

Research Forum**Tandem use of Dialog Classmate and Knowledge Index for online searching by end users****By Katherine M. Whitley**

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Beginning in fall 1985, the University of Arizona Library provided online searching for end users, using BRS After Dark. BRS After Dark was the first service to be used widely for end-user online searching and consisted of a wide variety of databases offered during off-peak hours at prices substantially reduced from the daytime rates. We initially considered another evening discount rate service, Dialog's Knowledge Index (KI), but rejected it in favor of BRS After Dark, partly because of the unavailability in KI of key databases in some fields.

The University of Arizona QuickSearch program was set up to offer evening and weekend online bibliographic searching at no cost for faculty, staff, and students. The program was intended to serve as a "quick search" source, and users needing more in-depth searches were referred to librarians for mediated searches. Users had to attend a classroom training session, scheduled weekly and taught by a library faculty member. They were then eligible to reserve half-hour sessions for doing searches in a supervised setting. Six sessions a day, Saturdays through Thursdays, were available at two library locations when university classes were in session.

The program was quite successful, and at first the costs were quite reasonable. Over the years, however, the cost of using the BRS After Dark service increased steadily. Additional display charges were added for popular databases; then connect charges began to rise, until the costs for some databases were almost equivalent to daytime rates. The library totally subsidizes the cost of the QuickSearch service for campus users, and these unpredictable cost increases made it difficult to

budget and to obtain funding. By the end of 1988-89, costs had increased from \$11,000 in 1985-86 to \$24,572. With the online budget stretched practically beyond its limits, it was clear that alternatives had to be investigated. The Computer-Assisted Reference Services (CARS) group in the library formed a committee to examine the problem and return to the group with solutions.

The problem

The library is committed to offering campus users at least some level of end-user online bibliographic searching, at no cost, but steep cost increases were making this commitment difficult to fulfill. QuickSearch online costs had increased 123% from 1985-86 to 1988-89, whereas only 38% more searches were performed in the latter year. The average cost per search had increased by 62%. The committee's charge was to propose alternatives for reducing costs while continuing to offer reasonable online searching capabilities to campus users.

The library's needs for end-user online searching required staying within a steady-state budget (although cost reductions, of course, would be ideal), a minimum staff impact for retraining, and continuing access to a large number of databases in important fields of instruction and research on campus. Our alternatives at this time were to continue with BRS After Dark and face the financial alternatives or change to another vendor such as Dialog. Staying with BRS After Dark would have required either instituting user fees or substantially reducing the hours of availability.

The discussion

Committee members were aware that some colleges and universities across the country were using Dialog as a vendor for end-user searching, especially the Dialog Classmate Program, which is designed to introduce students from high school through university to online bibliographic searching in concert with coursework (information is available from Dialog Information Services, Inc., 1901 N. Moore St., Suite 500, Arlington, VA 22209; 703/524-8004). Dialog obtains consent from vendors to forego royalties on the databases offered so that a single discounted rate may be charged to academic institutions for this service. Dialog approves applications to participate on a case-by-case basis.

We considered two different Classmate options: Dialog Classmate and Dialog CIP (Classroom Instruction Program). Dialog Classmate offers over 80 databases at \$15 per hour, with no additional telecommunications or display charges, using the Knowledge Index command user interface. Dialog CIP provides access to over 300 databases, also at \$15 per hour, without additional telecommunications or display charges, using the regular Dialog query language. Both options require classroom training and supervised searching, are available only to registered students, and are operational during regular Dialog hours.

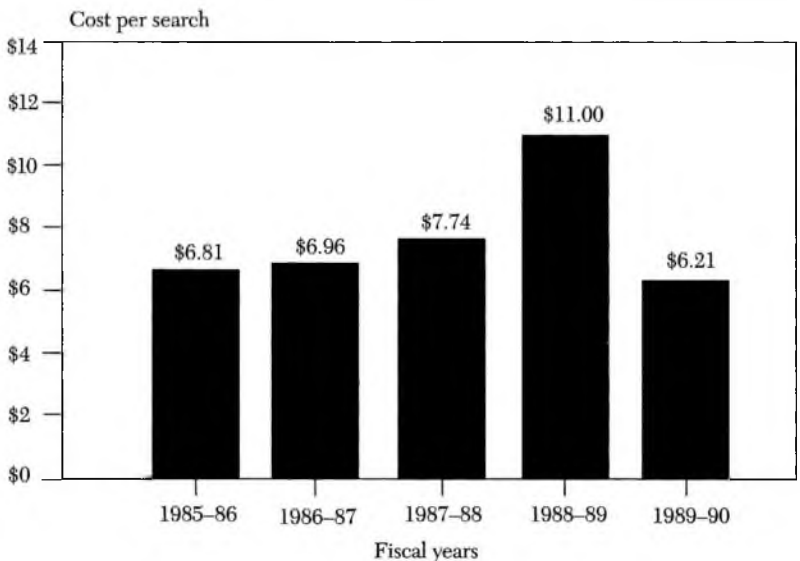
Another possibility was subscribing to Dialog Knowledge Index. Available only evenings and weekends, KI has over 72 databases available at \$24 per hour, with no additional telecommunications or display charges. It uses the Knowledge Index command user interface and is available for students, faculty, and staff.

