

## 13 **"Practice What You Preach: Building and Gaining Credibility with Clients"**

Lesley Robinson draws on her experience as an independent information consultant to advise on developing professional relationships and credibility with a client base.

## 19 **"Top Books and Websites About Publishing"**

Louis Rosenfeld, an information architecture expert who has recently launched an innovative publishing company, selects his favourite publishing resources.

## 21 **"Enterprise Search: Rethinking It in a Web 2.0 World"**

The Web 2.0 environment has raised the bar for information professionals involved in enterprise search. The Jet Propulsion Laboratory's Jayne Dutra explains the new way of thinking.

Plus ...

Jobs,  
Discussion,  
Tips, Reviews  
and Events



## Contents

Editorial	3
By Monique Cuvelier	
My Favourite Tipples	5
By William Hann	
Jinfo :: Jobs in information	8
FreePint Bar	11
Tips Article	13
"Practice What You Preach: Building and Gaining Credibility with Clients"	
By Lesley Robinson	
Review	19
"The New Publisher: Rosenfeld's Top Books and Websites"	
By Louis Rosenfeld	
Feature Article	21
"Enterprise Search: Rethinking it in a Web 2.0 World"	
By Jayne Dutra	
Events	26
Gold	27
Contact Information	28

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## About FreePint

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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



So much for chestnuts roasting and cozy fires. This December, I'm giddy about Online Information. Over the last few weeks, FreePint has been expressing its excitement by giving previews to some of the most noteworthy presentations at the conference, held 4-6 December in London.

In this issue, we give you a glimpse into two topics that are bound to resonate many times during the event: enterprise search 2.0 and becoming a better independent professional.

Jayne Dutra, the lead enterprise information architect for the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in California (yes, the same place that sends high-profile missions to Mars and Saturn), talks about the new frontier of enterprise search in a Web 2.0 world. Compare her piece with Judith Koren's feature in our last issue about global collaborative search <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/081107.htm#feature>>. Both Koren and Dutra will be presenting at Online, if you want to learn more.

Lesley Robinson gives practical tips on how to create better relationships with clients, which she'll expand upon during her presentation at Online. For more information about working independently, turn back to Joanna Ptolomey's feature in our last issue about how to create a methodology for building business <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/081107.htm#tips>>.

This issue's Tipples come from another person who will be at Online Information - at the Free Pint Limited stand, in fact. William Hann founded FreePint 10 years ago. Today he shares some of the tools he keeps on his desktop.

I'm also extremely happy to feature a list of favourite resources on publishing from Louis Rosenfeld, co-author of the "Polar Bear Book", otherwise known as the best-selling title "Information Architecture for the World Wide Web" from O'Reilly. Rosenfeld has recently launched an innovative new publishing company.

Please make sure to check in with FreePint at Stand #122 if you'll be at Online Information in December. We'd love to meet you.

Sincerely,

Monique Cuvelier Editor, FreePint  
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w: <<http://www.onopoly.com/support/team/>>

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William Hann is the founder and publisher of FreePint <william.hann@freepint.com>.

## My Favourite Tipples

by William Hann

Looking in my Windows system tray, the following always-on applications would be the first I would load, should I ever need to replace my computer:

- Logmein <<https://www.logmein.com/>> gives me secure virtual access to my computer from anywhere in the world. Indispensable.
- The Firefox browser is slower to start than Internet Explorer (IE), because IE remains partially resident in memory even when closed; behaviour mimicked by the Firefox Preloader <<https://sourceforge.net/projects/ffpreloader/>>.
- Fax Machine <<http://www.nicocuppen.com/>> receives faxes and can email them as a PDF attachment.
- The latest version of Skype <<http://www.skype.com/>> finally has a typing indicator. Upgrade if you're using an older version.
- Freemeter <<http://www.tiler.com/freemeter/>> shows my RAM and CPU usage, telling me why my PC has frozen or why the fan is whirring to cool the CPU.
- Clockx <<http://clocx.php5.cz/>> displays a simple always-on-top analogue clock.



