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## About FreePint

FreePint is a global network of people who find, use, manage and share work-related information. Members receive this free twice-monthly newsletter, packed with tips, features and resources.

Joining FreePint is free at <http://www.freepint.com/>, and connects information practitioners around the world with resources, events and answers to their tricky research and information questions at the FreePint Bar, our free online forum: <http://www.freepint.com/bar/>.

The FreePint Newsletter is available online in several formats and can be read, saved and forwarded at <http://www.freepint.com/issues/>.

## Editorial

What's the link between a bath, the back of an envelope, and a shed? No, I'm not leading into a poor joke that would amuse only a young child, but listing the three items chosen by the British Library to represent its new 'Business & IP Centre', the launch of which I attended here in London last week <http://www.bl.uk/bipc/>.



The theme of the launch was entrepreneurship, with the bath representing the 'eureka' moment, the back of the envelope being the common way to size-up an idea at the local hostelry, and the shed representing the prototyping and development of the concept.

It was good to be reminded what an incredible world-class resource the British Library really is, with a collection of over 150 million items. The event also reiterated how important creativity is in an increasingly competitive global economy, and encouraged us to get involved with the 'Gowers Review of Intellectual Property' <http://digbig.com/4fmyy>.

With impressive patent and market research resources, the Business & IP Centre will be useful when entering a new market, and we cover the complexities of entering the Chinese market in FreePint today. Although China is experiencing huge growth, it seems that even a simple project can quickly become extremely complicated if you don't have a knowledgeable plan.

Of course, doing the research is only half the battle. You then have to organise the information into some kind of presentable and understandable format. That's where today's article from Mary Ellen Bates will help, with tips on managing and sharing the information.

We hope you've noticed quite a change in the presentation of the online version of the FreePint Newsletter too. Simply compare the attractive layout of today's issue <http://digbig.com/4gsct> and the plain text formatting of issue 199 <http://digbig.com/4gsxc> to see the big improvement.

Please do use the 'FreePint Suggestion Box' to tell us your thoughts on these enhancements <http://www.freepint.com/suggestionbox.htm>. Or why not forward this issue of FreePint to a colleague? You could even check they've read it by asking them what the link is between a bath, an envelope and a shed.

Cheers

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Roddy MacLeod is Senior Subject Librarian at Heriot Watt University. Roddy edits the Internet Resources Newsletter <<http://www.hw.ac.uk/libwww/irn/>> and manages the PerX Project <<http://www.icbl.hw.ac.uk/perx/>>..

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

## My Favourite Tipples

by Roddy MacLeod

- Netvibes.com lets you personalise a 'home page' with various data feeds and services. If you try this site yourself, you'll quickly realise that it has fantastic potential <<http://www.netvibes.com/>>.
- Intriguing site! You can find the actual prices paid for recent UK property sales here, by post code or street address, and also register for email updates about sales <<http://ourproperty.co.uk/>>.
- I'd be lost without the Bloglines service, which lets me monitor 150 RSS feeds and weblogs for the latest news and events from any PC <<http://www.bloglines.com/>>.
- The CCLRC (Council for the Central Laboratory of the Research Councils) ePublication Archive is one of few sources of information about UK scientific and technical grey literature <<http://epubs.cclrc.ac.uk/>>.
- The Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) contains details of, and links to, nearly 2,000 free (open access), full-text, quality controlled scientific and scholarly journals. You can search many of them from this site as well! <<http://www.doaj.org/>>.

## The Library + Information Show, 26 + 27 April 2006, NEC Birmingham. Where the Library + Information Community Comes Together

With an exhibition showcasing the latest products and services in the market and a free seminar programme featuring leading figures and authors from the nations library community, The Library + Information Show will help professionals from the workplace, school, academic and public sectors to face the challenges in the library community today. Register now for free entry: <<http://www.lishow.co.uk/promo/freepint>>

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Factiva Search 2.0 Beta delivers superior results displayed with interactive charts, powerful filtering and intuitive navigation. It's so easy-to-use - everyone can find what they're looking for.

Try it today and see why there's nothing else like it. <<http://www.factiva.com/ad/2006/freepint/mar2>>

## NEW: Formatted HTML version of this newsletter

The online HTML version of FreePint is now formatted, with photos of authors, interactive elements and colour logos.

