

## Contents

<b>Editorial</b>	<b>1</b>
By William Hann	
<b>Jinfo :: Jobs in information</b>	<b>2</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Records Manager</li> <li>• Information Scientist</li> <li>• Business Researcher (with European language)</li> </ul>	
<b>My Favourite Tipples</b>	<b>4</b>
From Kim Dammers	
<b>Tips Article</b>	<b>5</b>
"Quality assuring health information resources"	
By Carolyn Eager	
<b>Bookshelf</b>	<b>7</b>
"Information Auditing - A Guide for Information Managers"	
Reviewed by Martin White	
<b>Feature Article</b>	<b>8</b>
"Trends in business information, provision and use"	
By Pam Foster	
<b>Events and Gold Forthcoming Articles</b>	
<b>Contact Information</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>HTML Version</b>	
< <a href="http://www.freepint.com/issues/070405.htm">http://www.freepint.com/issues/070405.htm</a> >	
<b>Fully Formatted Acrobat Version</b>	
< <a href="http://www.freepint.com/issues/070405.pdf">http://www.freepint.com/issues/070405.pdf</a> >	

## About FreePint

FreePint is an online network of information searchers. Members receive this free newsletter twice a month: it is packed with tips on finding quality and reliable business information on the Internet.

Joining is free at <<http://www.freepint.com/>> and provides access to a substantial archive of articles, reviews, jobs and events, with answers to research questions and networking at the FreePint Bar.

Please circulate this newsletter, which is best read when printed out. To receive a fully-formatted version as an attachment or a brief notification when it's online, visit <<http://www.freepint.com/subs/>>.

## Editorial

I spoke in the last FreePint about the tremendous energy there is in the information profession <<http://www.freepint.com/go/n179>>. It's fabulous to work in an industry where the primary aim is to help other people locate and use good quality information.



However, a common misconception outside the information industry is that the profession purely helps people find free information that they could easily find themselves, given enough time. Most people's experience of 'information research' is visiting their local library or searching Google.

The educational element of information work is indeed crucial, as we help people evaluate resources. We have an article in today's FreePint about evaluating Web sites -- yes, the title mentions health information resources, but the twenty-point checklist will help you evaluate Web sites for any topic.

By definition, however, there can't be an 'information industry' based solely around free information resources. Something has to be produced and sold; there has to be a commercial proposition. Paid-for information content takes many forms, and in today's second article we look at the latest trends in business information.

At best, therefore, the information content industry is 'cloudy'. Take FreePint, for example -- it sits on both the 'free' and 'paid-for' sides of the fence.

On the 'free' side we've now published over a million words in the FreePint newsletter alone, and emailed over six and a half million copies of the newsletter. On the 'paid-for' side we're selling reviews of business information products through VIP, and reports on information management topics, like the one which is reviewed here today. Somewhere in the middle of these extremes lies advertising and sponsorship, and the benefits of cross-promotion of other sites within the network.

Many information people talk about 'free versus fee information' -- that one side is pitted against the other. I strongly believe that the most exciting things happen when you mix together \*three\* elements of 'information' -- free, paid-for and promotion. Everyone benefits when there's a judicious mix of all of these elements. Ignore any one of them and the magic is lost.

If you have a comment on how best to blend together elements of the 'information mix', then please post them to the Bar <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b31805>> or why not write an article about your experience for FreePint? <<http://www.freepint.com/author.htm>>.

Best regards

William Hann  
Founder and Managing Editor, FreePint

e: [william.hann@freepint.com](mailto:william.hann@freepint.com)  
t: 0870 141 7474  
i: +44 870 141 7474

Free Pint is a Registered Trademark of  
Free Pint Limited © 1997-2005

**Jinfo** -- the best place for information-related job vacancies.

- **JOB SEARCHING** -- Free search and sign up to the Jinfo Newsletter.
- **RECRUITING** -- Complete the form and advertise a vacancy for only GBP195 <<http://www.jinfo.com/recruit/>>.

50% discount for registered charities. 10% discount for agencies.

Find out more today at <http://www.jinfo.com/>

## Jinfo :: Jobs in information

<<http://www.jinfo.com/>>

Jinfo is a database of information-related job vacancies.

The Jinfo Newsletter is published free every two weeks, and contains a list of the latest vacancies along with job seeking advice. The latest editorial is entitled "Do You Have any Questions?".

To read the latest Jinfo Newsletter and to subscribe to receive it twice-monthly by email, visit <<http://www.jinfo.com/newsletter/>>.

Here are some of the latest featured jobs:

### Records Manager

<<http://www.freepint.com/go/j3872>>

Become the Records Manager at a local council in the Midlands - good salary on offer.

Recruiter: Sue Hill Recruitment

### Information Scientist

<<http://www.freepint.com/go/j3941>>

Celltech/UCB Pharma are looking for an experienced Information Scientist to support the work of our dedicated research team.

