Free Pint ®

"Helping 45,000 people use the Web for their work"
24th January 2002 No.104

Editorial

The rush has certainly been on with our January Sale after we opened the doors in the last issue. We've welcomed a number of new Regulars (paying supporters) who used the sale code "round-house" to get an additional free month. The "buy one get one free" offer on advertising, job listings and company reports also went down extremely well and many happy customers left with their sale bags bulging. If you fancy nabbing a bargain then it's not too late to find out more at <http://www.freepint.com/shop/>.

There are plenty of specials in today's Free Pint too. We start with a generous helping of tipples, followed by Simon's excellent round up of the latest research questions at the Bar. There's a timely article about the Winter Olympics, followed by a personal account of harnessing the power of wireless technology in libraries.

If you're a regular visitor to the Bar then you'll have seen our new weekly postings listing the latest additions to Free Pint Jobs on Tuesdays and Free Pint Events on Thursdays. To receive these by email, sign up for the Bar Digest by logging into your account online at <http://www.freepint.com/subs/>.

Whilst you're there you might like to sign up to the free fully-formatted version of this newsletter in Adobe Acrobat (PDF) format. It's much easier to read and uses much less paper when printing out. Take a look at today's PDF version at <http://www.freepint.com/issues/>.

Finally, on the topic of additions to Free Pint Jobs, thank you to AstraZeneca, Alacra Inc., Glen Recruitment, Sue Hill Recruitment and City Professionals for listing their vacancies in today's edition.

Thank you too for reading Free Pint and sharing it with your colleagues.

Regards
William

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Online Version
with Activated Hyperlinks
<http://www.freepint.com/issues/240102.htm>

Adobe Acrobat Version with
Newsletter Formatting
<http://www.freepint.com/issues/240102.pdf>

About Free Pint

Free Pint is an online community of information researchers. Members receive this free newsletter every two weeks 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 the substantial archive of articles, book reviews, jobs, industry news & events, with answers to your research questions and networking at the Free Pint Bars. Free Pint Regulars (paid-up members) also receive a weekly current awareness newsletter, discounts and publicity.

Please circulate this newsletter which is best read when printed out.

To receive the Adobe Acrobat version as an attachment or a brief notification it's online, visit <http://www.freepint.com/subs>.

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When Researching Company Directors, Is 8 Pounds Much Money?

An Individual Director Report from Free Pint's company research gateway provides a wealth of information on all UK company directors. Nationality, DoB and home address. You even get basic financials for all associated companies, even for resigned directorships.

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My Favourite Tipples from Matt Kilcast

- <http://www.itpapers.com/> - A mixed bag of articles on every aspect of IT, and a fairly thorough starting point (free, but registration required).

- <http://www.plastic.com/altculture/> - Scour alternative and pop culture references at plastic.com's cultural encyclopedia.

- <http://web1.archive.org/> - provides some interesting historical background with a vast archive of website snapshots from the last few years.

- <http://www.prognosisx.com/> - The InfoSysSec Portal is a comprehensive list of IT security and hacking reference materials.

- <http://www.snopes.com/> - Co-worker with a chain email habit? This is a pretty good bet for debunking urban legends.

- <http://www.transportforlondon.gov.uk/> - London bus, train, tube, DLR, tram and river journey planners all in one place.

- <http://www.whatis.com/> - Useful IT glossary, including a thorough list of file suffixes, which always comes in surprisingly useful.

Matt Kilcast <http://www.fervent.co.uk/> works in IT security and web usability in London. Football provides some light relief, though - <http://football.guardian.co.uk/Games/Cartoon/Index/0,6243,,00.html>.

Tell us about your top five favourite Web sites. Email simon@freepint.com

Free Pint Regulars
<http://www.freepint.com/regular>

Results of our "Invisible Web" competition are still coming in and so we've decided to extend the closing date for entries.

If you're a Regular and would like to win one of three copies of "The Invisible Web" by Gary Price and Chris Sherman, then tell us about your favourite invisible Web site. Full details at <http://www.freepint.com/issues/100102.htm#regulars>.

We've been receiving some great feedback about the weekly Pub Crawl. Simon does an excellent job of reviewing free full text articles appearing in a whole raft of information and Internet-related publications. It's unmissable, as one Regular wrote to confirm:

"The latest Pub Crawl is great.

I got a lot out of it." Susannah Ross http://www.freepint.com/go/r30082

If you have suggestions of new publications for Simon to monitor, or other feedback, then do write and let us know.