Read FreePint the way it's meant to be read. Visit:

<<http://www.freepint.com/issues/160306.htm>>

{ the simple truth }

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## Jinfo :: Jobs in information

[www.jinfo.com](http://www.jinfo.com)

The Jinfo service enables you to search and advertise 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 article is entitled "Starting from now". Read it online and subscribe free at

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

These are just a selection of the jobs in the current edition of the Jinfo Newsletter

<http://www.jinfo.com/newsletter/> and over 170 in the Jinfo database <http://www.jinfo.com/>

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

- **JOB SEARCHING?** -- Free search and sign up to the Jinfo Newsletter.
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Find out more today at <http://www.jinfo.com/>

### Information Officer

Key responsibilities are research & enquiry work, current awareness, & support/training on legal information resources.

*Recruiter: Blake Laphorn Linnell Solicitors*  
<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j4973>

### Operational Manager

Interest in digital & audiovisual material? User needs analysis, info service delivery & staff mgt experience? Check out this role.

*Recruiter: Sue Hill Recruitment*  
<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j4975>

### Team Leader Knowledge Management, European Research

As Knowledge Manager at Jones Lang LaSalle you will develop, implement and deliver KM strategy and initiatives.

*Recruiter: Jones Lang LaSalle*  
<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j4985>

### Senior Researcher (consumer sector)

Senior Researcher to work in the Consumer Business sector (may train in this sector) and contribute to brain-storming meetings.

*Recruiter: Glen Recruitment*  
<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j5004>

## FreePint Bar

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

Subscribe to the twice-weekly email digests at  
<<http://www.freepint.com/subs/>>

The FreePint Bar has been relatively quiet these last two weeks after passing the 30,000th posting mark. But we've still had a wide variety of postings, with something for everyone:

Kofi Annan made a "fantastic speech regarding poverty and poverty housing" on World Habitat Day (October 2005). Do you know where to find his whole speech?  
<<http://www.freepint.com/go/b38162>>.

Is there a UK or European organisation for researchers in the IT or communications industry? <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b38147>>. Or perhaps you know of a resource that provides links to websites that deal with UK environmental information?  
<<http://www.freepint.com/go/b37854>>.

This FreePinter is trying to find registration requirements for companies in various countries <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b38189>>. And another is looking for bilingual (Russian/English) business resources portals?  
<<http://www.freepint.com/go/b38148>>.

There are lots of international events on the FreePint Events page <<http://www.freepint.com/events/>> and the latest listings are posted at the FreePint Bar every week <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b38024>>.

We are looking for two people who are attending the European Business Information Conference in Italy on the 29-31 March 2006 to share their experience with those that can't attend. Can you help?  
<<http://www.freepint.com/go/b37957>>.

Is there anywhere this enquirer can find market reports by chapter or table, other than through Thomson Business Intelligence; "It needs to cover the same scope of industries and sources that TBI covers AND lets you buy selected parts of a report instead of the whole thing" <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b38168>>. And can you recommend a thesaurus for a further education establishment?  
<<http://www.freepint.com/go/b38103>>.

Lastly, a quick visit to the FreePint Student Bar: Could you advise on some good graduate trainee posts before this person starts their library and information studies? <<http://www.freepint.com/go/s5393>>.

That's it for this week, until next time.  
Penny Hann Production Editor, FreePint  
<[penny.hann@freepint.com](mailto:penny.hann@freepint.com)>

### VIP: Business information product reviews and news analysis

VIP, a monthly publication, offers in-depth, unbiased reviews of business information products, plus commentary by editor Pam Foster.

Over 1,000 senior information workers read it, with information budgets from GBP 45k to GBP 1.7m. If you fit this profile and you don't read VIP, then you're at a disadvantage:

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

### Researcha :: Immediate pay-as-you-go company data

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Researcha is free to search and view basic details, with convenient report delivery. Try it now:

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### Have a suggestion about FreePint?

Use the FreePint Suggestion Box to leave your anonymous comment:

<<http://www.freepint.com/suggestionbox.htm>>

### Web Alerts reviewed in VIP

Read three in-depth reviews in the February 2006 issue of VIP. Web Alerts, a current awareness and data warehouse service; The Mobile World, a statistical data and analysis tool; and Factiva Search 2.0, which offers new clustering and visualisation features.

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



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**Recently advertised job titles:**

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- Researcher
- Reference Librarian
- Part-time Library Manager
- Knowledge Co-ordinator
- Information Professional
- Know How Indexer
- Associate Researcher
- Telecoms Researcher
- Information Services Assistants
- Information Services Manager

Jinfo (pronounced 'Jin-fo') is **the** place to find and advertise jobs in the information industry.

