

Six Degrees of Separation:
Mining Social Networks for News Research



SLA Seattle June 15, 2008

Created By Meg Smith
The Washington Post



smithm@washpost.com

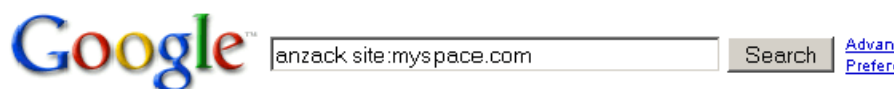


Advantages of External Search Engines

- Retrieve cached versions of pages that have been altered, made private or deleted by the user
- External engines allow more sophisticated searching
- Results include pages belonging to teenagers (MySpace search engine blocks them)
- Avoid detection while searching

Google Advanced Search

http://www.google.com/advanced_search



Web

[MySpace.com - joe anzack jrs memory is here - 24 - Female - - www ...](#)

MySpace profile for joe **anzack** jrs memory is here with pictures, videos, personal blog, interests, information about me and more.

[profile.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=user.viewprofile&friendID=193972336](#) - 174k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#) - [Note this](#)

[Myspace.com Blogs - Body of Joseph Anzack jr. found - Msnbc Report ...](#)

Read the DvorahChavahYaeli blog on MySpace.com. MySpace Blogs: Search, browse, read create you own blog.

[blog.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=blog.view&friendID=78545868&blogID=268465894](#) - 27k - [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#) - [Note this](#)

Yahoo! Advanced Search

<http://search.yahoo.com/web/advanced>



1 - 10

[MySpace.com - joe anzack jrs memory is here - 24 - Female - - www ...](#)

MySpace profile for joe **anzack** jrs memory is here with pictures, videos, personal blk information about me and more

[www.myspace.com/joeanzackmemory](#) - 175k - [Cached](#)

[MySpace.com - joe-jitsu - 21 - Male - triangle of death, karguali ...](#)

MySpace profile for joe-jitsu with pictures, videos, personal ... Sup, **Anzack** just wan Happy Birthday dogg, miss you brother. Think about you often. ...

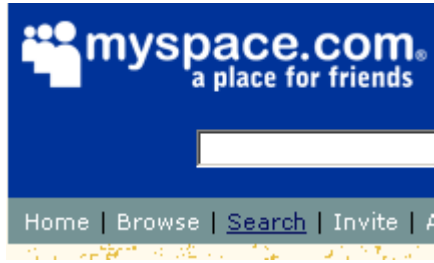
[profile.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=user.viewprofile&...](#) - 143k - [Cached](#)

» Once you've found a page you need, don't let it get away! Save web sites as PDFs using Adobe Acrobat 8.0, Foxit PDF Creator, or Firefox and IE's built-in "Print to PDF" feature.

Searching MySpace

Find Students from a Particular High School

1) Select "Search"



2) Type in School's name (keep it simple!)

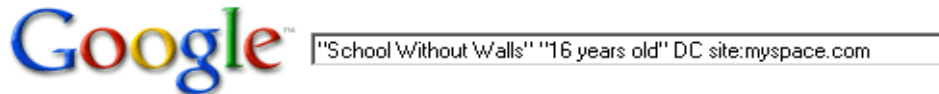
A screenshot of the 'Find a School' search form. The form has a title 'Find a School' and three input fields: 'School Name' with the text 'Whitman', 'Country' with a dropdown menu showing 'United States', and 'State/Province' with a dropdown menu showing 'Maryland'.

3) Limit years Attended

A screenshot of the 'browse by' filter options. The filter is titled 'browse by:' and has three radio button options: 'Alumni', 'Graduation Year:', and 'Years Attended:'. The 'Years Attended:' option is selected, and it has a dropdown menu showing '2008'.

