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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 & 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 this fully formatted version as an attachment or a brief notification when it's online, visit <<http://web.freepint.com/>>.

Editorial

We have a lot of difficulty defining the 'information industry' that FreePint inhabits. It's even harder to provide generic definitions of specific job titles, such as 'information professional' or 'information manager'. We're all information managers, to some degree or other.



Anyway, it's budding 'information managers' (however defined) who are going to get the most out of today's FreePint, with articles on accessibility, the latest trends in business information and an update to a seminal text on information strategy.

Accessibility is a timely topic here in the UK, with the recent October 1st deadline for making premises accessible under the Disability Discrimination Act. Web accessibility is not to be confused with Web usability, which Jakob Nielsen will be discussing as the keynote speaker at the Online Information conference next month.

As well as the conference, Online Information includes lots of free seminars and other co-located events. FreePint will be exhibiting as usual, and we'll be at the Gala Awards Dinner to announce the winner of this year's award for best customer service.

If you're in London, UK, from November 30th to December 2nd, do make sure you come along to this event. It's the biggest information event anywhere, and the only one at which we exhibit. More information and free exhibition tickets are available at:

<<http://www.online-information.co.uk/>>

Information managers should also enjoy today's round-up by Pam Foster, VIP's Editor, about the latest trends in business information. We're nothing if timely, and yesterday's announcement at the VIP Wire about Factiva and LexisNexis working together will surely get people talking <<http://www.vivavip.com/go/w395>>. The in-depth comparative review of these two products in VIP No.10 has been a run-away success, with one information vendor commenting: "Pam deserves the 'VIP medal' for stamina - quite a review!". To find out more about subscribing to VIP or how to receive a digest of postings from the VIP Wire, visit:

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

There's a lot going on in the information world at the moment, so it's fun to be back in the hot seat as Annabel Colley prepares for the birth of her second child. I'm sure you'll join me in wishing her all the best.

Please do send in your comments about today's FreePint, or post them to the FreePint Bar <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b30270>>. If you know someone who might enjoy the newsletter, then why not forward this issue to them?

William Hann
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Recruiter: Glen Recruitment

NB: There are 47 other jobs in the current edition of the Jobs Update
<<http://www.freepint.com/go/30136>>.

[The above jobs are paid listings]

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My Favourite Tipples by Irina Ibraghimova



Irina Ibraghimova (Medical Information Resources Coordinator, American International Health Alliance) provides reference help and training to health care professionals in CEE/NIS countries, and contributes content to EurasiaHealth Knowledge Network <<http://www.eurasiahealth.org>>.

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

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- Factsheets from BMA <http://www.bma.org.uk/ap.nsf/Content/_HUB+factsheets> - a useful resource both for answering frequently received medical information queries and a nice model for formatting your own answers to reference questions.
- NoodleQuest <<http://www.noodletools.com/noodlequest/>> - a wizard that helps to develop the optimum Web-based search strategy. Just answer a few questions about your research topic and NoodleQuest will reveal and explain some of the best search strategies you can use.
- Info Career Trends <<http://www.lisjobs.com/newsletter/>> - my favorite after-work reading. ICT addresses career development topics relevant to practicing information professionals. This newsletter helps me to feel that I belong to the library community, even being a solo librarian working from home (in Croatia) with company headquarters in Washington, DC and serving health care professionals in 20 CEE/NIS countries.

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If this edition of the FreePint Newsletter is all about educating information managers, then the FreePint Bar seems recently to have been all about recruiting them.

Following an agency recruiter's disappointment which was reported in the last edition, they have now received lots of interesting feedback about why people didn't apply for the job they advertised <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b30026>>. There have been similarly candid comments in a thread started by a job seeker in the Midlands: opinions are certainly mixed (shall we say) on the ability of recruitment agencies to do their job <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b30167>>.

A topic which was raised at the recent City Information Group (CiG) day <<http://www.cityinformation.org.uk/>> was that of recruiting staff for an information role who have no previous experience or qualifications in information. Is the enquirer being too protective of their profession or is there another problem with the appointment (e.g. the salary level)? <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b30106>>.

Over at the Student Bar, someone who will shortly be graduating with an MA in Information Services Management is looking to move to California. Can anyone over there help? <<http://www.freepint.com/go/s4229>>. Maybe a member of SCOUG would like to chip in <<http://www.scougweb.org/>>?