The Jinfo Newsletter contains advice from recruitment consultants and a list of the latest vacancies in Jinfo.

Recent articles include:

- "Interview day blues (things they don't tell you about in books ...)"
- "Skills for Records Management"
- "How to give yourself the best chance of making it to interview"
- "Accentuate the positive - tips for handling rejection"

Search jobs, advertise and subscribe at [www.Jinfo.com](http://www.Jinfo.com)



*"The process couldn't be simpler, and the support we receive is exemplary. We would thoroughly recommend using them to support your dissemination needs."*

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Read about the Modules at [www.Willco.com](http://www.Willco.com)



**VIP**

In-depth, unbiased reviews of business information products.

**VIP Eye**

Insightful current-awareness analysis of business information trends. Now in HTML format for easy reading and usage.

**VIP Wire**

Post your business information press releases for free.

*"I am a recent subscriber and find VIP a wonderful source of information and have already benefited from its content." Knowledge Centre Manager, (UK).*

**Recent Reviews:**

- Web Alerts
- Mobile World
- Factiva Search 2.0
- Pay-as-you-go service
- Euromonitor
- LexisNexis
- Prospectus+
- Perfect DEBT
- Hemscott

**Forthcoming Reviews:**

- Euromonitor and Profound

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



## "Save yourself! Free resources for organising, maintaining and sharing the fruits of your web searches"

By Mary Ellen Bates



Mary Ellen Bates is the owner of Bates Information Services in Boulder, Colorado, providing business research to business professionals, and consulting and training services to the information industry. She can be contacted through <http://www.BatesInfo.com>.

As any researcher knows, web searching can sometimes produce a disorganised mass of results. Saving results in a format you can find and use later is more challenging than simply bookmarking a site or saving an HTML file to your hard drive. This article looks at some free resources any searcher can use to save, organise, search and even share the results of web-based research.

Yahoo! has several web search personalization features available; the one that is of interest in the context of saving web pages is My Web 2.0 <http://myweb2.search.yahoo.com>. Note that this is different from My Yahoo!. You have to log in to use My Web; if you already have a Yahoo! account, you use that ID and password. Otherwise, now is the time to sign up - all you need to do is select an account name, and provide your name and gender.

Once you have logged in, go to the My Web site and type in your search words, just as you would in the regular Yahoo! search page. The search results page looks just like the Yahoo! search page, with one exception - there are links at the end of each item that let you save that page. If you click the "Save" link, you'll get a pop-up box, in which you can select your options for saving. You can:

- change the title of the saved page; the default is the title of the web page itself.
- add your own notes about the page - what you found helpful in it, a reminder of the project it was for, a note about what's on the page, and so on.
- add tags - subject terms you can create to describe the page. Helpful tip: If you use the same tag for every page you save for a specific project, you'll be able to find them all easily.
- decide whether you want to share this page with others in your "community" (more about this later), with everyone on Yahoo! or limit access to only yourself.
- decide whether you want to archive a copy of the page, which means that you'll always be able to see what the page looked like when you saved it, even if it changes later.

Once you've filled out whatever items you want on this pop-up page, close it and you can continue with your search. That page, and any others you save, will be stored within the My Web section of Yahoo! and, depending on how you set the access, viewable by anyone within Yahoo!, everyone in your "community" or just you. Once you have finished your web searching on Yahoo!, go back to the main My Web page, or click the "My Web" link at the top of the search page. You will see a link labelled "[a number] Saved Pages" (e.g., "10 Saved Pages"). Click that link and you will see the list of all your saved pages, along with your notes, your tags, a link to the current version of the page and - if you selected the option - a link to the archived copy of the page.

Ask.com (formerly Ask Jeeves) offers a web-page archiving feature through its My Stuff page <http://mystuff.ask.com>. Registration is required; you are asked for an email address and a password. Once you log in, you type in your search words in the search box and click "Search the Web". As with Yahoo!'s My Web, the search results page looks like the one you would see from the regular Ask.com search site <http://www.ask.com>, except that each item in the search results includes a link to "Save". Click that link for each web page you want to save, and the text of the link changes from "Save" to "Saved". Unfortunately, you aren't able to edit the title or add tags when you save the web page; to do that, you need to return to <http://mystuff.ask.com>, click the "edit" link next to each saved page, and then edit the title or description of the page, or assign your subject words ("tags") to that page. Ask.com keeps track of what search terms you used when you retrieved a specific web page, which may be a useful feature if you need to repeat your search later. Unfortunately, Ask.com does not offer the option to archive a copy of the web site; if you click the link of any saved page, you will see the current version of the page, which may not necessarily be the same as when you saved the page. You can also organise your pages into folders, which may be a helpful way of keeping track of which pages were saved for which projects.