Recruiter: UCB

### Business Researcher (with European language)

<<http://www.freepint.com/go/j3949>>

Excellent opportunity for a very bright Researcher with fluency in a second European language and online database skills.

Recruiter: Glen Recruitment

[The above jobs are paid listings]

NB: There are 23 other jobs in the current edition of the Jinfo Newsletter

<<http://www.jinfo.com/newsletter/>> and over 70 in the Jinfo database <<http://www.jinfo.com/>>.

## VIP No.16: Three M&A products compared

The current VIP includes in-depth reviews of ZEPHYR (M&A, IPO and venture capital deals) and Thomson ONE for Investment Banking (Deals Module), and compares them with CorpfinWorldwide (reviewed previously).

<<http://www.vivavip.com/>>

## VIP Wire :: Free current-awareness tool

The VIP Wire is \*the\* place to search and post announcements and press releases about business information products and services.

Subscribe to the free weekly 'Wire Digest' and receive news of the latest postings automatically by email.

<<http://www.vivaVIP.com/>>

## Library + information Show, 20-21 April 2005, NEC, Birmingham

PRE-REGISTER TO VISIT FREE AT:

<<http://www.lishow.co.uk/promo/freepintn2>>

With so many new exhibitors, a new venue, and an even more comprehensive seminar programme than previous years, LiS is a must attend event for library + information professionals across the workplace, public, school, and academic sectors from around the UK.

## With unmatched global coverage from 32,000 sources, LexisNexis KYC

can protect your business by identifying high risk customers with negative news, company reports, biographies, international sanctions lists and PEP data. LexisNexis enables you to carry out investigations quickly and comprehensively so you can truly 'Know Your Customer'. Providing online legal, tax, regulatory and news and business content, LexisNexis is your indispensable information partner. For further details, please email [response@lexisnexis.co.uk](mailto:response@lexisnexis.co.uk) quoting KYC.

## "Complying with Freedom of Information legislation: a guide for practitioners"

This report is written for practitioners in jobs focused on, or in roles influenced by, freedom of information legislation.

"Interesting and informative. I would and have recommended the publication to colleagues."

<<http://www.freepint.com/shop/report/>>

## Introducing MINT - a fresh approach to company information from Bureau van Dijk Electronic Publishing

To register for a FREE trial visit

<<http://www.mintbusinessinfo.com>>

Companies, news, industry research and directors in a single easy to use information database for research, sales, marketing and business development professionals.

## Email newsletter publication using Willco

Willco provides behind-the-scenes distribution of email newsletters for many publishers and online communities.

Willco saves you time by automatically managing subscriptions, welcome emails, distribution and bounces.

Find out more about the Willco system and read testimonials: <<http://www.Willco.com/>>

*Dive Deeper  
into our content...*

*FREE 1 week trial!*



[www.lexis-nexis.co.uk](http://www.lexis-nexis.co.uk)

- **Worldwide News**
- **Country Research • National Press Coverage**
- **Company Information • Biographical Information**
- **Trade Magazines & Market Research Data**

Here's an opportunity for you to try our service, a service that delivers real depth of information. You can also look at subjects in great detail.

...So for a **FREE 1 week trial**, call us on: **+44 (0) 20 7347 3588**

Alternatively email as at: **[response@lexisnexus.co.uk](mailto:response@lexisnexus.co.uk)**



**LexisNexis<sup>®</sup>**

Butterworths

### Sign up to Factiva's Newsletter

Keep up to date on Factiva and information industry trends by signing up for the free InfoPro Alliance newsletter. This monthly email will provide you with tips on how to better use Factiva, more information about Factiva sources, and link you to other items of interest to global information professionals.

Go to <<http://www.factiva.com/infopro/register>> and sign up today!

*Kim Dammers is the translator for the Web pages of the Goettingen State and University Library where great sites are listed under many links <<http://www.sub.uni-goettingen.de/index-e.html>>.*

*Submit your top five favourite Web sites. See the guidelines at <<http://www.freepint.com/author.htm>>.*

### My Favourite Tipples

by Kim Dammers

- "Let the Net Work" <<http://www.letthenetwork.de>> is a German-language portal to lists and specialized search engines arranged hierarchically.
- "Wer Weiss Was" <<http://www.werweisswas.de>> is the German counterpart to the recently suggested 'AnswerBank' in Britain. It's a fun and conscientious group.
- KVK <<http://www.ubka.uni-karlsruhe.de/hylib/en/kvk.html>> is a great tool for searching in hundreds of library catalogues world-wide simultaneously. There is an English GUI.
- \* CIA: The World Factbook <<http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/>> The CIA has the goods on every country in the world. Here is everything from maps to economics and languages and religion and beyond.
- Library Humour (definitely NOT German): <<http://www.ifla.org/1/humour/humour.htm>>

### Why do YOU use DigBig?

<<http://www.DigBig.com/>>

"Preparing a current awareness bulletin is time consuming; being able to use DigBig to shorten URLs is great, to have it automatically copied to the clipboard, so I can just paste, definitely represents added value. Thankyou."  
Librarian (Feb 2005)

### Why do YOU use DigBig?

"Extremely useful when sending links to clients - looks very professional." Research Manager, Manchester, UK

Use DigBig to shorten your long URLs, making them easier to communicate:

<<http://www.DigBig.com/>>

### FreePint Bar

**In Association with Factiva  
a Dow Jones & Reuters Company**

A very mixed bag of postings at the Bar over the last couple of weeks. Here's a selection of the unanswered ones.

