

Searching for Sci-tech Information via CSA's Internet Database Service (IDS)

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Introduction

Most of this presentation will take the form of a demonstration. First I want to talk a little about the databases offered on the Internet database service. Then, for the purposes of the paper, not the demonstration, I will outline the main search techniques and information screens. All of these features and many more will be shown during the demonstration.

The Databases of the Internet Database Service

Cambridge Scientific Abstracts, along with its publishing partners, provides databases in six key areas:

- Biological and Life Sciences
- Aquatic Sciences
- Environmental Sciences
- Computer Sciences
- Materials Science
- Social Sciences

Historically, the main core of Cambridge Scientific Abstracts' publishing program falls in the area of the life sciences. These twenty-one databases and abstracts journals cover broader subjects such as biochemistry, microbiology, toxicology, genetics, and immunology, as well as the narrower areas of chemoreception and calcified tissue. New topics such as acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) and oncogenes are included, reflecting their importance in scientific literature.

Compiled in cooperation with United Nations system and national partners, the Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts (*ASFA*) series that Cambridge Scientific Abstracts publishes is the leading information source for the science, technology, and management of marine and freshwater environments and organisms.

Cambridge Scientific Abstracts also covers extensively pollution, health, safety, and ecology research with such well known databases as Pollution Abstracts and Ecology Abstracts. It is the sole source for summaries of *Environmental Impact Statements* issued by the Environmental Protection Agency.

In the physical sciences and high technology areas, Cambridge Scientific Abstracts publishes abstracts journals covering solid state and superconductivity, computer and information systems, electronics and communications, and mechanical engineering. In June, 1992, Cambridge Scientific Abstracts and Engineering Information Inc. entered into a strategic alliance to jointly publish complete engineering reference tools in several formats including Internet, print journals, online and magnetic tape.

In May 1996, Cambridge Scientific Abstracts acquired Materials Information from ASM International and the Institute of Materials (UK) who had jointly owned this respected database business for more than 30 years. As a result Cambridge Scientific Abstracts have added the leading metallurgical database --*METADEx*-- to their portfolio, in addition to several smaller files. In a separate deal Cambridge

acquired Ceramic Abstracts and obtained the rights to distribute World Ceramics Abstracts, Weldasearch, Corrosion Abstracts and the Aerospace database via the Internet.

In March 1998, Cambridge Scientific Abstracts acquired Sociological Abstracts, Inc., publishers of Sociological Abstracts, the premier publication in the field of sociology, and the related journal Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts. Sociological Abstracts is already available on the Internet Database Service.

A database of quality web sites – the Web Resources Databases – is provided free with the environmental, materials science and aquatic collections. This indexes quality web sites in these disciplines, and provides regularly verified links.

Cambridge Scientific Abstracts's *Conference Papers Index* is an invaluable tool for cracking elusive information on authors and titles of technical papers presented at conferences in the U.S. and abroad. *FINDEX - The Worldwide Directory of Market Research Reports, Studies, and Surveys* is also produced by Cambridge Scientific Abstracts. It provides print, CD-ROM, online and Internet access to the latest business intelligence in the U.S. and throughout the world.

Single databases or collections all with unlimited usage

All these databases are available through the Internet Database Service, either individually or as part of subject based collections like Materials Science or Environmental Sciences & Pollution Management.

A few words about pricing where we are quite unusual. Cambridge offers subscription pricing that includes unlimited usage from a single site or university. There are no surcharges for the number of simultaneous users or work-stations. Substantial discounts of between 25 and 50% apply for customers in Central Europe and discounts also apply in multi-site and consortia situations.

One concern organisations have about Internet access is „What happens if I cancel? If it is a print subscription I can carry on using it.“ If you subscribe to a database on IDS, we will provide you with that same data in machine readable form if you cancel. For instance if you subscribed to METADEX for 1997 and 1998 and then had to cancel, we would give you the METADEX records for those two years, so that you could import them into your own in-house database package.

Searching the Internet Database Service

A demonstration will now take place. The next section is provided for those unable to attend the demonstration.

Getting Started - First you enter the CSA URL <http://www.csa.com> or its European mirror site <http://csa.sara.nl> to begin at the Cambridge Scientific Abstracts Home Page. Select Subscribers to proceed to the IDS Subscriber Login form; select Guests to access a FREE Demonstration.