Find Pages Made by Teenagers

When you search for these keywords:



Web Results 1

[MySpace.com - Just BLUW MY HOLE NIGHT - 16 - Male - 740 Da Grove ...](#)
16 years old 740 Da Grove , Maryland United States Last Login: 5/2/2008. Mood: horny
do she go to **school without walls** then yea. ...
[profile.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=user.viewprofile&friendid=84760536](#) - 164k -
Cached - [Similar pages](#) - [Note this](#)

[MySpace.com - I solemnly swear that i am up to no good... - 16 ...](#)
Female 16 years old WASHINGTON, Washington DC United States Last Login:
4/30/2008 ... **School Without Walls** Washington, DC Graduated: N/A Degree: In Progress
...
[profile.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=user.viewprofile&friendid=220756991](#) - 173k
- [Cached](#) - [Similar pages](#) - [Note this](#)

[MySpace.com - meet sarah. - 16 - Female - WASHINGTON, WASHINGTON ...](#)
16 years old WASHINGTON, WASHINGTON DC United States ohh thats good, you still
going 2 **School Without Walls**? so watchu doing over the summer? ...
[profile.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=user.viewprofile&friendid=50301184](#) - 123k -

You're drawing them from here (she's had a birthday since Google last crawled her page):

A screenshot of a MySpace profile for 'meet sarah.'. The profile has a green background and a pink border. It features a photo of a young woman in a yellow and red outfit. To the right of the photo is text: "and it's so rusty now..." female 17 years old washington, washington dc united states last login: 10/31/2007. At the bottom, there are links for 'view my: pics | videos'.

Find Friends of a Homicide Victim:

Grieving Friends Change their Headlines to "RIP"

RIP marquese

MySpace

Search




MySpace.com - I Love My baby Juice! **R.I.P. Marquese** - 19 - Female ...
MySpace profile for I Love My baby Juice! **RIP Marquese** with pictures, videos, personal blog, interests, information about me and more.
profile.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=user.viewprofile&friendID=70657223



Myspace.com Blogs - IN HONOR OF MY BAY[[BAY]]--> **R.I.P. QUESE** ...
N I HOPE TO DO THIS UNTIL WE MEET AGAIN MY ONE AND ONLI TRU LOVE--->
R.I.P[[MARQUESE D. TIMBERLAKE]], 12:21 AM - 4 Comments - 6 Kudos - Add Comment - ...
blog.myspace.com/index.cfm?fuseaction=blog.view&friendID=49321403&blogID=220215013

Or browse for "RIP" In Headlines of Students at the Victim's High School....



ΨDoobster is back Ψ R.I.P. to all my homiesΨ

Headline: "life is all [redacted] up how can all the closest just die"
Orientation: Straight
Here For: Dating, Friends
Gender: Male
Age: 18
Location: EVANVILLE, Indiana, US
Profile Updated: Jun 4, 2008 8:30 AM

[View Profile](#)
[Send Message](#)
[Send Instant Message](#)
[Forward to a Friend](#)
[Add to Blog Preferred List](#)

...Then Search Their Friends Lists for More Mourners

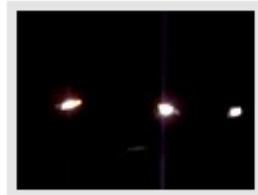
ΨDoobster is back Ψ R.I.P. to all my homiesΨ has 114 friends.

<p>..:~Lil. Miss Shyanne [[So Into You]]~:..</p> 	<p>Derick</p> 	<p>R.I.P 2 MY BROTHER DUSTIN LEE CHISM I LOVE YOU MAN</p> 	<p>Kayla {rip billy, jon, & nancy i'll miss you}</p> 
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Web Video: Use "MySpaceTV" to Lead You To Sources / Story Ideas

After a major street racing accident in Maryland, I looked for other examples of underground races on MySpace video.

Search Results for "Street Race Potomac"



Scion TC vs Civic SI Sedan

0:18

Street racing on River Rd in Potomac area, Maryland...
My girl, Mehr, in her TC n my boy, Roel "Kali" in his SI Sedan...
Good job u guys! ... [\[more\]](#)

Categories: [Automotive](#), [Entertainment](#), [Extreme Videos](#)

Tags: [civic](#), [honda](#), [race](#), [scion](#), [sedan](#), [si](#), [street](#), [tc](#)

Added: 1 year ago

By: [\\$ La TIeRnIta \\$](#)

Plays: 611 | Comments: 1

Video Details

Added: 4/1/2007

Runtime: 0:18

Views: 611

Comments: 1

Tags: [civic](#), [honda](#), [race](#), [scion](#), [sedan](#), [si](#), [street](#), [tc](#)

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By: [\\$ La TIeRnIta \\$](#)



