

**12 "Online Information Report: FreePint reports from this year's Online Information exhibition at Olympia"**

Professional development and technology reviews topped this years Online Information show in London, reports FUMSI senior editor Sara Waddington.

**17 "Consider the Source: A Critical Guide to the 100 Most Prominent News and Information Sites on the Web"**

Newspapers have been slow to adopt the Internet, but now they've broken away from an outdated mindset. This guide, reviewed by Graham Stewart, lists and reviews the top 100 online news sites.

**19 "1997-2007: A Decade of Find, Use, Manage, Share"**

FreePint has been covering evolution in these four core areas for 10 years. We've invited four experts in these fields to explain what these changes mean from a distance.

Plus ...

Jobs,  
Discussion,  
Tips, Reviews  
and Events



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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, which is 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



We love the end of the year, because it gives us a chance to look back at all the achievements from the last 12 months. But this year is special, because it marks Free Pint Limited's 10th publishing anniversary and gives us a chance to look back on the achievements in our industry from the last decade.

For perspective, we turn to four experts in our core areas (Marcy Phelps as our pro on 'find', Tim Houghton to tell us about highlights in 'use', Karen Loasby to talk about 'manage' and Jessica Lipnack to talk about what's happened in 'share') to give us an overview and perspective, as well as some indication of what's coming in future years.

It's a perfect segue into Free Pint's own immediate future

In January, we're launching FUMSI <<http://www.fumsi.com>>, a new online resource where you can see what's making the news in find, use, manage and share and meet the new FUMSI senior editor Sara Waddington.

You'll still be able to catch me on FUMSI as the Share editor, as well as Marcy Phelps as the Find editor, Tim Buckley Owen as the Use editor and Karen Loasby as the Manage editor.

That does not, however, mean less in FreePint. In fact, you'll notice more content in the FreePint Newsletter from January on, along with a user-friendly HTML design. We're growing and adding resources while continuing to focus on the quality content you've come to know for 10 years - practical, practitioner-written articles from our global pool of members and contributors, available to you, online for free.

Happy New Year to all. Look forward to the next FreePint in January - we'll see you then.

Sincerely,

Monique Cuvelier Editor, FreePint  
e: [monique.cuvelier@freepint.com](mailto:monique.cuvelier@freepint.com)  
w: <<http://www.onopoly.com/support/team/>>

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Arthur Weiss has written several articles over the years for FreePint - although probably none as memorable as the above. He specialises in competitive intelligence, and has recently completed a 500km+ sponsored cycle in aid of the children and family charity Norwood <http://www.norwood.org.uk>. He's still looking for additional sponsorship via <http://www.justgiving.com/arthurweiss> and can be contacted via his website <http://www.marketing-intelligence.co.uk>.

## My Favourite Tipples

by Arthur Weiss

FreePint is 10 years old this year, so I thought it apposite to list some of my favourite articles from FreePint's early years. Each contains links to great sources - although some are quite specialist and even eccentric. Each is a list of Tipples in its own right.

- "But what is it good for?" by Ian Watson - Issue 9 ([1998](#)) <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/050398.htm>>. Includes a great list of quotations denying the value of various innovations.
- "Lingo on-line - Languages resources on the World Wide Web" by Emma Thompson - Issue 39 ([1999](#)) <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/270599.htm#tips>>.
- "How will we survive Information Overload?" by Dr Pita Enriquez Harris - Issue 44 ([1999](#)) <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/050899.htm#feature>>. Still 100% relevant today!
- "Summoned by Bells" by Zena Woodley - Issue 92 ([2001](#)) <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/190701.htm#feature>>. This feature article on campanology was one of the more unusual topics covered by FreePint, showing the extremely wide range included in its content.
- "Librarians & Comics" by Emma Finney - Issue 133 ([2003](#)) <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/200303.htm#feature>> - looks at comics held in libraries.





### The Big Three Reviewed in November's VIP

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<<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j7951>>

## Records Manager - London

Full time temporary Records Manager position available within a government organisation based in London. GBP 21 per hour.