The old 'building a library catalogue in Access' chestnut has cropped up again <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b31770>>. There seems little good reason to want to do this from scratch.

Can you give advice on getting good search engine rankings for a person's name, when they're now trading as a company? <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b31773>>. Is there comprehensive information on how "international/US/Australian law is reacting to e-Commerce and jurisdictional issues"? <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b31772>>. Does anyone use 'Yahoo 360' and know if it offers posting categorisation? <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b31755>>.

Any good free Websites with economic information to test a new search engine? <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b31744>>. Can any Sage experts help with a specific problem? <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b31745>>.

The latest Jinfo Newsletter has some great suggestions of things to clarify in an interview when asked 'Do you have any questions?', and some things not to ask <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b31768>>. The latest issue of the excellent Internet Resources Newsletter is now online <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b31764>>. A free sample of VIP Eye from March 2005 shows the new "Editor's Comment" section <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b31717>>.

Finally, a couple of miscellaneous items: is there an index of job titles in engineering? <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b31786>>; is there an annual survey of university publications? <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b31718>>.

Don't forget to sign up for the Bar Digest if you aren't one of the 14,000 FreePinters who receive it by email twice-weekly. You can subscribe at <<http://www.freepint.com/subs/>>.

William Hann <[william.hann@freepint.com](mailto:william.hann@freepint.com)>  
Managing Editor, FreePint

*The FreePint Bar is where you can get free help with your tricky research questions*  
<<http://www.freepint.com/bar>>

*Twice-weekly email digests of the latest postings can be requested at*  
<<http://www.freepint.com/subs/>>.



## Tips Article

### "Quality assuring health information resources"

By Carolyn Eager

*Carolyn Eager works as a Health Information Officer for NHS 24. NHS 24 is the nurse triage and health information service for Scotland. During working hours Carolyn manages the presentation of information to nurses, call handlers and health information advisors, trains staff on information skills, quality assures websites, edits a weekly bulletin and still finds time to help on a major project to procure a Knowledge Management System. Out of hours Carolyn goes on cycle rides, plays games and reads stories with her 3 year-old daughter.*

#### Introduction

We all read FreePint because we know that it highlights some of the quality resources out there on the Internet. This is a good way of finding useful websites but some of us need a more structured approach to make sure that the websites we use are reliable sources of information and knowledge. We need to know how to sort out the good from the bad and the ugly for ourselves. In my organisation, we needed a list of the websites containing health information to read out to callers or to send to members of the public. In the course of your work you may need to compile a list of links for your website, or recommend resources to users; you may want to use a piece of information found on a website in a report or paper, or to answer an enquiry. In all these cases we need to assess the information to make sure it is of good quality.

#### Why do we need quality-assured websites?

We need information that is reliable and will uphold the reputation of our organisations. We can't rely on Google to find good information quickly. Google, as we know, is great but it doesn't filter out the bad or wrong stuff. Under the pressure of an enquiry, it's hard enough to find the right subject, never mind then trying to decide if the information is good quality. We need a list of the websites that have already been assessed as being of good quality, leaving us to focus on finding the actual information needed.

#### Finding quality sites

Finding websites that contain health information is easy - a search on Google for 'health information uk' turns up 29 million hits! Finding quality sites requires a structured approach. To start, you should compile a list of contenders. Recommendations are a good way forward - you can take recommendations from users, other members of staff, portals and gateways, journals, mailing lists or other professionals. There is also a benefit to just surfing. Once you have found likely sites then you can apply the approvals process below.

#### How to approve sites

It is important to work all the way through your assessment criteria before approving a site - using a form or tick list is helpful. Curiously, it is easier to reject a website than it is to approve it - once you have found a 'showstopper', there is no point continuing. To approve, you have to assess everything.

The following is a list of the kind of issues you will need to consider when assessing health information websites. The list is easily adaptable to suit other subject areas.

