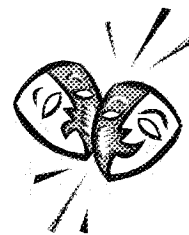


péter's picks & pans



Péter Jacsó
University of Hawaii

ingentaJournals

Collection of Computer Science Bibliographies

Awesome Library

The picks include two database services that are particularly relevant for library and information professionals (my specialty) as they provide information from substantial segments of the library, information, and computer science literature. One is the beautifully designed and content-rich ingenta Web site that offers free abstracts from thousands of scholarly journals, not just in library and information sciences. The other is the excellently searchable, and sumptuous, Collection of Computer Science Bibliographies database that provides not only citations to every possible area of research within the discipline and its related areas (including information science and technology), but also good abstracts and often links to the free full-text, HTML, or PDF versions of the documents. The pan is the Awesome Library, which is not nearly as awesome as its name claims.



the picks

INGENTAJOURNALS

A fairly new company, formed by a partnership with Bath University and enhanced by its purchase of UnCover,

The Ingenta search form could easily accommodate a filter to exclude publishers that don't offer abstracts for non-subscribers.

ingenta (<http://www.ingenta.com>) specializes in journal and article delivery. The beautiful design may be familiar to those who visited the information services pages of Bath University and, lacking authorization, drooled over it, as I did. The entire ingenta Journals collection consists of more than 2,500 scholarly journals from 33 publishers (including Adis International, Academic Press, Bowker-Saur, Blackwell Science, Gordon and Breach, John Wiley & Sons, Munksgaard, OECD, and White Horse Press, among others), and about one million articles. The good news is that the ingentaJournals subset offers at no

charge hundreds of thousands of substantial abstracts from scholarly journals for anyone, not just subscribers. However, there are many serials in ingentaJournals that offer free abstracts and full text only for subscribers, like all the journals of Elsevier, unfortunately one of the most dominant publishers in library and information science. For this reason, users should be able to exclude publishers or journals from the search that don't offer full text or abstracts for non-subscribers, a feature presently unavailable. The elegant and functional search form could easily accommodate such a filter.

Luckily, Elsevier has not yet purchased all the library and information science journals, so you still have good search results from core LIS journals that are published by Academic Press, Learned Information (archival only since its titles in ingenta are now owned by MCB), and especially MCB University Press. I write a column for the latter, but its excellence is beyond dispute in providing free abstracts from such respected journals as *Online Information Review* (and its predecessor: *Online & CD-ROM Review*), *The Electronic Library*, *Reference Services Review*, *Journal of Knowledge Management*, *Information Management & Computer Security*, *Information Technology & People*, *Interlending & Document Supply*, *Library Consortium Management*, *Library Hi-Tech*, *Library Management*, *Library Review*, and *New Library World*, among many others in various disciplines.

Equally impressive are the free abstracts from the journals of Blackwell Science and the Nature Publishing Group. Although neither is dominant in the discipline of Library

ingentaJournals

Documents 1 to 20 of 103

The "great exchange": the economic promise and peril of the digital library
Majka D.R.
 The Bottom Line: Managing Library Finances, 12 May 2000, vol. 13, no. 2, pp. 68-74(7)
 MCB University Press

Digital library query cleaning using clustering and fuzzy decision-making
Heywood M.I., Zincir-Heywood A.N., Chatwin C.R.
 Information Processing and Management, 1 July 2000, vol. 36, no. 4, pp. 571-583(13)
 Elsevier Science

The role of a digital librarian in the management of digital information systems (DIS)
Sreenivasulu V.
 The Electronic Library, 26 April 2000, vol. 18, no. 1, pp. 12-20(9)

An Ingenta search retrieves good search results from core journals.

and Information Science, my sample searches retrieved highly relevant articles from *Information Systems Journals* and the *European Journal of Information Systems*. Although Taylor and Francis has a strong presence in library and information science journal publishing and in the ingentaJournals database, its

LIS journals are not yet available. (I should add that the abstracts of most of its LIS journals are available for free at the excellent Catchword site (<http://www.catchword.co.uk>)).

Editors and publishers of the fee-based traditional abstracting and indexing services may fret at the usually short archival coverage of ingenta. Users, however, are most interested in the current literature that they often can't get soon enough even when they are paying customers of databases whose substantial retrospective coverage does not compensate for lack of currency. For example, the online and CD-ROM subscribers of Silver-Platter's implementation of Information Science Abstracts did not get a single record in the first six months of 2000. I think that ingenta will drastically reduce reliance on fee-based indexing and abstracting/indexing services, and is to be applauded for its excellent free content and sophisticated but intuitive software.