Table 1 shows the advantages and disadvantages we considered for each alternative. No one solution was ideal, but a comparison of these criteria as well as evaluation of cost projections allowed us to choose the overall best combination for our needs.

The choice

After much discussion with the CARS group about training load, databases available, and budget impacts, the committee recommended negotiating two different contracts—one for Dialog Classmate for student use and one for Knowledge Index for faculty and staff use. Classmate alone would not meet our needs because its use is restricted to students. We decided to offer both services concurrently under the single banner of "QuickSearch2." Student searchers would be logged onto the Classmate password, but might also be logged on to the Knowledge Index password for the one or two databases available only on KI. Faculty and staff searchers would be logged onto the KI password only and would not be allowed

FIGURE 1: QUICKSEARCH COST SUMMARY
AVERAGE COST PER SEARCH



access to two or three databases offered only on Classmate. Searching these two systems looks the same on screen because of the Knowledge Index user command interface, and we believed that our users would be largely unaware that students and faculty or staff are logged onto different systems,

except for the small differences between databases offered.

We chose to limit end-user searching to evenings and weekends, even though Classmate is available during daytime hours, in order to simplify scheduling and explanation of the service to stu-

TABLE 1: SUMMARY OF OPTIONS

Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
BRS After Dark	No training change Large number of databases Access for faculty, staff, students	Unpredictable cost increases Possible decreased access Possible user charges Evening access only
Dialog CIP	Large number of databases Fixed hourly cost Day and evening access Substantial cost savings possible	Retraining necessary Access for students only Classroom training required
Dialog Classmate	Fixed hourly cost Day and evening access Substantial cost savings possible	Retraining necessary Access for students only Classroom training required Somewhat smaller number of databases
Dialog KI	Fixed hourly cost Access for faculty, staff, students Some cost savings possible	Retraining necessary Somewhat smaller number of databases No faculty access to BIOSIS and CA Evening access only
Dialog CIP and KI Combination	Large number of databases Fixed hourly cost Access for faculty, staff, students Substantial cost savings possible	Retraining necessary Training for both Dialog command language and KI command interface necessary Somewhat smaller number of databases available to faculty No faculty access to BIOSIS and CA Faculty searching evening only Classroom training required for students
Dialog Classmate and KI Combination	Fixed hourly cost Access for faculty, staff, students KI searching interface for both systems Substantial cost savings possible	Retraining necessary Faculty searching evening only Somewhat smaller number of databases available to faculty No faculty access to BIOSIS and CA Classroom training required for students



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dents and faculty or staff. Evening hours are more convenient in terms of equipment access and graduate student staff time for monitoring searches; moreover, these hours matched the previous hours of service when we used BRS After Dark.

We planned a series of retraining classes for current QuickSearch users and restructured our weekly classroom training sessions to teach the Knowledge Index command interface for all new users. Library faculty members conduct all training sessions, and a schedule of classes for each semester and for summer sessions is published. A staff member maintains a PC-File database of users who have completed this training and are thus authorized to do searches.

Even though more online databases would have been available if we subscribed to the combination of Dialog CIP and Knowledge Index, the group felt that the burden of training time outweighed this advantage. Designing and offering separate training sessions for the full Dialog command language (for Dialog CIP) and the Knowledge Index command user interface would have taken more staff time than could be devoted to this project. It is possible still to offer a single training program for students, faculty, and staff because both Classmate and Knowledge Index use the KI user command

interface. Advanced and updated training sessions have also been scheduled.

A list of available databases was compiled, which makes it clear that there are several databases available only to students. We felt we could deal with the fact that faculty and staff could not use the CA Search (Chemical Abstracts) database because we subscribe to the CAS Academic Program for CAS Online on STN International for their use. Lack of access to BIOSIS for faculty and staff was more problematic, but we believed that the Life Sciences Collection database on Knowledge Index would provide at least some access to the life sciences literature, and we were aware that BIOSIS was soon to be available on compact disc.

As a result of this change, not only were we able to stay within our budget, but we had cost savings for the 1989-90 year of almost 50%, compared with 1988-89, for approximately the same number of searches.

