

with a review of critical success factors of importance to selecting and implementing a CMS. Of particular value in the concluding session was Martin's assessment of a series of print and web resources on CMS. This gave pointers to the delegates for further enhancement of their growing knowledge of CMS.

For the delegates who had yet to face decisions over content management system implementation the course was an eye-opener. The two main messages of the day were to (1) take care in balancing trade-offs in systems specification, and (2) put as much effort as possible in at the tender specification stage to ensure that the CMS called for is actually suited to the needs of the organisation.

It is testament to Martin's polished delivery style (as well as stamina) that he kept the audience engaged all the way through almost six hours of lecture-style presentation time. He skilfully addressed the main issues, and illuminated his points with entertaining anecdotes. The course was very good value for money, not least because it was presented from the point of view of a well-respected and trusted independent consultant.

For those unable to attend, White's Content management handbook to be published by Facet in early 2005 promises to be a valuable aid to understanding the issues discussed on the course, and to the design of strategies for effective content management within organisations.

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Book Reviews

The advanced Internet searcher's handbook 3rd ed, Phil Bradley. London: Facet Publishing, 2004 ISBN 1-85604-523-4 272pp. £34.95

This book aims to help you search the internet more effectively by giving you a better understanding of how search engines and related software and utilities work, allowing you to use them to improve your own search techniques. Why read this book? Phil Bradley's answer is that "as an information professional you wouldn't use one reference book to answer all the things you get asked, so why do it with a search engine?" And wouldn't anyone be inclined to read a book with 'advanced' in the title rather than 'dummies' or 'idiots'?

Following an introduction to the internet, there are 3

sections: Mining the internet for information; Becoming an expert searcher; The future. The contents cover a lot of material, including how the different types of search engines work and the advantages and disadvantages of using them. There are chapters on particular search engines, how they can be used effectively, and when they should be used. Phil Bradley also considers the challenges facing publishers, information professionals and end users. He predicts that information professionals will increasingly be turning away from paper-based collections, and organising intranets instead.

In chapter 12 he explains how to quickly assess the level of authority of a particular website or page. He advocates virtual libraries as "a very useful set of resources, which are all too often ignored or badly publicised...it may not be necessary to look anywhere else for the information that is required." Newsgroups and mailing lists he regards also as an under-used resource. Weblogs, news aggregators and 'the hidden web' are covered in chapter 7. Chapter 16 looks at online tools; chapter 15 is on hints and tips to make searching and using the internet a bit easier and a little bit faster. He suggests "you may be able to save yourself several hours each week by incorporating them into your normal daily work routines."

My criticisms are very few. Each chapter lists at its end the URLs mentioned but not the site names. I would find it useful to know which search engines have a built-in spell check function, and how useful this feature is. Any information professional involved in intranet or web design will know of the need to allow for a great variety of not only synonyms but mis-spellings so that users can find the information they seek. I am not the only reviewer for elucidate to criticise Facet Publishing's book indexes. They are just not extensive enough. Chapter 6, on resource or site-specific engines was a bit slender. For the public sector, a site-specific search engine is all the more important in meeting the e-Government Metadata Standard, since there are so few general search engines which can search the metadata required by the e-GMS, and with FOI users will need to be able to distinguish the wheat from the chaff.

The author's style is easy to read. I liked his characterisation of the internet as a grand, gothic, rambling edifice "presided over by a half-insane librarian who is constantly coming up with new classifications and cataloguing schemes..."

Each chapter can be read stand-alone, but if read as a whole you will find very little repetition. The main changes since the last addition are the growing popularity of weblogs, and the continuing advance of Google. Natural-language search engines have all

but disappeared, apart from Ask Jeeves. Weblogs are covered in depth, including how to search for them.

Given Google's ascendancy, Phil provides extensive coverage of Google and its features, including the Google toolbar, "the quickest and easiest installation of any software that I have ever done." Other search engine toolbars and their features are listed in a useful table on p. 218.

This book will give you all the information you need to use the internet as an information source with confidence. I was amused by his suggestion that you take a reality check by timing your searches – set your alarm clock, and stop wasting time. And although he says it quietly, it should always be remembered that "the internet is not always the best place to go first." Having said that he does outline resources where the internet has the edge. I will be trying out his chapter of tips and hints for better and quicker searching as well as trying some of the utilities he recommends for advanced searchers.

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Website Indexing: enhancing access to information within websites 2nd ed
Glenda Browne and Jonathan Jermy. Auslib Press. 2004 ISBN 1 875145 56 7

Website Indexing covers what the authors term 'back-of-the-book indexing' – the kind of index you are familiar with at the end of books. That's indicative of the challenge faced by this title. Websites don't have a back, and the 'givens' for creating a website index may be utterly different to those for a book index, starting from just where you put the website index. It is easy for indexers to fall into the trap of trying to shoehorn traditional book indexing skills for Web use, rather than starting with websites and identifying how best they can be accessed and indexed, but to the authors' credit, the book is an admirably open-minded tour of the many innovative ways in which websites provide navigation tools to their content. And, to its credit, the book uses innovative methods of presenting information in the body of the text. Technical terms are boxed and glossed at the point they are first used. If, like me, you like glossaries, you will find the in situ definitions very helpful. All the glossary terms and definitions are repeated at the back of the book.

The second edition of Website Indexing addresses the growing book / online divergence in indexing and navigation styles. The book is really two books in one: the first part an overview of book-style indexes

for Web use, and the second a wide-ranging overview on information access on the Web in general. This two-part distinction emerges from the Preface, but is not clearly distinguished in the contents list. En route the authors provide an invaluable whistle-stop tour of index usability research. The first part is very specific, while the second struggles valiantly to cover a huge range. The ideal, of course, would be to combine the best of both approaches.

There is a brief round-up of indexing software, covering the UK, US, and Australia, but I would expect a cookbook approach to give clear critical recommendations on the packages, such as which ones the authors have found useful. For example, they state that Word is cumbersome for creating indexes while the book is being written – I'd love to know more. Further information on the benefits and disadvantages of each of the other major programs would have been helpful.

Of course, it's all very well having a wonderful index if the users don't know how to use it. I remember from working as a lexicographer how dictionary users never read the 'How to use this book' section. As a result, much of the hard work that lexicographers put into a dictionary is never noticed by the reader. I would be surprised (and the usability studies confirm this) if many readers understand the full book index entry: for example, the authors describe, in the index reference 'cats 1,15-27,26,94', that '15-27' is the principal index reference. In my experience of indexes it frequently isn't the main reference. Browne and Jermy suggest that even a simple 'see also' reference is frequently misunderstood by readers, and that it might be better to rename these references 'search using'. The authors quote from several usability reports, which have very useful implications for online indexes – for example, Web indexes usually have less of a space problem in online indexes, and so such techniques as one line per link, which users find more intelligible, can be employed.

Some of the more recent developments in providing screen-based information are mentioned only briefly. We are familiar with Google indexing sites on the basis of links to them from other sites; other visualisation tools include different sized blobs, based on the popularity of the resource. I would have liked more on automated indexing methods, which are used in examples, but not described in detail (for example, the permuted or keyword-in-context index, which has been used with great success for software manuals for many years). There is mention of content management systems creating indexes, but no mention of the invaluable way many of these systems can check all hyperlinks automatically and identify errors, thereby enabling