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

[If you are not currently a Free Pint Regular and would like to find out more about the benefits of membership, then please visit the Regular homepage at <http://www.freepint.com/regular>. Regular membership is just 60 pounds per year (US$85, AUS$169 or 97 Euros) and Regulars receive the weekly "Pub Crawl" current awareness newsletter, discounts and publicity.]

Free Pint Gold

This time last year we ran a resource-packed article reviewing sites of use to the UK voluntary sector. There was also an interesting look at the future of online business news and the implications for information professionals.

- Free Pint No.79, 18th January 2001. "Internet Resources for the Voluntary Sector" and "Online Business News: A Tale of Boom and Bust?" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/180101.htm>

Two years ago, Free Pint's William Hann wrote about preparing and promoting your site using search engines. This was in the days before paid placements which we will be covering in a forthcoming edition of Free Pint. In fact, there are a whole bunch of resources for Webmasters in the Free Pint Portal at <http://www.freepint.com/go/p183>. There was also an in-depth look at architecture resources on the Web.

- Free Pint No.54, 20th January 2000. "Search Engine Promotion" and "Architecture: the science and art of finding it on the Web" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/200100.htm>

In 1999 we talked about how to evaluate the quality and reliability of Internet sources. There was also an article by the current European Special Librarian of the Year (ESLY), Annabel Colley. You can nominate someone for this year's award at <http://www.freepint.com/go/b15277>.

- Free Pint No.30, 21st January 1999. "Information quality on the Internet" and "Computer Assisted Journalism" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/210199.htm>

The tips article four years ago was also by William Hann, and looked at how to understand the page errors you often see when surfing the Web. The feature looked at medical sites, and it's good to see that most of the sites reviewed back then are still thriving.

- Free Pint No.6, 22nd January 1998. "Diagnosing Web Problems" and "The Best Medical Information on the Web" <http://www.freepint.com/issues/220198.htm>

Free Pint Fact

We welcome feedback on any aspect of Free Pint and have been delighted with the results of some recent face-to-face discussions with avid Free Pinters.

For instance, it seems that the "Preferences" feature in the Free Pint Bar is almost unknown, and when told about it users were amazed at how configurable the Bar actually is. Also, there was much talk about the way Free Pint Jobs works.

We're working hard on all the feedback we've received, but of course if you have any of your own then do send it to <support@freepint.com>.

Free Pint Bar
In Association with Factiva
a Dow Jones & Reuters Company
Reviewed by Simon Collery
<http://www.freepint.com/issues/240102.htm#bar>

Free Pint Bar <http://www.freepint.com/bar>

[Note: To read a posting enter the message number in place of XXXXX in the address <http://www.freepint.com/go/bXXXXX>]

A Free Pinter who keeps his ear to the ground says he's heard that the newswire, World Reporter, has been discontinued (15172). Oddly enough I haven't heard talk of this elsewhere. Have other Free Pinters heard anything?

While we are on the subject of reporting, I reviewed a useful site for journalists and other researchers this week (15252) and one about online texts (15044). We have also been directed to resources covering currency conversion (14929), business forums and newsgroups (14977), upcoming PR opportunities (15037), data on countries around the world (15056) and competitive intelligence (14902).

Further resources have been recommended for listings of UK private banks (15087), science and business parks (15170), free ISPs (14983), free merger and acquisition information (15030), dates of upcoming events (15050), business books due to be published (15105), timeline data (15033), bank sort codes (15070) and free pre-1988 Statutory Instruments (15234).

By the way, working in the information industries as many of you do, some of you must know of people you'd like to nominate for the European Special Librarian of the Year Award. You'll find all the details in the Bar (15277)!

Busy researchers have been enquiring about the information revolution (15093), working from home (15061), examples of good accountancy Web sites (15242), lists of job descriptions (15078), the medical equipment market (15196), US companies doing business in Latin America (14930), 'Nigerian' type scams (15045), ratios of IT support staff to non-technical staff (15059) and marketing contacts by sector (15052).

Other areas of research are UK specialist recruitment agencies (14950), movements of fund managers between investment houses (15094), grocery sales statistics (15027), water company closing prices for 2001 (14954), directories of leisure companies (15053) and companies in which the UK government holds a substantial share (14955).

There were several search related postings about things like Northern Light's recently announced reduction in free services (14964), search engine market shares in the US (15203), the relative merits of the Opera browser (15047) and museum cataloguing taxonomies (14941). There is also a question about whether Teoma is any good, because it doesn't appear to list the questioner's site (15004).