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Country: United Kingdom  
<<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j8017>>

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Country: United Kingdom  
<<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j8023>>

**Legal Information Officer**

Permanent role for an experienced legal information professional.  
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Country: United Kingdom  
<<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j8041>>

**Legal Researcher**

You will be an experienced legal information professional or a law graduate seeking experience in a legal research environment.  
Recruiter: TFPL  
Country: United Kingdom  
<<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j8045>>

**Strategy Research Associate**

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Recruiter: Sodexo  
Country: United Kingdom  
<<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j8051>>

**Manager of World Class  
e-Content Publisher**

Initiate and negotiate new opportunities to grow the use of Polymerlibrary.com.  
Recruiter: Smithers Rapra Technology  
Country: United Kingdom  
<<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j8061>>

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### Prospect Research Manager

Lead a programme of research to support the work of the fundraising and alumni relations teams.

Recruiter: University of Exeter

Country: United Kingdom

<<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j8074>>

### Assistant Records Manager

Role to assist Records Manager with developing and implementing records management plan, 3 months initially, may go longer.

Recruiter: Sue Hill Recruitment and Services Limited

Country: United Kingdom

<<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j8077>>

### Global Knowledge Analyst - WEYBRIDGE, Surrey

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Newly created position for expanding global organisation.

Recruiter: Glen Recruitment

Country: United Kingdom

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Recruiter: The British Council

Country: United Kingdom

<<http://www.jinfo.com/go/j8096>>

NB: These are just a selection of information-related jobs in the Jinfo database

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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.onopoly.com/support/team/>.

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

The FreePint Bar is abuzz with a range of research projects, ranging from finding criminal records to finding alternatives to The Big Three. Read summaries below, and then join in the fray at <http://www.freepint.com/bar>.

- Every worker is priceless, but how do you put that in terms of money? One Bar member wants to attach a value to the average worker in relation to the UK economy. How might you go about creating such a figure: profit to the economy or straight sales? Lend your opinion <http://www.freepint.com/go/b210833>.
- Companies House lists a large number of companies that are trading, but not all. One researcher is wondering what happens if a firm she's in charge of researching falls between the cracks. Chip in if you have a definitive way of knowing if a company is trading or not <http://www.freepint.com/go/b208546>.
- One 'Pinter is wondering if there is life beyond The Big Three: LexisNexis, Factiva and Thomson. Let him know if you have ideas <http://www.freepint.com/go/b213051>. Or, if you're looking to choose from the top three, tune into VIP for its annual comparative review of news products from Factiva, LexisNexis and Thomson <http://web.vivavip.com/go/vip/48>.
- Freelancers undoubtedly have freedom that staffers don't, but it doesn't mean they're available to take any contract that comes to them. One Bar member is faced with

a lucrative contract that is requiring him to become a company rather than a solo artist. Lend him a hand in finding the easiest and cheapest way of meeting qualifications <http://www.freepint.com/go/b210289>. Also look at Lesley Robinson's article in this issue on how to build credibility with clients.

- As it turns out, it may be as easy to find a criminal as it is to find a doctor. At least for research purposes. This discussion <http://www.freepint.com/go/b209514> features a helpful list of databases of articles and abstracts for criminology research as well as other industry search tools.

\*\* Will you be at Online Information this December? RSVP to let us know you'll be there <http://freepint.com/events/online-info-2007>



### FUMSI Events at Online Information

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## "Practice What You Preach: Building and Gaining Credibility with Clients"

By Lesley Robinson

Lesley Robinson set up Lesley Robinson Consultancy Services Ltd in 1999, specialising in advising organisations on information, knowledge and records management strategies, the marketing and development of information services and the coaching and development of information teams. She works in both the public and private sectors helping clients to run their information services more efficiently and effectively and maximise their value to the organisation.

Lesley speaks regularly at conferences, runs training courses and writes articles about information management issues. Her website is at <http://www.lesleyrobinson.co.uk>.

Visit the Online Information Conference on Thursday 6th December at 14.00 to hear Lesley speak in a panel debate about 'Transferable Skills for Independent Consultants'.

I would love to say that I set out on my independent consultancy career fully equipped with a 5-year strategic plan, divided into short-, medium- and long-term achievable goals. To be fair to myself, I had written a makeshift business plan, but on reflection, not much of it was grounded in reality. I left my final, permanent full-time post knowing that I had a short-term contract offer on the table and that was enough to help me make the decision to jump from payee to ... full insecurity.

This contract was going to occupy me for three days per week for at least six months. This allowed me to achieve three key goals:

- Make the leap from secure employment
- Get myself up and running in my home office
- Give me two days per week to focus on marketing myself and trying to secure further clients.

