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Are Online Companies Dinosaurs?

By Carol Tenopir & Jeff Barry

SCIENTISTS DON'T KNOW for certain why dinosaurs no longer roam the earth. Some theorize that they just grew too big and too unwieldy to compete with the evolving, more agile, smaller mammals. Others assert dinosaurs didn't disappear at all—they merely evolved and adapted to become birds. The most popular theory these days, however, is that some cataclysmic event, most likely a giant meteor falling to Earth, changed the planet's environment so dramatically that dinosaurs died off in huge numbers and became extinct. It's easy to see how any one of these theories might describe the impending fate of the traditional information companies in the Database Marketplace 2000.

The cataclysmic event

The Internet, more specifically the World Wide Web, just may be the cataclysmic event that drives the traditional, fee-based information industry to extinction. Several years ago, when the online service NewsNet announced it was closing shop, Andrew Elston, NewsNet's founder and president, blamed its demise at least in part on the Internet, because primary information providers began putting up their content and offering it free on their own web sites. Elston speculated that only those aggregators that added "a substantial amount to the equa-

tion" would survive in a web world. In a January article in *Forbes* describing the woes of Dialog, the author portrayed the traditional fee-based information services as "victims" of the Internet and mourned, "There is no better and sadder example than how Dialog Corp., the pioneer of the data retrieval industry, has been brought low by the Internet" ("Dial-

This is the fourth annual database marketplace survey. This year's survey provides profiles for 21 information companies. That number continues to decline because of acquisitions and mergers, a trend we've been tracking each year of this survey. Many of these companies offer multiple information services as a result of these acquisitions and mergers. Several companies did not return the surveys, thus limiting their inclusion to text, not tables. The authors would like to thank Jennifer Carless for her assistance with this year's survey.

a-Mess," Seth Lubove, *Forbes*, 1/24/00, www.forbes.com/forbes/00/0124/6502068a.htm).

Dialog President Dan Wagner may have solved his debt overload problem by selling Dialog's Information Services Division to the Thomson Corporation in March 2000 to "focus on its eCommerce and Web Solutions businesses." Because of the huge debt that burdened Dialog ever since its purchase by M.A.I.D from Knight-Ridder in 1997, Dialog needed cash. When the current deal is finalized, Thomson will pay \$275 million in cash for Dialog's Information Services Division, which consists of the Dialog, Data-Star, TradStat, and Profound online services. The Dialog Corporation will be renamed Bright Station plc (www.brightstation.com) and will retain its dizzying array of new web-based end user products, including InfoSort, Muscat, WebTop, WebCheck, Sparza, OfficeShopper, and the knowledge management (KM) business.

From the M.A.I.D purchase to this impending sale to Thomson, the new Dialog Corporation never seemed to have its heart in the information aggregator business and managed to alienate many of its once faithful information professional customers. Thomson better understands these customers and this business but still will have its hands full reestablishing these traditional online businesses in a new web world. No word yet on what will happen to Dialog's employees or its new offices in North Carolina.

Free flow via government

The web has also allowed government-sponsored databases to flourish and provide no-fee access to valuable bibliographic databases that link to fee-based full texts. The National Institutes of Health (NIH)/National Library of Medicine's PubMed service (which provides free searching of the Medline database) introduced a new, natural-language interface recently that makes access to this valuable medical research database even easier. PubMed gets millions of hits each year, although much of the literature indexed in Medline is not understandable by anyone but a medical professional. Many of PubMed's bibliographic records are hot-linked to full texts of the articles on the web sites of the primary publishers. Fee-based access to Medline still exists, and some online services, such as Ovid and Infotrieve, still count access to Medline as their key offering.

The Department of Energy (DOE)/Office of Science and Technology fol-

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TABLE 1: Customer Breakdown by Library Type and Region (by Percentage of Business)

	TYPE				REGION			
	Academic	Special	Public	School	No. Amer.	Latin Amer.	Europe	Asia/Pacific
Bell & Howell: Chadwyck-Healey	85	5	5					
Bell & Howell: ProQuest	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a				
Bowker	26	14	50	10				
Chemical Abstracts	proprietary							
Dialog	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a				
EBSCO	35	6	32	27	60	7	18	15
Elsevier Science	68	31	1					
Gale	proprietary							
Information Quest	34	66	0	0	50	5	40	5
Infotrieve	30	70	0	0	70	1	10	19
Lexis-Nexis	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
OCLC	24	30	20	26	86.3	0.4	8.8	4.5
QuickLaw	55	35	5	5	90	1	4	5
RLG	85	14	<1	<1	89	<1	10	1
SilverPlatter	70	27	2	<2	35	5	46	14
SIRS Mandarin	10	5	15	70	95	1	3	1
Wilson	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a				

