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October 30, 2014

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Hot Doc: NTIS Expands Free Access to Federal Technical Reports

October 30, 2014

If you haven't been following the story, the Department of Commerce National Technical Information Service (NTIS) is now offering the American public free public access to a searchable online database of approximately three million federal science and technology reports through their National Technical Reports Library (NTRL). Of the 3 million documents in the NTRL, approximately 800,000 can be downloaded immediately in PDF format without charge. Users coming from outside the U.S. must subscribe to the NTRL using one of their premium subscription options in order to download PDF reports.

The remaining NTRL reports, most published before 1995, must be scanned from microfiche archival files before being provided either as PDF's or in print for a fee. Each time a document is scanned to fulfill a request, the agency adds the PDF to its database for free public download. In addition to the free service, NTRL is offering a range of subscription-based services to individuals, universities, corporations, and other institutions for varying levels of access to all documents in its collection.

The free public access services (password required) provides only a basic search and 5 document downloads per session as well as links to the NTIS store for purchases. The Premium individual subscription($200/year within the U.S. and $300/year for foreign addresses) includes advanced search as well as filtering and e-mail results, 20 downloads per session, social networking, and personalization including saving personal notes and favorite documents. Institutional subscriptions (price based on defined IP ranges) include on-demand digitization of 5 reports per week, site branding, and usage statistics as well as an option to receive research data on DVD/CD for free.

You can create your own free NTRL Account at:

https://ntrl.ntis.gov/NTRL/login.xhtml

Information about the program can be found at:-　　　News announcement: http://www.ntis.gov/products/ntrl/news/–　　　Functionality chart: https://ntrl.ntis.gov/NTRL/functionality.xhtml

–　　October 15, 2014 NTRL Newsletter: http://www.ntis.gov/assets/pdf/NTRNews7-4.pdf

–　　Premium subscription price list: http://www.ntis.gov/assets/pdf/NTRL2014Pricelist.pdf

NTIS continues to license the NTRL database records to commercial vendors, including ProQuest, for integration of their holdings into commercial services.

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