- Reputation - the organisation should be reputable and have the interest of the reader at heart, not their own commercial interest.
- Advertising - the site should not endorse products or services. Any advertising should be separate from health information. Quality information is always impartial.
- Audience - the information must be aimed at the appropriate geographical audience. For us as a national organisation, this is Scottish or UK-based sites, not English or local.
- Target audience - this should be clearly stated and the content should be appropriate to the stated target audience. For us this is information written for patients/general public.
- Contact information - they must have a phone number and postal address. Reputable organisations have no problem with you knowing their address.
- Quality assurance - the organisation should have QA process.
- Production - the website should look good and read well; it should be easy to navigate and search and the structure should be logical. A sloppily presented website suggests that the content is sloppy too.
- Maintenance - the website must be kept up to date. The best indication of this is dates on the pages, although beware of sites that automatically insert today's date. If there are no dates, look for other indications that it is up to date, like mention of recent legislation changes for example. A website that is not up to date is of little value.
- Domain - it should be recognisable (com, org, co.uk, org.uk, gov.uk, ac.uk, nhs.uk). It doesn't cost much to register a domain name and a reputable organisation should have no problem with this.
- Scope and aims - the front page should state what the website is about and content should match this. It should be relevant and should not be very controversial. Health information websites should state that the information is not a replacement for professional medical advice.
- Presentation of information - the information should be original, balanced, neutral, easy to read and understand, and up to date (probably not more than three years old). There should be a range of referenced sources. Development and evaluation of the site should have independent professional and user input.

**Related FreePint links:**

- 'Healthcare and Medicine' articles in the FreePint Portal <<http://www.freepint.com/go/p64>>
- Post a message to the author, Carolyn Eager, or suggest further resources at the FreePint Bar <<http://www.freepint.com/bar>>
- Read this article online, with activated hyperlinks <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/070405.htm#tips>>
- Access the entire archive of FreePint content <http://www.freepint.com/portal/content/>

- Writers - they should be named, along with a note of their qualification to write on this subject.
- References - references should be given for factual information.
- Feedback - the authors of the site should invite and enable comments.
- Topic/disease/condition - they should be clearly explained and well written. The level of writing needs to be appropriate: we choose sites aimed at the general public, someone else may choose sites aimed at health professionals.
- Treatment/management - all available options should be discussed including non-intervention.
- Outcomes/benefits/risks - these should be explained for all treatment/management options.
- Uncertainties - they should be addressed if relevant.
- Decision-making - the site should suggest things to discuss with family, friends, health professionals.
- Jargon - jargon should be explained in context or in a glossary.
- Access - the site should offer alternative formats and languages.
- Diversity - the articles should address needs of different cultures and beliefs.
- Further information - the site should have useful links and reading material.

This is a lot of criteria and this list sets a very high standard. Obviously, if a website is perfect then great -- but it's unrealistic to expect every website to come up to this standard. However, each website should meet a good many of the requirements to be acceptable. There will always be showstoppers. For us it's product endorsement, information about a service only, no author/source of the information, too old, not UK based; you will know what's unacceptable to you.

**Guidelines to use**

There are many websites on the internet which discuss quality for health information. These include CHIQ - Centre for Health Information Quality <<http://www.hfht.org/chiq/>>, HON - Health on the Net Foundation <<http://www.hon.ch/>> and Judge: web sites for health <<http://www.judgehealth.org.uk/>>. Others discuss quality processes for their own purposes which can give useful insights. The main one here is BIOME

<<http://biome.ac.uk/guidelines/eval/>>. Obviously, the websites themselves would have to be assessed for quality before you trusted what they had to say - but if they are into quality enough to publish guidelines then they're probably a pretty safe bet!

**Quality assuring your own websites**

By now you should have a good idea of how to quality-assure websites. The key message is to have a structured approach: set your standards and then uphold them. Why don't you start your quality assurance process with your own organisation's website? Would you approve it?

**What is ResourceShelf?**

<<http://www.resourceshelf.com>>

ResourceShelf is a free daily update containing news of interest to information professionals around the world.

Topics include the latest news with web search engines, research tips, new web resources, and much more.

**Jinfo :: Search and advertise information jobs**

Jinfo is a great resource for locating and promoting information-related job vacancies.

Subscribe to the free twice-monthly 'Jinfo Newsletter' and receive the latest postings and career advice by email.

<<http://www.Jinfo.com/>>

**FreePint Forthcoming Articles**  
[Provisional]

- Asperger's syndrome and autism
- Making archives available through a website
- The 9 Ps of publishing
- Competitive intelligence
- User employee abuse of the Internet
- Cross-cultural management
- Seeking the value proposition for the information professional
- Applying governance to the management of information
- Business information in Germany

If you have a suggestion for an article topic or would like to write for Free Pint then please contact <[penny@freepint.com](mailto:penny@freepint.com)> or sign up for the Author Update at <<http://www.freepint.com/author.htm>>.

## Complying with Freedom of Information legislation: a guide for practitioners

ISBN: 1-904769-09-8

This report is written for practitioners in jobs focused on, or in roles influenced by, freedom of information legislation.

Focusing on key elements of the legislation and guidance from relevant coordinating authorities in the public sector, the report offers up-to-date and timely advice on the key issues.

The report contains detailed structure and key steps for practitioners to follow.

Key "practitioner action points" are highlighted throughout the text and are presented as a handy reference list at the beginning.

The reader is offered relevant advice and guided to more detailed sources when relevant. Extensively researched, this publication is based on the latest guidance and resources available from the Department of Constitutional Affairs, including fees regulations.



