Electronic document delivery seminar at IO & OD 95

Jim Coleman from RLG and Martha Whittaker from UnCover have been two of the pioneers in document delivery over the Internet, and they'll be speakers at a seminar on electronic document delivery to be held in conjunction with the Information Online and On Disc 95 Conference in January. The seminar will focus on technical aspects of document delivery, and will also feature Tony Barry from ANU and Sue Orchard from UMI. It will run from 1–5 pm on Monday 30 January and the registration fee is $80.

Enquiries to Kerry Webb at k.webb@nla.gov.au or phone (06) 2621535.

NLA information — at your service

The National Library installed a pilot Web server early in 1994, and has recently formalised the project as the NLA Information Server. It provides national and international access over the Internet to information produced by the NLA and to information held by others which is required by NLA staff and clients.

Its primary purpose is to publish information about the Library, its collections and services, but there is also information about Australia and Australians, and matters of special interest to Australian libraries. There are pages relating to the NLA's coordination activities, such as the DNC, the NPO and ACLIS, and pointers to various services, directories and guides to the Internet.

The server is being used to disseminate important Australian government publications on the Net. The government's cultural statement *Creative nation* was put on the server shortly after its launch, and other documents include the ASTEC report *Networked nation*

Kerry Webb about to embark on a journey down the information superhighway during Library Week celebrations at the National Office
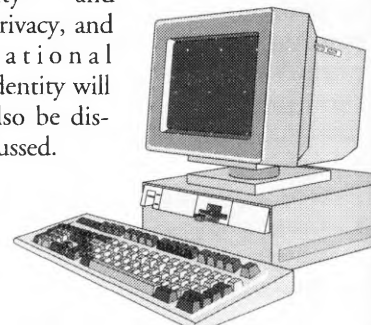
and the interim report of the Broadband Services Expert Group. There is also an extensive list of pointers to documents on these topics produced in other countries. One important feature will be a Lynx public access Web client, which allows users character mode access to the Web by telnetting to the server.

The URL for the NLA Information Server is http://www.nla.gov.au and to access the Lynx client, telnet to www.nla.gov.au and enter nlaweb for the login and password. For further information contact Diana Dack at ddack@nla.gov.au.

The global network

There is a growing awareness of the global impact of the Internet — now we can do something about it.

CPSR-GLOBAL is a moderated Listserv for uniting people all over the world who want to discuss the decisions made in the USA about the national information infrastructure (NII) that will affect the rest of the world, making it an effective GII (global information infrastructure). Computer developments in language processing, international security and privacy, and national identity will also be discussed.

A path to CD-ROM searching

Introductory CD-ROM searching: the key to effective on-disc searching is a very useful introductory book for people wanting to search CD-ROM databases. Written by Joseph Meloche, it is organised into two parts — the first 45 pages providing an introduction to CD-ROMs in general, basic searching techniques and microcomputers, and the rest describing specific text-based CD-ROM products with detailed information on how to search them.

In the first part, each of the four chapters takes the reader easily through the concepts and ends with a summary of the chapter and a series of review questions, designed to ensure that the diligent reader has understood what has been explained.

The second part explores eight products which are of particular interest in libraries — DIALOG, SilverPlatter, WILSONDISC, UMI, Compact Cambridge, AUSTROM, Grolier Encyclopedia and ISI Citation Indexes.

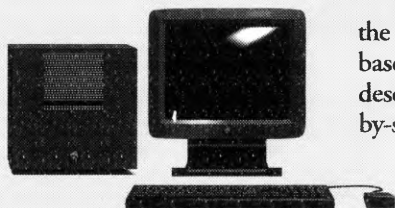For each product, the content of the database and its origin is described, with step-by-step instructions on searching. This is the most useful part of the book as it not only provides instruction but also comparison of the various products.

Appendices comprise a glossary and a list of major CD-ROM products arranged by subject area.

Although it may be considered out of place in such a basic book, some explanation of the various search engines used in the products would complete the coverage of the topic and help guide users familiar with one product to try another which they could use easily.