*Recruiter: Aslib, The Association for Information Management*

Country: United Kingdom

<<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j8158>>

## Strategic Research Executive

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*Recruiter: Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer*

Country: United Kingdom

<<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j8098>>

## Research Assistant

Provide support for the UK Information Service including assisting with Research enquiries using online information databases.

*Recruiter: TFPL*

Country: United Kingdom

<<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j8198>>

## Library and Information Resources Manager

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*Recruiter: Weekes Gray Recruitment*

Country: United Kingdom

<<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j8130>>

## Practice Development Executive / Business Development Executive

Support our business development, technical, legal & business research. A varied & rewarding role with excellent career prospects.

*Recruiter: Freshfields Bruckhaus Deringer*

Country: United Kingdom

<<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j8139>>

## Researcher / Knowledge/ Database Specialist

Junior Researchers (2) with some research experience for Central London Consultancy. Excellent training and prospects.

*Recruiter: Glen Recruitment*

Country: United Kingdom

<<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j8203>>

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## FreePint Bar



Monique Cuvelier is editor of the FreePint Newsletter. She has edited, launched and written for many magazines, newspapers and websites in the US and UK. Learn more about her at <http://www.onopol.com/support/team/>.

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

FreePinters are bound to feel akin to the Bar these days, especially with discussions of too many pints of cider and lists of fitness trainers. Also check out our pictures of our party at Online and get a sneak peek of FUMSI at the FreePint Bar <<http://www.freepint.com/bar>>.

- The holiday blues are liable to attack anyone during this emotional time of the year, and the FreePint Bar is no Exception. A topic has turned morose, as a researcher is looking for reports of a suicide in the Thames at Oliver's Wharf in 1932. On the bright side, some interesting sources for coroner's reports and old Newspapers have cropped up. See what's been dredged up: <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b221812>>.

- Many unlucky souls have felt close to death after an evening in front of too many rounds of cider. So it may be a relief that one researcher is looking into regulation of the marketing of super-strong cider drinks, possibly to save lives. It's an interesting topic that's caught the attention of some other researchers <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b223579>>.

- While looking for a past article from The Wall Street Journal, a librarian from the NHS turned up some advice on how to find old issues <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b223677>>. If you're looking to subscribe to Factiva, LexisNexis or Thomson, you might want to check VIP's review of the Big Three to decide on the best <<http://web.vivavip.com/go/vip/48>>.

- New Year's resolutions mean it's time to examine winter weight gain, so one Bar member's quest to find lists of personal trainers' websites <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b217902>> may be of use to the general public. Some helpful sites have been suggested.

- If we missed you at Online, you can see the par-tay as it happened with our online photo album <<http://www.freepint.com/go/b221788>>.

Also check out the form to register your interest in the new FUMSI.



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## "FreePint reports from this year's Online Information exhibition at Olympia"

By Sara Waddington

Sara Waddington recently joined Free Pint Limited as the senior managing editor for FUMSI <<http://www.fumsi.com/contact/>>. She has many years' experience as a writer and editor, focusing on technology, defence, robotics and other business topics, and previously worked for Jane's Information Group, among other organisations. She is based in the London area.

This year's Online Information conference and exhibition at Olympia (4-6 December 2007, Olympia, UK) attracted thousands of visitors, over 230 exhibitors and 900 conference delegates from over 43 countries. The exhibition is co-located with the Information Management Solutions event.

The exhibition showcased a variety of content resources and information management solutions. Visitors could learn about and develop new search and information management skills at many of the 110 free show seminars. These include Information Skills masterclasses and Career Development talks; Business Information in Focus; Challenges for Academic and Corporate Libraries; Content in Context; Web 2.0, Information Management etc. Presentations from many of these can be downloaded on the website at <[http://www.online-information.co.uk/online07/seminars\\_2007.html](http://www.online-information.co.uk/online07/seminars_2007.html)>.

The Online Information conference offered insight into learning; professional development; technology reviews and assessments; case studies and research results and opinions. Jimmy Wales, founder of Wikipedia and Wikia, gave a keynote address examining "Web 2.0 in action - free culture and community on the move." Over 80 international experts, academics and business leaders were included in the programme, which can be accessed at <<http://digbig.com/4wdpd>>.