Subscribe

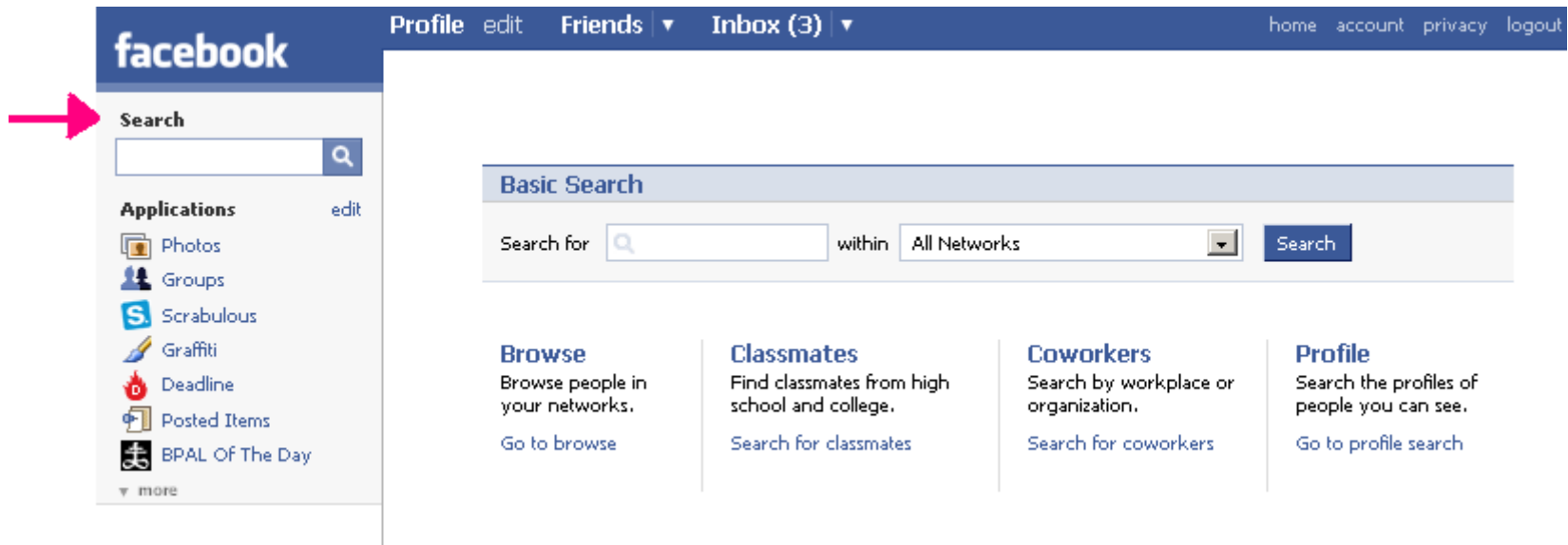
Google also has videos that trace back to myspace users.

A screenshot of a Google Video search interface. The search bar contains "Street Race Maryland". Below the search bar, there are two search results. The first result is titled "street racing md:" with a duration of 4 min, a 5-star rating, and a link to www.youtube.com. The second result is titled "Kent Island: MD Street Racing Movie Part 1" with a duration of 7 min, a 4.5-star rating, and a link to www.youtube.com. The Google logo and "Video BETA" are visible at the top left of the search results area.

