



## Automating Web Monitoring

### Why automate Web monitoring?

Collecting relevant information, or Business Intelligence (BI), from Internet sources represents a major asset for those who are able to find and make use of it. Knowledge of:

- Industry developments,
- New products,
- New regulations,
- Patents,
- Invitations to tender,
- What the press, customers and bloggers say about your firm,

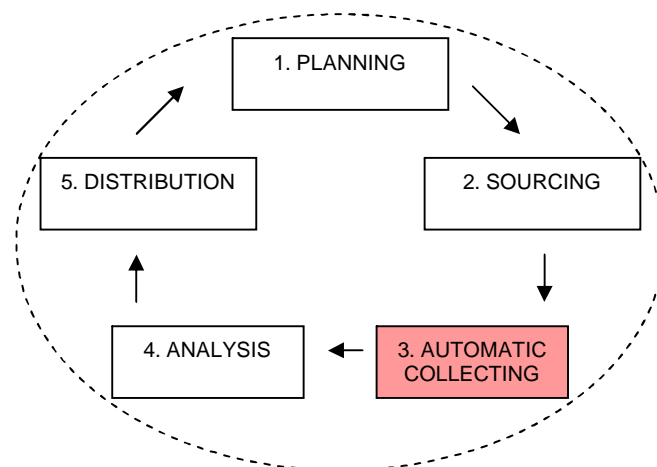
in a timely manner is a must today. To gather this information by manually visiting and re-visiting websites is very time-consuming.

According to Accenture, knowledge professionals spend around 2 hours per day gathering information from the Web. Search engines are only a limited help because the user must initiate the search and results are often irrelevant. The Gartner Group has also identified the problem of “query fatigue.”

Now, it is possible to resolve these issues by automating external website monitoring.

### Why was automatic Web monitoring developed?

The Competitive Intelligence (CI) community developed the Web Monitoring Cycle, pictured below. This has become the widely-accepted method to approach and manage this issue and is used by professional intelligence managers.



The Web monitoring cycle. Automatic harvesting of relevant information helps organisations get and keep a competitive edge.



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### Why monitor both the visible and the invisible Web?

Besides open websites, a great deal of useful information resides in sites that require registration or are buried within PDF or Word documents, Flash files, or even text within images. It is estimated that this "invisible web" may be as much as 80% of total web content.

### Who in my organisation can benefit from monitoring strategic information?

Major firms have established full-time roles such as intelligence managers. But, in most organisations, without dedicated resources, the company's traditional groups are, or should, be responsible: R&D, Marketing, Communications & PR and the Legal departments.

Today, everyone can automate their monitoring of the Web according to their interests. The table below lists a few concrete examples of Web monitoring.

Department or activity	Type of monitoring	Information to be gathered	Example websites
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Corporate Development</li> <li>- Marketing</li> <li>- Communications</li> <li>- Public Relations</li> </ul>	COMPETITION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Monitoring competitors' latest publications</li> <li>- Detecting the launching of new products</li> </ul>	competitor websites
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Legal</li> <li>- R&amp;D</li> <li>- Documentation</li> </ul>	REGULATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Detecting new regulations</li> <li>- Dealing with institutions before laws are enforced</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.fda.gov">www.fda.gov</a> <a href="http://www.europa.int.eu">www.europa.int.eu</a>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- R&amp;D</li> <li>- Documentation</li> </ul>	TECHNOLOGY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Detecting new patents issued</li> <li>- Learning about new technology</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.uspto.gov">www.uspto.gov</a> <a href="http://ep.espacenet.com">ep.espacenet.com</a> <a href="http://www.nist.gov">www.nist.gov</a>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Documentation</li> <li>- Marketing</li> <li>- General Management</li> </ul>	INDUSTRY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Keeping up-to-date with business news relating to a specific sector</li> <li>- Following up on suppliers</li> </ul>	General-interest and specialized news websites
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Communications</li> <li>- Marketing</li> </ul>	TRENDS in SOCIETY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Detecting new trends</li> <li>- Assessing the company's image</li> </ul>	blogs social networking chat rooms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Sales</li> <li>- Marketing</li> </ul>	CRM & BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Call for tenders</li> <li>- Keeping up-to-date with customer news</li> <li>- Detecting new opportunities in the press</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.mod.uk">www.mod.uk</a> <a href="http://www.cbd.gov">www.cbd.gov</a> customer websites



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### Can you give me an example of automatic Web monitoring?

Let's say you are interested in laws and regulations that affect your firm. The 5-step cycle could look something like this:

1. Plan            To monitor websites that announce new regulations.
2. Define        List relevant websites: [www.europa.eu.int](http://www.europa.eu.int) or [www.fda.gov](http://www.fda.gov)  
Choose keywords to monitor and/or changes to web pages.  
Tell KB Crawl how often you want to check your target sites.
3. Monitor      KB Crawl returns results at the desired frequency. Crawling each website usually takes just a few seconds.
4. Analyse and process the raw data collected  
  
For example, if a new European directive is proposed, a daily monitoring session can alert you by email (push). Or, you can integrate the alert into your Knowledge Management (KM) system (pull).
5. Distribute the information  
  
Circulate by email or publish the information on the company's Intranet.

### What else should I know about automatic Web monitoring?

Contrary to one-off searches usually performed with search engines, monitoring should be done on a regular basis. As time passes, you will build up a picture of interesting developments.

This is especially useful when monitoring the competition, but also benefits you when watching changing regulations, technological development and the general business climate.

Obviously not all steps described in the 5-step model can be automated. The user must still do "mission planning" and must decide what is worth finding and which sites are relevant.

KB Crawl plays an important part by handling the task of monitoring websites to detect new content. KB Crawl should be seen as the "automatic pilot," while the user is in charge of "takeoff" and "landing."



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### What's the pay-off from automatic Web monitoring?

Websites vary greatly in how often they change their content. To manually navigate all one's Bookmarks or Favorites to check for new *and* relevant content, even with site search tools, is a time-consuming and often frustrating task.

As a consequence, Internet users tend to resign themselves to manually checking just a few pages. Obviously, this behaviour runs the risk of missing vital information about opportunities and threats to the firm.

Automation significantly increases the effectiveness of Web monitoring compared to the "hit-or-miss" nature of manual monitoring. By adopting a methodical approach and using modern software tools, users are relieved of the monotony of repeatedly checking the same site.

With more time and energy to concentrate on analysis and creative work, decision-makers are assured they have a fuller picture of the business landscape.

### What should I do next?

For an assessment of your organisation's needs, contact KB Crawl SAS on +44 20 7092 6678 or [www.kbcrawl.com/en/contact.html](http://www.kbcrawl.com/en/contact.html).

### About KB Crawl

KB Crawl SAS is a European Competitive Intelligence (CI) software firm and has more than 500 clients across all industries and the public sector including the defence and security communities.

By collecting external Business Intelligence (BI) from web sources with KB Crawl, customers stay informed about the competitive landscape, opportunities and threats.

Founded in 1995, the KB group includes KB Crawl SAS which produces web monitoring software and KB Intelligence which provides custom solutions which identify, collect and process information in high value-added industries including finance.

For more information visit [www.kbcrawl.com](http://www.kbcrawl.com) .