Blanks indicate information is unavailable. Where total does not equal 100, the remainder is "other."

lowed NIH's lead in the fall of 1999 when they introduced the free web service PubSCIENCE. Like PubMed, PubSCIENCE provides free access to a huge government-created bibliographic database—in this case the Energy Science and Technology Database—linked to full texts at the primary publishers' web sites. PubSCIENCE is just one part of DOE's EnergyFiles trilogy—together with the PrePRINT Network and DOE Information Bridge (gray literature and reports). In the last few months DOE has created the foundation of a gigantic sci-tech information service on the web.

Getting bigger

Dinosaurs got bigger over several eras before their unwieldy size and appetites kept them from moving quickly enough or finding enough to eat in lean times. Similarly, a small number of multinational megacompanies are ballooning, as they continue to gobble up smaller information firms. The biggest news in March 2000 in the online world was not unexpected, as Canada's Thomson Corporation added Dialog's Information Services Division to its substantial information holdings that also include Westlaw, Gale Group, Information Access Company, and the Institute for Scientific Information.

Last year and in years past, Dutch company Reed Elsevier gobbled up Engineering Information, Cahners Publishing, and Lexis-Nexis. Just a little over a year ago, German-based Wolters-Kluwer

added the online and CD-ROM distributor Ovid Technologies to its holdings. Bell & Howell merged its newly named Bell & Howell Information and Learning Division (formerly UMI) with its Publications Division, plus it digested Chadwyck-Healey—a specialist in humanities and social sciences information. The company will soon be renamed again, this time with the more recognizable ProQuest.

So far most, though not all, of these large beasts are doing well, and some are using their growing size to their advantage. Products such as Gale Group's (Thomson) Resource Centers and Bell & Howell's incorporation of Chadwyck-Healey content into ProQuest, are beginning to take content from one part of the company and merge it with newly acquired products and services. (Reed Elsevier hasn't done much of that yet.) A larger size can take some financial pressure off as well and should benefit Dialog's information services.

Evolve or die

No player in the fee-based information industry can ignore the Internet, but many see it as an opportunity to expand services to their library customers rather than as a threat. Some companies that started in the CD-ROM business have adapted by offering web versions as well and are seeing much more growth in their web-based services. Gale Group is one that has successfully shifted its emphasis from CD-ROM to web versions. Gale's Beth Dempsey says, "The web

has been a boon for Gale. We're able to deliver databases through a keystroke, update continuously, and integrate data from a variety of publishers. The web has eliminated the issues of limited shelf or tower space, allowing Gale to dramatically increase the breadth of data provided in a single product." Rather than relying on separate bibliographic, directory, and full-text products, web versions can more easily integrate a variety of content all focused on a single topic, as in Gale's Resource Centers for literature, biography, history, and business/company information.

SIRS reports that "the number of SIRS online database users has outpaced the number of SIRS CD-ROM database users." The web versions may offer more features than CD-ROM databases; in fact, SIRS on the web is updated more frequently, includes a "spotlight of the month" and current events, and provides more resources than the CD-ROM products. EBSCO reports that more than 85 percent of its worldwide database business is now web-based (the rest is CD-ROM and DVD-ROM).

SilverPlatter also has seen "a steep decrease in requests for CD-ROM access in the U.S. market." Its substantial web efforts to date have focused on the U.S. market, but this year the company "will relaunch the SilverPlatter Internet Service to the rest of the world." Surviving (and thriving) on the web does not come easily. According to SilverPlatter, "We've invested a significant amount of

time, money, and resources ramping up this service." The SilverPlatter web services are popular in U.S. libraries not only because users feel comfortable with a web interface but because SilverPlatter maintains the databases at its central server and provides links to full texts through SilverLinker.

The H.W. Wilson Company was at first cautious in its web strategy. Before launching its own web version, the company first leased access to its databases over SilverPlatter Web. That success led to the development of WilsonWeb, which

has seen a year of tremendous growth. According to a Wilson spokesperson, "In January 2000 monthly WilsonWeb usage had increased 244 percent compared to last year. This has resulted in Wilson devoting more resources to the development, support, and maintenance of the web service in addition to expanding our web content."

