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**Going with the Current: A Google News Lab Workshop**

    On Wednesday Oct. 26, Old Main was treated to special guest, Nicholas Whitaker. Whitaker works as a teacher for thousands of journalists across the globe. As an employee of Google, specifically the Google Lab division, Whitaker aids a whole generation in discovering new tools for the field of journalism. In his presentation, Whitaker went into detail about the endless possibilities google provides those in the field of mass communication and journalism.

    News and journalism equates to data, and if there was one thing to be taken away from the presentation, it would be that Google strives to be the best at collecting and disseminating data. With a handful of tools and techniques, Whitaker began the presentation by first showing how to use Google to refine searches which would lead to more relevant results faster. Using key phrases found in the Advanced Search menu on the Google search engine, web searchers are able to restrict their search to a certain file type, web domain, image size and more. Jumping from refining searches, Whitaker then moved on to the benefits of using Google Scholar to discover academically trusted information. By accessing the database collected by Google, one can find scholarly articles peer reviewed by professionals.

    While the job demands of a journalist don’t normally require articles of an ilk requiring Google Scholar, one thing that is required is the necessity of fact checking information both written and visual. In the age of social media images considered news are thrown back and forth whilly nilly. The importance of using factual images in a story over photoshopped or staged ones is an all too real concern for journalists today, Whitaker explained. The use of reverse image searching via Google’s image search engine provides itself as the solution to this troubling problem. By selecting an image and placing it into the search bar, Google traces said image and locates the site of origin and all other uses of it on the internet.

    Saving the largest asset for last, Whitaker introduced the Google Public Data Explorer. As its most engaged effort yet, Google is now making the most up to date and accurate data available to any and all who search for it. In the form of automatically showing info about, events taking place near and websites dedicated to a term typed into the search bar, Google uses its massive log of information to grant web users the most relevant data first and in one place. In addition, Google Trends was shown as a tool to retrieve data relative to terms it was given. Impressive in its own right, the tool was revealed to be even more powerful by being able to retrieve data from as far as years in the past to as recent as one minute.

    Whitaker concluded the presentation by revealing that current projects being worked on by Google involve more location based information. The company hopes to notify users of relevant information by simply being aware their location.