



Weavers web



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Good search tools just keep on coming. Xrefer is a tool tailor-made for librarians; it searches across a range of online reference 'books' from such publishers as Bloomsbury, Macmillan, Oxford University Press, and Penguin. Searchable works include encyclopaedias, dictionaries, thesauri, and books of quotations, as well as some subject-specific works, for example medicine. These include the Oxford dictionaries of art and of quotations, the Penguin dictionaries of psychology and of sociology, *Grove's Concise Dictionary of Music* and several others. It all makes that job of online checking just that little bit faster and easier. Try it yourself at <http://www.xrefer.com/>.

Other voices

NewPages Online, subtitled 'Alternatives in print and electronic media', focuses on the work of smaller, independent publishers. You can find links here for independent publishers and bookshops, alternative newsweeklies and literary periodicals (many of which provide full-text online articles) and to the book reviews sections of many online journals and newspapers. The web section is a neat, concise guide to tools available for general searching or to find reference information on the Net. You can also visit the Resource Library to track down other alternative media sites on the Web [<http://www.newpages.com/>].

As it happens

A new site from the United States government allows you to search and retrieve the full-text of a range of United States government periodicals hosted on the net. Not all web-based journals are here yet, but the site will be updated with new additions as they are processed. Each title is searchable by subject or by title, or by the mysteriously-named Sudoc number. The site also provides links to other sources of government periodicals, including the Index to military periodicals, and the Magazines of the Armed Forces [<http://198.252.9.95/home/govper.html>].

Patently overwhelming

The British Library's Science, Technology and Business (STB) section has published a guide to patent and intellectual property information resources on the internet, and a pretty enormous one it is too. This may be the only patent site you will ever need as it provides a huge directory (with links) of sources. The directory is broken up into sections such as gateway sites, online hosts, patent and trademark databases, design databases, classification systems, legislation,

and so on and each section seems mind-numbingly comprehensive. A terrific effort [<http://www.bl.uk/services/stb/etalmenu.html>].

Previews of coming attractions

The Oxford University Press Reading Room gives librarians the chance to see sample chapters and extracts from a wide range of OUP new publications before committing themselves to buy. There are several reading rooms available, broken up by subject, for example biochemistry, classical studies, business, philosophy and law. Extracts and chapters are posted in PDF so you will need Adobe Acrobat software to read them. Chapters are linked to the OUP online catalogue so you can get the full bibliographic details for anything that captures your fancy. A nice-looking site that is only too easy to navigate [<http://www.oup.co.uk/readingroom/>].

Finding PDFs

Adobe has launched a new search tool to help users locate PDF files on the Web. Why would you bother? Well, it can be a handy way to track down published materials on a topic, as people tend to use the PDF format for more formal publishing. Many government reports or information packs are published this way, as are annual reports of large organisations and other useful materials. By limiting your results to PDF files only, you can eliminate a lot of junk in search returns and get straight to the meaty stuff. I have often used HotBot [<http://www.hotbot.com/>] and limited my search to PDF files, but now Adobe can do it too. They claim to have a million report summaries in their database. Summaries can be viewed before you opt to view the original document [<http://searchpdf.adobe.com/>].

Rebadged service

Her Majesty's Stationery Office has launched a new United Kingdom government portal called ukstate.com. It offers a range of resources on the United Kingdom government and links through to legislation, publications, and other information and services as well as to HMSO itself [<http://www.ukstate.com/portal.asp>]. Another handy launch is the new United Kingdom MPs Network. Though still in the early stages, this will end up as a searchable (and very useful) database of information on all United Kingdom Members of Parliament. In coming months, information on Scottish and European Members of Parliament and on the Members of the Welsh Assembly will be added to the database as well [<http://194.128.65.140/>].

Out of Africa

The Electronic African Bookworm is a new web guide to internet sites on Africa, African and development studies, African publishing and the book trade. It provides links to African journals and newspapers. The site has been designed with writers and academics in mind, so it will be a useful resource for librarians too. You can use the site to get to the web sites of both African libraries and selected Africana libraries in other countries. The site also provides access to annotated listings of major publishers with African studies lists [<http://www.hanszell.co.uk/navtitle.htm>].

Corroboree 2000

The Corroboree 2000 site comes from the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation and describes events and activities that took place across Australia during National Reconciliation Week. The site is a gateway to other resources such as the Roadmap for Reconciliation and to speeches and media releases on the topic. A useful starting point for anyone studying reconciliation as it provides background and context as well as coverage of current and future events [<http://www.reconciliation.org.au/>].

NASDAQ overload

The NASDAQ Newsroom is the place for all those people (and I am sure there are many) who have wondered about this constant fixture in our evening news and daily headlines. All about NASDAQ explains what the NASDAQ actually is, and the indexes and statistics section gives both daily and historical statistics. Get on top of it all at <http://www.nasdaqnews.com/>.

Hard work central

They just can not help themselves at the United States National Institutes of Health. Do they have a dare to do something new every single month? Who knows? It is terrific news for librarians anyway. BioMed Central, <http://www.biomedcentral.com/>, is still in the testing phase, but aims to publish (for free) new, as yet unpublished, peer-reviewed biological science and clinical medical research. So it is a pre-print service of a kind, except that it plans to do more than just publish; it plans to help scientists network and communicate with each other. The site also plans to publish reviews by experts, and to maintain specialist databases set up by contributors. If it is hot off the press, or still in press (and taking ages to emerge), then BioMed Central may be the place to track it down.

Get your library

The National Library of Canada has recently launched the Canadian Libraries Gateway to facilitate access to all its libraries, large or small. You can find libraries by name, region or type. If it is national union catalogues you are after or simply inter-library loan policies for particular places, then these links are available separately. The site is very simply laid out and easy to use, in both French and English [<http://www.nlc-bnc.ca/gatepasse/>].

Your new best friend?

With all the talk in the media lately about identity theft and the scares about massive databases being built of our online searching and shopping habits, IDcide's Privacy Companion may be a timely tool to put on your system. This is a free browser plug-in (currently only available for Internet Explorer browsers, v.4.0/5.0) that alerts you when you are being watched by tracking networks, for example, online shopping sites which seek to record your actions or preferences online. The plug-in enables you to block the cookies these networks use, thus protecting your online privacy. A version for Netscape is in the works <http://www.idcide.com/>.

A world of pictures

The United Nations' Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization (UNESCO) has put its Photobank online at <http://www2.unesco.org/photobank/>. This collection of photographs and slides covers a wide range of subjects related to the Organization's work in education, science, culture and communication. There are multiple ways into the collection. You can search by region, country, place, theme, subject, keyword, year or photographer. The collection was started in 1946 and currently contains more than 10 000 digitised images. More will be added. You can e-mail Photobank if you want to reproduce any of the images in publications.

In short

All That JAS is a handy site for tracking down those pesky journal abbreviations — the ones that aren't in the source you already have. The site points to Web resources that list or provide access to the full title of journal abbreviations in a range of disciplines, such as agriculture, economics, mathematics, or physics. The site also links to selected OPACs that offer abbreviated title searching [<http://www.public.iastate.edu/~CYBERSTACKS/JAS.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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