The key to all of these success stories is that the companies are adapting and expanding products without changing their target customers. Although the products are used by end users, they are selected, paid for, and marketed to end

users by libraries and librarians. These companies know how to sell to librarians, and they rely on librarians to sell to the ultimate users. They are employing the web to serve their customers better, rather than seeing the web as a way to replace traditional customers. Companies like Dialog that didn't seem to realize the value of their traditional customers are finding themselves replaced.

Competition from the more agile

Traditional companies recognize the power of the Internet, but the question re-

TABLE 2: Database Services and Systems by Company

	Bell & Howell		Bowker	Chemical Abstracts			Dialog			EBSCO	Elsevier Science
	Chadwyck-Healey	ProQuest		STN International	STN Easy	SciFinder	Dialog	Data-Star	Profound	EBSCOhost	ScienceDirect
Access Methods	Online, web, tape, CD-ROM	Online, web, tape, CD-ROM	Online, web, tape, CD-ROM	Online, web	Web	Internet	Online, web, CD-ROM	Online, web	Online, web	Online, web	Web, Intranet
% of Content Created by Company	5%	10%	90%	10%	20%	90%	0%	0%	0%	40%	90
TITLES AVAILABLE BY CATEGORY											
Bibliographic	●	●	●	●	●	●	●	●		●	●
Directory	●		●	●	●		●	●		●	
Encyclopedias	●	●						●		●	
Full-Text Journals/Magazines	●	●					●	●	●	●	●
Full-Text Newspapers/Newswires		●					●		●	●	Planned
Full-Text Other	●	●		●			●	●	●	●	●
Statistical/Numeric			●	●	●		●			●	
Other				Chemical Substances	Chemical Substances	Chemical Substances					
Document Deliv.				●	●	●	●	●		●	●
TITLES BY SUBJECT											
General	●	●	●				●			●	
News		●					●	●	●	●	
Business		●	●	●	●		●	●	●	●	●
Law			●				●			●	
Life Sci./Med.		●		●	●	●	●	●		●	●
Sci-Tech		●		●	●	●	●	●		●	●
Social Sciences		●					●	●		●	●
Arts & Humanities	●	●					●			●	
Multidisciplinary		●	●	●	●		●			●	●
Z39.50 comp.		●	●		●	●	●			●	
PRICING OPTIONS											
Connect Time				●				●			
Subscription: concurrent users	●	●	●								
Subscription: potential users	●	●				●					●
Flat-Fee Subscription	●	●	●			●	●	●	●	●	●
Flat Fee Per Search				●	●						
Per Record				●	●		●	●	●		
Other						●	●				●

icant overhead and need to make money directly from their information products. Early this year, Reed announced layoffs of six percent of its work force worldwide and more at the home office in an ambitious "streamlining effort." Soon after that, the president of Reed's online service Lexis-Nexis was replaced. Even though Lexis-Nexis's Academic Universe product has seen tremendous penetration in the U.S. academic market by offering attractive discounts to consortia and lower fees by including limited advertisements, the Lexis-Nexis profits continue to be lower than expected by its parent company.

On the other hand, not-for-profit information players seem to be doing better. OCLC has absorbed PAIS (Public Af-

fairs Information Service) and WLN, its FirstSearch online service, which is quite popular in libraries, and the company has begun to take a leadership role in helping to tackle the problem of cataloging the web. Chemical Abstracts Service, with its STN International online system, has long since picked up any slack Dialog left in the marketplace for sci-tech bibliographic and full-text databases. Research Libraries Group (RLG) has shifted most of its use to the web—its web version of Eureka searching system for end users was introduced only in 1997 but today "has become the primary route for searching RLG databases." An RLG spokesperson summarizes their adaptation to the web: "as a not-for-profit organization with limited resources, RLG

takes as much advantage as possible of the web's facility for reaching users and potential buyers around the world."

Finding the old in the new

Even though many of the longstanding information companies have not completely made their old products and services extinct (usually at the request of their customers), most are evolving and offering a wider variety of new products and services that rely on web access. DialogClassic, Ovid's Native Mode, Wilson's CD-ROM (and print) indexes, Gale/IAC's InfoTrac CD-ROM all still exist after many years of successful service. (Factiva is one company that decided not to support its old system but gave customers plenty of time to adjust to the new service.) Database systems and services have evolved from the early online days of the 1970s and CD-ROM days of the 1980s as they rely on web-based services, but skeletal structures are evident to those who look deeply.