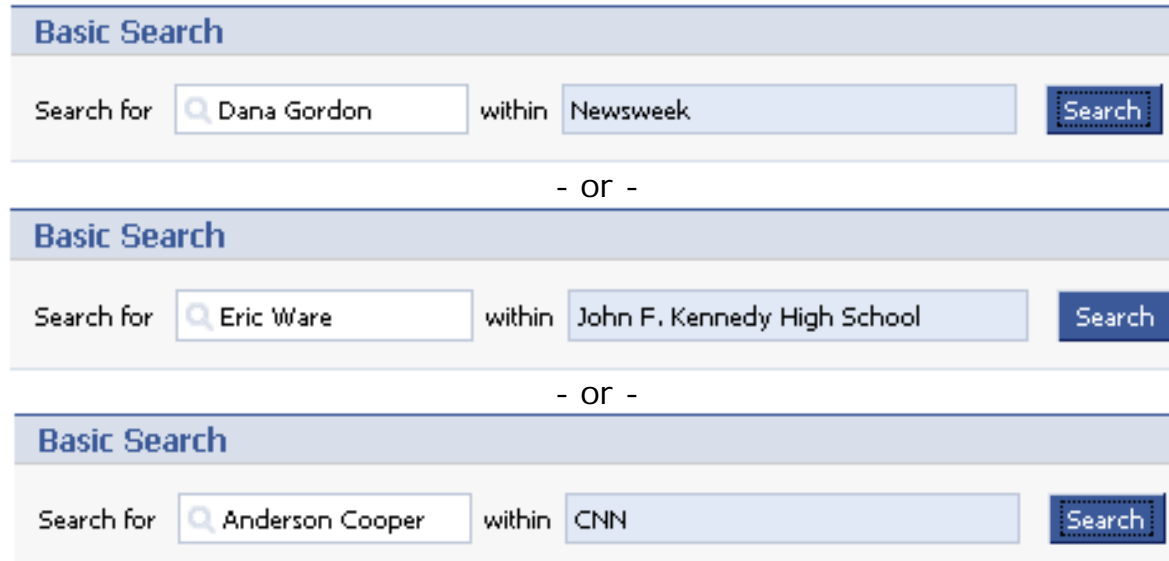
» You can save MySpace, Google and YouTube Videos using the Firefox "Video DownloadHelper" extension or the free-standing "Internet Download Manager" recommended by CNET.com.

Searching Facebook

Click the word "Search" above the search bar to make all search options appear.



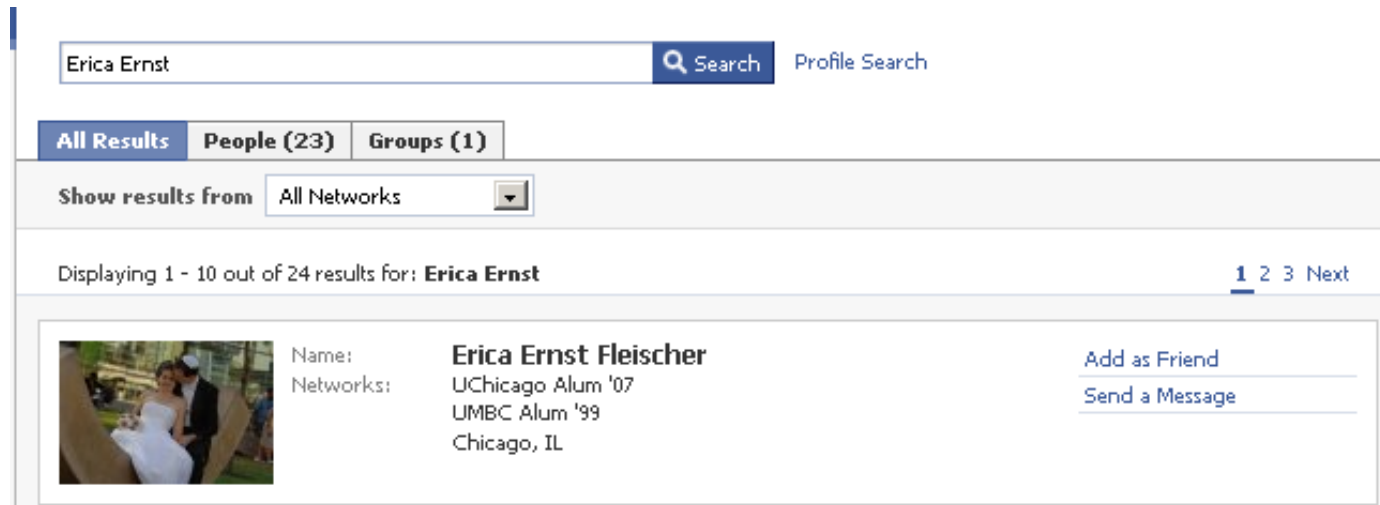
Use Professional or School Networks to Verify You Have the Real Person You're Looking For:



(This last example gets no hits, suggesting all 500 Anderson Coopers on Facebook are fakes)

Travel the World Without Leaving Your Chair (ie, Join Regional Networks to Unlock Some Profiles)

Add yourself to an open Network (“Chicago, IL”) to view a profile. This only works when users keep the default privacy setting that allows “All of my Networks” to view their profiles.



