



Is there an e-version?

The *Directory of Electronic Health Sciences Journals* can help you determine whether there is an electronic version of a print journal title. The database at <http://www.med.monash.edu.au/shcnlib/dehsj/> contains information on over 800 titles in clinical medicine, biomedical research, nursing, and allied health, and focuses on full-text, online versions of peer-reviewed print journals indexed in MEDLINE. Journal entries in the database provide titles, web addresses, price categories, dates for commencement of full-text access, and links to journal publishers. The database also lists some free e-journals and other full-text providers.

She'll be jake

After you have found an e-journal that interests you, use jake to find out where it is indexed online. You can also use jake to find out if you can get the full-text of either a magazine or a newspaper article online — the database includes more than 23 000 e-journal titles [<http://jake.med.yale.edu/>].

Revamped ILRS Directory

The National Library of Australia has started to redevelop the online version of the Australian Interlibrary Lending Resource Sharing Directory (ILRS) [<http://ilrs.nla.gov.au/ilrs/>]. The new ILRS Directory should be completed by the final quarter of 2000, and will look and work a little like the Australian Libraries Gateway [<http://www.nla.gov.au/libraries/>] whose framework it shares. The new directory should provide accurate information for inter-library lending and is also designed to support new inter-lending systems such as Kinetica Document Delivery [<http://www.nla.gov.au/kinetica/docdel.html>] and the Local Inter-lending and Document Delivery Administration System [<http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/LIDDAS/>]. The demo version of the new ILRS is online at <http://www.nla.gov.au/ilrsdemo/> for those who want to see how the final product might turn out. Feedback is welcome on this prototype, so have a look and send along any suggestions you have.

Reach out and touch someone...

Webhelp advertises itself as a Live Human Assisted Internet Search, so it is similar to many online reference services — you can type in questions and get answers. It claims to produce relevant, personalised results, and it is free, so it might be one to try next time you get a knotty one. They should lose the Flash intro if they want to attract business — who has time to waste when the search is on? [<http://www.webhelp.com>]

...preferably a librarian

Whether Webhelp will be as good as any of the web-based 'Ask a librarian' services is moot. Certainly, many of the really useful sites and tools that I use frequently have been built by librarians. A new one comes from Pat Ensor who has created a tool kit for the 'expert web searcher' on the Library and Information Technology Association's site [<http://www.lita.org/committe/toptech/toolkit.htm>]. It is divided into sections and there are tips for when you would use each different kind of tool. Each sectional list is manageable — it is not trying to be exhaustive. What you get is the best of the bunch — best search engines, best subject lists, best multimedia searchers, and so on. There is also a selection of sites for search news.

Awards night

If you love a particular web-site and would like to see it honoured, nominate it for an *Australian Financial Review* Australian Internet Award. The 2000 competition is now open for business at <http://www.webawards.com.au/>. It will cost you though — the site now expects nominees to stump up A\$49 for the honour of inclusion. This seems a bit steep — presumably the GST component does not help. The site provides everything you need to know about the Awards, including categories for entries (sixteen to choose from), deadlines and the competition's rules. Nominations must be received by 5:00 pm EST, Friday 4 August. You can send any questions you might have about the Awards via e-mail to enquiries@webawards.com.au.

Pricing research out of the library market?

Create Change, a site which seeks to address what it calls the 'present crisis in scholarly communication', is presented from two points of view — that of a librarian and that of an academic. It identifies the chief issue as the 'dramatic increases in journal costs and the increasing commercialisation of scholarly publishing', and seeks to provide tools, resources and an advocacy kit for anyone who wants to take action on the issue. It is sponsored by American Research Libraries among others [<http://www.arl.org/create/home.html>]. The statistics are certainly disturbing. Year after year, the site claims, American libraries are reducing their journal and monograph collections, even though the production of scholarly information is growing exponentially. Prices of scholarly publications — especially in science, technology and medicine — have skyrocketed. The average North American research library has had to cut journal acquisitions by more than six per cent since 1986, and book acquisi-