### Notes from Conference Sessions

Prior to the event, we asked you, our readers, which sessions you wanted to hear about. Here are our notes on some of the sessions requested.

Information on Web 2.0 highlights from the conference was requested by the FreePint network. Jimmy Wales, in his Web 2.0 keynote address, discussed his initiatives to create rapidly growing new concepts for community development on the Web. Not stopping with the encyclopaedia, he is now working on the rest of the library and an innovative new search engine concept. He also spoke about how the free licensing models that made 'open source' the dominant software paradigm on the Internet are now pushing into content spaces and beyond. As part of his work at Wikia, Wales is developing a human-powered search engine ('Search Wikia') which, he says, will be based on the same open, community-driven principles as Wikia and Wikipedia.

A session on "Web 2.0 in Action (The Challenges)" was held on 4 December. In this session, three speakers, from Vodafone, ERM UK and Drugscope, outlined their views on social media, collaboration and time management.

Christian Schatzinger of Vodafone Group Services explained how Vodafone's wiki kept all its employees on the 'same page'. Bonnie Cheuk, head of knowledge and information (Global Knowledge Sharing Programme) at ERM UK, showed the audience how Environmental Resources Management has embraced Web 2.0.



Minerva, ERM's global Internet and collaboration portal, offers all ERM employees access to a range of Web 2.0 tools (eg My Profile, wikis, blogs, collaborative workspace etc). Dr Cheuk outlined the lessons learned from the experience as a result of a new style of collaboration and communication through Web 2.0. Comments from staff to the MD's blog also resulted in changes to the way that ERM approaches and handles certain issues internally.

The last presentation specifically requested by FreePint users was given by Anne Welsh, Information Officer at Drugscope (UK), entitled "We've got the technology, but how do we find the time?".

'What is needed to create a good wiki, blog and set of bookmarks is not any special technical skill but the ability to find, create and organise information,' she told the audience. 'Make time for development ideas. When creating your wish list, ie a blog, it is very important to think "big". Don't think "small" and try to scale up - think "big" and scale down.'

She advised the audience to keep up with new technology developments - these offer the potential for increased profit/profile, greater efficiency gains and the possibility of potential future new services or the development of existing ones.

She also had useful time and money-saving tips.

'Get on board with feeds,' she urged users. 'They can save a lot of time - they save us at least two days per week,

which we would have spent looking for new resources. The versatility of feeds means that any software that produces them (and all Web 2.0 software does) can be aggregated on to a main website, to cluster news and fresh information in whatever way is most useful to the end-user.'

She also stressed the importance of constantly reusing and repurposing material, ie press releases, blog articles etc, as well as sharing knowledge using wikis.

She also tackled topics such as how to keep the information flowing when you do not have a professional resource.

'Don't just do it because everyone else is or because it says Web 2.0,' she concluded. 'Do it because it meets your business efficiency and time requirements.'

OCLC, the world's largest library research and service organisation, also held a symposium, "Who's watching your space" on 5 December. John Naughton, Professor of the Public Understanding of Technology at the Open University and Observer journalist, examined the entire concept of social networking. Matt Brown, editor of Nature Network and blogger, outlined real life examples of social networking (including Second Life) using his experience from the scientific community.

Finally, Cathy de Rosa, VP Global Marketing for OCLC, presented results from OCLC's recent research report "Sharing Privacy and Trust in our Networked World". It examines four primary areas:



- Web user practices and preferences on their favourite social sites
- User attitudes about sharing and receiving information on social spaces, commercial sites and library sites
- Information privacy
- US librarian social networking practices and preferences.

The survey was sent to over 6,000 Web users aged 14 to 80+ in 6 countries.

'We know relatively little about the possibilities that the emerging social Web will hold for library services,' she explained. 'More than a quarter of all Web users we surveyed are active users of social spaces. As Web users become both the creators and consumers of the social Web, the implication and possibilities for libraries are enormous. The research provides insights into what these online library users will expect.'

Sample results indicated that, from 2005 to 2007, there had been a 33% drop in the use of library websites, reflecting the trend for users to find information from a growing number of sources. She pointed out that respondents had indicated a desire to have a two-way dialogue with information providers, urging librarians to find a way to do this online, and highlighted the potential of online resources (such as YouTube) for libraries to reach 'Google generation' users.

