Internet Reviews

Sara Amato, editor

CancerNet. *Access:* gopher://gopher.nih.gov:70/11/clin/cancernet; gopher gopher.nih.gov; #3. Health and Clinical Information; #1. CancerNet Information. Producer: National Cancer Institute. Contact: Cheryl Burg, cheryl@icicb.nci.nih.gov; (301) 496-8880.

A question asked by every Internet navigator is, "How reliable is this information?" With CancerNet the National Cancer Institute (NCI) has set a high standard. Arranged by cancer type, site, and patient age, 100+ state-of-the-art summaries are prepared by a board of oncology experts, peer-reviewed by other experts, and updated monthly, if indicated. Written at both physician and lay levels, most are available in English and Spanish. Additional resources include Supportive Care Statements (14) on topics like nutrition, pain management, and nausea; Cancer Screening Summaries (10) for breast, cervical, skin, and other frequent sites; and investigational drug documents (11) with taxol and tretinoin among those listed. Couple this with document delivery via downloading, electronic mail, or telefacsimile and the potential of the Internet becomes apparent. These summaries make up the PDQ Cancer Information File available from online vendors. Future CancerNet plans call for adding other NCI information as well.

And there's more, lots more. Over 100 Fact Sheets from NCI's Office of Cancer Communications organized into broad areas such as cancer risk factors, prevention, and rehabilitation are available.

That's not all, but hopefully enough to encourage further exploration. CancerNet can be found on the NIH gopher noted above in the Health and Clinical Information directory and through several other gophers worldwide. For a Table of contents and instructions on using CancerNet, send an e-mail message to cancernet@icicb.nci.nih.gov with the word "HELP" as the body. For those with only e-mail access to the Internet (via CompuServe for example), the item codes returned can be used to submit document requests. Although a two-step process, the server is responsive and documents have been sent to over 40 countries. CancerNet information is the Internet at its best.—*Greg Pratt, Texas Medical Center Library*

EDGAR. *Access:* WWW: http://town.hall.org/edgar/edgar.html.

Detailed financial information has come to the Internet in the form of EDGAR (Electronic Data Gathering, Analysis and Retrieval). This controversial database presently contains over 8,300 annual and quarterly reports (8-K, 10-K, 10-Q, N-SAR, etc.) filed electronically with the Security and Exchange Commission (SEC) by publicly traded companies. Over the next two years approximately 15,000 companies will file electronic reports. The Internet version of EDGAR is currently maintained by the New York University School of Business, along with the Internet Multicasting Service, through a two-year National Science Foundation grant.

Though growing, EDGAR is actually not intended as a permanent database; the service will discontinue upon expiration of its grant after 1995. Rather, the purpose of EDGAR is to demonstrate the feasibility of archiving and distributing large data collections at reasonable cost over the Internet.

The best access point for EDGAR is World Wide Web, using a sophisticated browser such as Mosaic, which permits online, keyword searching. A resourceful alternative is through Washburn University Law School's telnet site at: acc.wuacc.edu. Login as washlaw and go to the Federal Government Information/(EDGAR) SEC Filings directory. Regardless of access method, users should expect to wait as long as 5–10 minutes for retrieval of EDGAR's large (up to one Mb) data and index files.

EDGAR is also available directly via ftp and e-mail from: town.hall.org. To ftp records of individual U.S. companies, first download the index file /edgar/full-index/company.idx to determine each report's unique numerical identifier. Searchers should also retrieve the help

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file general.txt in the /edgar directory. Note that many gophers allow searching of ftp sites, with the opportunity to retrieve files via gopher-mail (e.g., marvel.loc.gov in the Internet Resources/Archie and ftp directory).

To mail the company index send the following message to mail@town.hall.org: send edgar/company.idx. After identifying specific companies, request individual reports with the message: send edgar/data1/xxx/xxx.txt where xxx represents a multidigit code from the index. To retrieve just one or a few records, the search command provides the most efficient method for identifying file names. As with gopher, WAIS, and WWW, Search allows keyword and boolean queries. Send as mail, for example: search Douglas and McDonnell to find several pages of report identifiers for the McDonnell Douglas Corporation.

Regardless of difficulty, EDGAR boasts high usage. As of March up to 20,000 documents were transferred each week, amounting to over 17 gigabytes of data. System administrators believe the service will eventually reach 200,000 users. But this success must be measured by the realization that EDGAR serves primarily as a demonstration project, not as an archival treasure chest.—*Larry Schankman, Mansfield University*

The Center for Advanced Space Studies. *Access:* WWW: http://cass.jsc.nasa.gov/CASS_home.html or telnet: cass.jsc.nasa.gov. Login: cass, password: online. Terminal Emulation: vt100, X-windows.

Established 25 years ago under the auspices of the National Academy of Science, the Universities Space Research Association is a consortium of 76 colleges and universities that support graduate programs in the space sciences and aerospace engineering. The Center for Advanced Space Studies (CASS), located in Houston near the Johnson Space Center, is one of USRA's principal research facilities and a major conference center. Built in 1991, CASS is home to the Exploration Science Institute, Division of Educational Programs, Division of Space Life Sciences, and the Lunar and Planetary Institute. These agencies support space and planetary research through project coordination, educational programs, conferences, publishing, and computer networking.

CASS' menu-based online system reflects its collaborative mission. A common interface permits users to move easily among the center's diverse collection of resources. However, users must contend with minor command and display variations within individual tools and databases. Online help is readily available. The system's downloading feature supports e-mail, ftp, X, Y, and Z modems.

Students, researchers, and the public can keep abreast of current research and exploration projects in the *LPI Bulletin,* a quarterly publication of the Lunar and Planetary Institute, and on the Mars Exploration Bulletin Board. A conference and workshop schedule lists upcoming meetings and seminars.

The *Lunar & Planetary Bibliography, Library Catalog,* and *Meeting Abstracts* provide access to an extensive collection of literature on space and planetary research.

Planetary science researchers will be interested in CASS' Image Retrieval & Processing System, a database containing information about planetary images. Each record includes: mission, spacecraft, and imaging instrumentation; time, date, latitude, and longitude when taken; the geometry of the spacecraft, planet and sun; and ordering information. Additional planetary data and information are available in the USGS *Index to Planetary Maps, Venusian Impact Crater Inventory,* and USGS *Gazetteer of Planetary Nomenclature.* The latter is a browseable index of hundreds of named geographical features.

CASS' World Wide Web homepage contains links to its online system, NASA's WWW document and the Planetary Data Institute. However, as of this review, the link to the center's online system failed to connect properly.

CASS is an excellent resource for the professional researcher or student interested in the exploration and mapping of the solar system. However, its easy to use interface and current news items will appeal to the general science student and space enthusiast.—*Michael White, Loyola University* ■

Clarification

The acquisition notice on the Los Angeles riot collection at the University of Southern California in the May issue implied that the Christopher and Webster materials are part of that collection. However, they are part of the Special Collections Department and their access is restricted. The editors regret the confusion.