Weavers web



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tions have been cut by twenty-six per cent. One projection suggests that by 2015, the average academic research library will have had to cancel another seventeen per cent of its journals and cut back in other areas to keep up with inflating prices. If the United States economy worsens, the percentage cut for the average research library could be as high as forty-five per cent. If you would like to know more about the process of digital scholarly publishing, there is a useful article from the *Journal of Electronic Publishing* at <http://www.press.umich.edu/jep/05-04/sheridan.html>. The article, by Linda Beebe and Barbara Meyers, is called 'Digital workflow: Managing the process electronically'.

Enabling technology

Adaptive technology for the internet — Making electronic resources accessible is a complete web version of the 1999 book of the same name by Barbara Mates, an American librarian who has had to grapple with a raft of accessibility issues for vision and hearing impaired Net users. The American Library Association has made the full-text accessible at http://www.ala.org/editions/openstacks/insidethecovers/mates/mates_toc.html. The appendices will also be useful as sources of further information on manufacturers and vendors, other accessibility sites and libraries that are using this technology. Get everything you need to know about Braille or large print screens, hearing assistance devices, and how to code your Web pages to maximise accessibility.

Speaking of Braille, HotBraille <http://www.hotbraille.com/> can provide you with a web-based Braille transcribing service. You can see your own name in Braille or send letters to others.

Part of the landscape now

You may not like it, but you will probably need to bookmark the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's GST page at <http://gst.accc.gov.au/index.cfm>. It is one you users will need to know about even if you would rather not. Find out which prices will change and which will not. There is also a pricing kit for small businesses. The information on the site is available in a number of languages.

They're everywhere

Publisher's Catalogues is a tool for finding publishers' web-sites. You can browse by geographic location, by subject or by the type of material, for example multimedia, audio, comic books. You can also search for a publisher by name. The listing includes

about 6000 publishers, mainly located in the United States, but it includes almost 200 Australian publishers and provides links to their web-sites. A useful tool for librarians who want a good, quick listing [<http://www.lights.com/publisher/>].

Only on the web

LexicalFreeNet is the kind of service that web technology makes possible — it offers more than a thesaurus, but without the fiddly to-and-froing. Among other things — and the site offers quite a lot — it allows you to track relationships between words, find rhymes for them, find words spelled similarly, find words as sub-strings of other words and trace connections between concepts, words and people [<http://www.lexfn.com/>].

Oz stats

There is been a lot going on at the Australian Bureau of Statistics recently. Their list of publications is now fully searchable online. *Australia Now* — a statistical profile provides an online version of what would appear in paper form as *Year Book Australia*. They have also launched AusStats at <http://www.abs.gov.au/>. This new services makes many publications, including time series data, basic community profiles from the 1996 census, spreadsheets and data sets, accessible via the web for the first time. Non-subscribers will have to pay per item — costs appear on-screen when items are selected. Many publications can be downloaded in portable document format, so you will need Adobe Acrobat to read them. The United Kingdom has also gone down the web-accessible road with a revamp of their official statistics site at <http://www.statistics.gov.uk/>. This is the place for national United Kingdom statistics.

Busy bees

The International Monetary Fund has a new project which aims to improve the provision of country information over the web. Certainly, timeliness of data is important — who wants to look at outdated information? The new project, entitled the General Data Dissemination System, will help countries provide 'comprehensive, timely, accessible, and reliable economic, financial, and socio-demographic data.' Sounds like every librarian's dream. You can search for data by country or by subject. Only a few countries are represented in the GDDS as yet — among them Fiji, Kuwait, Albania and the Ivory Coast, but other country data can be accessed via the Country Info links provided [<http://dsbb.imf.org/gddsindex.htm>]. ■

This column
[with URL links]
can be found at:



<http://www.alia.org.au/incite>

Contributions and suggestions for this column are always welcome. Please contact Belinda Weaver via e-mail.

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