One aspect I was clear about from day one was that I wanted to be a 'true' consultant and hunt for my own food. A significant part of my background is grounded in management consultancy and so my own business model was to go out and build my own client base rather than work through agencies. I had won my initial contract from my own contacts and that set me off on the right foot. There is nothing as motivating or exhilarating as winning a contract through your own efforts.

### Building expertise

There are many ways to build expertise. The key ways I have done this are by: taking on challenging projects, ensuring I keep up with industry trends,

keeping abreast of developments in business management more generally, joining relevant committees and getting involved with conferences. It is true that you learn something from every project, whether it is an ideal project or not. You could be improving your project management skills, learning how to present ideas, refining the proposal process, managing clients better or trying out a new way to negotiate your fees. There are so many aspects to finding, winning and delivering projects that it has to be a continuous learning process.

Early in my independent career, I was keen to push the boundaries and take on projects that were slightly out of my comfort zone. This approach really helped me to build expertise. As an example, an early project I took on was for a firm of architects. It was a review of their national information service, which was spread across their seven UK offices. The project involved working with the information teams, running workshops with the service users, interviewing the board of directors and other senior managers, and carrying out some benchmarking with other architect firms. Apart from having a microscopic knowledge of architecture, I hadn't run that many workshops before, was working with information staff who didn't want the review and was asked to make recommendations that would effectively rewrite some of the core business processes.

I tried to position myself as an external business advisor who could see issues from different angles and who would consult widely within the business to deliver the best outcome. This inclusive approach helped to get a range of

stakeholders to buy into the final solutions and also taught me a vast amount about how to manage a whole range of people with different expectations.

### **Staying ahead**

As your experience in consulting grows, it is vital to keep up to date with industry trends. An effective way of doing this is by attending conferences and seminars. This helps you to discover the best speakers in your specialist area and hear them in action. Conferences are also great places to network with people; not only your peers but potential clients.

Cost can be a prohibitive factor in attending conferences, and a way to conquer this is to become a speaker yourself. You can start small by facilitating a workshop session which may run alongside the main conference, offering a master class in a topic you are passionate about and then build up to chairing a panel debate or giving a full paper to the main conference. This pushes the boundaries of your comfort zone further, but it is an excellent marketing tool, an effective way of being seen and heard, adds credibility to your brand and positions you as an expert.

Joining relevant committees is also a useful way of staying ahead and getting involved in your industry and beyond. I am a member of the Central London Branch Committee of the Institute of Directors, which is the biggest branch in the UK with 10,000 members. This is invaluable for meeting a much wider range of people and really understanding broader business

issues. As part of this committee, I organise several events and seminars each year, which brings me into contact with politicians, chief executive officers of the FTSE 100 organisations, entrepreneurs and a whole host of people who run their own small businesses like me. You can't beat that for networking, exposure and excitement.

Committee involvement takes time and energy, but it is a hugely rewarding experience. It also teaches you how to interact with different kinds of people. On a consulting assignment, I will be talking to a cross-section of people in the organisation such as those in IT, marketing and finance, as well as the core staff, support staff, the CEO and the board. Meeting and talking to such a wide range of people at a non-threatening industry association event can really help you to understand and be aware of the different perspectives people take and the issues that executives face.

### **Recognition**

'Oh yes, I have heard of her.' They may not be sure how they have heard of you or when, but if your name rings a bell with someone, your marketing has worked. The most powerful marketing tool is being seen and heard. There is nothing like experiencing the real thing - apparently. If people see me speak or run a workshop and they like what they hear, they are more likely to keep me in mind for when they need consultancy help. Of course, this can work the opposite way if someone does not like what they hear. It's a gamble but it mostly works in my favour. After all,

people buy people. We are all more likely to buy something from a person we have seen and heard and like, rather than someone who may look good on paper but is an unknown quantity. It is very subjective but it gets the doors open.

Once you are through that door, of course, the client now expects you to live up to your reputation. Your hard work in making yourself known, seen and heard has paid off, but clients are now very sophisticated buyers. There used to be a certain aura around consultancy, but that has now faded and clients want much more input from their external advisors. In such a competitive world, clients want you to be able to help them benchmark themselves against their immediate competitors. For example, a medium-sized law firm hired me to review both their information and library services and their records management processes. In both projects, they asked questions like:

- How are we doing against our competitors?
- How far behind or ahead are we in current best practice?
- What is the most widely used technology or software out there that can help us to deliver our information more efficiently?