There have been techie questions about bulletin boards for a small online community (14942), Excel formulae (14961, 14927), creating thumbnails (15145), email

survey software for Macs (15205), Access 97 problems (14973), multiple Internet connections (15215), designing demo CDs (14917), 'favourites' programs (14974), Nero CD software (15013), using fonts in Psion (15223) and advice on IT courses (14905).

Miscellaneously, Free Pinters have been looking into buying post offices (15008), the game of Go (15021), Latin and Italian translations (15071, 15151), song lyrics (15228), phrase origins (15019, 15035), vision statements (14898), recommendations for IT courses (14982) and the whereabouts of a former German POW camp at Bad Langensalza (15058).

Free Pint Student Bar
<http://www.freepint.com/student>

[Note: To read a posting enter the message number in place of XXXX in the address <http://www.freepint.com/go/sXXXX>]

An enquiry about pre-library school placements resulted in some excellent advice on how to go about finding a position (2133). This is just the sort of thing the Free Pint Student Bar was intended for, so we are very grateful to those involved.

Other course information was sought on accredited PhD programmes in MIS (2116), market intelligence studies (2129) and PhD travel grants (2108).

Students have been busying themselves researching airport retailing (2101), the graphical user interface (2130), library management skills (2100), setting up a stock shot footage library (2120), post- coordinate and pre-coordinate retrieval systems (2127), Irish civil service exams (2124), European employment statistics (2109) and Celtic symbols (2105).

Finally, there were two questions which were so vague I'm not sure if anyone will be able to answer them, one on accountability frameworks (2128), the other on music databases (2135). For future reference, you have much more chance of getting a response if you make your query as focused and specific as possible.

Simon Collery, Content Developer
<simon@freepint.com>

If you have a tricky research question or can help other Free Pinters then do post a message at the Bar <http://www.freepint.com/bar> or the Student Bar <http://www.freepint.com/student>.

Factiva Brings Back Its Favourite Information Professional!

Remember Isabella Larsen, the Director of Research for Risk-eGames.com and the fictional heroine of a serialized mystery story by Jane Kelly, published last year on our InfoPro Portal? Well, Isabella is back and in just as much trouble as before, this time in Los Angeles - the site of the 2002 Special Libraries Association conference. So, find out more about Isabella in LA at
http://www.factiva.com/infopro

Free Pint Jobs
<http://www.freepint.com/jobs>

As well as the listings below, you might also like to check out the new weekly Bar posting which lists the latest additions to Free Pint Jobs. This week's edition is at <http://www.freepint.com/go/b15267>.

Here are some of the latest featured jobs:

Market and Sector Analyst
<http://www.freepint.com/go/j1522>
For strategic in-depth analysis and report-writing across a broad range of sectors. At least 5 years related experience.
Recruiter: Glen Recruitment

Business Information Executive
<http://www.freepint.com/go/j1526>
Banking or consultancy junior research experience? Online skills? Great perm job available in Knowledge Unit at accountancy firm.
Recruiter: Sue Hill Recruitment

Freelance Indexers
<http://www.freepint.com/go/j1549>
Freelance indexing of European business-related web sites for an established Internet business portal.
Recruiter: Alacra Inc.

Assistant Records Manager
<http://www.freepint.com/go/j1558>
Opportunity for an experienced records manager who has recently completed a postgraduate course in archive or records management.
Recruiter: City Professionals

Information Science Team Leader
<http://www.freepint.com/go/j1582>
Major pharmaceutical company requires an Information Science Team Leader to provide value-added information services.
Recruiter: AstraZeneca

[The above jobs are paid listings]

Free Pint Jobs is THE place for information-related vacancies. Whether you're job searching or have a position to fill, you should be using Free Pint Jobs.

Candidates: It is free to search the database and you can set up a profile to be notified weekly by email of relevant new vacancies.

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

Events
<http://www.freepint.com/events>

The Free Pint Events database has lots of events listed for March and April, but February seems to be very quiet on the conferences front. There is a two day event from Pira International on Digital Rights Management in The Netherlands <http://www.freepint.com/go/e93> and another two-days in Ottawa, Canada from Competia on best practice sharing for managers in the public sector <http://www.freepint.com/go/e96>.

In March things hot up with conferences from the AUKML, TFPL and three events from Information Today. Visit <http://www.freepint.com/events> for full details.

Do watch out for our new weekly "event additions" posting at the Bar. This week's can be seen at <http://www.freepint.com/go/b15191>.

Details of many other conferences and exhibitions in the information industry can be found on the Free Pint Events page <http://www.freepint.com/events>.

Submit details of your event for free promotion, and keep us informed about any changes to current listings.

"Regular" membership gives you a lot for 5 pounds per month

As a Free Pint Regular you receive the weekly "Pub Crawl" current awareness newsletter, entry in our member directory and discounts.

