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Honour rolls

It's always good to find online services that make the offline job of helping people easier. Some things are hard to find in print, or do not translate well to that medium. The Australian Honours List [http://www.itsanhonour.gov.au/honours_list.html] is a case in point. Online, this searchable list of anyone who has been awarded the Order of Australia, or other awards, is a piece of cake. This is an official record of Australian honours, with more than 224 000 entries, of all Australians who have been recognised from Federation in 1901 up till the present day. What you will not find in the database are military campaign service and military long-service awards, but you could try the Australian War Memorial for those. The honours are broken up into three lists for easier searching — the very latest honours list (from Australia Day, the Queen's Birthday, and so on), earlier honours awards (1975 on) and a historic list from Federation to 1975. Searching is not restricted to individual names; you can search for a number of recipients in a specific region over a specified time and with a specific award. It is possible to make comparisons and develop statistics about the type of people who have received awards.

Not a sickie

ILLWeb [<http://www.law.northwestern.edu/lawlibrary/illweb/>] looks like a health site when you see the name in print, but this is one for the document delivery people. It is a sizeable gateway to electronic and print resources on all aspects of interlibrary lending, document delivery, and resource sharing. This is an American site but the resources are international in scope. Anyone wishing to stay on top of developments in this branch of the profession would do well to have a good scout around this site and bookmark it for later on. It covers everything from document suppliers, library networks and consortia to copyright and licensing issues and costs. There are links to online directories, e-mail lists, systems, standards and codes and current initiatives. There is also a featured site of the week, which turned out to be a gateway to Chinese academic journals on the day I visited.

Financial freebies

Although it charges quite handsomely for articles from its global archive, the UK *Financial Times* gives a lot away too. There is an exhaustive list of different currencies in the curren-

cies section [<http://www.marketprices.ft.com/markets/currencies/ab>] which also supplies the current US dollar exchange rate for each, no matter how obscure or lightly traded the currency may be. They also publish a lot of surveys which appear as supplements to print copies of the paper [<http://surveys.ft.com/>]. These are now being made available online, and the number is not negligible — around 240 surveys a year. These are not just number crunching exercises but overviews of specific countries or industries or of events within a specific year, so they would be useful to anyone looking for background. The surveys contain articles, either arranged by topic, or loosely linked by the overall theme. The content of past surveys (from 1994) can be obtained from the site as well. <http://specials.ft.com/spdocs/FT34WOWY9ZC.pdf>.

Virtual goldmine

AcqWeb's directory of publishers and vendors [<http://acqweb.library.vanderbilt.edu/acqweb/pubr.html>] is a terrific one-stop shop for the websites of publishers, but there is more to AcqWeb than just publishing. Set up in 1994, the site [<http://acqweb.library.vanderbilt.edu/>] has been developed for acquisitions librarians and staff involved in collection development and contains a range of tools and services that acquisitions staff will find handy. Anything new to the site is covered in the web news section, while the verification tools and resources will be a boon for anyone tracing rare, antiquarian or out-of-print materials. There are loads of links to associations and organisations in librarianship and related fields, so look here if you want professional organisations as these are often a source of useful, topic-specific onward links. You can also find general library science information, journals, newsletters and e-mail lists and a well-organised virtual reference collection. Among other topics, the collection covers awards, biography, dictionaries, translation services, weather, quotations and citation styles, so you should find something to add to your own library's collection here.

Under a bushel

The Government Online Services Compendium [http://www.govonline.gov.au/service_map/index.asp] from the National Office for the Information Economy is not quite as informative as it could be, but as a gateway to government agencies, it is certainly a lot

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simpler to use than the Commonwealth Government Entry Point [<http://www.fed.gov.au/>]. All government agencies are listed on one page, as opposed to their intermingling with government departments and other websites on fed.gov.au. You can search or browse the compendium to see which agencies have their services online, but you will probably need to visit agencies individually to see what kinds of things they offer as the compendium is not terribly forthcoming on their behalf. It is part of the government's push to get services online and, as such, at least it is a start. The resource lists applications, for example, statistics, legislation, available online by each government agency and it can be searched according to service type, agency or functional category.

Also running

[Australia.gov.au](http://www.australia.gov.au/) [<http://www.australia.gov.au/>] is a new gateway to government information for people too daunted by the hierarchical structure of fed.gov.au to find anything. You have only four main choices on Australia.gov.au, so you cannot go too far wrong. (Don't choose the business door if you don't want business.) As such, it follows in the tradition of the US's Firstgov [<http://www.firstgov.gov/>] which created a topically organised directory of the US government instead of a hierarchical one. Anyone wanting sport could find sport, regardless of the level of government at which the information was held. That is the aim of Australia.gov.au — to provide a seamless gateway to topical information across all levels of Australian government. There is a bit of a way to go as local government is not really on board yet and even the federal information does not seem as comprehensive as it could be. I could find business assistance but not business regulation, for example. The site has not been going long, so there is still a lot of work for the site developers to do. There is a considerable amount of information targeted at people who are not Australians, but who might want to become one, or visit the country. With the changeover of fed.gov.au's arrangement to a more topical structure, I can't really see the need for this site, but it is out there, and if it develops in a helpful direction, it may turn out to be a good thing.

Counting costs

The use of networked databases in libraries is ever-increasing, but measuring the take-up of these kinds of resources has been patchy at

best. The COUNTER (Counting Online Usage of Networked Electronic Resources) project [<http://www.projectcounter.org/>] aims to fix all that, by developing a single, internationally accepted code of practice on the measurement of online information products and services. The aim is to be able to compare use across journals and databases from different publishers. The project is backed by some heavyweight bodies such as the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers, the Association of Research Libraries, the Publishers Association and the United Kingdom Serials Group. Once the protocol is developed, the project will attempt to garner support for it from information purchasers and providers, and propose an organisational framework for implementation and compliance.

Digital guidelines

Many people are digitising resources on the run — think university lecture notes or distance learning materials. This may be fine for ephemeral materials but what about materials that researchers will need in the future? How can they be preserved and how can such projects be properly planned and sensibly managed? OCLC and the Research Libraries Group have collaborated on a report on the long-term preservation of, and access to, research materials in digital form. 'Trusted digital repositories: attributes and responsibilities' is available from the RLG's site [<http://www.rlg.org/longterm/repositories.pdf>]. Primarily intended for cultural institutions such as libraries, archives, museums, and scholarly publishers, it is written for those with traditional or legal responsibilities for the preservation of national or international cultural heritage. Colin Webb, director of the Preservation Services Branch of the National Library of Australia, and a member of the working group, made the comment: 'Just how to ensure reliable access to digital information over the long-term seems to raise questions from all directions. It's vital that we take the time and effort to focus on discrete sets of questions — such as what a trustworthy digital repository would look like and what it would do.' ■

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.

Primarily intended for cultural institutions... it is written for those with traditional or legal responsibilities for the preservation of national or international cultural heritage...

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