

Opening up government access



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People with an interest in e-publishing might do well to have a look at what other people are doing...

A new entry point for Australian Federal, State and Territory governments has opened up at <http://www.gov.au/>. Apart from those links, there isn't much else at the site at present, but the site will eventually be developed to offer searches across all levels of government, including eventually local government (not listed at present). At that point, searches for a topic such as energy will retrieve relevant items from all tiers of government without the need for prior knowledge of the responsible agencies or jurisdiction. I can't wait...

Facts and stats

That exceptionally hard-working Washington librarian Gary Price has just released a huge new page called Fast Facts [<http://gwu.edu/~gprice/handbook.htm>]. It provides subject-arranged links to online reference sources such as almanacs, factbooks, statistics and other handy tools. The focus is American, but the site does include some Australian material.

Selection criteria

Public librarians might get a kick out of All Readers [<http://www.allreaders.com/>], and if it keeps developing, the site should become a handy tool for readers as well. The site helps you pinpoint exactly the type of book you want to read. It is arranged by genre — for example, romance, sci fi/fantasy, mystery/thriller — and you can browse a list of authors for each category or run a search. The detailed search is just that — extremely detailed. For example, in the thriller category, you can choose a preferred manner of death for your murder victim. The options are rather grisly — cooked? eaten? — alongside more traditional shooting and drowning. You can also opt for greater or lesser difficulty in spotting the villain. The main benefit of the site is in identifying authors or books you have not yet read, so it could be useful if you have read everything by a particular author and want something similar. Genres also include literature with a capital L, biographies and history. The results pages give a brief plot summary and highlight how closely the results match your search criteria. There is searchable movie information as well.

Cutting edge

If you are searching for e-journals on the frontiers of new technology, then EJI(sm) [<http://www.public.iastate.edu/~CYBERSTACKS/EJI.htm>] is for you. This registry aims to list innovative e-journal fea-

tures, functionalities, and content, so it is the place if you want something new and different. People with an interest in e-publishing might do well to have a look at what other people are doing, especially in innovative approaches to navigation, organisation and functionality. E-journals that include embedded multimedia components are listed in M-Bed(sm) <http://www.public.iastate.edu/~CYBERSTACKS/Just.htm>, while those that offer pay-per-view access are listed in Just-in-Time(sm) <http://www.public.iastate.edu/~CYBERSTACKS/Just.htm>.

New millennium cataloguing

Papers from the Library of Congress Bicentennial Conference on Bibliographic Control for the New Millennium [<http://lcweb.loc.gov/catdir/bibcontrol/recommendations.html>] held on 15–17 November 2000, featured eleven topical discussion groups, that addressed major challenges facing cataloguers in the vendor and publisher communities. Each group presented recommendations to the final session of the conference, which were then released for comment by participants. The summaries are available online and include such topics as 'what is a valuable web resource?' and 'what co-operative partnerships should libraries explore in the digital world?' Other topics included the continuing education needs of cataloguers, making AACR2 more flexible for cataloguing networked materials, and integrated access to catalogues and other resource discovery tools. The site is very well put together. You can even see candid photographs of conference participants.

Crystal ball gazing

We have only just started 2001, but academics in the United States are already predicting what will happen fourteen years from now. *Global trends 2015 — a dialogue about the future with non-government experts* is just out from the National Intelligence Council, and is an attempt to predict the major drivers and trends that will shape the world of 2015. Among those identified are demographics, natural resources, science and technology, globalisation, and the role of the United States, among others. The report begins with an overview and summary of the key points, then each of the trends is examined in turn [<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/globaltrends2015/index.html>].

Canadian Encyclopedia goes online

With so many good, free encyclopaedias going

online, you have to wonder whether print versions have a future at all. The 2000 edition of this encyclopaedia about Canada and its people has been updated and expanded before being put on the web. As you would expect, it is available in both French and English, and includes a lot of multimedia content, including animations, film clips and interactive maps [<http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/>].

e-everything

The California Digital Library has launched an initiative called eScholarship to serve as a repository of new tools for creating online collections of scholarly work and as a storage space for e-prints produced using these tools. The site was created to address threats, such as escalating journal costs and the increasing volume of available research, to the sustainability of traditional scholarly communication. eScholarship aims to provide a place for the dissemination of research among peers, a place which will provide opportunities for review and commentary, protect contributors' intellectual property, and guarantee ongoing availability of material. Apart from housing its own e-journal and monograph collection, the site links to useful directories such as New Horizons in Scholarly Communication and to other digital projects such as the Open Archives initiative and the Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC). Resources at the site cover a range of topics from archaeology, dermatology and international studies to physics, computer science and tobacco control [<http://escholarship.cdlib.org/>].

Newsletters online

With thousands of web and e-mail newsletters starting up, it is good to find a site such as Newsletter Access [<http://www.newsletteraccess.com/>] to help keep track of them. The site lists more than 5000 newsletters. If you know a title or words that might appear in one, you can search. But if you are just looking to see what is around, try browsing through the categories. There are currently about sixty-five of these covering the whole spectrum of information from cars, to clothes, to chemicals, to business, real estate, internet marketing — you name it. The listings for each newsletter are not comprehensive, but you should get enough information to help you get hold of it.

Top 20

Who can resist a top of the pops list? Not me. I clicked on the Most Popular Downloads of

the Year 2000 as soon as I saw it mentioned in a newsletter. I wanted to be sure I was not missing out on anything. The list includes the usual suspects — ICQ, Napster, CuteFTP — but the surprise winner was ZoneAlarm, a program that makes your computer more secure by setting up a personal firewall. Presumably all the publicity about viruses and Trojan Horses is paying off, and people are really trying to make their computers hacker- and cracker-proof. The programs listed all get a five-star rating. System requirements are listed so you can find out whether your computer is up to the job before downloading any of the programs yourself [<http://www.zdnet.com/downloads/top20/2000.html>].

Musical freeway

When I first saw Mutoopia mentioned, I thought it was a dog-heaven site, but the M stands for music, not mutts. This is the place to go for copyright-free musical scores, which you can download for your own use. Hardworking volunteers have written out or typeset musical scores which they have then provided to Mutoopia for dissemination. Files can be previewed at the site or downloaded in a range of formats, including PostScript and PDF. The collection can be searched by a composer's name, or by musical instrument or musical style. One to watch [<http://www.mutopiaproject.org/>].

Organisations directory

Created by the *Nation* magazine, the Nation Directory is searchable, and links to organisations (NGOs, political parties, think-tanks) working in the broad fields of politics (foreign affairs, disarmament), economics (globalisation, sweatshops) and culture (youth, religion). In addition, searches of the directory may retrieve articles published in the *Nation* relevant to the search topic [<http://www.thenation.com/directory/>].

Testing time

AllTheTests.com [<http://www.allthetests.com/>] is a directory site for finding web-based tests, whether they be IQ tests, tests by employers, or personality tests. The site is a mixture of the serious and the silly, but it is a handy one-stop shop for this kind of material. Material is divided up into categories if you want to browse, but direct searching is also available. Site listings include the name and web address, a description of the test, and an approximate time for completion. Tests are rated, and many offer the option of having results e-mailed to you. ■

**This column
[with URL links]
can be found at:**



<http://www.alia.org.au/incite>

Contributions and suggestions for this column are always welcome. Please contact Belinda Weaver via e-mail.

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