'On social networking sites, 39% have shared information about a book they have read, 57% have shared photos/videos and 14% have shared self-published information,' she explained. 'Online trust increases with usage. Respondents do not distinguish library websites as more private than other sites they are using. 13% of the public feels that it is the role of the library to create a social networking site for their communities.'

The report is available for download, free of charge, at <http://www.oclc.org/reports/sharing/>.

### A focus on FUMSI

It was a busy show for the Free Pint Limited stand, which celebrated the 10th anniversary of Free Pint Limited. Photos of our activities can be found at <http://www.freepint.com/portal/event/s/>.

As part of the celebrations, we made the award of the 'FUMSI Citation for Most Useful Article' at the Free Pint stand. Our editors reviewed the nominations and selected Heather Carine's article, "Mentors and Mentees: Structuring a Professional Relationship" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/240507.htm#tips> as the winner.

Heather, an independent information consultant based in Australia, was not able to accept her award in person; appropriately enough, however, her mentor, Amelia Kassel, was able to accept on her behalf. Heather receives a one-year subscription to VIP magazine <http://www.vivaVIP.com/>, and the

individuals who nominated her article will receive a one-year subscription to FUMSI, our newest offering, available from 2 January 2008 <<http://www.fumsi.com/contact/>>. Our press release, including Heather's remarks, can be found at <<http://www.freepint.com/press/citation-result.htm>>.

We also released the results of our FUMSI user survey, which highlighted the needs of information professionals (subscribers to the different publications and sites within the Free Pint Limited network). The results can be accessed on <<http://www.freepint.com/press/survey-oi2007.htm>>.

The latest FUMSI Report on "European Research Resources" was also highlighted at the exhibition. This is a convenient introduction to Web-based resources for a variety of important topics: government, news, companies, industries and more. The new report was prepared by frequent FreePint contributor Adrian Janes, and includes an index to all URLs cited, links to other resources including industry associations and other materials published by Free Pint Limited, as well as extracts from relevant in-depth product reviews published in VIP magazine <<http://www.vivaVIP.com/>>. For more details, please access <<http://web.freepint.com/go/shop/report/european-research/>>.

## News and product launches

The latest product launches, exhibitor news and show information can be accessed at <[http://www.online-information.co.uk/online07/press\\_show.shtml](http://www.online-information.co.uk/online07/press_show.shtml)>.

We hope to see you at the next Online Information exhibition, which has been scheduled for 2-4 December 2008 at Olympia!

## FreePint Forthcoming Articles

[Provisional]

- Ethical Acquisitions
- Special Collections
- Corporate IT convergence
- Collaborative Search Strategies
- RSS on the Go
- Managing a Team of Researchers
- The Leaving Employee
- Taking Enterprise from Web 2.0 to Web 3.0
- Prospect Research

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



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Director of  
Business  
Development,  
United States

## "Consider the Source: A Critical Guide to the 100 Most Prominent News and Information Sites on the Web"

Written by James F. Broderick & Darren W. Miller

Reviewed by Graham Stewart



Graham Stewart is a freelance writer. His website is at <http://www.grahamdstewart.com>.

Newspapers, as a species, were slow to 'get' the Internet. They tended to see it either as simply a repository of amateur opinion or as a frightening and confusing competitor. Nowadays, of course, even the most local of newspapers spawns an online presence to complement its print edition or, at least, to supplement the paper's advertising revenues.

News is ideally suited to an environment that thrives on frequent updates and the ability to cross-reference sources and stories. The problem faced by an audience hungry for news is not a lack of sources, but how to select meaningful voices among the clamour and throng of the Internet.

Broderick and Miller believe their book, "Consider the Source: A Critical Guide to the 100 Most Prominent News and Information Sites on the Web", is just the filter that we need. For a book that is some 450 pages long and whose purpose is to list and review 100 online news sites, it works surprisingly well.

The authors are both experienced reporters, and their guiding principle for the book is that, regardless of the medium, news is judged by the quality of its content. The tricky part is then to apply a consistent set of criteria across a range of sites that differ in political outlook and target audience. To a large degree, Broderick and Miller pull this off.