These questions take us beyond 'How is my information service doing?' and focus on how the vital information and records functions contribute to an efficient business.

Alongside this, clients want to understand how new technologies can

impact their businesses. Web 2.0 tools are a good example. Corporate clients are struggling with the value of using blogs, wikis, RSS feeds and other communication tools and want to understand how these 'risky' new tools can help them. Clients want case studies, reference sites and first-hand knowledge of the value of these tools to mitigate their own risk in experimenting with them.

Therefore it is essential for me to do the experimenting and gain first-hand experience. I need to evaluate blogs and wikis, find ones to recommend as good examples and also assess how they can work for me. I have helped a client to set up a wiki around capturing their organisation's best practice, which was an invaluable experience. Working with them to build this, I was able to see the process, overcome any problems and realise the value it could bring to sharing knowledge. I have also contributed to other wikis and experimented with my own blog, which have been important steps for learning about these tools.

### **Building a network of trusted experts**

A fast way to keep up to date with developing technologies is to have trusted colleagues who are experts in the area. For example, I work with other consultants who are experts in intranet design and deployment, customer relationship management systems, records management, social networking tools and content management. If am working on an assignment and this expertise is needed, I will bring in other specialists to help me. Or indeed, we will bid for a

project together at the outset. If you have the position of trusted advisor with a client, they are generally very open to you recommending another expert who can help them. This reinforces their trust in you but it is also a low-risk option for them to find other recommended consultants.

As well as introducing other trusted experts to clients, I will also introduce clients to clients. This is particularly valuable during benchmarking exercises. If a client of mine can demonstrate best practice in an area of relevance to another client, I will often connect them to share their experiences and knowledge. This has worked extremely well with an accountancy firm client and a law firm client who now collaborate in several areas where they share expertise and learning and even rotate their information staff between them to develop their research and analytical skills.

Connecting clients in this way puts you in the position of being seen as a powerful networker. Rather than diminishing your role - now they have connected they might not need you - it deepens their relationship with you and raises your credibility to a higher level. Once this level of trust has been built up with clients, it makes it easier to take some calculated risks and maybe test out a few techniques and ideas during projects that will not only extend your own skills but could also lead to innovative new ideas and approaches for the client.

### Strengthen your consulting

To continue to be an effective consultant and maintain your reputation, it is essential to be constantly learning, embedding and extending your skills. This approach gives you the flexibility you need to survive. There are two mechanisms I have used to underpin this approach. The first is through learning how to coach people, and the second is by devising and delivering my own training courses.

Coaching: As I worked on projects that involved change management - a change in business processes or people's roles - I realised that not everyone found it easy to cope with

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that change. I would work closely with those who found change difficult and tried to give them the support they needed. I enjoyed this aspect of an assignment but wasn't sure I was doing this to the best of my ability. So, I signed up for a diploma in coaching at City University and studied 'Performance Coaching for Business'. The course gave me a deeper insight into coaching techniques and how to get the best out of people as well as the opportunity to practice these techniques in a safe environment. This new learning gave me a much more confident approach to bring to some of the more complex consulting assignments.

Training: As coaching helped to add to my portfolio of skills and work, so does developing my own training courses. I have pulled together half-day courses on topics such as how to network effectively, communications and presentation skills, through to a 1-day course on the basics of knowledge management and a 5-day course on information excellence. Training gives you the platform to showcase and market your skills but it is also an excellent way to practice what you preach and gain fresh insights and feedback from the participants. It is also the case that some participants on the training courses often become consultancy clients, having seen and heard me in action.

Being a consultant often feels like being in a circus: keeping the pace and energy high, juggling at least six things at once, multi-tasking and helping out other team members, keeping the audience happy and delivering a fabulous overall experience. As with a circus act, underlying the overall

performance is constant practice; the honing of skills and taking calculated risks to make it all look easy.