Use the code "round-house" in January and get an extra month free. Find out more about the benefits at <http://www.frepint.com/regular>

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" Making It Personal: How to Profit from Personalization without Invading Privacy"
Written by Bruce Kasanoff
Reviewed by Paul Pedley

'Making it personal' explores the impact of 'personalization' technologies which are capable of gathering data on behaviours and preferences.

Personalization technologies have the potential to add value for customers wishing to do business online. They can do this by making services simpler to use, less expensive or more convenient for the customer. But Kasanoff believes that most businesses don't start from thinking about the potential benefits to customers, but rather they think about how the technology can be employed to extract more money from the customer.

The author believes that in any relationship between an enterprise and a person, the enterprise must acknowledge that the person has a right to control and access his/her personal information; and that without such an understanding there will be no trust and no lasting relationship.

Kasanoff says that the paradox of personalization is that people increasingly expect personalization, but if you get too personal they get scared and want to have nothing to do with you. The book explores the need to get the balance right between personalization and privacy. Kasanoff asserts that there will eventually be only two types of companies in the world:

* those who treat individuals in a personal manner and make healthy profits; and

* those who treat everyone the same and must scratch and fight to break even.

Kasanoff says that direct marketing is becoming unacceptably invasive. He believes that the use of personal information for advertising is likely to become outlawed or highly restricted by new legislation. He says that one thing is certain: technological advances will force change in the laws around the globe that protect individual privacy. The problem, of course, is that the technology changes faster than the laws will.

I found this book absolutely fascinating, and didn't want to put it down. To be able to say that about a book covering data protection and privacy issues is no mean feat.

'Making it personal' gives us a glimpse into the future. We see how personalization technologies that already exist might be used in the future, as well as being given the chance to consider how new technologies might develop. In a very readable style we are presented with a number of scenarios which illustrate real-life challenges.

The book is written for people who work in business to help them understand how technology is changing business relationships and what they should do about it.

Bruce Kasanoff was one of the original partners of the Peppers and Rogers Group. He is founder of the on-line newsletter 'Inside Privacy' and he maintains a website at <http://www.insideprivacy.com>.

Paul Pedley <paulpedley@eiu.com> is Head of Research at the Economist Intelligence Unit. He is the author of a number of books for Aslib and is currently developing a one day training course on data protection issues to be held in February 2002.

Related Free Pint links:

- Find out more about this book online at the Free Pint Bookshelf <http://www.freepint.com/bookshelf/personal.htm>

- Read customer comments and buy this book at Amazon.co.uk <http://www.amazon.co.uk/exec/obidos/ASIN/0738205362/freepint0c> or Amazon.com <http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/ASIN/0738205362/freepint00>

- "Making It Personal: How to Profit from Personalization without Invading Privacy" ISBN 0738205362 published by Perseus Publishing and written by Bruce Kasanoff

- Search for and purchase any book from Amazon via the Free Pint Bookshelf at <http://www.freepint.com/bookshelf>

- Read about other Internet strategy books on the Free Pint Bookshelf <http://www.freepint.com/bookshelf/strategy.htm>

To propose an information-related book for review, send details to <bookshelf@freepint.com>.

Tips Article

<http://www.freepint.com/issues/240102.htm#tips>

"Winter Olympic Adventures Online"
By Marydee Ojala

Most people travel to the Olympic Games. A lucky few have the Games travel to them. I'm one of those lucky people: some 40% of the events in the Salt Lake City Winter Games 2002 (the 19th occurrence of Olympics featuring winter sports) will be held in the Park City, Utah, area, where I now live and work. Park City Mountain Resort will see Giant Slalom, Snowboard, and Halfpipe; Deer Valley Resort has Slalom, Freestyle Moguls, and Aerials; and the Utah Olympic Park (known to locals as Bear Hollow) is busy every day with Bobsleigh (Bobsled in U.S. English), Luge, Skeleton, Ski Jumping, and Nordic Combined (the jumping part of it). You may not be familiar with Skeleton - it's a new Olympic sport this year. Those three venues will be supplemented by the nearby Soldier Hollow venue (about 15 miles from Park City) that will host Biathlon and the skiing portion of Nordic Combined.

We are preparing, as a community, to welcome the world in February to Park City, home to three ski resorts - and awesome summer mountain biking should you not be attending the Winter Olympics. A major way to prepare, at least from the perspective of the information professional, is to identify sources of information about the Games. When the Park City Library began its planning for collection-building and resource identification a few years ago, there were not many Web sites around. As an event that happens every four years, there's a definite cyclical element to information. As the Games come closer, more local sites spring up, only to disappear as the world's attention shifts to the next venue. Four years ago I followed events in Nagano on sites that no longer exist.