This project at the University of Arizona allowed us to choose the best alternative for online searching in view of current budget and staff constraints. We will continue to review the growing options for colleges and universities to make computerized bibliographic searching available directly to end users—online access through commercial vendors, locally loaded databases, and CD-ROM. ■■



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NEH awards \$3 million

The National Endowment for the Humanities has announced 14 awards, totaling more than \$3 million, to preserve brittle books and other printed materials, expand NEH's ongoing program to preserve U.S. newspapers, assist in the creation of statewide preservation plans, and support research that will improve preservation technology.

A grant of \$396,132 to the University of California, Berkeley, will help to preserve volumes in the library's European language and literature collections. Stanford University will use a grant of \$137,144 to microfilm 1,020 volumes of Uruguayan Congressional Proceedings. Yale University will receive \$204,508 to catalog and microfilm brittle volumes in its French history collection. An award of \$600,000 will allow the American Theological Library Association to microfilm embrittled monographs on the history of religion drawn from collections across the country. The Museum of American Textile History will use its grant of \$18,146 to microfilm two sets of textile industry directories covering the period 1866 to 1989, volumes that are important for students and scholars of American business, economic, regional, and technological history. A grant of \$175,572 to Co-

lumbia University will support the microfilming of Argentine legal journals in the Law School Library. The University of Texas, Austin, will use a grant of \$346,966 for microfilming 4,200 volumes valuable to research on the history, literature, and culture of Mexico, Guatemala, and other Latin American countries.

Four of the new awards are part of the Endowment's United States Newspaper Program, a long-range effort to locate, catalog in a national database, and preserve on microfilm the 250,000 newspapers published in this country since 1690. New grants will allow the North Carolina Department of Cultural Resources and the Rhode Island Historical Society to begin cataloging and microfilming hundreds of their states' newspapers. Also, the Alaska State Library and Archives and the Arizona Department of Libraries are receiving awards that will support planning for their states' participation in the U.S. Newspaper Program, which is organized on a state-by-state basis and is coordinated with the Library of Congress and OCLC.

Two grants of \$50,000 each to the Maine State Archives and the Rhode Island Department of
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Prepared by Barbara Brown

*College Libraries Committee
Commission on Preservation and Access*

● **Chicago, Illinois.** For those of you who may not see *The American Archivist* (published by the Society of American Archivists) regularly, the latest issue, Spring 1990 (vol. 53, no. 2) is a Special Preservation Issue, edited by Anne R. Kenney, Cornell University. Particularly useful are the "Checklist of Standards Applicable to the Preservation of Archives and Manuscripts" and the review essays on "Literature on the Preservation of Non-Paper Materials" and "Audiovisual Resources on Preservation Topics."

● **Atlanta, Georgia.** The SOLINET Preservation Program has announced the publication of "Choosing and Working with a Conservator" by Jan Paris. This new pamphlet offers sound, broadly applicable guidelines to help institutions and patrons choose the right person or service center, then explains how the client and conservator work together to get the desired results. Single copies may be purchased for \$10 prepaid, check payable to SOLINET. Reduced rates are available for multiple copies. Copies may be ordered by mail, SOLINET Preservation Program, 400 Colony Square, Plaza Level, Atlanta, GA 30361-6301 or by fax, (404) 892-7879. For additional information, call SOLINET at (800) 999-8558.

● **Washington, D.C.** The conference, Preservation of Library and Archival Material, jointly

sponsored by the Association of Physical Plant Administrators and the Commission on Preservation and Access, attracted one hundred and two librarians, physical plant personnel, and architects. The conference was designed to foster better working relationships among participant groups in order to improve environmental conditions of library and archives material. The APPA is planning to issue a publication from this conference, which will include the text of the keynote address given by Dr. Billy E. Frye, Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost of Emory University. For more details contact: Steve Glazner, Director of Communications, APPA, 1446 Duke Street, Alexandria, VA 22314-3492.

● **Washington, D.C.** A report on the National Conference on the Development of Statewide Preservation Programs held March 1-3, 1989, at the Library of Congress is available, while supplies last, for \$15.00 from the Commission on Preservation and Access. The report was edited by Carolyn Clark Morrow, Harvard's Malloy-Rabinowitz Preservation Librarian, to be a practical tool for states interested in developing preservation plans. Send a check made payable to "Commission on Preservation and Access" to Trish Cece, Communications Assistant, 1785 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 313, Washington, DC 20036-2117. ■■

(NEH awards con't from previous page)

State Library Services will support the development of comprehensive preservation plans for the libraries, archives, historical societies, and museums in Maine and Rhode Island.

NEH also provides grants for scientific research undertaken to improve preservation technology

and procedures. A grant of \$279,012 to the Rochester Institute of Technology in New York will support a project to develop improved archival storage techniques and new methods for detecting the deterioration of microfilm. ■■