The skeletal structure of BRS is evident in Ovid; DataTimes in ProQuest Direct; Medlars in PubMed; and old-fashioned command systems in advanced search features of DialogWeb, Dow Jones Interactive, and Lexis-Nexis Universe. Factiva's Dow Jones Interactive system will soon be merged with its Reuters Business Briefing to form the Factiva online system, but the structures of each will still be evident. If dinosaurs become birds, then traditional database companies are hoping they will be the ones who fly in the future.

TABLE 2: Database Services and Systems by Company

	SIRS Mandarin					Wilson
	Discoverer	Renaissance	Researcher	Government Reporter	Knowledge Source	WilsonWeb, CD-ROM & Tape
Access Methods	CD-ROM, web	CD-ROM, web	CD-ROM, print	CD-ROM, web	Web	CD-ROM, web, magnetic tape, print
% of Content Created by Company	5%	0%	5%	5%	5%	95%
TITLES AVAILABLE BY CATEGORY						
Bibliographic						●
Directory			●	●	●	
Encyclopedias	●				●	
Full-Text Journals/Magazines	●	●	●		●	●
Full-Text Newspapers/Newswires	●	●	●		●	
Full-Text Other	●	●	●	●	●	●
Statistical/Numeric				●	●	
Other			Maps			
Document Delivery	●	●	●	●	●	
TITLES BY SUBJECT						
General	●	●	●	●	●	●
News	●		●	●	●	
Business	●		●	●	●	●
Law	●		●	●	●	●
Life Science/Medical	●		●	●	●	●
Sci-Tech	●		●	●	●	●
Social Sciences	●		●	●	●	●
Arts & Humanities	●	●	●	●	●	●
Multidisciplinary	●	●	●	●	●	●
Z39.50 Compatible	●	●	●	●	●	●
PRICING OPTIONS						
Connect Time						
Subscription: concurrent users	●	●	●	●	●	●
Subscription: potential users						●
Flat Fee Subscription	●	●	●	●	●	●
Flat Fee Per Search						
Per Record						
Other						

Company Profiles

■ Bell & Howell Information and Learning

300 N. Zeeb Rd., PO Box 1346, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346; 800-521-0600; 734-761-4700; www.umi.com; www.infolearning.com

Bell & Howell Company, Inc. has a solid reputation in the information services industry today as an innovator through Bell & Howell Information and Learning (formerly UMI, renamed last May, and to be reincarnated again as ProQuest later this year). That reputation is well earned. Its newly launched ProQuest Coursepacks and ProQuest Academic Edition can only be described as leading edge for information delivery to targeted audiences. As it continues to emphasize the education and academic market, for both students and instructors, Bell & Howell Information and Learning strives to make research and learning easier and more fun. Bell & Howell Company, Inc. acquired scholarly journal and database publisher Chadwyck-Healey in September and has already incorporated its content into the ProQuest

Coursepacks and Academic Edition. As of this writing, Chadwyck-Healey's web site (www.chadwyck.com) is still going strong and announced an agreement with Harper's Magazine Foundation to provide all issues of *Harper's Magazine* from its inception.

■ **R.R. Bowker**

121 Chanlon Rd., New Providence, NJ
07974; 888-269-5372;
www.bowker.com/

Bowker continues to expand the delivery mechanisms for its core databases to the library community, among them *Books in Print (BIP)*, *Ulrich's International Periodical Directory*, *American Library Directory*, and *Literary Market Place*. It has added cover images, tables of content, best seller information, reviews, author and contributor biographies, and award information to several of these databases; collects e-mail and URL addresses to enable linking from its web products; and links with automated library system vendors and other content and web providers to offer data in many formats. *Booksinprint.com* 2000, the new web version of *BIP*, debuted earlier this year with a new interface and search engine that allows searching across databases including *BIP*, *Books Out of Print*, and *Words on Cassette*. Bowker is working on making these Z39.50-compliant to facilitate delivery of these databases through its online partners. *Ulrichsweb.com* is being redesigned as well, in order to offer links to full text and document delivery.