Full details available at [www.freepint.com/shop/report/](http://www.freepint.com/shop/report/) or order here

### About you

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Organisation: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Country: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

### Additional information

How did you hear about the report? \_\_\_\_\_  
 Additional message: \_\_\_\_\_

**Payment method**  Invoice ... or ...  Credit card:  Visa  Mastercard  Amex  Maestro

Single user  £29 (EUR42, US\$55)  
 Multi-user, single site  £87 (EUR124, US\$165)

Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Expiry: \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_ Issue (where applicable): \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Cardholder Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature

Date

**Fax the form to 01784 420033 (int: +44 1784 420033) or post to: Free Pint Limited, 4-6 Station Approach, Ashford, Middlesex TW15 2QN, UK.**

Please contact us for multi-user multi-site subscription rates. Prices exclude VAT for UK customers. [Ref: VIP]

## FreePint Bookshelf

<<http://www.freepint.com/bookshelf>>

### "Information Auditing - A Guide for Information Managers"

Reviewed by Martin White

Written by Steve Wood



Martin White is  
Managing Director of  
Intranet Focus Limited  
<<http://www.intranetfocus.com>>.

#### Related links:

- Find out more about this report online at the FreePint Shop <<http://www.freepint.com/shop/report/>>
- "Information auditing: a guide for information managers" ISBN 1-904769-08-X, published by FreePint.
- Search for and purchase any report from FreePint at: <<http://www.freepint.com/shop/report/>>
- To propose an information-related book for review, send details to <[support@freepint.com](mailto:support@freepint.com)>..

Although the consensus is that carrying out an information audit is an essential precursor to the development of any information, intranet or records management strategy, until the publication of this report there has been a dearth of practical advice. Steve Wood has a background as an intranet manager in the public sector but is now Senior Lecturer in Information Management at the School of Business Information, Liverpool John Moores University. The result is a report that is an adroit blend of academic rigour and practical insight.

<<http://www.freepint.com/shop/report/>>

By book standards it's quite a slim publication, just 40 pages in length, but that matters little when the quality is so high. The main sections deal with setting the scene, defining the purpose, scope and objectives, the purposes that require an information audit, a brief discussion on the difference between information and knowledge auditing, and then a detailed description of good practice in information auditing. There is even advice on how to present an information audit report. Some software tools that can be used to support an information audit are profiled and there is a useful bibliography that illustrates how little published information there is on the subject.

Indeed despite the importance of a reliable information audit the only other book that I am aware of is Susan Henczel's book *The Information Audit*, (K.G. Saur, 2001). One document that seems to have escaped Steve's diligent research efforts is the Information Management Audit Guidelines developed by the Department of Commerce of the New South Wales state government in Australia <<http://digbig.com/4dcdn>>, which covers more than IM issues.

### April VIP to feature international company data

Hoover's and Mergent products will feature in the April issue of VIP. Hoover's UK Pro Premium provides data on UK and international companies. Mergent offers a wide variety of business and financial services. Read what VIP has to say about both sets of products.

<<http://www.vivaVIP.com/>>

The merit of Steve's report is the clarity with which it is written, enabling anyone in an organization tasked with carrying out an information audit to do so with excellent results. Many of the sections contain useful checklists. As a result, the guide will be of value not only to information professionals and intranet managers, but also to business managers who have been asked to carry out an audit for compliance, risk management or records management purposes and have no idea of where to start. If there is an omission, it is that I would like to have seen a reference to the problems of conducting content audits of web and (especially!) intranet sites.

The publishers offer a corporate licence so that the report can be added to an intranet. Overall, highly recommended, and I can't see how any organization trying to maximize the benefit from its information resources can justify not buying a copy.

<<http://www.freepint.com/shop/report/>>

## FreePint

#### Contributors to this issue:

William Hann (FreePint Managing Editor), Penny (FreePint Administrator), Martin White, Kim Dammers, Carolyn Eager, Pam Foster, Plain Text <<http://www.plain-text.co.uk/>> (proofreading).

#### Advertisers/Sponsors of this issue:

UCB, BvD, VNU Exhibitions, LexisNexis Butterworths, Sue Hill Recruitment, Glen Recruitment, Factiva, ResourceShelf, Willco, VIP.

© Free Pint Limited 1997-2005

## Contact

**WEB:** [www.freepint.com](http://www.freepint.com)

**EMAIL:** [support@freepint.com](mailto:support@freepint.com)

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** [support@freepint.com](mailto:support@freepint.com)

**AUTHORS:** [www.freepint.com/author.htm](http://www.freepint.com/author.htm)

**ADVERTISERS:** [www.freepint.com/advert.htm](http://www.freepint.com/advert.htm)

**ISSN:** 1460-7239

#### Free Pint Limited

4-6 Station Approach  
Ashford, Middlesex  
TW15 2QN, United Kingdom  
Tel (UK): 0870 141 7474  
Tel (Int): +44 870 141 7474

Technology by Willco

<<http://www.willco.com/>>





#### Free Pint Limited

4-6 Station Approach  
Ashford, Middlesex  
TW15 2QN

T: 0870 141 7474  
I: +44 870 141 7474  
E: info@freepint.com

### VIP Wire

The VIP Wire is *the* place to search and promote press releases for business information products and services.