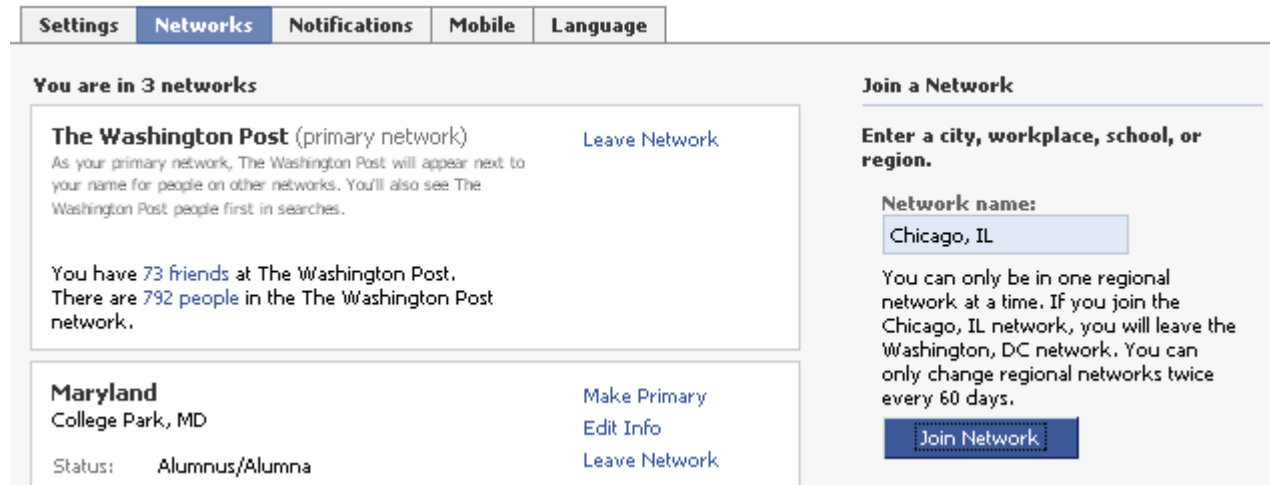
A screenshot of a search results page. At the top, there is a search bar containing the text "Erica Ernst" and a "Search" button. To the right of the search bar is a link for "Profile Search". Below the search bar are three tabs: "All Results", "People (23)", and "Groups (1)". Underneath the tabs is a dropdown menu labeled "Show results from" with "All Networks" selected. Below that, it says "Displaying 1 - 10 out of 24 results for: Erica Ernst" with pagination links "1 2 3 Next". The main content area shows a profile card for "Erica Ernst Fleischer". It includes a small profile picture of a couple, the name "Erica Ernst Fleischer", and lists her networks: "UChicago Alum '07", "UMBC Alum '99", and "Chicago, IL". To the right of the profile card are two links: "Add as Friend" and "Send a Message".

1) Choose “Account”



A screenshot of a user profile navigation bar. It features a dark blue background with white text. On the left, there are links for "Profile", "edit", "Friends", and "Inbox (3)". On the right, there are links for "home", "account", "privacy", and "logout".

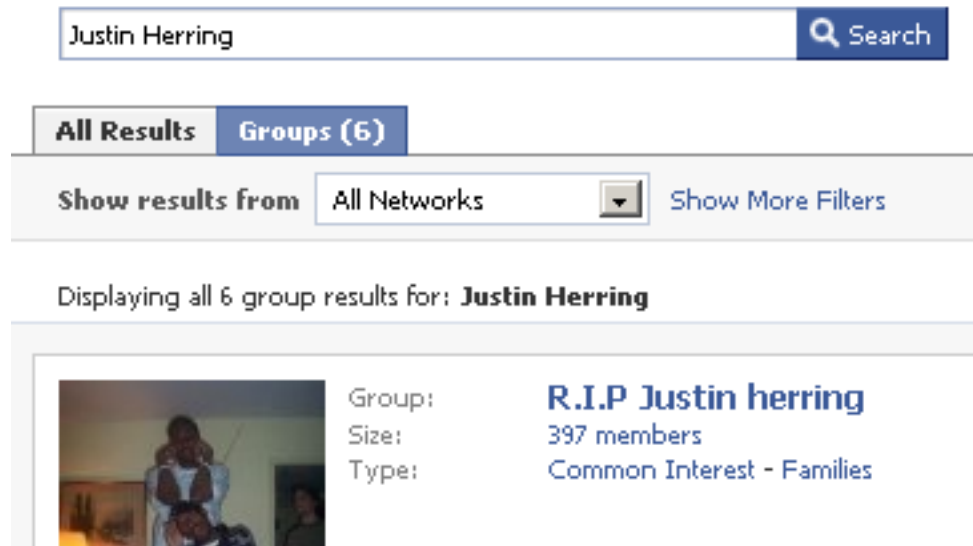
2) Choose the “Network” Tab and enter the open network name. Note the restriction that prevents you from changing regional networks more than twice every 60 days; this is to deter spammers, but it catches us as well.