■ **CAS—Chemical Abstracts Service**

2540 Olentangy River Rd., PO Box
3012, Columbus, OH 43210; 614-447-
3600; www.cas.org

CAS has continued to add full-text journals, patents, and links to its databases and now offers over 350 million links to more than 12 million electronic documents through ChemPort. Patents are more current than before—fully indexed new patents appear within 30 days of issue date (for key patent offices only), and partially indexed new patents appear within two days of issue date through CAplus. Chemical literature is now accessible prior to 1967 back to 1907 through CAOLD and can now be searched by abstract title, author name, and patent assignee. In addition, references from web editions of American Chemical Society journals now link to CAS database records. With Dialog's emphasis continuing to shift away from science and technology, the CAS online service STN International is the major traditional supplier of sci-tech information.

■ **The Dialog Corporation**

11000 Regency Pkwy., Suite 10, Cary,
NC 27511; 919-462-8600;
www.dialog.com

The Dialog Corporation (formerly M.A.I.D.) announced March 23, 2000 that it will sell its entire Information Services Division (ISD), which includes Dialog, DataStar, Profound (business database access for businesses), k-working (KM suite), and Intranet Toolkit, to the Thomson Corporation, pending Dialog Corporation's stockholder and

bondholder approval. In the past year, Dialog had refocused on software technology products. The company continued to have a troubled relationship with customers of its traditional online services and could not meet the huge debt encumbered when M.A.I.D. purchased the Dialog products from Knight-Ridder.

■ **EBSCO Publishing—EBSCOhost**

10 Estes St., Ipswich, MA 01938;
800-653-2726; www.epnet.com

In the past year, EBSCO has increased its content offerings through wider access to full-text and full-image documents and by adding databases. It continues to target the general library end user through a variety of popular periodicals and bibliographic databases. EBSCO's market is made up entirely of libraries of various sorts, and its focus remains on better interfaces and content to serve that market. At the beginning of 2000, EBSCO Online upped its coverage to include 4000 journals from 75 publishers, including 13 e-journals from Professional Engineering Publishing and 31 titles from Swets & Zeitlinger. In 1999, EBSCOhost added such databases as EconLit, Basic BIOSIS, and SPIN as well as a directory of a million records from Dun & Bradstreet to its already large stable of offerings.

■ **Elsevier Science**

655 Ave. of the Americas, New York,
NY 10010; 212-633-3766;
www.elsevier.com

Elsevier Science launched ScienceDirect commercially in 1999. The new version has been beefed up with licensed content from eight STM publishers and three secondary databases—Biosis, EconLit, and Inspec—and is participating in CrossRef, the STM linking initiative. The company also introduced interlibrary loan and archival policies for Elsevier Science journals on ScienceDirect. Elsevier also established library advisory boards in the United States and Europe to help the company with policies and practices as it shifts from paper to electronic publishing. On the print front, Elsevier changed its pricing policies, putting a cap on annual print price increases, in an effort to regain library confidence. Community services BioMedNet, ChemWeb, and Ei's Engineering Village are being updated with new products, features, and services.

■ **factiva (Dow Jones Reuters Business Interactive, LLC.)**

PO Box 300, Princeton, NJ 08543-0300
and London; 800-369-7466; 609-452-
1511; www.factiva.com

In May 1999 Dow Jones and Reuters merged two business information divisions, Dow Jones Interactive (DJI) and Reuters Business Briefing (RBB), in a joint venture to form a new company. In November the new company was renamed *factiva*, and an aggressive public relations campaign promises it brings "the best of both" of the original companies. Since the initial merger, DJI and RBB have been working to develop a merged online service due to launch in mid-2000—also named *factiva*. It will be a com-

plete redesign of the old DJI and RBB, although the old services will also be maintained in the transition. Originally, the reason for the merger was Dow Jones's need for international news and customers and Reuters's need for a North American customer base. In January, Tim Andrews stepped down as CEO and was succeeded by Clare Hart, former VP of marketing.

■ **Gale Group (owned by Thomson Business Information, a division of the Thomson Corporation)**

27500 Drake Rd., Farmington Hills, MI
48331; 248-699-4253;
www.galegroup.com

Gale Group, long a creator and provider of massive amounts of information, continues to acquire other publishers. Having previously incorporated content from Thomson's Information Access Company and Primary Source Media (now all Gale Group), Gale is currently integrating the vast historical content from Macmillan Reference and Scribner, which became part of the company last July. With this latest acquisition, Gale is securing its role as both an information content creator and aggregator for online distribution. Gale Group continues to focus on libraries as its main market. As part of the expanding Thomson Corporation, Gale counts as siblings such diverse information companies as West Publishing, Institute for Scientific Information, and, soon, Dialog, DataStar, and Profound.