*Related FreePint links*

'Information and Libraries' articles in the FreePint Portal  
<<http://www.freepint.com/go/p69>>

Post a message to the author, Mary Ellen Bates 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/160306.htm#tips>>

Access the entire archive of FreePint content  
<<http://www.freepint.com/portal/content/>>

A9.com <<http://www.a9.com>>, the search engine owned by Amazon.com, offers a "Diary" feature that is somewhat similar to the My Web and My Stuff sites described above, although with fewer features. You'll need an Amazon.com account to use the Diary feature and you will need to have installed the A9.com toolbar <<http://toolbar.a9.com>>. The process of storing pages in the Diary isn't particularly intuitive, and you aren't able to tag your Diary entries as you can with Yahoo!'s My Web and Ask.com's My Stuff. When you are viewing a page you want to save, click the "Diary" icon on the A9.com toolbar. A box will open up between the toolbar and the web page, where you can type in notes about the page. Click the "Diary" icon again and the information on the web page, along with your notes, have been stored to your Diary. To view all your Diary pages, you can either pull down the Diary menu from the toolbar and select "See all Diary Entries" or you can go directly to <<http://diary.a9.com>>.

One limitation of both Yahoo!'s My Web and Ask.com's My Stuff is that they only store web pages that you found through a search on that engine. So, for example, if you conducted your research on Ask.com and stored your web pages in My Stuff, and then went to Yahoo! and stored pages in My Web, you will have two separate archives of articles for a particular project.

One workaround to this problem is to save all your pages to one search engine's 'my web' feature, and then use that search engine's downloadable toolbar to save any page you're viewing to your personal archive. For example, regardless of how you get to a particular page - through a Google search, an Ask.com search, or by going directly to the site - you can save it to Yahoo!'s My Web by clicking the My Web icon on the Yahoo! toolbar. This will prompt you to log onto Yahoo!, and it then takes you to a pop-up window where you can tag the site and save it to your 'my web' archive. Likewise, you can save any page to Ask.com's My Stuff by clicking the Save icon on the Ask.com toolbar.

In addition to free resources, several companies like Onfolio <<http://www.onfolio.com>> and NetSnippets <<http://www.netsnippets.com>> offer desktop software packages to help with post-search data management. Many have free trials, and even when you pay for a license, they are reasonably priced. However, you may find it helpful to start with the free web-based products, to get a sense of how you might use post-search tools prior to purchasing anything.

## Jinfo :: Advertise information jobs to 4,000+ job seekers

Advertising an information-related vacancy with Jinfo puts that position in front of 4,000 Jinfo Newsletter subscribers and the entire FreePint membership.

Find out more about listing a vacancy today:

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

### Let's Share

Yet another option for saving and organizing web pages are what are sometimes called "social bookmarking services" such as del.icio.us <<http://del.icio.us>> and Furl <<http://www.furl.net>>. The purpose behind these services is twofold:

- to let you store and organise your bookmarks on a password-protected web site, so that you can get to the bookmarks from whatever Internet-connected computer you are on.
- to share your bookmarks (or a selected subset of them) with others, and to see what other people have bookmarked; the theory is that, if you bookmarked a page and someone else did as well, the other bookmarks that person saved might also be of interest to you.

With both del.icio.us and Furl, you sign up and set up a free account, and then install an icon on your browser toolbar. When you see a web page you want to save, you click the icon and a window pops up, in which you can change the saved title of the page (the default is the web page's title), the URL, and insert any notes you want to add and tags or subject terms. One advantage that Furl has over del.icio.us is that it also allows you to archive an actual copy of the page into your private area; del.icio.us only saves the URL. With either service, you can use the tag or subject term field to organise your web pages by research project, or by other words that will help you find certain pages again.

You can also "subscribe" to other users' bookmarks, and get notified whenever those users add new bookmarks to their public accounts on Furl or del.icio.us. [If a user saves a bookmark and labels it "private", no one else can see that



bookmark]. And if you find a web page that is particularly useful, you can bookmark it and then see who else has publicly bookmarked that page and what other pages they have bookmarked. One very handy feature of Furl is the ability to generate a bibliography of saved pages in any one of several standardised citation formats.