It is free to browse and search the database of announcements.

It is free to post press releases for your organisation.

### VIP Wire Digest

Subscribe to the free weekly email digest listing of the latest press releases. Monitor the latest announcements through a content feed.

Full details at [www.vivaVIP.com](http://www.vivaVIP.com)

The VIP Wire is part of the VIP family of products:

**VIP** reviews business information products. Monthly.

**VIP Eye** analyses business information announcements and comments on trends. Twice-monthly.

**VIP Wire** is a database of business information press announcements.

**VIP Lounge** is for announcements relating to VIP and its subscribers.

Full details about VIP at:

<http://www.vivaVIP.com/>

*"VIP provides me with an excellent source of reviews of all manner of relevant products. What better editorial team could there be than the people behind FreePint to report on products and news in the information market! I think this is positive testimony enough!*

*VIP's monthly compilation of proper in-depth reviews provides me with plenty of objective information from which to make decisions on products I might be interested in. It is also an excellent way to keep up with the latest content and functionality improvements.*

*VIP Eye is a great way to keep up-to-date in the fast-changing information world. Rather than be distracted with daily press releases, I much prefer the fortnightly round-up of what's important for me as an information manager in a large global corporation."*

Information Manager, UK

## Feature Article

### "Trends in business information, provision and use"

By Pam Foster



*Pam Foster is the Editor of VIP and VIP Eye <<http://www.vivaVIP.com/>>, and has been actively involved in the business information industry as a writer and reviewer for nearly 20 years.*

*Pam previously played a major role in Headland Business Information since its inception, as editor of its newsletters and directories. More recently, she has acted as a consultant to several large information companies.*

*She has an extensive network of contacts in the international business information sector amongst producers and users. A qualified information professional, Pam also has a social science degree.*

*Contact Pam Foster by email to <[pam.foster@vivavip.com](mailto:pam.foster@vivavip.com)>.*

The VIP publications, VIP and VIP Eye, are concerned with the business information industry - its products, its providers and its users <<http://www.vivaVIP.com>>. An overview of their content for the first quarter of 2005 reveals that the period was relatively quiet in terms of major new alliances and mergers. However, when it comes to product development, the same period witnessed the launch of a number of new and important products, particularly covering China and Asia.

#### New products and co-operative agreements focus on China

The increasing importance of the growing Chinese economy is influencing the demand for English-language Chinese intelligence. Established information companies are seeking new alliances with Chinese information companies and a lot of product development is concentrating on the region. At the same time, the demand by Chinese domestic companies for access to regulatory information and the like has led to some information companies developing Chinese-language services. LexisNexis China Online <<http://research.lexisnexis.com.cn>> is one such new Chinese-language service. It provides data on legislative and regulatory issues for legal and professional services firms, as well as international companies. The service was created in part through the acquisition of PRCInvestment.com, a Chinese tax and financial information provider.

In Europe, VNU Business Media <<http://www.vnu.com>> has signed a strategic co-operation agreement with Shanghai Media Group <<http://www.smg.sh.cn/english/>>, in order to jointly develop database and marketing information, and cross-media models for the business information market.

A new Asian news service is currently being developed by Market News International (MSI), in response to demands for information on Asian markets, particularly China. The new service will complement the company's existing European and North American news services. Its development is a logical extension of MNI's acquisition by Xinhua Finance <<http://www.xfnn.com>>, a Chinese financial services and media company. Xinhua Finance is becoming increasingly dominant. Last year, it acquired Mergent, one of the US's oldest information companies. At the end of 2004, Xinhua became a public company.

Dow Jones has launched The Wall Street Journal Briefing <<http://briefing.wsj.com>>, a new series of newsletters focussing on business in China. The series has launched with two fortnightly executive briefings, China Manufacturing and China Business. China Manufacturing provides news of major and minor industries, companies, factories and the people who run them, trade and currency news, legal and regulatory developments affecting manufacturing and export, and much

more. Its sister title, China Business, covers company news concerning acquisitions, CEO appointments, investment deals and earnings, trade and currency news, banking updates, investment summaries, briefings on changes to regulatory laws, details and analysis of changes in key economic indicators, and briefings on political developments that affect the business environment.

Accoona <<http://www.accoona.com>> claims to offer the most extensive listing of Chinese companies available online. This claim is made possible through a 20 year agreement with China Daily Information Company to be the official search partner for its China Daily news portal. Accoona has recently enhanced its service by offering QuickProfiles which provide free summaries of company information, and include contact details, name of primary contact, country, sales volume and size.