COLLECTION OF COMPUTER SCIENCE BIBLIOGRAPHIES

The impressive Collection of Computer Science Bibliographies (CCSB) (<http://iinwww.ira.uka.de/bibliography/index.html>) database from Alf-Christian Achilles at the University of Karlsruhe in Germany includes well over 1,200 bibliographies with a total of more than one million references. The name "bibliography" is misleading because the references are not merely bibliographic citations but also include abstracts or summaries, and in the

Editor's Note:

Since Peter wrote about ingentaJournals, there have been some new developments at the company that readers will want to know about. For one thing, if you are as excited about ingenta as Peter is, you can customize ingenta to meet your personal or institutional needs. You can set up a customized home page within the site that will provide direct, one-click access to favorite journals. Plus, you can receive an email alert when the newest issue appears. Recognizing that students and faculty want to use ingenta from home or while traveling, the company now has off-site access. Users can register to receive insite—a free email newsletter with three editions created to keep them up-to-date with news in the rapidly changing online information world—and can participate in discussion groups. Customizing the user experience is a major thrust for ingenta going forward.

In other news, major publishers Sage, Bowker-Saur, Bentham Press, nRn Publications, Henry Stewart Publications, the Institute of Direct Marketing, Preston Publications, Oldenbourg Verlag, and BIOS Scientific Publishers Ltd. have added their journals to ingenta. A link from ingenta to the European Patent Office puts users in direct contact with the millions of patents housed there. On the mergers and acquisitions front, ingenta acquired Publishers Communication Group, a company that provides marketing services to publishers, negotiating electronic licensing arrangements and helping them promote sales of individual titles to library markets in the U.S. and Europe. Technologically, ingenta developed a unique portal to the OECD (Organisation for Economic and Cooperation and Development) full-text catalog of books, reports, statistics, and journals. For a single subscription fee, you can buy unlimited access to OECD publications, with the ability for concurrent desktop use. SourceOECD launched in September.

—Marydee Ojala

case of about 100,000 records the hyperlinked full text is also available for free or for a fee. At a minimum, this is an abstracting and indexing database of computer science, with splendid coverage that even users of traditional and expensive computer science databases will envy. People interested in information science and technology will also find this database very useful. Searches on topics like visualization of search results brought up 65 records, about 90% of them highly relevant.

The variety of sources is impressive. The documents retrieved from the search results visualization query included papers from the Computer-Human Interface, Digital Libraries, and Hypertext conferences of ACM; the IEEE Visualization conferences; the 8th World-Wide Web Conference; technical reports from the University of Maryland's highly respected research group; and from Dartmouth College—just to name a few from the first 20 records. All of them had abstracts; many had links to the full-text version in PDF and/or HTML formats, and/or prototype systems. Journals providing nearly half the citations in CCSB include such prime titles as the *Communications of the ACM*, *Journal of ACM*, *IBM Systems Journal*, *Microsoft Systems Journal*, *American Statistician*, *SIAM Journal on Scientific Computing*, *Psychological Reviews*, *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, *Behavioral and Brain Sciences*, *Byte*, *Artificial Intelligence*, *AI Expert*, and almost all of the *IEEE Transactions* and *ACM Transactions*.

There is a Simple Search and an Advanced Search template. Basic Boolean operators, prefix searching, and truncation are available. In the former mode, searching for variant forms is automatic, so the query `visual and search and result` will retrieve the British and American spelling of the first word (visualization and visualisation, as well as possibly irrelevant forms for the topic like visually unless you use `visuali` rather than `visual` in your search). The gerund and plural forms are also searched automatically.

Searches can be limited to items that have the source documents online. In the Advanced Search mode you have to use the * suffix (incorrectly called the prefix in the help file)

for truncation, except for a title field search where stemming is automatic. Searches can be optionally limited to the title field and to a time period. Case sensitivity can be specified. Author searches are possible in an unusually flexible way. Sticking the initial of the first name of the author after the last name—MillerP, for example—will retrieve several variations irrespective of the order of name elements in the references, i.e. Peter

Miller; Miller Peter; Miller, Peter; Miller, P.; Miller J. P., etc. Try to do that in a cross-database search on the venerable fee-based hosts.

Results can be sorted by relevance or date, and displayed as a short headline or in full format. The short headline is more useful in the Simple Search mode because it includes the exact source citation. The latter is in BibTeX format (widely popular among computer scientists for handling formulas, Greek

The CCSB query form supports many advanced features.

Results of a CCSB search can be sorted by relevance or date, and displayed as short headlines or full format.

characters, and the like). The BibTex format is visually not attractive, but includes what the typical abstracting and indexing records include about an item—and then some. Very often there is a hotlink to the full text of the document in HTML, PDF, or Postscript format, to a PowerPoint presentation file, or to a demo site. From within the records, author searches can be launched. The bibliography source from which the item is taken appears in front of every item, and is also hotlinked for launching a search to retrieve all the items from that source.