Information about the Olympics falls into several categories: the official organizations, unofficial observers of the Games and the sports (personal and political), news outlets, and sponsor pages.

The Olympic Family

At the top of the Olympic hierarchy, it's not the ancient Greek gods who rule, it's the IOC, headquartered in Lausanne, Switzerland. The International Olympic Committee (IOC) is the supreme authority for Olympic matters, both Winter and Summer. The IOC Web site <http://www.olympics.org> or <http://www.olympics.com> is well designed and visually attractive. (Don't make the mistake of guessing the URL as <http://www.ioc.org>. That's a religious site "powered by Jesus" and maintained by the International Outreach Center in Miami.)

The official IOC site has both an English and a French language interface. It's a complex site with many layers. You can learn more about the IOC itself, visit the Olympic Museum (information on the library is included here), look at the Olympic Television Archive Bureau, and discover what's going with Olympic Collectors. Particularly interesting is the amount of history, facts, and figures that's packed into this site. If you want to know the differences between the ancient Olympics and the modern ones, who Pierre de Coubertin was, the role of women in the Olympic Movement, or timelines for various events, this is the place to go.

There is also information on the World Anti-Doping Agency, likely to be increasingly important as the doping issue comes forward as a major challenge to the Olympic movement. In addition to the deep pages on the IOC site, there are links to the upcoming venues for both Summer and Winter Games. That would be Salt Lake City for 2002, Athens for 2004, and Torino for 2006. Beijing will host the 2008 Summer Games but has no Web site yet. There are also lists of the National Olympic Committees (NOCs) and International Sport Federations from which you can click directly to their Web sites, if they have one.

National Olympic Committees

Each country has its own Olympic Committee. In the United States, that's the USOC, headquartered in Colorado. On its Web site <http://www.usoc.org> or <http://www.olympic-usa.org> you will find trivia quizzes, tips from athletes and sports experts, information about who has qualified for which U.S. Olympic team, and press releases about the Games. More than most NOCs, the U.S. site concentrates on the personalities of the Olympic athletes, treating them not just as athletes but also as human-interest stories. It's similar to the approach of the U.S. television networks in their Olympic coverage.

Jamaica, made famous in the film Cool Runnings for its bobsled team, claims to have an official site <http://www.jamolympic.org>, but wouldn't open for me. The British Olympic Association <http://www.olympics.org.uk> provides Olympic News Alerts for both summer and winter sports. There are also lists of medal winners and information on tickets to events. Most of the official NOC Web sites are in the national language and very few bother with an English translation. For example, the Suomen Olympia-komitea <http://www.noc.fi> is in Finnish; the Danish site <http://www.dif.dk> in Danish (DIF stands for Danmarks Idraets- Forbund).

Regardless of language, most NOC Web sites include a brief history of the Olympics, the latest news on their countries' Olympic sports events, and names of athletes who will be participating in the Games. New Zealand <http://www.olympic.org.nz> even posted a request for volunteer health team workers for the Winter Games.

Each venue has a Web site. Obviously, this is a recent development, so you won't find Web sites for Olympic sites that pre-date the Internet. Nor is there any guarantee that venues will maintain or update any information on their Web sites after the Olympics have finished in those cities. The official site for Nagano closed a few years ago; you are now redirected to the IOC's Museum page. However, CBS archived its footage on the Nagano Games <http://cbs.sportsline.com/u/Olympics/nagano98>. To find the upcoming venue sites, you can either go to the main IOC site and click on the venue you want or type its URL. Salt Lake City is <http://www.saltlake2002.com>; Athens is <http://www.athens.olympic.org/en>; and Torino is <http://www.torino2006.it>.

At the Salt Lake site, which is actually created and maintained by Microsoft and NBC, you will find a complete schedule of events, transportation data, and a link to ticket sales, along with the latest news and information on the Torch Relay, Paralympic Winter Games, and the Olympic Arts Festival. You can also sign up for News Alerts.

Sporting Chance

Oh, did I forget? The Olympics are about sport. Most sports have a national and sometimes international association, some with a Web site, some not. There are only seven International Olympic Winter Sports Federations, compared with 28 for summer sports. The sports represented are biathlon, bobsleigh and tobogganing, curling, ice hockey, luge, skating, and skiing. There are an additional 30 Federations recognized by the IOC, most of which are for sports not yet deemed Olympic sports. Examples are billiards, dance, orienteering, bowling, chess, and tug of war.