Another option for sharing files, web pages, photos and music is eSnips <http://www.esnips.com>. Like Yahoo! My Web 2.0, it's free, and it lets you invite people to view (and, if you choose, edit and add to) your collections of information, organized in "folders". You have a lot more flexibility with eSnips than with Yahoo! My Web 2.0 in terms of what you share with whom. An eSnips account management page shows you your private and shared folders - for example, you can set up folders for your own use, a "documents for clients" folder, or folders for specific projects. For any folder, you can decide who can view them, whether viewers can also edit files and upload their own files to your folder, whether you need to approve the files before they're uploaded, whether they can add comments to your files, and even whether they can invite other people to view the folder. You can also "publish" folders so that they are viewable by anyone. The most significant advantage of eSnips is that, once you have downloaded the eSnips toolbar, not only can you upload files to share but you can also bookmark a page, save a snippet of text from the page, or archive the entire page in an eSnips folder. If you plan on conducting in- depth research with others, eSnips may be your best choice for creating a space where all of you can collaborate, share resources, and comment on saved files and web pages.

You can also share your results in Yahoo!'s My Web 2.0, if you create a "community" - essentially, a group of people you invite to join you. This is done through Yahoo! 360 degrees <http://360.yahoo.com>, a service that lets you create your own blog, upload photos, share your thoughts, and stay in touch with friends. To share your saved web sites with others, you log onto My Web 2.0, click the link labelled "invite", then provide each person's email address. Yahoo! will send an email to the people you want to join your community and, once they click on the emailed link and sign up for My Web 2.0 themselves, they will be able to view your stored web pages by clicking the link for "My Community's Pages". Your friends and colleagues can also save copies of your saved pages to their own My Web 2.0 page.

## Do you use DigBig to shorten long Web addresses?

Then please supply a brief testimonial: <http://www.digbig.com/testimonial.html>

"Really useful for our printed and electronic newsletters. Takes the headache out of mis- typing those ridiculously long web addresses."  
Information Co-ordinator, Nottingham (March 2006)

## FreePint Forthcoming Articles

[Provisional]

- Blind web accessibility
- Project management
- Delivering user education to a dispersed population
- Linking real-world local communities with online communities
- KM and blogging
- Monitoring and analyzing social media
- Content enrichment
- Customer service

If you have a suggestion for an article topic, or would like to write for FreePint, then please contact [penny.hann@freepint.com](mailto:penny.hann@freepint.com) or read the notes for authors at <http://www.freepint.com/author.htm>.

Note that when you set up your My Web 2.0 account, you may want to change some of the default settings. For example, the default for who can see the web pages you save is "Everyone", meaning that anyone else who has a Yahoo! account can see what pages you have saved. If you want, you can change that to My Community (meaning that only people you invite can see what pages you've saved) or even Me (no one else can see your shared pages, which would defeat the purpose of creating a Community, of course).

What is particularly noteworthy about the information profession is the increased importance in managing information rather than simply finding and delivering it to others. As we rely more heavily on web-based resources, the need for information-organisation and information-sharing tools becomes that much more critical.



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### VIP

Reviews of business information products published monthly.

VIP includes in-depth product reviews and comparisons, interviews with senior information industry figures and monitoring of research to identify future trends.

*"... has set the marker for excellence in product reviews for the information industry."*

### VIP Eye

VIP Eye is a current-awareness newsletter, analysing business information news announcements and trends twice-monthly.

*VIP and VIP Eye are edited by Pam Foster and are published digitally.*

*"... an excellent bi-weekly roundup of news in the information sector"*

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

### Published Reviews

- Web Alerts
- Thomson Business Intelligence
- Pay-as-you-go (Factiva, LexisNexis, Dialog, Alacra )
- Country Insight
- CI-newsdesk
- GMID (Euromonitor) and Market Indicators and Forecasts (EIU) (comparative reviews) Extra
- Perfect Debt and Europrospectus (comparative reviews)
- CoreReference and CoreCompensation (Hemscott) Extra
- Global Business Browser
- OneSource Express UK
- OneSource Express
- ISI Emerging Markets
- Mergent Online
- Hoover's
- CorpfinWorldwide v. ZEPHYR v. Thomson ONE
- Factiva SalesWorks and Factiva Companies & Executives
- EBSCO Bus. Source Corporate
- Business Monitor Online
- Corpfin's CompanyQuery
- BvD's Mint
- Dialog Newsroom v. Factiva v. LexisNexis
- D&B's Global Reference Solution and MarketDirect
- Gale Virtual Reference Library vs. xreferplus
- Find.com
- Thomson ONE Banker
- Times Digital Archive
- MyInsight
- Datastream Advance
- WorldData from EIU
- Advanced Country Analysis & Forecast
- Dialog's new unified platform
- Market Research on the Web
- ICC Plum
- Net Snippets Professional
- Hemscott Company Guru