A screenshot of a user's network settings page. At the top, there are tabs for "Settings", "Networks", "Notifications", "Mobile", and "Language". Below the tabs, it says "You are in 3 networks". There are two network cards visible. The first card is for "The Washington Post (primary network)" and includes a "Leave Network" link. The second card is for "Maryland" and includes links for "Make Primary", "Edit Info", and "Leave Network". On the right side of the page, there is a "Join a Network" section with a form to "Enter a city, workplace, school, or region." The "Network name" field contains "Chicago, IL". Below the form is a "Join Network" button.

Join Groups (Good Way to Find Teenagers)

Facebook Groups are so easy to create and join they occur much more often than on MySpace. For grief groups like the one at right, it is usually acceptable to join the group yourself.




Justin Herring Search

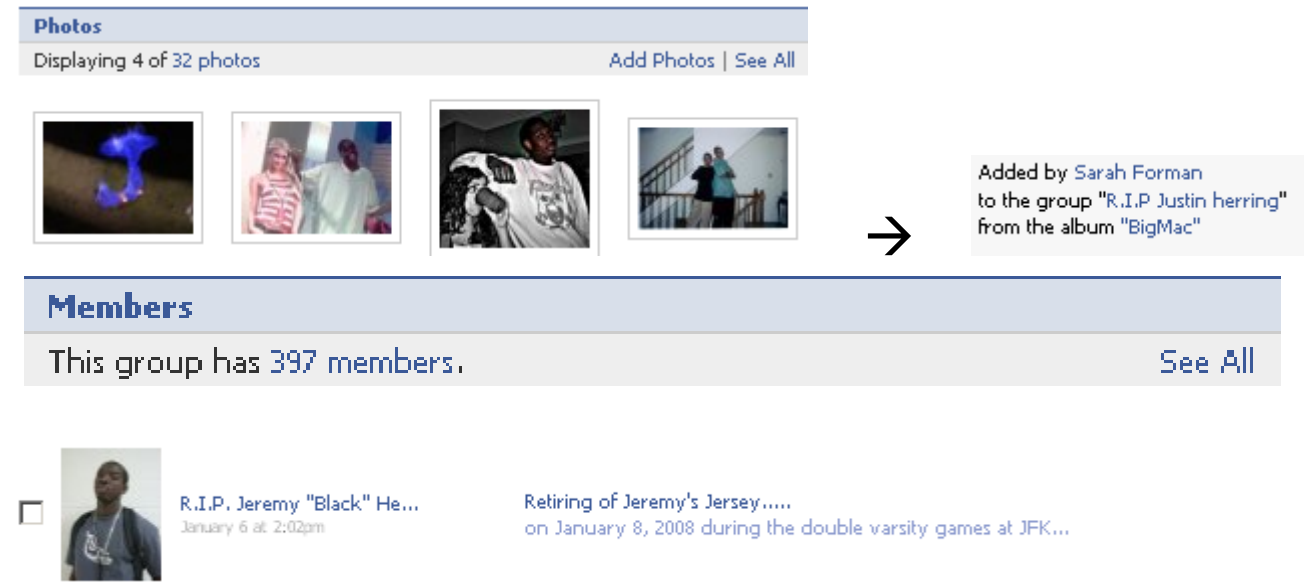
All Results Groups (6)

Show results from All Networks Show More Filters





Displaying all 6 group results for: **Justin Herring**

 Group: **R.I.P Justin herring**
Size: 397 members
Type: Common Interest - Families

Important Places to look for information: The Photos section and the Members section. (Asking users if you can publish their photos is a good way of breaking the ice).