The United States Ski and Snowboard Association (USSA), with offices across the street from my office, has the Web site <http://www.ussa.org>. Separate areas of the site are designated for the individual sports that USSA governs: alpine, cross-country, ski jumping, snowboarding, freestyle, and disabled skiing. The common elements to the sites are schedules of competitions, rankings of athletes, and explanations of the sport. Some include biographies of the athletes. The USSA site also has a TV schedule.

At the U.S. hockey site <http://www.usahockey.com> you'll also find an Olympics poll, and the luge site <http://www.usaluge.org> invites you to a luge fantasy camp where you can pretend you're a luger.

Although it's not a winter sport, the swimmers have created an extensive International Swimming Hall of Fame <http://www.ishof.org> complete with museum special displays. I particularly like the Vee S. Toner Display on the history of the Amateur Athletic Union in the U.S. It was my Aunt Vee who introduced me to the Olympic Movement when I was still in primary school and I'm thrilled to see her volunteer work recognized.

The Open Directory Project has a nice list of links to Olympic sports <http://dmoz.org/sports/events/olympics>. However, it is biased towards summer sports. There are many more sites identified for the Summer Games than the Winter and no sites at all for winter sports. Canada's Sports Information Resource Centre, producer of the SPORTDiscus database, created another interesting set of links. Its SPORTQuest <http://www.sportquest.com/resources/Olympic-games> has a section for Winter Olympics that contains links to (mostly) Canadian Halls of Fame and Museums and to news sites. The latter could be improved by spell-checking and duplicate elimination.

News

Sport is big business and the Games are no exception. Some of us, raised in the tradition of amateur athletes, are uncomfortable with this. But it's reality today. The local media, the trade press, and major media all cover the Olympics, but with hugely different perspectives. Plus, media coverage differs considerably depending upon

sponsorships and national sports interest. The Finnish media puts considerably more emphasis on ski jumping, for example, than the British press. Canada's coverage of ice hockey is much more extensive than is that of Italy.

Although the U.S. network NBC has exclusive rights to televise the Games in the U.S. (and it's in charge of the official venue site), rival network CBS has mounted an extensive Web site of news and information <http://www.sportsline.com/u/olympics/2002> and has valuable archival data. Local Salt Lake NBC affiliate, KSL, has created an informational site with newspaper Deseret News <http://www.wintersports2002.com> that tracks recent news and has Nagano statistics. The combined CNN/Sports Illustrated page <http://www.cnnsi.com> is another site with in-depth Olympics coverage. Online directories, such as Yahoo!, have created a section for Olympics news. Yahoo!'s was not operational over the summer, but began updating again this past autumn.

The local perspective is always a little different from that of national and international media. For the 2002 Winter Games the obvious local news sources are the Salt Lake Tribune <http://www.sltrib.com> and the Deseret News <http://www.deseretnews.com/dn/oly>. The Tribune has initiated a special section on the Olympics in print and has carried that over to its Web site. Even more obscure would be the newspaper from Park City <http://www.parkrecord.com>. It only publishes twice a week, although there may be daily editions during the Games, but it includes not only national and international wire service stories related to the Games, but very local concerns including profiles of Olympic athletes who live here and the traffic situation during the Games.

The Nay-Sayers

Not everyone thinks the Olympics are a godsend. There have been critics for a long time. One of the most vocal is Andrew Jennings, British investigative journalist, who documents Olympic Family abuses of power and money. If you think bribery was invented in Utah, you should read Jennings' books. The first one I read was The New Lords of the Rings; his latest is The Great Olympic Swindle. According to Amazon, the latter ranks 115,874 in sales in the UK and 136,993 in the U.S. It is most popular, says Amazon, in Xmission. That's amusing, because Xmission is the largest ISP in Utah.

The Olympics as a Site of Controversy is how University of Queensland researchers title their unofficial Olympics Web site <http://www.sjc.uq.edu.au/projects/Olympics>. It talks about the Atlanta and Salt Lake City bids in the U.S. and ticketing scandals in Sydney. On a lighter note, there's NOCOG (Not the Organising Committee for the Olympic Games), also in Australia <http://www.nocog.org.au>, which was upset that the torch for the Sydney Olympics bypassed Cook Shire, so ran its own alternative torch run.

Then there's the issue of terrorism. When I first proposed writing this article, despite the fact that I was at the 1972 Summer Games in Munich during a terrorist episode directed at Olympic athletes, I never truly thought this would be a recurring theme. Certainly there has always been a threat and the entire Olympic Movement has never been entirely free of political pressures. However, after the events of September 11th, the mood here has changed. It's not as lighthearted and we've been told that security will be very tight. You will not find a Web site detailing how security will be handled.