Each of the 100 sites gets about four pages of analysis, divided according to a straightforward template. After an overview that introduces the company behind the site, we get a description of the site's contents ('What You'll Find There'), reasons you might want to use the site ('Why You Should Visit'), a brief look at any hidden - or explicit - bias or agenda ('Keep This in Mind'), and a final judgment and rating.

Ratings run from one newspaper - 'Disappointing, definitely look elsewhere' - through to five newspapers - 'Superior sites worth checking in with every day'. Given the inevitable US weighting of the book and its authors, it is gratifying to note that of the five sites that merit five newspapers, two of them are British - the BBC and Guardian Unlimited.

Equally gratifying is the fact that Fox News cannot even muster one newspaper, and is paired with Rush Limbaugh at the bottom of the pile with a rating of only one half of a newspaper. When rating the Fox site, the authors say, 'unless you want neo-con spin and Republican-driven opinion, FoxNews.com belongs in the no-visit zone'.

This is obviously a book to dip into rather than read from cover to cover, but the opinions expressed on the sites I know are fair and balanced - not something that can be said of Fox News - and encouraged me to look at other sites, such as First Amendment Center and TomPaine.com, which were unfamiliar to me.

There is a decent index, and, better still, an associated website at TheReportersWell.com <<http://www.thereporterswell.com>>, with additional resources and updated information. I was dubious about the potential usefulness of a book as a guide to websites, but I find I refer to it now more than I expected.

So, I give it four newspapers - 'Very good information'.



### Line Up a New Challenge for the New Year

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## "1997-2007: A Decade of Find, Use, Manage, Share"

On the evolutionary scale, 10 years isn't even a blip, not a blink, not a breath in. It's hardly anything at all. But on the information scale, especially in the years from 1997 to 2007, a decade is a new mountain range, a new species, a new world.

FreePint has been covering this evolution revolution from tip to tail, keeping up with changes in the business information industry as they've happened. Now, as we celebrate our 10th birthday, we've invited four top experts in their fields of finding, using, managing and sharing information to explain what these changes mean from a distance.

By the time you read this, the landscape is likely to have evolved again - who knows what earthshaking ideas are rippling forth? Until then, here are the hottest trends in the last 10 years. We'll keep an eye on the seismograph while you read.

### Find By Marcy Phelps

During the past 10 years, the information industry has seen one significant trend that I call DIY. End users are doing their own searching, as well as creating and sharing their own content. The DIY trend has affected all areas of search, including who's doing the searching, what we are searching for, and where we do our searching.

It also has changed the role of the professional searcher, allowing us to add analysis and other value to search. Several significant



developments during the past 10 years have driven this trend toward DIY in search:

Google The Google.com domain was registered in September 1997, and the company officially incorporated in 1998. By then, we were already moving away from mediated searching. AltaVista, HotBot and other free tools were helping end users find information on the Internet.

Librarians were teaching patrons how to access database products. But it was Google, with its easy-to-use and clutter-free interface and heavy investment in R & D that brought searching to the masses. Today, 'google' is a verb and search engines advertise directly to consumers.

Personalised search lets users control search results, and anyone can even create their search engine. Not to be left out, the professional online services discovered and began to target end users. Forget professional-grade subscription fees, telnet and Boolean. To compete with Google, these companies now offer pay-as-you-go pricing and Web interfaces that make these products attractive to non-information professionals.

Web 2.0 More user-generated content means we are now searching for information in different formats; we're looking for up-to-the minute content, and users are demanding a say in the look and feel of their search tools. We are no longer limited to text-based content and peer-reviewed articles. Now images, blogs, audio and video files, books and other sources are routinely included in our searches.

These new resources have created a new sense of urgency, and we frequently need content that was created just hours ago. As a result, we've developed specialised search tools, and some search engines are experimenting with combining their various indexes into Universal Search - which displays all types of files in one results page. Comfortable with online interaction and no longer content with one-size-fits-all solutions, searchers today have the ability to create their own search homepage and change how results are displayed.