If you're looking for a job, or looking to recruit, don't forget that the twice-monthly FreePint Jobs Update can be sent to you by email automatically. You can also view a fully-formatted version at <<http://web.freepint.com/jobs/>>.

Of course, recruitment isn't the only concern of information-related Bar users at the moment. Does anyone know if the 'Information Managers Directory UK' is still available? <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b30085>>. What about a list or review of suppliers of press clippings services? <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b30272>>.

The topic of a forthcoming FreePint article is that of preservation and ephemera. If you're concerned about the long-term implications of digital data storage, then you might like to listen to the Radio 4 series which has helpfully been highlighted at <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b30215>>.

There are regularly requests for reviews of market research providers, both at the Bar (e.g. <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b30142>>) and to VIP's Editor, Pam Foster. Pam has offered a comparative review of two providers (Alacra and Profound) in a future issue of VIP, but she needs your confirmation that it's something you'd find useful <<http://www.vivavip.com/go/l79>>.

Thank you to everyone who monitors and uses the FreePint Bar. It's a pleasure to moderate and participate in such a professional and useful forum.

William Hann <william.hann@freepint.com>
Managing Editor, FreePint

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

Tips Article

" Web Accessibility: Ensuring Access for All " By Bill Raschen



Bill Raschen is an Information Professional and Web designer whose experience has included project managing and managing intranets for large organizations. He has also acted as a consultant and troubleshooter on matters including the redesign of intranets and the rollout of Content Management Systems. His particular interests include the usability and accessibility of large web resources, and he has written and lectured on both topics. Outside of work, he is a keen amateur astronomer and runner.

Web Accessibility is a subject whose importance has quietly grown in recent years. This results, in part, from the effects of legislation in the UK and the USA, but also from the policies and initiatives of organizations including the Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB) and others. Advances in technology, particularly the advent of PDAs, have also played a part. However, despite its increasing importance, web accessibility remains a subject that at best is relatively poorly understood by many information professionals, and at worst attracts some wholly wrong misconceptions. What follows is an attempt to clarify the issue, discussing the implications of accessibility for both web designers and web users in general.

Definitions of Web Usability and Accessibility

The first thing to do is to define what web accessibility actually is, and how it differs from web 'usability'. Very briefly, in this context, 'usability' refers to the features that make a Website user- friendly: the ease of retrieving information, and the manner in which that information is displayed. A detailed overview of web usability is provided by Jakob Nielsen in 'Usability 101: Introduction to Usability' <<http://www.useit.com/alertbox/20030825.html>>. Web accessibility differs from this in that it refers to a web site's contents being made available to everyone, including people with disabilities. Under ideal circumstances, an accessible web site can be perceived and navigated by all, and can be utilized with just a keyboard or devices other than a mouse. Material on the site should be easily understood, even in attention-poor situations. An excellent definition of web accessibility is provided by Education Technology Services (EduTech) at <<http://www.edutech.nodak.edu/accessibility/>>. EduTech debunks the misconception that accessibility applies only to the permanently disabled, pointing out that the subject has implications for anyone who uses non-traditional browsing devices such as handheld computers and web-enabled mobile phones. In addition, accessibility will be an issue to all web site owners who need to benefit from search engine ranking results, search engines being described as the biggest 'blind users' of them all.

The W3C Web Accessibility Initiative

No study of web site accessibility can ignore the importance of the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI). The WAI pursues accessibility through five primary areas of work: technology, guidelines, tools, education and outreach, and research and development. A good starting point for the work of the WAI can be found at <<http://www.w3.org/WAI/Resources/#fq>>. Although there are other sets of accessibility standards and guidelines, the WAI Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG 1.0 <<http://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG10/>> remain the definitive guidelines for accessible websites (a working draft of WCAG 2.0 became available at the end of July 2004). These concentrate on a

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variety of 'good practice' web design measures (for example, the use of style sheets to control presentation, and the use of properly descriptive 'alt' tags in conjunction with images) and are reasonably straightforward - at least in theory! The University of Strathclyde provides an excellent overview of WCAG 1.0 (and of web accessibility matters in general) on its website at <<http://www.learning-services.strath.ac.uk/access/websites/wcag.html>>. There are 14 of these WCAG 1.0 guidelines, each with associated checkpoints and priority levels. At minimum, 'accessible' websites should conform to all WCAG 1.0 'Priority 1' checkpoints: ones that have to be satisfied otherwise some groups of people will be unable to access information from the web.