#### Gold

- FreePint No.157 1st April 2004. "Intrusion on privacy by electronic surveillance and personal data gathering" and "Skills for Career Success" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/010404.htm>
- FreePint No.134 3rd April 2003. "Genetically Modified Foods: Official Information Sources" and "Information Systems - Never Just Technology" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/030403.htm>
- Free Pint No.109 4th April 2002. "The War Against SPAM" and "Finding Chemical Information on the Web - the User's Viewpoint" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/040402.htm>
- Free Pint No.85, 12th April 2001. "Getting Connected in a Rural Area" and "Streaming Media and Broadband Sites" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/120401.htm>
- Free Pint No.60, 13th April 2000. "Wedding Sources on the Web" and "Knowledge Management" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/130400.htm>
- Free Pint No.36, 15th April 1999. "Cataloging the Internet: The Dublin Core" and "Idiots' guide to chemistry information resources on the Web" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/150499.htm>
- Free Pint No.12, 16th April 1998. "The Duffers Guide to 56K Modems!" and "Sources of information on science policy and popular science topics" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/160498.htm>

Penny <[penny@freepint.com](mailto:penny@freepint.com)>

**Related FreePint links:**

- 'Information and Libraries' articles in the FreePint Portal <<http://www.freepint.com/go/p69>>
- Post a message to the author, Pam Foster, or suggest further resources at the FreePint Bar <<http://www.freepint.com/bar>>
- Read this article online, with activated hyperlinks <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/070405.htm#feature>>
- Access the entire archive of FreePint content <http://www.freepint.com/portal/content/>

**ISI Emerging Markets**

<<http://www.securities.com>> has enhanced its data by acquiring CEIC Holdings, a leading provider of Asian times series economic data. Data is aggregated from 500 primary sources including national statistical offices, central banks and local exchanges. CEIC has offices in Shanghai, Beijing, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Jakarta, Manila and Bangkok. The deal not only enables ISI to extend its data offering but also enhances its position in the Asian market. VIP plans to publish an in-depth review of ISI Emerging Markets in the May 2004 issue.

All of these items are covered in more detail in VIP Eye, issues 26, 29 and 30 <<http://www.vivaVIP.com/eye/>>.

**Information companies increasingly targeting new markets**

Major information companies are increasingly targeting new or niche markets. Both OneSource and Factiva have launched new products for different markets. OneSource <<http://www.onesource.com>> has switched its attention away from larger corporations to small and medium-sized firms (SMEs) with the launch of OneSource Express. The new service provides company and executive data, news alerts and corporate family hierarchies to sales and marketing professionals. The product has already been launched in the US and OneSource is planning to launch something similar for the European market during the summer. OneSource Express looks set to compete directly with Hoover's. Hoover's will be reviewed in this month's (April) issue of VIP. OneSource Express will feature as soon as the European product becomes available.

Factiva <<http://www.factiva.com>> is targeting sales and marketing professionals with the launch of two new products, Factiva SalesWorks and Factiva Companies & Executives. Factiva SalesWorks has been designed specifically for sales professions, while Factiva Companies & Executives offers more flexibility and is aimed at relationship managers, marketing, and business and information professionals. Content is provided by well-known providers such as Bureau van Dijk Electronic Publishing, D&B, Datamonitor, Hoover's, Reuters and many others. The interface on both products is available in English, French and German and this will shortly be extended to include six other languages - Simplified and Traditional Chinese, Italian, Japanese, Russian and Spanish.

An in-depth review of Factiva SalesWorks and Factiva Companies & Executives, published in the February 2005 issue of VIP <<http://www.vivaVIP.com/vip>>, found that both products are easy to use. The review specifically notes that creating prospecting lists is very easy, as are peer comparisons which are useful in assessing the potential for new products, sales campaigns and marketing activities.

**Reputation management is an expanding area**

Products that monitor web conversations, press

items and news content for mentions of a company and its competitors are being developed for launch later this year.

Factiva <<http://www.factiva.com>> is developing a corporate reputation-management tool based on human expertise, technology and content, that will allow corporate communications and management professionals to understand the trends and patterns that affect their organisations. In order to accelerate its strategy for developing the tools, Factiva has forged alliances with new companies and has also acquired London-based 2B Reputation Intelligence Ltd. and Benchmarking Solutions Ltd., a consulting business specialising in media monitoring and reputation management. In order to increase its web coverage, Factiva has signed an agreement to integrate content from Moreover Technologies <<http://www.moreover.com>> into its reputation products. At the same time, Factiva also announced a global partnership with communications consultancy Hill & Knowlton.

Trendum <<http://www.trendum.com>> is also in the business of developing monitoring tools. Well known for its PropheSEE product which measures which TV shows are being talked about on the Internet, the Israeli-based company has just raised \$6 million in its first round of financing. Investors included international media company VNU. The financing will be used to develop new products that monitor information from conversations in chat rooms, news groups, blogs and other information, in order to analyse what is being said about products, companies and people.

Further details of the development of the Factiva and Trendum products are available in VIP Eye, issues 27 and 28 <<http://www.vivaVIP.com/eye>>.