Mobile Search Not only are we doing our own searching, we're doing it anywhere we want. It wasn't long ago that we were chained to our desktop at home, work or the library. Internet cafes whet our appetite for searching on the go. Eventually laptops became lighter, and wireless connectivity made us free to search anywhere. Now we use handhelds. According to one study by Outsell, Inc., about two-thirds of their respondents were using wireless handhelds. Among those, 71% have moved beyond phone calls and text messages and access and use 'real' content on their handhelds. According to a recent article, we'll soon be able to search Google Maps at the gas pump. And with Google's recent entry into mobile operating systems, who knows where this will take us.

Google, Web 2.0 and mobile search have paved the way for DIY searching and, along with it, new roles for both information professionals and end users.

## Biography

As the company founder and president of Denver-based Phelps Research, Marcy Phelps <[mphelps@phelpsresearch.com](mailto:mphelps@phelpsresearch.com)> offers business intelligence and market research for business executives. Marcy publishes a free monthly e-mail bulletin, ResearchNOTES, with useful sites and tips for Internet research. To subscribe, go to <<http://www.phelpsresearch.com/research.html>>.

## Use By Tim Houghton



The blindingly obvious information trend of the last decade has been the development of the Internet and the continued growth of computing and digitization, which has led to a vast increase in the volume of information. A study by researchers at Berkeley University back in 2003 reckoned the global stock of information was increasing by 5 Exabytes per annum (that's 5,000 million Gigabytes).

But whilst the sheer volume of information has increased, many of the techniques employed to solve business problems - in other words, 'use' information - haven't changed. Spreadsheets are still a basic tool of analysis. Graphs are still a standard of visualisation. More complex techniques like regression analysis and scenario planning were around well before 1997.

Nevertheless, there are a few significant trends that emerge from the last 10 years in the field of using information. Here they are:

#### Business Planning Software

Large firms have been able to run sophisticated analyses of sales, cashflow and inventory since the adoption of the mainframe. But increasingly such systems can be used by any size firm, thanks to the growth and democratisation of enterprise analysis software. Think SAP for small businesses and Web-delivered systems like Salesforce.com.

#### Social Information Usage

Web 2.0 and social media are obviously all the rage right now, but actually using information collaboratively in a professional context has moved through two distinct phases. In simple terms, the period 1997-2002 saw increased collaboration within the enterprise via intranets. And post 2002, we have seen increased collaboration outside of the enterprise via blogging and extranets.

#### Semantic Web

In 1998 Tim Berners-Lee, one of the founders of the Web, wrote about his hopes for 'a logical web of data' or a Semantic Web. Nearly 10 years on, his vision has been partly achieved. Think how XML helps firms share data or RSS helps researchers track news. Or how open API's enable mash-ups of related data. This is leading to very great changes in the use of information whereby machines can read and

analyse information from multiple sources in real time.

#### Meaning-Based Computing

This is, in a way, the next step on from the Semantic Web. It involves computers actually extracting meaning from text in order to suggest relevant articles, conduct automated summarisation of articles and so on. In other words, it is computers 'using' information in ways humans used to. Important companies in the field include Corpora and Autonomy.

#### Computing-Based Decision Making

The logical conclusion of the ever-greater usage and digitisation of information is that computers can use information to make their own decisions. This for me is the most exciting and controversial development of the last 10 years. In many fields from medical diagnosis to bond trading computer systems have started to outperform their human peers. It was 1997 when IBM's Deep Blue computer beat the greatest chess player of modern times Gary Kasparov. Read Ian Ayre's fascinating new book 'Super Crunchers' to see why computers may soon be writing film scripts.

Looking forward to the next 10 years is always hard but the rise of computerised analysis and decision making seems set to continue. Does this leave no room for the talented human being to use data? Certainly not, for it is people that write the algorithms that data-processing

machines use. And there is still a place for intuition and creativity. Fortunately, humans aren't obsolete just yet.

### Biography

Tim Houghton is the founder and MD of New Media Intelligence, a Web clipping firm. New Media Intelligence monitors thousands of websites for news, allowing clients to keep up with the latest media developments online. The firm prides itself on its tailored approach and develops bespoke solutions for clients, including social media monitoring. Read more at <http://www.NewMediaIntelligence.com>.

