to avoid drifting over time
- Support permalinks and archival URLs

Addressing new research methods & use cases:

- Map online communities from the past
- Compare time snapshots & study the structural transformations
- Complete live web with archived material of disappeared websites

CRAWL WEB ARCHIVES (experimental)

THIS IS AN EXPERIMENTAL FEATURE: YOU SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT CRAWLING WEB ARCHIVES IS NECESSARILY MUCH SLOWER SINCE ALL CRAWL WILL OUERY ONLY ONE SAME SERVER

crawl the live web, not any kind of web archive O Live Web

crawl worldwide web archives maintained by Archive.org Web.Archive.org

crawl France's official web archives maintained by BNF ArchivesInternet.BNF.fr

Date to try to approach

01/01/2023

Delay to consider before and after the date

Whatever

1996-01-01 → 2023-02-07

Hyphe is now compatible with web archives from BnF, INA, Arquivo.pt & Internet Archive



Experiment crawling through the archives in a DataSprint

- Hands on workshop during 5 days within BnF DataLab
- Dive into data to explore hypothesis on research questions
- Gather complementary skills & expertises: research, web archiving, engineering, design, digital methods • Experiment with different methodological and exploratory approaches • Find preliminary insights



Focus on a presidential candidate's campaigns: Jean-Luc Mélenchon

Hypothesis: online communities changed across 2012, 2017 & 2022 campaigns

Methodological approach:

- Define time windows depending on available archives • Start coherent crawls from stable sources (Wikipedia) • Define common rules to select and include actors • Use ontologies to tag actors (editorial form, nature) • Produce graphs to visualize differences
- Identify disappeared actors, newcomers and resilient ones



- Hyphe's source code, demo & references: https://github.com/medialab/hyphe
- BnF's Web Archives introduction: https://www.bnf.fr/fr/depot-legal-du-web
- ResPaDon DataSprint results: https://respadon.medialab. sciencespo.fr



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