Subscriber Login Form - The combination of username, password and originating IP address is the key that opens access to the Internet Database Service. Enter the assigned username and password and click on the Enter button. This action results in a customized list of the databases to which you or your organisation subscribe. Institutional subscribers often set up a bypass script, provided by us, making it possible for end-users to avoid this password verification step

Choose Subject Area Form - Databases are grouped into subject categories to help you focus on a single subject area. Click on the button corresponding to the area you wish to search. Cross-discipline searching can be performed by clicking on the button for the Alphabetical List of IDS databases. Additionally, you have the option of selecting a [Standard Search](#) or [Advanced Search](#) by clicking on the button for the one of your choice.

Standard Search Form - You can search more than one title at a time by clicking in the boxes corresponding to the databases you want to search. To find out facts about each database, click on the i beside the selection box. For subscribers to certain databases, there are links to [Environmental RouteNet](#) and [Water Resources RouteNet](#) which provide access to a pertinent collection of electronic resources. Also, for specific databases, searches are automatically run against an indexed database of useful Web sites.

The Search Form - Provides query boxes for author and title searches as well as for searching words in all fields. Truncation (*) and Boolean logic may be used, proximity is assumed between words. A pop-up menu allows you to select the specific year range you wish your search to cover. Click on [Submit](#) to start your search.

Click on [Advanced Search](#) if you prefer to use an unstructured search form, where you can enter long search statements including different field codes and Boolean operators.

Advanced Search Form - You can search more than one title at a time by clicking in the boxes corresponding to the databases you want to search. The Advanced Search provides a query box that allows you to specify other fields to search and to construct queries using the Boolean operators, AND, OR and NOT. A **Field Code Quick Reference List** is provided for your reference. A pop-up menu allows you to select the specific year range you wish your search to cover. Format options (brief title, citation, citation & abstract and full record) are provided for your search results. Click on [Submit](#) to start your search.

Search Results Form - This lists the number of records retrieved by the search query in each individual database selected for searching and in the Web Resources Database, if relevant. The original search form is included so that corrections or revisions can be made easily to the query once results have been retrieved. To go to your results either click the blue highlighted phrase [search results](#) in the first sentence on the screen, or scroll down to review the list of records. The initial display format shows up to 100 citations in groups of 25. The last document in the title list is a query report detailing how the query was interpreted, specific fields for the database you are searching and word occurrence details.

Record Review List - Records are displayed in a ranked list. Relevance ranking is achieved with consideration given to term weighting, proximity relationships, and word density. Each document is given a score between 1 and 1000, with 1000 indicating the highest relevancy.

From this screen, you can mark records by clicking in the box to the left of each record, view marked records, capture marked records or capture all records by clicking on the specified buttons. At the bottom of each list of records are the navigational buttons for moving to the [Next Group](#), [Previous Group](#), or [First Group](#) in a display set.

Record Formats - Click on the pop-up menu to change the number of records to display at a time (the maximum is 500). Choose from four record format options: **brief title; citation** which includes the title, author and source fields; **citation & abstract** which includes the title, author, source and abstract, and **full record** format which provides all the information (including index terms).

Found Record - While viewing a list of records in one of the abbreviated formats, you can choose to see the full record by clicking on [View Full Record](#). From this single full record display you can choose to see the [Next](#) or [Previous](#) record from your results list. If you wish to mark this record, return to [Search Results](#) by clicking on the arrow at the top right of the screen. The [In Your Library](#) highlight will also show, if the link to your library holdings has been implemented. This enables users, after finding a reference in a CSA database, to check if the title is held in their library.

View Marked Records - After marking records from the Search Results Screen, click the [View Marked Records](#) button to review the list. Click in the mark box if you wish to remove a record from your marked list. The [Capture Marked Records](#) button brings the Capture Marked Records Form to the screen.

Capture Marked Records Form - From here, you can designate how you want to capture your search results. After indicating platform and record format, you can choose to save the search results to disk, display them for printing, or e-mail them to a selected address (either your own or somebody else's). An additional box allows you to write an accompanying message. To start a new search, click on [Standard Search](#) or [Advanced Search](#) as desired. To begin a new search in a different subject area click on [New Subject Search](#).

Usage Reporting - Users can look at their own usage statistics by clicking on <Information Desk> then <Site Administration> followed by <Usage Reports>. This provides information by month for the number of logons, number of searches, and details of the individual databases searched. Although CSA pricing is for unlimited access, the usage reporting will keep the library coordinator in touch with what is being searched and helps them to justify the subscription.

In Conclusion

For those of you seeing the demonstration, I hope you will appreciate how easy and effective it is to search the Internet Database Service. For those of you reading the text of the paper, it is a little more difficult. I would strongly recommend that for both groups you try out the Internet Database Service for yourself by asking for a 30 day free trial. This gives you access to all the databases and all the features of the service for a free trial period.