Other Sets of Accessibility Standards

Two other sets of accessibility standards should be noted, both of which build on WCAG 1.0. In the UK, the Royal National Institute of the Blind (RNIB) 'See it Right' logo is issued to sites that the RNIB has audited and which achieve a good standard of accessibility. Details of the audit process are available at <<http://digbig.com/4bxnj>>. In the USA, accessible websites should comply with 'Section 508', this being the section of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 that was amended in 1998 to include a set of standards for accessible electronic and information technology <<http://www.access-board.gov/sec508/guide/index.htm>>. This includes web-based intranet and Internet information and applications. Sites will be deemed noncompliant with Section 508 if they fail to meet the set of standards within the Act.

Accessibility-related Legislation

Web accessibility has become an increasingly important issue for a variety of reasons. In part, this is because of the general growth of Internet usage, and in particular the spread of handheld browsing devices. But just as important are the effects of legislation on site owners (and their employers). Since June 1999, webmasters in the UK have been obliged by the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA), passed in 1995, to make 'reasonable adjustments' to enable people with disabilities to use their websites. The DDA specifically referred to the rights of disabled people against service providers, and has been followed by the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act (SENDA) of 2001, which confers similar rights upon disabled students against educational institutions. Details of the implications of both for web sites can be found at <<http://digbig.com/4btms>>.

Related FreePint links:

- 'Webmaster' articles in the FreePint Portal <<http://www.freepint.com/go/p183>>
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Accessibility Legal Actions

The words of the DDA were given teeth by the RNIB in July 2003, when it initiated county court proceedings against a website it deemed inaccessible. The case was settled out of court, and the identity of the site was not disclosed. Nonetheless, a precedent was set for future action against other providers. In taking action, the RNIB was following the examples of other cases elsewhere: notably in Australia in 2001 where a private citizen managed to win substantial damages after a ruling that the Sydney Olympics portal caused 'unjustifiable hardship' in failing to meet accessibility standards, and in the USA, where the National Federation for the Blind (NFB) won damages against AOL in late 1999. The importance of accessibility has been enhanced by greater publicity as well: a good example of this was the widespread press coverage in April 2004 for the findings of a Disability Rights Commission (DRC) investigation, which showed that 81% of a representative sample of 1,000 UK public websites failed to reach minimum W3C standards for disabled web access <<http://www.drc-gb.org/open4all/newsroom/newsdetails.asp?id=633>>. The DRC is an independent body that was set up by Parliament in 2000 with the remit of stopping discrimination and promoting equality for disabled people.

Accessibility Checking Tools

If you're a web manager, you'll be forgiven for feeling somewhat despondent by the issues raised above. But there is plenty of help at hand: notably, a large array of online resource tools designed to help make sure your web pages conform to accessibility guidelines. Many of these 'checking' tools are free - the WAI lists many of them at <<http://www.w3.org/WAI/ER/existingtools.html>>. This list includes long-term stalwarts such as the 'Bobby' and 'Lift' tools. Incidentally, if you're a Dreamweaver MX user, you can access the version of 'Lift' that is already installed on the product by accessing 'File > Check Page > Check Accessibility'.

Assistive Technology

Conforming to web accessibility guidelines may be 'good practice', but many disabled users will still need assistive technology to view a web site properly. An excellent introduction to this subject is provided by the AbilityHub web site <<http://www.abilityhub.com/>>, which details the different types of product (for all types of disability) on the market, the individual brands and what they do. The 'Blind and Visually Impaired' section of the site, for example, provides a useful overview of the screen magnifiers and screen readers that are available and what they do. If you're not aware, 'screen readers' are software devices that read aloud the text on websites - there is also a section on 'speech recognition' software, this being software that translates your speech into computer commands. The site does not mention two telling disadvantages facing the disabled user - firstly, many assistive devices mentioned are pretty expensive, and secondly (in the case of at least one well-known 'screen reader' device) the voice talking back at you sounds suspiciously like a transatlantic Dalek on illegal substances.