### Testimonial

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Peter Huggins, Knowledge Centre Manager, The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport, UK

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## "Knowledge Management: An Integrative Approach"

Reviewed by Written by Meliha Handzic and Albert Z Zhou

Reviewed by Mandy Webster

Mandy Webster is the Library & Information Services Manager at Browne Jacobson Solicitors with a particular interest in KM, management systems and user education. She is the author of several journal articles and chapters of books on KM and legal information management. She writes for FreePint in a personal capacity.

This new title on knowledge management is intended to bring together different perspectives on the topic for the benefit of students, individuals and organisations wanting to discover the benefits and limitations of KM. The book also aims to help managers develop KM solutions.

It opens by examining different theories of what KM is. Later chapters progress logically through the business case for KM, the role of organisational culture and technology, processes for manipulating knowledge, including its creation and transfer, knowledge as a personal and organisational asset. It concludes with a review of the benefits and limitations of KM.

While there are ever-increasing numbers of books, journals and courses on KM claiming a pivotal role for it in business survival, we have no single, widely accepted definition of what KM is. The authors simplify the various theories by identifying three main schools of thought: the process- and technology-driven approach; the economic approach; and wider behavioural learning organisation approach. By setting out these three areas, the authors successfully set a context for the remainder of the book.

The main focus of the book is a discussion of various KM theories, supplemented with a number of short case studies scattered throughout each chapter to illustrate points in a more practical way. The case studies are one of the most interesting aspects, but might have been more usefully gathered together into an appendix, as there isn't a list of them. Some of the tables refer to case studies simply by name as illustrating a particular approach to KM, but it is difficult to then locate the case studies quickly as some, but not all, are listed in the index. The index itself is too short at only two pages.

Good clear explanations are provided the first time a technical term is used, and extensive references at the end of each chapter make the book very readable and a good starting point to pursue further reading on different theories and strategies. A glossary would have been a useful addition. The chapter on the role of technology in KM is very good and balanced, as too many people assume KM is all about technology. The final chapter offers an interesting examination of the tensions between protecting a company or individual's intellectual property, and making knowledge available to generate further ideas. Tables and case studies are

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excellent but a few screen shots and more detailed examples of concepts, such as visualisation tools, would be even better.

Despite the focus on theories discussed throughout the book, "Knowledge Management" also offers practical suggestions, such as how to develop successful knowledge repositories. It will probably be of greatest interest to students or anyone new to KM looking for a broad overview of different approaches, rather than anyone looking for practical tips and ideas, although such an audience may find the price (at GBP57) quite high. The end of chapter reference lists offer a good starting point for further reading and ideas for future research.

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## "Characterising the dragon - undertaking research in China"

By Mike Taylor



Mike Taylor has an engineering and sales background and joined Evalueserve in 2002, when it employed 45 people. His role at the time was to introduce the UK marketplace to KPO - Knowledge Process Outsourcing, using offshore teams to research and analyse data about markets, companies and products. Evalueserve has since grown to over 1,000 people in India and China, and Mike's role has expanded to running the UK sales team while still serving as account manager for a number of financial services, research and consultancy companies. Tel: +44 1763 837334 <<http://www.evalueserve.com>>.

Harold Geneen, the founder of MCI Inc., once said, "In the business world, everyone is paid in two ways: cash and experience. Take the experience first; the cash will come later".

When entrepreneurs and investors think about steering their companies towards Chinese shores these words should be remembered - learn quickly, as it could be some time before the cash starts coming in!

The Chinese economy, growing at a gravity-defying rate of 9.5 percent per year, offers immense opportunities, stemming from a population base of 1.3 billion souls. The success that global powerhouses like Nokia, Wal-Mart, Microsoft and Ikea have had on entering the Chinese market makes it tempting for smaller Western companies to try to piggyback the Dragon, but the scale and diversity of the Chinese market are incredibly daunting. Any researcher trying to understand Chinese demographics to facilitate the launch of new products or services needs to keep the wider picture in mind.

The disparity between east and west China is an interesting illustration. The China Human Development Report of 2005 gives an intriguing insight into the dynamics of the Chinese population. According to the report, China's Gini coefficient, representing income equality across the population, is more than 0.4 and on an upward trend (source - United Nations Development Program report on China, from 2005. Download of the full report available at: <<http://digbig.com/4gqwf>>).