**US compliance issues proving burdensome for some European companies**

US compliance issues are proving burdensome for some European companies. Sarbanes-Oxley legislation, in particular, doesn't fit well with the different corporate regulations employed across European countries. Additionally, the legislation is such that some European companies are worried that they may be breaching European data protection regulations.

The Sarbanes-Oxley Act, which came into effect in 2002, requires executives, boards of directors and auditors to adhere to certain measures designed to bring about greater corporate accountability and transparency. Non-US companies that are registered on US exchanges need to comply with the Act. The costs involved in maintaining a US listing are already high and when combined with the extra expense involved in complying with Sarbanes-Oxley, some companies are wondering whether a US listing is worth it.

Also in the US, the Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) <<http://www.sec.gov>> has implemented a voluntary programme whereby companies are invited to submit eXtensible Business Reporting Language (XBRL) data on specified EDGAR filings. If the experiment is

successful, XBRL data is likely to become mandatory. EDGAR is adapting to XBRL and has recently demonstrated its new product, EDGAR Online I-Metrics Excel Add-In <<http://www.sec.gov/edgar.shtml>>, which enables Excel users to access public company financial data without leaving Excel.

Supporters of XBRL claim that it will lead to financial information being more widely distributed and understood. However, there also appears to be confusion amongst some executives as to what XBRL is and what it can do for their companies. If the format does become mandatory then companies that are in the business of collecting and distributing financial data, such as Bloomberg, Thomson Financial and Standard & Poor's Compustat, will have to adapt.

Some VIP subscribers have indicated that they find compliance a tricky and complex area. In response, VIP is planning to publish an item on compliance issues and sources of information later in the year.

#### **Increasing need to balance privacy with access to critical data**

An increase in the number of identity thefts, plus concerns about international security, means that information companies increasingly have to balance privacy policies with the demand for critical data. The dilemma has been highlighted by the recent fraudulent use of passwords, stolen from LexisNexis customers, to access the personal details of 32,000 Americans. The type of information accessed included individuals' names, addresses, and social security and driving licence numbers. LexisNexis <<http://www.lexisnexis.com>> has responded by increasing customer security requirements, and restricting the display of social security and driving licence numbers.

In the US, there are calls for information brokers who compile and sell personal data to be more tightly regulated. While better security measures

may be required to protect personal information from unauthorized users, any new legislation also has to be set against the need by authorised organisations to access identifying data required for purposes such as detecting and preventing fraud. Getting this balance right may prove difficult in the US where personal data protection laws aren't as rigid as those in Europe.

## Events

### *United Kingdom:*

- "Free STN workshops in London" 12th - 13th April <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e463>>
- "Re-designing your Intranet" 13th - 14th April <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e418>>
- "Data Protection" 13th April <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e432>>
- "Visit to Fire Service College" 14th April <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e478>>
- "The Library & Information Show" 20th - 21st April <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e447>>
- "Advanced Internet Search Strategies" 26th April <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e417>>

### *United States:*

- "Society of Competitive Intelligence Professionals" 6th - 9th April <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e468>>
- "Buying & Selling eContent" 10th - 12th April <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e460>>
- "2005 AIIP Annual Conference" 14th - 17th April <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e444>>

### *Australia and Territories:*

- "Dave Snowden: Networking the Organisation" 20th - 21st April <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e435>>

### *Belgium:*

- "EUSIDIC Spring Meeting 2005" 17th - 19th April <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e442>>

### *France:*

- "4th European Conference Research Methodology in Business and Management Studies" 21st - 22nd April <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e475>>

### *Spain:*

- "Competia European Symposium 2005" 27th - 28th April <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e449>>

For your free listing, complete the form at <<http://www.freepint.com/events>>.

Penny <[penny@freepint.com](mailto:penny@freepint.com)>

#### **Free Pint Limited ® 1997-2005**

To subscribe, unsubscribe, change your subscriptions or password, visit <<http://web.freepint.com/>> or email <[support@freepint.com](mailto:support@freepint.com)>. For details about contributing, advertising or to see past issues, please visit the Web site at <<http://www.freepint.com/>> or email <[support@freepint.com](mailto:support@freepint.com)>.

Please note: FreePint (ISSN 1460-7239) is a registered trademark of, and published by, Free Pint Limited. The publishers will NEVER make the subscriber list available to any other company or organisation.

The opinions, advice, products and services offered herein are the sole responsibility of the contributors. Whilst all reasonable care has been taken to ensure the accuracy of the publication, the publishers cannot accept responsibility for any errors or omissions.

This publication may be freely copied and/or distributed in its entirety. However, individual sections MAY NOT be copied and/or distributed without the prior written agreement of the publishers. Write to William Hann, Managing Editor, <[william.hann@freepint.com](mailto:william.hann@freepint.com)> for more details. Product names used in FreePint are for identification purposes only, and may be trademarks of their respective owners. FreePint disclaims any and all rights in those marks. All rights reserved.