Conclusion

Beyond all the legislation, guidelines, and assistive technology, why should the subject of web accessibility be treated with such importance? The glib reply, 'because it's a good thing' is a bit of a non-starter. Much better would be to give the example of a visually impaired individual visiting an electrical retailer in pre- web days to ask for a washing machine - only to be sold either the most expensive model, or else the one that the shop wanted to get rid of. This is a cynical example, but (according to the RNIB) sadly true. The same individual can now avoid such rip-offs by visiting <<http://www.kelkoo.com/>> (or wherever) and can compare prices on screen. And accessible sites could also benefit those with short-term injuries: for example, if you are unfortunate enough to break your wrist. As Tim Berners-Lee famously said: "The power of the Web is in its universality. Access by everyone regardless of disability is an essential aspect". The web has the potential to be a great enabler - 'accessible' sites are one of the ways that this potential can be turned into reality.

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Steve Wood, Senior Lecturer, School of Business Information, Liverpool John Moores University, lectures on undergraduate and postgraduate programmes on web management, knowledge management, network management and information policy.

Research interests include content management knowledge management and freedom of information legislation. Steve is author of the text "Business Information Management" with Dave Chaffey, published by Pearson Education November 2004.

Email <steve_wood62@hotmail.com> or visit <<http://www.livjm.ac.uk>>.

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- "Information Strategy in Practice 2004" ISBN 0566085798, published by Gower Publishing Company.

FreePint Bookshelf

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"Information Strategy in Practice" Reviewed by Steve Wood

Elizabeth Orna's 1999 text "Practical information policies" is regarded as a key text for information managers responsible for auditing information, devising organisational information policies and strategies. This new text, "Information Strategy in Practice", builds upon "Practical information policies" by including updated versions of chapters 2-6 from the 1999 text with postscripts entitled "practical insights" for each chapter. As Orna notes, a good deal has happened in the world of information management since 1999, hence the need for the new text.

Orna's excellent text has a well-defined approach that is consistently applied throughout. It avoids much of the jargon that has often blighted this field of work, particularly related to the area of knowledge management. I will always point students to Orna as a starting point for defining terms such as information, knowledge, information management, etc. The scenarios from real-world organisations that are used to illustrate key points in the text are well chosen and taken from a good mix of sectors and industries. This makes the text valuable to information managers working in both public and private sectors.

The structure logically guides the reader through information strategy processes for organisations. It begins with a chapter discussing why information is important; then covers understanding information requirements; before dealing with analysing organisational objectives. The process developed by Orna matches the objectives to "content" which is then mapped to "containers". The table outlining these three areas is an excellent basic starting point and can be easily adapted to many scenarios. In terms of teaching or training it also acts as a good starting point for student understanding of the topic.

The following chapters then move on to the information audit process from planning to execution. Useful new material added to the practical insights section for this chapter include terms of reference that could be adapted for an information audit project. The next chapter rightly stresses the importance of analysing and interpreting the findings before moving to the policy and strategy stages that are dealt with in the following chapters.

Chapters 7 and 8 will be of most interest to readers of the "practical information policies" text, as Orna offers insight beyond the "how to do it" aspects focused on in chapters 2-6. She uses her experience to: "recapitulate the main underlying ideas, so that readers can make them their own, illuminate them with their own experience and knowledge, and use them in convincing, explaining, arguing a business case, answering objections, gaining allies on the way towards developing and using information strategy". Concepts such as taxonomy, that have become important information management tools, are introduced here, along with a valuable comparison of information management and knowledge management concepts in practice.

This book is highly recommended for students studying on undergraduate and postgraduate information management degree programmes and equally for information managers working in the field attempting to assess information assets and formulate policies and strategies. For those without the previous 1999 text, I would say this edition is an essential part of any information manager's bookshelf.

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FreePint

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Feature Article

"Trends in business information, provision and use"

By Pam Foster

The VIP publications, VIP and VIP Eye, are concerned with the business information industry - its products, its providers and its users. The summer months are usually a quiet time for any sector, but an analysis of the VIP content over the last quarter, from July-September, identifies some interesting trends.

The VIP Web site is at
<<http://www.vivaVIP.com>>.

Strategic relationships bring increased data coverage and new markets

A number of information providers have entered into strategic relationships, resulting in improved data coverage and new market opportunities.