#### Related FreePint links:

- "Blown to Bits: how the new economics of information transforms strategy" Reviewed by Lesley Robinson  
<<http://www.freepint.co.uk/bookshelf>>
- "Net future: the 7 cyber trends that will drive your business, create new wealth and define your future" Written by Chuck Martin. Reviewed by Lesley Robinson  
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## "The New Publisher: Rosenfeld's Top Books and Websites"

By Louis Rosenfeld



Lou Rosenfeld is founder of Rosenfeld Media, a new publishing house focused on short, practical books on user experience design. As an information architecture consultant, he has helped numerous Fortune 500s and other large, messy, political enterprises make their information easier to find. Lou is co-author of "Information Architecture for the World Wide Web" (O'Reilly & Associates; 3rd edition, 2006), and has been instrumental in helping establish the field of information architecture and in articulating the role of librarianship within that field. Lou co-founded the Information Architecture Institute and UXnet, the User Experience Network, and blogs regularly at <<http://www.louisrosenfeld.com>>.

The traditional publishing industry has always employed scads of information professionals. But in an era of digital design, print-on-demand, viral marketing, and Web-based direct sales, just about anyone can be a publisher. This change has opened up a great new opportunity to information professionals: instead of working within the traditional industry's confines, we can publish \*our\* way. We can create publishing houses built around what we know about how information can be best organised, distributed, and consumed.

For the past two years, I've morphed from an information architecture consultant - focused on solving large companies' information problems - to a publisher. (Needless to say, I find my own problems a bit more interesting!) My company, Rosenfeld Media <<http://rosenfeldmedia.com>>, is about to publish its first book, "Mental Models: Aligning Design Strategy with Human Behavior" <<http://www.rosenfeldmedia.com/books/mental-models/>>. Despite the long hours and financial risk, it's been a fantastic experience, full of opportunities to engage with and truly understand our readers in ways that weren't possible before. And fortunately, there are some excellent resources on the Web to guide and inspire us along the road to publishing nirvana. Here are six of my favourites:

- **Beneath the Cover** <<http://www.beneaththecover.com/>> is a true diamond in the rough among publishing industry sites. It manages to balance broad, industry-wide coverage with a healthy dose of

cutting edge topics, the advice is actually quite helpful, and the writing is excellent (Michael Drew and Bryan Eisenberg's especially).

- I also enjoy scanning the Book Marketing Expert Newsletter <<http://www.amarketingexpert.com>>, produced by Penny Sansevieri of Author Marketing Experts, Inc. OK, it comes from a publicity firm, but it really does provide a good, free, and regular dose of tips and links that make sure I think about book marketing at least once a week.
- Dan Poynter's "The Self-Publishing Manual" (Para Publishing, 2007), now in its 16th edition (!), is the most useful guide to printing, getting ISBNs and bar codes, pricing out shipping options, and all the other sausage-making that goes into publishing and selling your own books.
- Poynter also maintains the Para Publishing site <<http://www.parapublishing.com>>. Like his book, the site is a trove of nuts-and-bolts content, though be forewarned: much of it isn't free. Still, it's as close to being a Swiss Army Knife for DIY publishing as I've found.
- If you're a joiner, the Small Publishers Association of North America (SPAN) <<http://www.spanet.org>> is the association for you. But even if you don't become a member, you'll want to bookmark SPAN's site; like Para, it contains loads of practical content, like an excellent glossary of industry terms.

- As you'd expect, discussion lists are wonderful resources in this rapidly-changing corner of the industry. I suggest subscribing to two: <[self-publishing@yahoogroups.com](mailto:self-publishing@yahoogroups.com)> <<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Self-Publishing>> and <[smallpub-civil@yahoogroups.com](mailto:smallpub-civil@yahoogroups.com)> <<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/smallpub-civil>>. The former, sponsored by SPAN, runs at about 1,000 postings per month, so set it to digest; the latter is closer to 100 per month. (It's interesting to note that the small publisher community needed to establish a 'civil' list; and you thought that librarians like to argue!)

#### Related FreePint links:

- "2001 to 2006: Five Years of Information Architecture" By Karen Loasby <<http://www.freepint.com/issues/211206.htm#feature>>
- "Poor Richard's Creating eBooks: How Authors, Publishers, and Corporations Get into Digital Print" Written by Chris Van Buren, Jeff Cogswell, Christopher Van Buren, Matt Wagner Reviewed by Caryn Wesner-Early
- Louis Rosenfeld's blog <<http://louisrosenfeld.com>>
- Rosenfeld Media's RSS feed <<http://feeds.rosenfeldmedia.com/rosenfeldmedia>>
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## "Enterprise Search: Rethinking it in a Web 2.0 World"

By Jayne Dutra

Jet Propulsion Laboratory, California Institute of Technology



Jayne Dutra has worked at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory for the last 10 years, managing software development tasks in the areas of Web content management, search and portals. Her experience led her to believe that no enterprise search effort would be truly successful without a foundation layer of information architecture and standardised metadata, and she became interested in taxonomies. She subsequently worked on a Project Engineering Taxonomy for JPL space exploration teams and the development of the JPL Business Domain Taxonomy. Jayne currently serves as the Lead Enterprise Information Architect for JPL.