### Manage By Karen Loasby

We manage many things within the boundaries of information. There are things that must be found, acquired, classified, organised, monitored, protected, archived and eventually disposed of. Curiously, we never talk about 'book management', but records, content, documents, digital assets and even knowledge are all managed.



Many of these phrases came into existence with the arrival of digital technologies in the latter half of the 20th century and by 1997 were common and accepted phrases. But the last decade has seen a growth in activity, discussion and jobs in these areas.

It is unlikely to be a coincidence that the decade has also seen the coming of age of the Internet. FreePint shares its 10th anniversary with the BBC's Website. Amazon was around in 1997, but Larry Page and Sergey Brin were still trying to get Google off the ground. Information professionals had certainly noticed the potential of the Internet by then, both as a resource and as a domain needing a touch of their expertise. At that time Lou Rosenfeld and Peter Morville were applying their information science training to the Web and writing the O'Reilly book, "Information Architecture for the World Wide Web".

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As the Web increasingly became a place of business as much as a place of anarchy and unrestrained freedoms, the need for some aspects of information management became clear, particularly data protection and copyright controls. Digital information brought new challenges in meeting freedom of information and other legal requests.

A new concept, knowledge management, built momentum throughout the decade. There was much debate about what differences, if any, distinguished KM from information management, but there was also an indisputable boom in intranets, information audits, corporate blogs and wikis.

Metadata became a surprising buzzword, bringing with it new terminology and applications, but in many ways tapping into old expertise in abstracting and indexing. Dublin core, taxonomies, XML, Semantic Web, topic maps, tagging and folksonomies were all part of the debate.

The term 'information architect' was coined in the 1970s but the new Web profession found its feet in the late 1990s. Information architects combined information management with ethnography, human computer interaction and graphic design to tackle the accessibility, usability and findability of information on the Web.

Web 2.0 arrived, identifiable in part by an enthusiasm for "tagging not taxonomy" <<http://digbig.com/4wdnh>>. Software developers were exhorted to rely on the wisdom of the crowds not the

commitment of librarians. Initially it felt like the digerati found information management concepts and rejected them in the space of the decade, but 2.0 poster children like Google's PageRank and Amazon recommendations remain 'managed' systems. They were not built and left to their own devices. The companies still plan where the users will contribute, design the systems that allow and encourage this, and then evaluate and report on how well the systems (and the users' contributions) are achieving the companies goals. There is still plenty of work to be done.

The next decade will doubtless see the arrival of a new thing to be managed but we are also still managing books thousands of years after they were invented. It is tempting to say that the one thing that we are guaranteed to need to manage is 'change', but we need to remember the similarities in the management problems we face as well as noticing the dazzling differences.

## Biography

Karen Loasby is Information Architecture Team Leader for BBC Future Media & Technology. She has been at the BBC for six years working on content modelling, controlled vocabularies, metadata schema, automatic indexing and trying to support organisational memory. She writes at <<http://www.iaplay.com/>>.



**Share By Jessica Lipnack**

Though born half a century ago for the very purpose of sharing, the Internet's contribution to collaboration only began to flower in the virtual recent past.



In 1997, going online still was new in many places, including most developed countries. Dial-up meant that people ran mental meters while online (the faster you got off, the less it cost); being on the Web at work was highly suspicious; and it was still reasonable to ask, 'Are you on e-mail?'

'You had to go to IT to negotiate projects for massive systems if you wanted to collaborate', says Michael Sampson, principal at Collaboration Success Advisors. 'Now it's a credit card and \$49.99/month for Confluence. Collaboration was an add-on-you did stuff then thought about how to share. Now it's core to products.'

Collaborative Strategies' David Coleman marks 1997 as the formative year for 'real-time collaboration'. With the advent of Web-conferencing companies like Centra and WebEx, screen-sharing across distance turned simple. Everyone could look at the same information simultaneously without having to be in the same location. We take it for granted now but remote screen sharing was a breakthrough for conference calls.