However, that is a minor quibble with what is overall a very good book on the subject. From Haworth Press, RRP $39.95.

Kerry Webb

It is a moderated list, which means that any posts which are not 'on topic' or inflammatory will be filtered out. To join this discussion write to listserv@cpsr.org with a blank subject and the e-mail command SUBSCRIBE CPSR-GLOBAL firstname lastname where firstname and lastname are replaced by your first name and last name.

Similar matters will be the subject of the Seventh Annual MacBride Round Table, from 16 March in Tunis, organised by the Tunisian Association of Communication (ATUCOM), with the central theme being the implications for Africa of the global information superhighway.

Enquiries about the Round Table should be sent to Dr Richard C Vincent, School of Communications, Dublin City University, at 76002551@vax1.dcu.ie.

US elections on the Net

The US mid-term elections were held on 8 November, and for the first time, the Internet was used as a means of disseminating information about the election, about the candidates, and most importantly, about the results. While many servers throughout the country provided lots of information, the prize must surely go the to Californian Web server at http://www.election.ca.gov.

It may not be running by the time this issue of *inCite* hits the streets, but it was a great example of what can be done. Data was provided on all election races (senator, congressmen, governor, insurance commissioner) and also the propositions (referenda) put to the electors. On election day, the results were loaded onto the server as they were received. The service was so popular that most people had great trouble getting connected. Results were shown as percentages, bar charts, and best of all, colour-coded maps showing which way each county in the State had voted on all issues. Very impressive indeed.

More about getting connected

On pages 5-7 of the September 1994 issue of *Online currents*, there is a good summary of how to get an Internet connection through APANA, using a SLIP, UUCP or dial-up connection.

SLIP gives you a direct connection to the Internet, similar to what someone on a LAN in a university

would have. All Internet facilities are available — mail, news, telnet, World Wide Web access, and it is possible to let the Net have access to your system (if you so choose!). SLIP is complicated to set up, but offers a lot of services.

UUCP provides e-mail and news group access only. Dial-up lets you connect to a public access computer provided by APANA, which then has facilities for mail, telnet, ftp, news and so on. Your computer is not directly connected to the Net, but you can use most of its services.

Business on the Net

There are many signs that the private sector is not only acknowledging the presence of the Internet, but is actively exploiting it. A recent publication, *Internet business advantage* is pitched at the commercial user. Its premier issue reports on CommerceNet (based in Silicon Valley, California) and also addresses security, online government information, business sites on the Web, and a fair amount of general information.

One feature that all Net users will appreciate is a list of Do's and Don'ts for advertisers, including 'avoid hype', 'don't send ads to mailing lists or news-groups not relevant to the product', and 'do offer something free to respondents'. Good suggestions!

Dotted throughout the issue are small sidebars (the 'Help-desk' feature) explaining concepts as they are mentioned. This information is repeated in a glossary at the end of the magazine.

For subscription information, contact success@wentworth.com.

New products

Just when you thought you'd mastered Mosaic, along comes something better. It's another Web browser, similar in function to Mosaic, but with better features. It's easier to use (it appears that it was written for 'real people' and not programmers) and easy to customise.

Versions are available for Windows, Macintosh and Unix systems. There's a free version provided now, and it's said that commercial versions will be offered in the future. To find out more about Netscape (including ftp instructions) the URL is http://home.mcom.com.

The challenges of superhighway planning

The *Wall Street Journal* reported in October that a recent poll shows the interactive services market may not be quite what some people expect it to be. Only 40 per cent of those questioned were interested in ordering movies-on-demand or sports events, and only 33 per cent wanted interactive shopping. On the other hand, 63 per cent said they would want health-care information, lists of government services, a phone directory, and product reviews. Almost 75 per cent wanted a customised news report, and about 50 per cent wanted e-mail.

ALIA on the Net

Watch for big news about ALIA's own Internet connection in the next *inCite*.