■ **Information Quest (a service of RoweCom, Inc.)**

5838 Edison Place, Carlsbad, CA
92008; 800-422-3223; 760-431-7474,
x135; www.informationquest.com

Information Quest, recently purchased by RoweCom, Inc., specializes in providing journals published by academic houses. Search software includes the capabilities of searching by concept, which uses natural-language searching; related term searching; Fuzzy Matching, which allows searches for misspelled words, technical terms, expressions, "odd characters," and foreign languages; traditional Boolean searching; a "More Like This" function; and permitting users to browse by journal title, article title, publisher, or provider.

■ **Infotrieve**

10966 Le Conte Ave., Los Angeles, CA
90024; 800-422-4633; 310-208-1903;
www.infotrieve.com

Although Infotrieve serves the library market, it, too, has succumbed to the end user bait and dangles its offerings before web users on a pay-per-view basis—searching is free, but users are charged for viewing a full-text article. Infotrieve is excited about expanding its market to end users and plans to continue developing products with this in mind.

■ **Lexis-Nexis**

PO Box 933, Dayton, OH 45401-0933;
937-865-6800; 800-227-9597;
www.lexis-nexis.com

Lexis-Nexis has added sources and expanded its range of customers. Academic Universe tar-

gets colleges and universities, while Scholastic Universe targets high schools—new directions for a service that has most of its customers in law firms and corporations. In continuing competition for the legal market, Lexis-Nexis had acquired Shepard's from Times Mirror in 1998, but Westlaw, which had licensed the content from Shepard's, kept the old links active, and redirected them to its own product, KeyCite. Lexis-Nexis challenged Westlaw's use; the judge concurred, and last July ordered Westlaw to remove all Shepard's links. The company also launched LEXIS Publishing, combining the technology and content of its legal brands: Lexis-Nexis, Shepard's, Matthew Bender, MICHIE, and Martindale-Hubbell.

■ **Northern Light Technology, Inc.**
222 3d St., Suite 1320, Cambridge, MA 02142; 617-621-5158;
www.northernlight.com

Northern Light Technology, Inc. (NL) began life as an innovative web search engine service and was one of the first to combine access to free web resources with indexing of and links to fee-based journal articles. This year NL announced a joint project with Student Advantage, Inc. (research.studentadvantage.com), called Student Advantage Research. This new product aims to enhance college students' research experience on the web and includes links to NL's own Special Collection, a database of 6200 full-text electronic journals.

■ **OCLC**
OCLC Online Computer Library Center, 6565 Frantz Rd., Dublin, OH 43017; 614-764-6000; 800-848-5878;
www.oclc.org

The OCLC FirstSearch service grew by 25 percent last year, from 12,000 libraries to more than 15,000. FirstSearch was redesigned and overhauled, given a new interface, and now includes a web-based online reference service. The number of e-journals FirstSearch provides access to has doubled to over 2000. With its command system Epic discontinued, OCLC relies solely on FirstSearch for reference database access.

■ **Ovid Technologies (owned by Wolters Kluwer U.S. Corp., which is wholly owned by Wolters Kluwer N.V.)**
333 7th Ave., 4th fl., New York, NY 10001; 212-563-3006; www.ovid.com

Although founder and entrepreneur Mark Nelson stepped down last August as CEO and president of Ovid Technologies, the company continues to make changes and enhancements. In the past year, Ovid has completely redone its web site, released a new interface in version 4.1.0, made enhancements to Books in Print Online, added its 300th journal to Journals@Ovid, created Books@Ovid, and added more content, including additional BIOSIS material.

■ **Quicklaw**
PO Box 2080, 1 Gore St., Kingston, Ont., Canada K7L 5J8; 613-549-4611; 800-267-9470; www.quicklaw.com/
Quicklaw, a Canadian online legal publish-

er, primarily targets lawyers and other legal researchers. Quicklaw provides access to over 1900 databases of case law, legislation, and secondary legal sources from Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Commonwealth countries in Africa and the Caribbean. A web service, now under development, is due to be released this year. Last year the company purchased Current Legal Resources, Inc., and changed that company's name to Quicklaw America, Inc., based in Bethpage, NY.