Just as the dot-com bubble inflated, online team rooms sprouted across corporate networks. Products like Lotus Notes and eRoomwere standard bearers for a new way of working

asynchronously. Though their forebears (EIES, c. 1975 and MetaNet, c. 1982) had been providing online collaboration environments for decades, the late-1990s team room made work-at-a-distance significantly easier. (Disclosure: My company, NetAge, designed Livelink virtualteams for Open Text).

Fast-forward to the year 2000 bubble-burst and the birth of the supernova: Wikipedia. Many global experiments in massive numbers of people working together preceded the Wikipedians but none matched their collaborative heft. The electronic encyclopedia of eight million pages in 250 languages arising from voluntary collaboration was a landmark in human cooperation.

Peer-to-peer computing, the ultimate in you-me and me-you collaboration (or stealing, depending on your perspective) made headlines then too. And, lest we forget, instant messaging, another early Internet feature, and text messaging also burst onto the scene at the dawn of the 21st century, radically transforming quick information exchange.

Advance the clock to now, when we're in the middle of the Web 2.0 era. Over the past few years, a lifetime in collaboration, the underlying technology that allows us to share everything in multiple media with a few clicks is so good that it's 'our bad' if we can't work together online.

'I could go on poetically for hours about the 'prince of social software' - the wiki,' says Loretta Donovan, Adjunct Assistant Professor at Columbia University. 'Its ability to allow

co-creation both synchronously and asynchronously ... [and] retain archives is the essence of collaboration.'

Wikis, blogs, and social networking have radically altered collaboration. The just-for-kids nature of online social networks is growing up even as I type.

What's next? Haven't even mentioned Second Life and the other virtual environments yet, again with deep roots, but now they're going mainstream. Increased bandwidth, better compression algorithms, and faster transmission speeds will bring these 3-D collaborative technologies inside companies, Coleman says. And, before long, holography will be a commodity, real-time language translators will be commonplace-and our skill in dissolving distance itself will morph into something we can barely imagine.

### Biography

Jessica Lipnack is CEO of NetAge <<http://www.netage.com>> and co-author with Jeff Stamps of many books, including "The Age of the Network" and "Virtual Teams". Her blog: <http://www.netage.com/endlessknots>.

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- "Information Law for Information Professionals: What you need to know about Copyright, Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Accessibility and Disability Discrimination Laws" 19 February 2008 <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e964>>
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- "JISC Conference 2008" 15 April 2008 <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e973>>
- "Blogs, RSS and Wikis: tools for dissemination, collaboration and information gathering" 22 April 2008 <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e968>>

**Czech Republic:**

- "International Outsourcing Forum" 31 January - 3 February 2008 <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e971>>

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- "3rd International Conference on Information Warfare and Security" 24 - 25 April 2008 <<http://www.freepint.com/go/e985>>

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## Gold

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

- FreePint No. 220 21st December 2006. "Convergence Counselling: Integration of IT Departments and Libraries" and "2001 to 2006: Five Years of Information Architecture" <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/211206.htm>>
- FreePint No. 196 15th December 2005. "Information Sources for Social Exclusion On The Web" and "Online Information Conference 2005" <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/151205.htm>>
- FreePint No. 173 16th December 2004. "Outsourcing Research to India" and "The Open Archive Initiative (OAI) and Google Scholar" <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/161204.htm>>
- FreePint No. 150 11th December 2003. "Taking a look at media information professionals and asking: what makes a successful conference?" and "From Fortune 500 to Handelsblatt's European 500 two years on - a final look at some useful European and International Rankings" <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/111203.htm>>
- FreePint No. 127, 12th December 2002. "Home Pages: Websites for the Homeworker" and "Archive Television - A Survey of Websites" <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/121202.htm>>
- FreePint No. 102, 13th December 2001. "Tracking the Net" and "Free Pint In 2001" <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/131201.htm>>
- FreePint No. 77, 14th December 2000. "A Look at Online Auctions" and "Horseracing on the Web" <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/141200.htm>>
- FreePint No. 52, 16th December 1999. "Free Pint in 1999" and "Review of Online Information 99" <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/161299.htm>>
- FreePint No. 28, 17th December 1998. "Review of Online Information 98" and "Free Pint in 1998" <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/171298.htm>>



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