Photos
Displaying 4 of 32 photos [Add Photos](#) | [See All](#)

Added by Sarah Forman to the group "R.I.P Justin herring" from the album "BigMac"

Members
This group has 397 members. [See All](#)

 R.I.P. Jeremy "Black" He...
January 6 at 2:02pm

Retiring of Jeremy's Jersey.....
on January 8, 2008 during the double varsity games at JFK...

By being a member, you automatically receive updates about the victim, which can be good for follow-up stories.

[View Friends](#)

Analyze a User's Friends List

Click the "More..." tab to get these options. Remember that these labels correspond to people who are in those categories of Networks, so "College Friends" and "Work Friends" mean people who are in any college or employer Network; "Classmates" and "Coworkers" refers to people your subject went to school or worked with.

The screenshot shows the 'All Friends' status updates page. At the top, there are tabs for 'Status Updates', 'Recently Updated', 'Everyone', and 'More...'. Below these is a 'Show:' dropdown menu that is currently set to 'Housemates'. The dropdown menu is open, showing a list of options: 'Choose an option...', 'Online Now', 'Recently Added', 'The Washington Post', 'Maryland', 'Washington, DC', 'College Friends', 'Work Friends', 'Regional Friends', 'No Networks', 'Housemates' (highlighted), 'Coworkers', 'Club, group, or teammates', 'Summer/Abroad friends', 'Classmates', and 'Friends met through friends'. The background shows a partial view of a friend's status update with a profile picture and the text 'ventilator and breath'.

Even if the user conceals his or her networks and profile, you can guess where he may have gone to school or where he works based on how many friends he has from one place. (Then call to confirm).

The screenshot shows a Facebook profile page with the 'Show:' dropdown menu set to 'College Friends'. Below this, it says 'Brian has 311 friends at colleges.' and shows a profile picture of 'Jay Abadie', a 'Maryland Alum '06'. A dropdown menu is open, showing a list of colleges: 'from...', 'Maryland (191)', 'UMass (14)', 'Northeastern (5)', 'Georgetown (5)', 'Maryland Baltimore (5)', 'Harvard (5)', and 'GWU (5)'. The background shows a partial view of a friend's profile with a profile picture and the text 'd gotten a picture with'.

Triangulate. These two men, Christopher Perry and Brian Meenaghan were in a car accident together; by making sure they are on each other's friends list, you have more evidence you are looking at the right person.

The screenshot shows the 'Chris Perry's Friends' page. At the top, there is a profile picture of Chris Perry and the text 'Chris's Profile'. Below this are tabs for 'Recently Updated', 'Everyone', and 'More...'. A 'Show:' dropdown menu is set to 'Choose an option...'. Below the dropdown, it says 'Chris has one friend named "Brian".' and shows a profile picture of 'Brian Meenaghan', a 'Washington, DC' 'Maryland Alum '05'. There is an 'Add as Friend' button next to his profile.

ALL Social Network sites have value!

Craigslist: find cell phones for people in an apartment building by searching the “for rent” notices.

(rent OR sublet) knox call site:washingtondc.craigslist.org

Search

[Feet from UMD and a bus ride away from Metro](#)

All you need is a bed. give me a **call** at 240-315-5064 if you have any questions. Looking to **rent** it quick, I'm going out of the country in a couple of days. ...

LinkedIn: Find employees of a company; find a shadowy company that isn't properly registered; also another way to contact people when you don't have a phone

People



Blackwater

Search

Chris Taylor **FEATURED**

International Affairs & Business Executive & Graduate Student

Greater Boston Area | International Affairs

Current: Director at Harvard Defense & Security... [see more](#)

Past: **Blackwater** Worldwide; United States Marine Corps

Twitter: A cross between Facebook's Updates and AOL's instant messenger; search by name, location, or keyword (like URL, at right) and read what people are talking about.

Results 1 - 20 of 32 for "nytimes.com"

nytimes.com

search

Your search term is highlighted below.



sewell_chan

Follow

The police just shut down an art show, "The Assassination of Hillary Clinton/The Assassination of Barack Obama," <http://tinyurl.com/4vbuow>

4 days ago from web



» Many of these sites allow you to search by email address; always ask reporters if they have the email addresses of the people they are interested in finding! Use a WhoIs directory to get the email contact if the subject owns a web site or search the web for classified listings. Even out-of-date emails can reveal long-forgotten profiles.

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