In a surprise move, two of the sector's largest news and business information providers, Factiva and LexisNexis, have just announced (12 October 2004) a deal that will result in LexisNexis becoming the exclusive provider of Factiva content to legal professionals at law firms worldwide. Factiva content will become available to LexisNexis' legal customers in North America, UK, France, Germany, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and Singapore on 1st March 2005. This agreement is only for the legal market. Factiva content will not be available from LexisNexis in the corporate legal department or federal government markets. The deal will provide LexisNexis' legal customers with access to Factiva's 9,000 sources of global news and information, including business titles such as The Financial Times, The Wall Street Journal, Dow Jones and Reuters newswires. Factiva previously entered into a similar deal with Westlaw, the online legal research service. Following the LexisNexis deal, Factiva is withdrawing its data from Westlaw.

UK company Hemscott has entered into a complex reverse buy-out deal, which takes the company into the US and provides it with GBP20 million of financing for approved acquisitions over the next 12 months. Hemscott has acquired CoreData, a provider of US and Canadian company financial data and, at the same time, Centerpoint, owner of CoreData, has acquired a minority stake in Hemscott. Finmedia, which is the majority shareholder in Hemscott, has sold 10 million of its Hemscott shares to Centerpoint Data which now has a 54.5% stake in Hemscott. The combined group will have access to 30 years of North American and 20 years of UK financial information, as well as a database of directors' biographies and remuneration. Hemscott is best known for its Company Guru product, which was reviewed in the January 2004 issue of VIP.

D&B is continuing to seek strategic relationships in Europe and has just sold its business in France to Base d'Information Legales Holding. The terms of the deal mean that BIL Holding will own the business and distribute D&B branded products in France. In return, D&B will increase its coverage by gaining access to BIL Holding's database of

French businesses. This latest move follows a deal made earlier this year, whereby D&B sold its operations in Austria, Czech Republic, Germany, Hungary, Poland and Switzerland to Bonnier Business Information. Again, the terms of the deal mean that D&B obtains access to Bonnier's Central European database in exchange for Bonnier distributing its D&B branded products in the Central European market. D&B will also gain access to both BIL Holding's and Bonnier's sales and marketing data in Europe.

OneSource is actively seeking out deals with new company data providers, following D&B's decision to withdraw its data from OneSource's Business Browser products. The decision followed OneSource's acquisition by infoUSA, which is one of D&B's competitors. In the meantime, D&B has just entered into a relationship with Corpfin to supply its CompanyQuery product with European company data.

Perceived lack of information necessary to exploit benefits of EU enlargement

Despite the lengthy negotiation process in admitting the latest 10 countries into the EU, a corporate opinion poll, conducted this summer



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- FreePint No.146 2nd October 2003. "Problems with Good Credit Information on Chinese Companies" and "Digital Preservation - Barbarians at the Gate"
<http://www.freepint.com/issues/021003.htm>
- FreePint No.122 3rd October 2002. "Effective Writing: How Good Copy Can Make Your Information Work Harder" and "From Knowledge Economy to Knowledge Ecology? - IBM's David Snowden Maps a 'Third Way' for KM at Open University Seminar"
<http://www.freepint.com/issues/031002.htm>
- FreePint No.97 4th October 2001. "Tax Links" and "Taxonomies are what?"
<http://www.freepint.com/issues/041001.htm>
- FreePint No.72, 5th October 2000. "Influence of the Internet on the Patent Process" and "All change for search technology?"
<http://www.freepint.com/issues/051000.htm>
- FreePint No.47, 7th October 1999. "Sources of UK Financial Information on the Internet" and "Getting Good References"
<http://www.freepint.com/issues/071099.htm>
- FreePint No.23, 1st October 1998. "The Good Times are not about to end, unfortunately" and "There's an awful lot of coffee in Brazil: Coffee information on the Web"
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suggests that vendors have failed to provide adequate information covering these new admissions. The survey was conducted by company information provider Kompass and UKeIG, the UK electronic Information Group (previously known as UKOLUG). The poll revealed that 66% of companies are planning to conduct research into the business opportunities offered by the enlargement, yet nearly half of the respondents - 47% - claimed that there are currently not enough information sources available to help them research the new EU countries and companies. Kompass and UKeIG plan to construct more corporate opinion polls over the next few months.

Still room for more new company data products

You might be forgiven for believing that the market was saturated with company information products, but a number of new ones have been launched in the last couple of months. The development of some of these products has led to some new and interesting partnerships between vendors and content providers and/or software companies.

Corpfin, which is well known for its M&A product CorpfinWorldWide, has launched CompanyQuery, a new UK company financial database that looks set to rival FAME, Business Browser and Plum. The initial product covers all UK limited companies registered at Companies House, from data supplied by Experian. The content set is currently being expanded, following the news that Corpfin has struck a deal with D&B to include its European company data on CompanyQuery. CompanyQuery will be the subject of an in-depth review in the November issue of VIP.