In the Land of Web 1.0, we would search by looking for a small box in the top corner of a website. The user would be expected to know a magical keyword or some other bit of information that would unlock the door to a cascade of results ready to be winnowed by hand into piles of carefully hoarded treasure. Publishing to the Web was controlled by a few individuals called 'webmasters' and data was carefully guarded behind moats and firewalls in castles called database stores. Search engines were composed of spiders that crawled the Web to find pages rendered in HTML, which made them understandable only to advanced human intellect and not re-use friendly. Search had to 'stink', which always seemed a bit unsanitary.

### Today in a Web 2.0 world

Today things are different. Ordinary people publish blogs and have passionate electronic conversations in wikis. Data is out and about, turning up on iPhones, navigational devices in your auto and podcasts. Bits of content recombine and transform themselves into altered beings with new formats and sexy, fashionable looks. The Web is a movable feast with Twitter <<http://www.twitter.com>> parties materialising spontaneously as individuals find each other in both virtual and physical space. New connections from rich social interactions on YouTube <<http://www.youtube.com>> and Facebook <<http://www.facebook.com>> create vibrant energy that renews human discourse. Wisdom is collected, syndicated and documented in

Wikipedia and Wikimedia. Rich media, photos, screencasts and other visualisations are tagged for sharing on Flickr <<http://www.flickr.com>> and del.icio.us <<http://www.del.icio.us>>.

Where is it all going and how do we, as the Web's virtual cartographers, help others find their way at a time when fellow travellers are empowered beyond our wildest expectations of only a few years ago? How can we add value to information retrieval systems within our organisations that enhances user experience and meets the increased pace of daily activity and multi-tasking? Web 2.0 has raised the bar for those of us involved in enterprise search.

### Search is complex

More than ever, search developers are required to understand the core foundation of the organisation's business models. Individual aspects of services, products and processes are needed in formats that can be recombined to report past performance, current status and future 'what if' scenarios. 'Business Intelligence' was once confined to statistics on last quarter's sales, but now corporations want to understand why the business performed as it did, what was successful, what didn't work and how they can develop strategies to capture and retain market share.

Enterprise search is no longer a one-size-fits-all problem. Information retrieval is a complex area that is being increasingly seen as task dependent. In other words, how and why a user searches is directly related to what type of activity he is engaged in. Therefore

search solutions must be designed around specific business problems that provide meaningful value to the enterprise. Users have been trained by Google to expect search results with lightning speed. They also want high precision without a personal investment in lengthy exploratory research. In other words, they want information to come to them no matter where they are or how they are connected to both the intranet and the world outside the firewall. Indeed, these differences are blurring more rapidly every day.

There is a cornucopia of new technologies available to help us reach these goals. IT departments and system developers can choose to implement company-wide authentication for seamless access to multiple repositories, enterprise messaging busses for information services, Semantic Web technologies for embedding relationships and collaborative portals with personalisation designed by the user alone or in teams as a natural outgrowth of work activities.

### **Capturing and leveraging user-generated metadata**

Successful enterprise search today doesn't mean making keywords work well. It means creating a holistic information architecture designed for the enterprise that allows input and evolution by the users themselves. Ironically, this usually relies on the time honored and humble practice of generating metadata and controlled vocabularies that enable data connectedness and intuitive recall. For years, we've heard that users won't fill

out metadata fields. Then how does one account for the phenomenal success of Flickr? If one enters a set of bookmarks in del.icio.us, doesn't that tell us something about the person's interests and background? New Web 2.0 technologies generate metadata in the wild that can be domesticated if we are wily enough to recognise the opportunity.

A revitalised corporate IT environment should provide a common entry point to multiple repositories with single sign-on capability, user qualification awareness, and a simplified interface. Metadata about people can be reconciled with metadata about objects and process to facilitate personalised content delivery. Knowing an employee's department and role implies something about the tasks associated with that employee. Relevant applications, syndicated feeds and better portlet integration enable customisation of activities and transactions needed by employees. Data should be available without regard to device or location thereby setting the stage for recall in handheld devices or mobile units.