Going for the Gold

The hills are alive with the sound of - cowbells? There's been a vehicle seen around Park City lately that is completely covered with paintings of cowbells. There's also a URL painted on the car. It's <http://www.cowbell.com>, owned by Moen Bells of Norway, the manufacturer of cowbells. The Henriksen/Butler Design Group <http://www.hbdg.com> has introduced a limited edition of an Aeron office chair with the official Salt Lake Organizing Committee emblem woven into it. The official licensee for sweaters, Dale <http://www.dale.no>, has a special part of its Web site for Salt Lake City 2002 sweaters and blankets. Most of the U.S. Web sites, including those for the Olympic Committee and the sports associations, have a shopping area.

Collectors of Olympic memorabilia have moved onto the Web with a vengeance. At the IOC's Collectors link, you'll find the International Olympic Memorabilia Federation, which specializes primarily in coin and stamp collections. Pin traders/collectors, though not mentioned at the IOC site, like the Web because they can see pictures of the merchandise they're trading. Pin trading sites come and go. Your best bet is using a general search engine to search for "pin trading" AND Olympics, when you want to locate existing sites.

Whether you're able to come to Utah for the 2002 Winter Games or content to watch it on television, it's clear that the Web has become indispensable for those interested in following either a favorite sport or the Games as a whole. Particularly in times when traveling is problematic, the Net, with its myriad of authorized and unauthorized sites, acts as an alternative to actually being there.

Plus, you're likely to stay a whole lot warmer sitting in front of your computer than you'll be standing in the viewing areas for ski jumping, cross country skiing, or aerials.

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**" Using Wireless Technology –
where does the library fit in?"
By Mary Peterson**

At the Online Information conference in London in December 2001, I spoke on how my library is taking up the wireless idea, specifically with hand-held devices, sometimes known as Portable Digital Assistants (PDAs) e.g. Palm Pilots, Compaq iPAQs. What I thought I'd do here was provide a personal view of the advent of this technology on the practice of librarianship. To do this, I'll look at the effect these devices are having on the work practices of our clients - library users - and how their expectations are in turn being changed.

Background

I work in a library serving a large teaching hospital and a pathology and research institute. Our users are clinicians, laboratory workers, academics and researchers. Their information seeking patterns and hence their demands on the library service vary. Academics and researchers perform complex searches of the published literature and often request large numbers of journal articles via our document delivery service to supplement that which we can supply from our own collection. Laboratory staff and clinicians use the library to find answers to tricky clinical questions or problems which may arise. Clinicians working in areas where quick responses are needed, such as the intensive care unit or accident and emergency department, use the library services for only minutes at a time, but the answers they find can be life-saving.

These people rarely come into the library itself. We've noticed that use of the library's suite of PCs has diminished over the past two years. Most of the core information they need is available electronically - a fairly standard trend in the area of information delivery. But the advent of the hand-held computer has given them another platform through which to get at the information they need. Our task has been to find out what type of "library" owned information is best suited for the hand-held device.

The changing role of the library

One of the maxims of special librarianship (where a library serves a specific user group: a legal firm, an engineering company or staff of a hospital) is that in order to be really effective, the librarian needs to have a real understanding of how the library users work, what other systems they use, what sort of information they need, when they need it and where they'll be using it.

The intranet rollout represented a major change in the way our patrons used our services. As they no longer needed to come to the library to use our electronic services, we could no longer spot someone having difficulty with an online

search, or not finding an item they were seeking from the library's collection. We relied on them to contact us if they needed help, and were aware that this didn't always happen. Since many of the difficulties our patrons encountered stemmed from a lack of familiarity with the way the Internet worked - even how to use a web browser - we instigated a program of hands-on Internet courses. In the first year after the intranet was rolled out (1999), we held a course every month, with a limit of 8 participants to ensure plenty of individual attention. We never had fewer than 6 participants, and we have continued to offer the course in subsequent years, albeit at less frequent intervals.

Our experience here isn't unique - in fact user education is a regular item on library conference programs. What it demonstrates is that the librarian's role has changed from being the evaluator, custodian and organiser of information to include disseminator and teacher. The 'librarian-as-trainer' has started to make regular appearances in the library literature.

This role has been enabled by the advent of the new technologies of the past, say, 20 years. (Remember microfilm? One of my horror memories is that of trying to demonstrate a reader-printer to a group of senior physicians, and having the roll of film spring out of the spool and snake its way among their legs.)

