

Looking around for good sources of information on how to select a search engine I found that there was not much out there. Avi Rappoport's web site at <http://www.searchtools.com> is a good place to start, and has a pretty comprehensive list of vendors. CMSWatch has a report at \$1325 that profiles the major search engine vendors and their products <http://www.cmswatch.com> and there is a good blog at <http://www.unstruct.org/>. So I spent much of the summer writing the Enterprise Search Guidebook, which was published in September by Freepint. Details at <http://www.freepint.com/shop/report/>

End of sales pitch. Happy searching.

Reference Management

Best Practice on Using Reference Software

Tracy Kent (t.k.kent@bham.ac.uk)

There are a number of ways in which reference management (no matter which package you choose) can be utilised for research and so here are a number of useful tips which you could consider:

To add value to individual references include some notes about the reference for later retrieval. You may wish to make a distinction between "quotes" that you can relocate or your [own notes] that could be placed in square brackets. This would help you keep track of materials and to re-purpose materials at a later date.

Alternatively you could use your own word-processing package to retain extensive notes and include your reference software ID number for cross referencing. This would mean that each reference would contain a file name and location in a field such as a label field or research notes option. You should ensure that the file format is consistent though to aid retrieval such as c:\documents\research\filename.doc Most packages allow you to open up additional file formats from within the references and to retain more than one link. We have yet to see how this might be affected by desk top search tools!

Several packages such as Endnote or Procite (for example) make reference to an image field which put a copy of the file into an internal software folder. Endnote for example has a data folder. This way you can only (often) locate one file per record while you can add multiple file links using other fields.

Try not to use numerical IDs for references, particularly if you are collaborating with a group of users as errors can occur. Rather consider extending the ID of a reference when inserting into a document, so that it is clear what the reference is perhaps by adding a core word from the title.

To ensure you retrieve relevant references from your database, annotate references with your own keywords and indicating these with a trailing character such as “yyy” to make a demarcation. Be sure, though, that you do not use punctuation characters such as asterisks which are searchable codes (for truncation, etc).

You might also want to check how the system searches for keywords and whether this is limited to the keyword field or any occurrence of a particular word. Most systems allow you to specify how you might achieve the best results.

If traditional reference software does not seem to help, consider using Open Source software such as PHP and MYSQL. PHP, for example, offers a natural language web scripting syntax and is integrated with the database management system of MySQL which enables web applications that can store, access and present information. If you complement them with a meta data standard such as Dublin Core this may well turn your references into a well ordered and retrievable system. Try <http://www.php.net> and <http://www.mysql.com>

Finally, good practice on reference management might involve some practical readings. Two useful items to get you started might include *Essential Classification*, which offers practical advice and worked examples on understanding the underlying principles of classification; Written by Vandra Broughton and published by Facet. (ISBN 1-85604-514-5); or *Building your own database driven website using PHP and MySQL* now in its third edition and written by Kevin Yank in 2004 (ISBN 0-97524-021-8).

Software News

Endnote

If you are still trying to plough your way through the extensive manual for Endnote you might find the endnote tip sheets useful which are available from the Adept Science webpage once you have pre registered. A useful pdf document of the key areas to get you started.

<http://www.adeptscience.co.uk/> or

ftp://ftp.adeptscience.co.uk/pub/EndNote/EN9-Tip_Sheets.pdf

Onfolio

Onfolio captures bookmarks and stores local copies of Web pages, PDF files, charts, e-mails, etc into personal collections. The feed functionality also allows you to organise, read and search RSS feeds, a feature soon to be made available from the UKEIG website. The software synchronises bibliographic data with EndNote to track and manage online information, using cite whilst you write and allowing the posting of references to a Web page or blog. The later version also allows the creation and monitoring of persistent web searches by enabling subscription to a feed for a web search. <http://www.adeptsience.co.uk/products/refman/onfolio/>

Ref Viz 2.1

This latest release has recently been beta-tested, so we can expect another version out soon. Usefully, part of the Beta test has been working with web of science to get this database to work effectively from non ip-recognised addresses. Very useful for individual researchers.

<http://www.refvz.com>

Ref Works

The advantage of refWorks is that when a new release is available the enhancements are automatic (whether you want them or not – but it does save patches having to be downloaded). Such enhancements include Output Style Preview which allows you to preview references and in-text citations and/or footnotes (using your own data) in any output style. Write-N-Cite for Windows (version 2.0) now allows you to preview and modify in-text citations or footnotes via a citation editor. Finally within the new Administrator Central more support tools for training.

<http://www.refworks.com>

WriteNote 2.5

There is a new simplified interface which introduces a new colour scheme and changes to the Internet Explorer and Mozilla toolbars. Other new features of note include Import and Export options now separate menu items; Guided Tour is available and users can navigate to library resources using their Web browser. Also, the Get Biblio feature has been renamed *capture* and instantly opens a new WriteNote reference window for the user to drag and drop the appropriate bibliographic data and build a reference. Further details from

<http://www.adeptsience.co.uk/products/refman/writenote/>.

Reference linking : a bibliography

Locating appropriate references to add to your database is part of the life blood of Information Professionals and so the following reference might be of interest:

'The effect of open access and downloads (hits) on citation impact: a bibliography of students' by Steve Hitchcock, which considers reference linking and citation analysis for Open Archives.
<http://opcit.eprints.org/oacitation-biblio.html>

Public Sector News

E-Government Progress

Jane Inman (janeinman@warwickshire.gov.uk)

In a press release issued on 23rd August 2005, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister says that on average local authorities were 77% e-enabled in March 2005 so are well on the way to being 100% by December. This is based on local authorities reporting on the Best Value Performance Indicator which covers electronic service delivery, BVPI 157.
http://www.odpm.gov.uk/pns/displaypn.cgi?pn_id=2005_01755

As the year progresses and the e-government targets draw ever closer the minister for local government, Jim Fitzpatrick has announced £7.5m of funding for 2005/06 to develop *Government Connect*. *Government Connect* will provide better security for online transactions and a single sign in for users. It should provide better facilities for sharing data between local and central government and be available to all local authorities by December 2007. <http://www.govconnect.gov.uk/ccm/portal/>

What else will you be able to do once local authorities have completed their e-government work? The list is a long one but highlights include online admissions for school places, web pages for and maintained by councillors, more online consultation, multi-media, map-based data for property related information, map-based information about roadworks, online submission of planning applications, online payments for services including council tax, purchase of registration certificates, skip licences and parking fees and online booking of sports facilities.

Is anyone using these online facilities? SOCITM (The Society of Information Technology Management) has produced a report on usage of local authority web sites. They report an estimated 11.4m visitors to local government websites in May 2005, equal to about 10% of the population and more than 20% of those who use the Internet. Job vacancies were the most frequent reason for visiting council websites! To find out more about this survey go to <http://www.socitm.gov.uk>. As part of the Implementing e-Government work the Government will be running a campaign in Spring 2006 to encourage take up of the services available.