The database has impressive statistics about the distribution of items by document types, publication years, and major subcategories (databases, neural systems, human-computer interaction, logic programming). Each bibliography collection, in turn, includes statistics about its features, such as total number of items in the bibliography, the number of items available online, the latest update, or the presence of data elements (title, author, publication year, ISSN, pagination, subject). This is exactly the kind of information I have long urged file producers to include in their promotional materials (“A Proposal for Database Nutrition and Ingredient Labeling,” *DATABASE*, February 1993), and is just one more reason to pick this excellent resource.



the pan

AWESOME LIBRARY

This Awesome Library site (<http://www.awesomelibrary.org>) has received many accolades and grants, but it fails to impress me. On the contrary, it depresses me to realize how inflated these star ratings and awards have gotten. The introductory part of this site assures that it is meant “to promote long-term world peace and to provide information to students, teachers and librarians that promotes healthy lifestyles.” Most mortals would be happy with short-term world peace, and without specifics, I don’t know what the editor considers healthy lifestyles.

The same inferior “encyclopedia” is listed three times among the best encyclopedias, once with the star award. ►

Address: <http://www.es.hawaii.edu/~cliffon/wic/a.htm>

Select the first letter

A B C D E F G H I J K L M N

A

Aachen

City in Germany close to the borders of the Netherlands and Belgium. Historically the primary residence of Charlemagne. Other Ref: [Bismarck](#), [Hawaii](#), [Encyclopaedia.com](#), [Yahoo!](#)

Abacus

Japanese Abacus (Scribble)
Chinese Abacus (Java Simulation)

Abalone

A marine gastropod
[Worldwide Abalone Distribution](#)
[Anatomy Abalone](#)
[Commercial Abalone](#)
[Wild Abalone as Food](#)

http://www.awesomelibrary.org/Library/Reference_and_Periodicals/General_Reference/ark/encyclopedias.htm

- [Davis Encyclopedia](#)
- [Encyclopedia \(Monte Carlo\)](#)
- [Encyclopedia \(Bates High School\)](#)
- [Encyclopedia \(Encarta\)](#)
- [Encyclopedia \(National Geographic Society\)](#)
- [Encyclopedia Britannica](#)
- [Encyclopedia Smithsonian](#)
- [Encyclopedia for Students to Use With Homework \(StudyWeb\)](#)
- [Free Internet Encyclopedia](#)
- [Health Care Encyclopedia \(HealthStu\)](#)

◄ *Maybe the Free Internet Encyclopedia gets special treatment because it misspells abalone only three times out of five.*

I definitely would not like, for example, my children using the ill-organized and shallow *Free Internet Encyclopedia*. It is full of misspellings and dead links. Even more egregious, it is not even an encyclopedia but an index, a far cry from the very high-quality, well-organized real free encyclopedias. It is like learning morals from the Jerry Springer show. Among the many ill-chosen sites, I find it absurd that Awesome Library includes the *Free Internet Encyclopedia*—panned by me in my last column (*EContent*, August 2000)—under the Encyclopedia category three times with three different names (*Davis Encyclopedia*, *Free Internet Encyclopedia*, and *Macro-pedia Encyclopedia*). All of them refer to the same encyclopedia created by Cliff Davis and Margaret Fincannon. (see examples at <http://www2.hawaii.edu/~jacs0/extra/picks-pans/davis/davis.html>).

If this were not enough, the editor of the Awesome Library honors the *Davis Encyclopedia* with the star symbol that is awarded to 20% of the best sites within the Awesome Library. I wonder why the other two aliases of the *Davis Encyclopedia* don’t get the star treatment. Never mind that *Britannica* and *Encarta* don’t get the star symbol. The editor of

the Awesome Library mentions that sometimes *Britannica* is misspelled as *Brittanica* or *Brittannica*. He might have added also the misspelling *Britanica* as the *Davis Encyclopedia* refers to it in this format. Obviously, spelling is not the forte of this triple-listed source that on its very first page can’t get the spelling right three times for abalone. Then again, in sync with the common educational mantra of “no one fails,” its correct spelling twice out of five garnered the star award.

Using such pathetic information sources for educating children is discouraging. I wonder how much money the various government agencies wasted on grants for projects like this, not to mention the many abysmal sites that promised geographic literacy programs and at best provide links to three to five-year-old editions of the *CIA World Factbook*. Luckily, the CIA site now automatically redirects these links to the current version. Users of the Awesome Library are not so lucky to be steered to the really good sites.

Communications to the author should be addressed to **Péter Jacsó**, 322 Aolua Street, #703, Kailua, HI 96734; 808/956-5817; jacs0@hawaii.edu.