Note:- The Gini coefficient is an Inequality Indicator - it measures the inequality of income distribution within a country, varying from 0.0, which indicates perfect equality, with every household earning exactly the same, to 1.0, which implies absolute inequality, with a single household earning a country's entire income. Latin American countries are grouped at the top of the scale, with Gini coefficients of around 0.5 - 0.55; in the UK the figure is 0.25.

This income disparity is particularly pronounced between the eastern cities of Shanghai, Beijing and Guangzhou, where consumers are looking for experiences and products on par with those in Hong Kong and most other developed markets, to the west of the country, where consumers are seeking far simpler functional benefits for much lower costs. For example, city-dwelling, office-working consumers of laundry products use washing machines and have more garments in their wardrobes. On the other end of the demographic spectrum, small-town blue-collar workers have different needs and requirements - a smaller wardrobe, washing them less frequently, and not necessarily using washing machines. For the record, the regional income-divide between the eastern (industrial) and central (agrarian) Chinese belts has surged from 1.42 to 1.52 in a span of six years, from 1997-2003, according to the UN China Human Development Report of 2005.

Each sub-segment is huge. As an example, China's top four cities alone - all on the Eastern coast of the country - account for a market size of over 30 million people. That's the challenge - carrying out meaningful research while dealing with a mind-boggling maze of data. Likely to drive a researcher up the (Great) wall!

### Variations on a Chinese theme

Imagine - 56 different ethnic groups speaking scores of different languages and dialects - astounding in their variation across the nation with myriad dialects and forms. To sum it up: the heterogeneity of the Chinese market requires researchers to look at it not as a single mass market, but as a large number of smaller markets. This makes designing a comprehensive questionnaire a tricky affair, needing to accommodate a wide range of disparate views, not to mention languages.

Collection of data and its collation is going to be tough. Ensuring that the sample of respondents corresponds to a representative slice of the market is a challenge which, from a Western viewpoint,

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can sometimes be overwhelming. A local Chinese partner will be able to help you decide which regions are the primary targets for the products or services you are researching, as well as which language will be most appropriate for those target groups. Without a local plan, deciding in London to conduct the interviews in 'Mandarin' will limit hugely both the respondents and the quality of the results.

To further muddy the picture, basic demographic information about the population provided by government agencies or culled from published reports cannot be relied upon, as illustrated by the official population figures. Since the 1970s, the communist regime in China has restricted couples to a strict 'one child' policy. It is believed that an unspecified number of couples may have hidden from the census authorities the actual (higher) number of offspring. One estimate pegs this 'unreported population' figure at over 100 million -- twice as big as the UK population!. (see Foreign Policy Research Institute report on "The limits to China Growth" Spring 2004: <<http://www.fpri.org/orbis/4802/dreyer.limitschinagrowth.pdf>>).

Primary data collection is complicated still further by variances in economic development, purchasing power, and cultural factors, all of which lead to differences in consumer behavior across and within the large and diverse regions of China. Concurrently, infrastructure problems and the size and heterogeneity of the market make it difficult to identify and select representative samples and to organize survey research. Phone-based research is also very hard to conduct - China's cultural norms call for face-to-face interviews traditionally using a female team. Other cultural differences are even more marked - our CEO was surprised when, after a lengthy, in-depth interview by a major national newspaper about Evalueserve and our plans in China, the (female) interviewer concluded by giving him a big hug ...

#### **Don't believe everything you read**

An additional complication on conducting primary research in China is that non-Chinese-owned companies are not allowed to build their own survey facility for B2B or B2C phone campaigns in China. As

a result, it is absolutely critical for any company trying to conduct research in China to develop local links and strong, trust-based relationships with good, Chinese-owned, primary research agencies.

Published company results in China are also not straightforward. Those of us who are accustomed to the strict, regulated reporting requirements of the West may get a severe headache when contemplating the multiple different ways of reporting the same information in China. External influence can sometimes mean that figures are amended before release, making reliance on a single source a high-risk strategy. Triangulation of data points through multiple sources and original modeling, when needed, are the only ways to ensure painting an accurate picture.

#### **With all these challenges, what are WE doing there?**

Evalueserve is a research company based in India. Since we were founded in 2001 we've grown to 1,000 full time, highly qualified research professionals who deliver desk research, financial analysis and B2B surveys for clients in the US, UK, Continental Europe and the Far East. Our client base is a mix of other research companies, who use us as a hidden back-office and some corporate clients for whom we either deliver one-off projects or build a full time, dedicated team.

