Text REtrieval Conference (TREC)

https://trec.nist.gov

Community evaluations focused on search and related technologies

pioneered use of "pooling" for building large collections

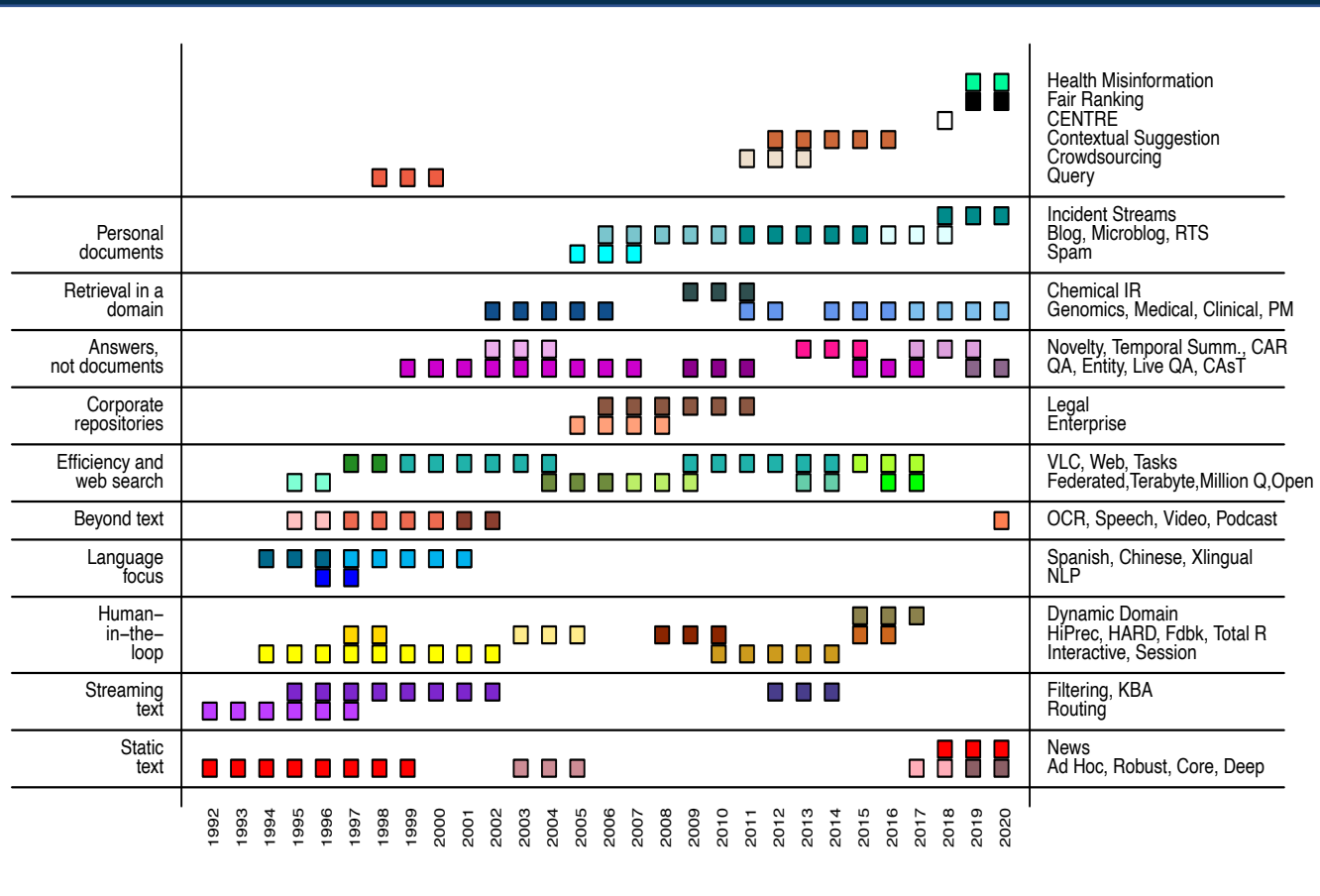built ~200 test collections for dozens of search tasks

hundreds of participant teams world-wide

premiere venue for determining research methodology

model for other efforts in IR and related fields

Answers

- Live QA (2015-2017)
  - systems produced answers for Yahoo Answers q's in real time
  - NIST assessors annotated answer quality
- Conversational Assistance (2019-)
  - systems answer series of q's that model info-seeking dialogues with digital assistants
  - progressively more realistic series in amount of anaphora, recovery from earlier errors, etc.

Machine Learning

- Deep Learning (2019-)
  - focus on methods' effectiveness when large amounts of training data available
  - ties to MS-MARCO benchmark
- TREC-COVID (2020)
  - off-cycle effort to build pandemic collection
  - highlighted differences between traditional & neural methods when varying amounts of relevance information available

Not Just Accuracy

- Fair Ranking (2019-)
  - recognize multiple stakeholders affected by document rankings
  - explicitly optimize fairness for different parties across set of rankings
- Health Misinformation (2019-)
  - penalize wrong/deceptive on-topic information more severely than off-topic
  - consumer health domain has authoritative Truth and ample misinformation for testing