Bureau van Dijk has taken advantage of its partnerships with existing content providers to create MINT, a new UK product targeted at the desk-top market. MINT combines company data, news, director information and market research from 11 content providers. It doesn't offer the powerful searching and analysis functionality associated with many of BvD's corporate products; rather, its emphasis is on ease of use and simplicity. A review of MINT will also be published in the November issue of VIP.

As part of its strategy to create more revenue from the web, D&B has launched two more products on its D&B Access for the Internet (DBAI) platform. Global Reference Service provides integrated access to D&B's global database of over 80 million companies and its Who owns Whom data. A partnership with Anacubis means that, shortly, users will be offered options for visualising the results of a search and will also be able to explore corporate structures visually. MarketDirect, D&B's other new product, provides sales leads and marketing prospects on more than 20 million enterprises in Western Europe. Both of these new products were reviewed in the August issue of VIP.

News services looking to add value

Rather than carrying news of events that have just happened, a new service is adding value by providing its subscribers with advance knowledge of global geopolitical and business/economic developments, together with an analysis of their consequences. Every working day,

Earlywarning.com claims to explore the interface between economics, politics and government, throughout the world, in order to predict the impact the news will have on future events. The news of Earlywarning.com was featured in a recent issue of VIP Eye (No. 17, 15 September 2004). As well as describing the service in some depth, the feature ponders on the type of user the new service will attract by asking, 'Will casual users be willing to pay for a service when they're used to accessing news sites for free, and will serious users find it worthwhile when they can access much more analysis from products such as World Markets Research Centre, MyInsight and those offered by the Economist Intelligence Unit'.

Another new news service offers consumers suggested news stories based on what they have read previously. Newsbot is being developed by Microsoft who describes it as a 'first-of-its-kind personal newsstand'. It delivers headlines in seven different categories of news and information, and provides users with the latest relevant news stories at any time.

Search engines are developing higher levels of sophistication

Search engines currently mine only a small proportion of available knowledge and desktop search is the logical next step in their development. Google, Microsoft and Ask Jeeves are all working on their own projects. A small Anglo-American development has stolen a march on established search engine rivals by developing blinkx. The blinkx search engine is one of the first to mine both the web and the user's PC, in order to generate links to related concepts. It claims to understand the context of what the user is reading on the computer screen, such as documents, emails, web sites, news articles, blogs and videos. As the user scrolls through the text, blinkx works in the background connecting related information on the web and on the PC. It scouts for information in over 200 media types such as Word, Excel and PowerPoint documents, attachments to emails, Acrobat PDF files, blogs, and video and audio clips.

Find.com is a new search engine developed by FIND/SVP and Empire Media, in response to the results of a FIND/SVP survey which revealed that US businesses are throwing away billions of dollars in lost time due to ineffective and deficient research tools. Find.com is described as the first true search engine designed specifically for information professionals. It aggregates documents from major search engines and combines them with results from thousands of business web sites, plus premium research from well known business information publishers. The search engine uses clustering retrieval technology, which it claims, 'thinks like an executive by automatically anticipating additional classifications that may be relevant within a search and instantly organising them into folders'. A review of Find.com was published in the July 2004 issue of VIP.

Making sense of search is the theory behind the development of Textonomy Reveal, a new search engine that claims to, 'deliver relevant, coherent and accurate results based on the linguistic sense of the words used in a search'. Textonomy asserts that the only way search engines can overcome the problems of irrelevance and inaccuracy is by harnessing the power of human

linguistic intuition. Textonomy Reveal combines dictionary and encyclopedia definitions, with the knowledge inherent in the linguistic intuition of adult users of a language. In addition, the names of thousands of products and organisations, that form a crucial part of online searching, have also been included.

The brain behind Textonomy Reveal is Professor David Crystal, Chairman of Crystal Reference Group, and one of the world's authorities on reference publishing and on linguistics. Professor Crystal will be writing an article on: 'Take care of the sense, and the search engines will take care of themselves', in the October issue of VIP.

Aimed at business information researchers, the monthly VIP provides in-depth reviews of major products, while the fortnightly VIP Eye provides news and analysis of products, publishers and vendors. Further information is available at:

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

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