■ **RLG—Research Libraries Group**
1200 Villa St., Mountain View, CA 94041-1100; 650-691-2207;
www.rlg.org

RLG continues to be centered around its immense shared cataloging database but each year adds more research "resources that commercial suppliers may overlook or find too specialized, [focusing] on the long-term needs and potential of its members." RLG has been adding full-text journals on an array of topics (general interest, business, law, life sciences/medical, sci-tech/engineering, arts/humanities, and multidisciplinary) and in many formats (ASCII, scanned image, combination ASCII and scanned image, HTML, PDF, SGML, or XML).

■ **SilverPlatter Information**
100 River Ridge Dr., Norwood, MA 02062, 781-769-2599, x220;
www.silverplatter.com

SilverPlatter continues to make agreements with many information content providers, such as EBSCO, ingenta, and SIAM, and is increasing the number of bibliographic, full-text, and directory content offerings with every passing month. The WebSPIRS online service is now more popular than the CD-ROM products that launched the company, although the CD-ROM is still available and is particularly popular outside of North America. A Windows version of the SilverPlatter system is still available as well. SilverPlatter is now emphasizing solutions to linking to full text, as well as providing more full text to which to link. Last year, SilverPlatter abandoned plans to develop KM products and will stick with its tried-and-true focus on database products for the library market.

■ **SIRS Mandarin**
PO Box 272348, Boca Raton, FL 33427-2348; 800-232-7477; 561-994-0079; www.sirs.com

SIRS Mandarin is making some necessary and useful changes to its software and updates to content. Most of the software enhancements are changes that are finally catching SIRS up with the rest of the pack. SIRS now has new, useful features that many other database providers have been making available for several years, including proximity searching, saving searches, keyword searching within descriptors, etc. SIRS continues to serve only the library market—70 percent of its customers are school libraries.

■ **The UnCover Company (formerly owned by CARL, now by ingenta)**
3801 E. Florida Ave., #200, Denver, CO 80210; 800-787-7979; 303-758-3030;
uncweb.carl.org:80

■ **ingenta inc**
124 Mt. Auburn St., Suite 200 N, University Place, Cambridge, MA 02138-0222; 617-576-5815; www.ingenta.com
In January 2000 UnCover became a subsidiary of ingenta inc, an aggregator of databases and a global research gateway based in the UK, with a U.S. office in Cambridge, MA. ingenta acquired UnCover after purchasing 100 percent of its stock from CARL Corp. ingenta's purchase of the UnCover Company significantly increased its customer base, especially in the United States. For now, UnCover can still be accessed the same as before—from its UnCover web page on CARL's web site, and users are promised no interruption in service. ingenta provides similar services to UnCover—indexing and abstracting linked to document delivery of full-text journals and magazines. Like UnCover, ingenta provides free searching of its databases but charges for article copies.

■ **Westlaw (owned by West Group, a Thomson company)**
610 Opperman Dr., Eagan, MN 55123; 651-687-7000; www.westlaw.com

Westlaw, a West Group law and legal database aggregator and distributor in the United States, has added several more products and features in the past year. These include five more separate web sites for law schools, an online store, help with finding an attorney, attorneys seeking positions, and a new westlaw.com site. In addition to other improvements, it has added faster searching capability, footnote linking, citation linking (KeyCite; see Lexis-Nexis, above), natural-language searching, a 14-day free trial for new users, hourly pricing (in addition to customized subscriptions), and a new online customer service site. At the October Court Technology Conference in Los Angeles, Westlaw unveiled a new technology—the ability to electronically file court cases over the Internet—developed with SCT e-file Management system and Orange County Superior Court, Los Angeles. The new service is called WestFile and has not yet been given a release date.

■ **H.W. Wilson**
950 University Ave., Bronx, NY 10452; 800-367-6770; 718-588-8400;
www.hwwilson.com

The H.W. Wilson Company continues to be a favorite among libraries, which comprise 95 percent of its customer base. Wilson still favors human indexing by MLS-degreed indexers, believing it helps to keep indexing and database integrity high. Wilson continues to maintain its print, CD-ROM, and web-based indexing and abstracting products, some with full-text links on the web. Its newest product is SearchPlus, which permits a search to be limited to peer-reviewed journals. Among other projects, Wilson is currently working on a Readers' Guide Retrospective, going back to 1890. ■