Through 2004 we fielded increasingly frequent requests from our clients to study Chinese markets. We began by conducting research from our base in India, recruiting Chinese speakers and using Chinese partner companies for the B2B interviewing. This approach produced great results but was slow and more expensive than it should have been. We decided that the only way to accurately research the Chinese market was to be within it, so in mid-2005 we sent one of our senior guys to China to choose a location and open an office. He took with him one of our Chinese team members from our International Language Centre to help with local issues.



Two months after selecting Shanghai as a location, we had a fully-operational facility with seamless training, recruitment and IT systems linking into our India hub, and we were starting to train the first few team members in the our way of work. Now, five months from opening, the team comprises forty people working on live, paid projects for clients in London, New York, Tokyo and Hong Kong.

The opening of the office and starting to deliver work was surprisingly straightforward - there is significantly less red tape than in London or Delhi. Yet the infrastructure in Shanghai is of a similar standard to any modern global metropolis such as Paris, Manhattan or Sydney.

A key part of our business model is for the delivery team lead to interact directly with the client, without an onshore gatekeeper or project manager. This ensures no 'transmission losses', gives a much higher quality end-deliverable and gives the delivery team leads a much more rewarding job (thus reducing attrition). My personal experience during a recruiting visit to China in November was that students who are in the current graduation year have exceptional English language skills, but those who graduated three or four years ago are very variable - we could not use some of the most able candidates in a client-interfacing position without significant training. This is very different to India, where all students have their formal education in English from an early age, with the result that their English is normally significantly better than mine!

One additional benefit to being in China is that we are now much closer to the time zones of our clients in Hong Kong, Tokyo and Seoul, and can hire English, Chinese and Japanese speaking MBAs and finance graduates directly from the best universities in China, without the issues of bringing them to India.

Researching the Chinese market is not easy - it requires patience, a multi-region strategy and contacts with local companies who can help. The potential market, though, is huge for companies with the patience to understand what they're getting in to and wait for the returns.

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### Portugal:

- "IATUL 27th Annual Conference: Embedding Libraries in Learning and Research" 22nd - 25th March <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e675>>

### Italy:

- "EBIC 2006" 29th - 31st March <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e681>>

### Ireland:

- "The European Conference on Research Methods" 17th - 18th April <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e560>>

### United Kingdom:

- "An Instructional Design Masterclass" 21st March <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e669>>
- "Engineering Librarian Visit to Ratcliffe Power Station" 21st March <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e677>>
- "Firex South" 21st - 22nd March <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e616>>
- "How to buy e-learning" 28th March <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e668>>
- "Career tips for regional media librarians" 30th March <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e673>>
- "Open Source and Sustainability" 10th - 12th April <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e630>>
- "BCS IRSG Industry Day" 13th April <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e680>>

### United States:

- "Youth Marketing Mega-Event 2006" 27th - 29th March <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e650>>
- "IT Project Portfolio Management 2006" 3rd - 5th April <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e648>>
- "Longitudinal Patient Data 2006" 3rd - 5th April <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e649>>

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## Gold

A look back at what FreePint covered at this time in previous years:

- FreePint No.179 24th March 2005. "New Librarians and Open Positions: Bringing the Two Together" and "Key issues in complying with Freedom of Information legislation" <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/240305.htm>>
- FreePint No.156 18th March 2004. "Information Sources For Childcare On The Web" and "Curious about Clio? History and Historians on the Web" <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/180304.htm>>
- FreePint No.133 20th March 2003. "Military History on the Internet" and "Librarians & Comics" <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/200303.htm>>
- FreePint No.108, 21st March 2002. "An introduction to the Netherlands on the web" and "Evolution or revolution: the future of scholarly publishing" <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/210302.htm>>
- FreePint No.83, 15th March 2001. "XML - the DNA of the Internet" and "Freedom of Information" <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/150301.htm>>
- FreePint No.58, 16th March 2000. "Portals" and "WWW.OED.COM - A New Home for the Dictionary" <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/160300.htm>>
- FreePint No.34, 18th March 1999. "Pharmaceutical/health information on the Web" and "Who goes there...? - Access Control Issues for Internet-based information services" <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/180399.htm>>
- FreePint No.10, 19th March 1998. "Working the Net" and "Business and Accounting Resources on the Web" <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/190398.htm>>

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**ISSN:** 1460-7239

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