Wireless and the hand-held device

Different types of devices have made their appearance in recent years. Free Pint had an article last year which provides a good summary of the different types of hand-held devices around, with plenty of links to relevant websites <http://www.freepint.com/issues/200700.htm#feature>.

However, wireless connections were also tried and are being used in some libraries with laptops. Library patrons bring their laptops with them, are issued with a wireless card, insert it into their machine and they have access to the local network which may or may not include Internet connection, depending on organisational policy. This type of connection proved popular in many US hospitals - not only in the library, though that was where several pilots were done - and is still in use.

Tablets have also been trialed in hospitals as an alternative to a mobile laptop. For some introductory information about tablets, see: <http://www.pcworld.com/news/article.asp?aid=9254>. The Women's and Children's Hospital in Adelaide, Australia, trialed wireless connection to their electronic patient records using tablets in the renal unit in early 2001. Since the screen is about the same size as a laptop and the operating system was identical to that used by all the PCs (Windows), the tablet had a high level of acceptance among the clinicians. They didn't have to learn anything new! However, tablets don't seem to have taken off in the same way as the hand-held device. I'd argue that

this is due to the aggressive marketing of the hand-held PDA.

Hand-held devices offer a different approach to displaying information, bringing both advantages and disadvantages. They're smaller and lighter, to begin with. But their size makes them easy targets for theft, and the screen isn't always easy to read. Different models also have different operating systems, which makes it impossible to share resources between them. Until all hand-helds can be web-enabled, this will mean that they will depend on access to downloadable products, which again will be limited by the memory size of an individual device.

The information imperative

One of the more significant trends of recent years in health care has been the move towards evidence-based practice. Essentially, this means that clinicians should base their practice on the best possible evidence which shows that treatments will be effective and do no harm. Since research in medicine is widespread and ongoing, it is impossible for practitioners to read all the published information in their areas of interest, expertise or need. To this end, various groups such as the Cochrane Collaboration in Evidence-Based Medicine <http://www.cochrane.org/> produce regular reviews of the literature and treatments which distil research results into a readily digestible form. A good starting point for reading about EBM is the ScHARR website <http://www.shef.ac.uk/~scharr/ir/netting/>. In Australia, the Federal (National) Health Minister recently indicated that practising according to the best available evidence could soon become mandatory, which has put health professionals under pressure to ensure that their access to information is timely and current.

Enter the library

In the clinical setting, clinicians have access to the library's electronic information sources on the networked computers in the wards, or via the Internet from home. However, with the advent of the hand-held computer and its use at the bedside, we began to look at the library products which were available for them which would assist in clinical decision-making at the point of care.

First, we categorised our electronic products into groups:

* Drug databases
* Prescribing aids
* Dictionaries
* Textbooks
* Databases such as Cochrane and Medline
* Full-text linked to the above
* Electronic subscriptions to individual journals.

Of these, the first four we felt would be suitable for use with a PDA at the bedside. However, the trials in hospitals in South Australia were done using a PC compatible device (iPAQs), and none of the products for which we had licences were available in a downloadable form. We therefore tested the Internet versions, which, although they worked, weren't really suitable as the display was designed for larger screen sizes. But with the wireless-enabled iPAQs, our clinicians were able to use our "library" drug databases at the patients' bedsides to look up drugs before prescribing - something which one young doctor described as "just soooo cool!".

Conclusions

How does this affect the way we work as librarians? We have to be aware of our patrons' work patterns, which means going and watching them using the tools we provide. If I had not seen the squashed display on the small screen I may have incorrectly interpreted the enthusiastic response to the trial as "everything's okay". It's not. I must now begin negotiations with my product sources about developing a web-based PDA compatible display.

Similarly, I must develop a PDA version of the relevant sections of our website - the pointers to the look-up databases, for example. Perhaps we can develop a "Request a literature review" button so that our patrons can ask for information to be supplied later, via email. I have a few different ideas on how I'd approach this one.

Our user's expectations of the library service have, of course, increased. It means they can get to look-up information as and when they need it most. It therefore falls back on us to look for this type of information resource when we're renewing our licences or our suite of electronic resources, and negotiating with product developers to ensure that we can buy the resources in the appropriate formats.

But the greatest things to come out of the trial are almost immeasurable. Goodwill. Enthusiasm. Support.

Higher profile for the library. Which all boils down to teamwork.

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Many thanks for reading today's Free Pint. If you've enjoyed it then do tell your colleagues. If it's raised an issue that you'd like to discuss then join us at the Free Pint Bar or contact me directly.

See you in two weeks!

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