



## Web Sitings

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### On-line full-text Web journal database update

As database vendors, content providers and journal publishers vie to provide integrated quality content, there have been interesting developments recently in the pricing and access to abstracting, citation, bibliographic and full-text on-line journal databases available on the Web. Various models of access reflect varying approaches and attitudes of database producers, vendors and on-line journal publishers.

PubMed (<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/entrez/query.fcgi>), a service of the US National Library of Medicine, is a search tool for accessing literature citations and linking to full-text journals at Web sites of participating publishers. It provides access to citations from MEDLINE and includes links to many sites providing full-text articles. User registration, a subscription fee, or some other type of fee may be required to access the full-text of articles in some journals but some are available freely, as is PubMed. Similarly, PubMed Central (<http://pubmedcentral.nih.gov>), a Web-based archive of journal literature for all of the life sciences developed by the National Center for Biotechnology Information (NCBI) at the US NLM, permits free and unrestricted access. Although PubMed's primary role is as an archive, it aims at providing the value of a common search format to a body of full-text literature in a single repository. Journals may elect to make material available at publication date or may delay release in PMC until a specified time after publication. Journals providing free access to research articles include the valuable *British Medical Journal* and the *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*.

The American Psychological Association (<http://www.apa.org/psycinfo/products>) has introduced a site-licence model for its PsycINFO database and the option of searching PsycInfo Direct on-line for \$9.95 a day. With over 1.7 million records, PsycInfo is the definitive abstracts database for psychology essential for psychology departments. PsycINFO has introduced a tiered site lease model of pricing which is based on overall user numbers in institutions. Although this means more affordable rates for smaller institutions in the USA, it has been criticized by universities which were forced into a higher charge bracket and which claim that since only a small percentage of total students use PsycInfo they are paying unnecessarily for students in faculties such as science and engineering. PsycInfo is available within this model from either local or vendor-based site access.

Vendors of citation and full-text databases such as EBSCO, HW Wilson, Gale Group, ProQuest, Dialog and SIRS continue to use a subscription model of either an annual fee for unlimited access or access by a specified number of simultaneous users. Dialog also offers a pay-per-article option. Northern Light (<http://www.northernlight.com>) and Electric Library (<http://www.elibrary.com>) also offer combinations of subscriptions and pay-per-article in a pricing model which includes advertising. Document delivery services such as UnCover or British Library's Inside offer a range of pricing options, including pay-per-article rates.

What are the implications for the South African Information Manager who is trying to stretch undervalued rands into a budget for 2001? If joining a consortium such as Gaelic is not warranted, careful comparisons must be made between products available. Since the same database might be available from different vendors or directly from the producer, a useful approach is to target important journals and determine which databases provide full-text, abstracting or citation indexing of the targeted journals and further to estimate what proportion of full-text needs can be met by document delivery services on a pay-per-article basis. It is essential to trial databases to compare ease of searching and search interface, indexing sophistication and overall suitability.

To facilitate this process, I have selected a few sites, which will be useful to South African Information Managers researching bibliographic and full-text database options.

CD-ROM Information <http://www.cdrom.co.za/>

CD-ROM Information (CDR) represents over 40 international suppliers of database products in southern Africa, in both CD-ROM and on-line format. The site provides a directory of electronic products by subject, listing databases and linking to suppliers of the products CDR represents, including SilverPlatter, ProQuest, Gale Group, Wilson, OVID and CIS/Lexis-Nexis. CDR is also the South African agent for the British Library's Inside document delivery service. Since the range of products is extensive, the site provides an excellent introduction as well as subscription contact.

SABINET On-line <http://www.sabinet.co.za>

SABINET On-line offers library support as well as information access products. A wide range of South African databases include SA Citations, Index to South African Periodicals (ISAP), SA Gazettes, Bill Tracker, SA Tenders, SA News, SA Legal and SA Engineering. International databases include FirstSearch from OCLC, Dialog @Site and UnCover. The site provides useful product information, listserves, industry news and product demonstrations.

Ebsco South Africa <http://www.ebsco.com/ess/global/sa.stm>

This refers to Ebsco Information Services African regional office. The site provides South African contact information, local news and conference information. Links to EBSCO's homepage provide details of EBSCO's full-text periodical database products available on the Web through EBSCOhost <http://www.epnet.com/database.html> including EBSCO's Academic Abstracts and Academic Search Elite.

Dialog South Africa [http://dialog.com/info/home/south\\_africa](http://dialog.com/info/home/south_africa)

Dialog is represented in South Africa by Metropolis. Dialog South Africa offers the full range of Dialog products. The site provides local contact information and links to full information on Dialog databases.

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