The corporate information environment should be available to access by machines as well as individuals and utilise a common data reference model for improved data consistency. Federated searches, contextual results and composite data sets are all possible. Using new tools, users can enter metadata right into the browser which can be displayed by tag clouds and saved in a personal portlet. Search can be saved for individual or team use and subscribed to as an ongoing service.

Graphical representations of results in charts or plots are a personal choice. Browsing by image, video clips or text are now interrelated and can be presented together for wider access by the user.

### **Foundation pieces and strategic approaches**

In order to achieve the seamless integration of data to build our brave new world, a semantic layer that handles data reconciliation and unification of content sources is needed. Most experts recommend starting by understanding the business uses of content and creating a semantic representation of the target data that allows for recombination and presentation in a variety of outlets. The representation of enterprise data is expressed by the enterprise metadata specification and its associated taxonomy. One of the foundation pieces of the search team is to work with engineering system owners to see that the metadata core specification is incorporated into the searchable index. Working with system owners to coordinate data values can be phased over time. Early phases include mapping data fields to the enterprise standard in order to give systems time to adopt standards. Opportunities for systems to incorporate the standards arise when there is a major upgrade of the system or replacement of the system's technology.

Content resides in many places and in many formats. Unstructured data may be appropriate for natural language processing and entity data

extraction that facilitate automated tagging. Folksonomies and tag clouds are examples of human tagging. The proposed solution set for an enterprise search task should encompass both these approaches. Objects will be tagged over time through both automated and human actions using the concepts around the Unstructured Information Management Architecture (UIMA).

Instead of implementing a Web crawler to randomly generate search results on arbitrary key- words, the approach of the modern enterprise search team is to leverage a strong information architecture infrastructure resulting in a unification layer for enterprise content. By utilising enterprise metadata standards, deploying reconciliation strategies with gold source vocabularies and building a clearinghouse for data collection, order can be brought to a chaotic information environment.

The ultimate goal is an information environment enhanced by metadata and served up through a number of rich user interactions facilitated by role based access. Unified enterprise search at my organisation is conceived of as a set of integrated systems utilising different types of technologies to provide information quickly and represented with a variety of visualisation techniques including charts, sliders for query definition, and thumbnails of engineering drawing families.

There are numerous benefits for the enterprise, from better

information re-use including a higher percentage of winning proposals, shorter product development time, more effective resource management, better decision making and improved business agility. These benefits combine to make a stronger competitor in the marketplace and generate more success in the long run. That's a business case our managers can't afford to ignore.

The research described in this (publication or paper) was carried out at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory, under a contract with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

#### Related FreePint links:

- Catch Jayne Dutra's presentation at Online Information 2007  
<[http://www.online-information.co.uk/online07/conference\\_2007.shtml](http://www.online-information.co.uk/online07/conference_2007.shtml)>
- Enterprise Search Guidebook  
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- "Specifying and Implementing Enterprise Search" By Martin White  
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## Gold

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

- FreePint No. 218 23rd November 2006. "Leveraging the Power of White Papers: How to Create White Papers That Persuade" and "Understanding Today's Capital: Thomas Stewart Delves Into His Keynote at Online Information 2006"  
<http://www.freepint.com/issues/231106.htm>
- FreePint No. 195 24th November 2005. "You need to know about what industry? Paintball & extreme sports industry sources" and "Knowledge management for development: an international organisation's perspective"  
<http://www.freepint.com/issues/241105.htm>
- FreePint No. 172 25th November 2004. "Advanced Search Techniques using Natural Language Processing" and "Ephemera: the stuff of history"  
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- FreePint No. 149 20th November 2003. "Re-Entry Shock or Reverse Culture Shock" and "Data Protection for Websites and Intranets"  
<http://www.freepint.com/issues/201103.htm>
- FreePint No. 125, 28th November 2002. "Health Informatics on the Web" and "Ping, touch, head, tail: or, how to become a systems librarian"  
<http://www.freepint.com/issues/281102.htm>
- FreePint No. 100, 15th November 2001. "Digital Content on the Web" and "Untangling The Web For Health Professionals"  
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- FreePint No. 50, 18th November 1999. "Information on tap - Web resources on the water industry" and "Electronic Communities"  
<<http://www.freepint.com/issues/181199.htm>>
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**ISSN:** 1460-7239

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