

DATABASE & DISC REVIEWS

EDITOR: CHERYL LaGUARDIA

ELECTRONICALLY SPEAKING...A brace of business files bring company and industry information to the web, while EBSCO has brought to market an excellent social sciences resource. Women's studies researchers will be eager to explore Bell & Howell's new **Gerritsen Collection** online, while Columbia University Press releases another

web file of solid use to patrons and librarians alike.

WEB ABI/TRADE & INDUSTRY INDEX

ProQuest/Bell & Howell Information & Learning Co. (800-521-0600; pqsales@bellhowell.infolearning.com. www.proquest.com)

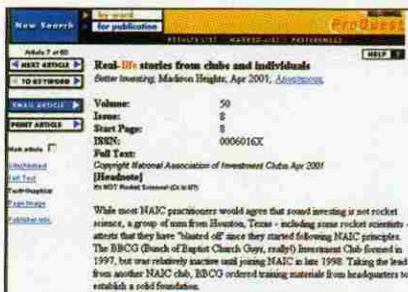
Date reviewed: 3/11/01

Price: Negotiated by site.

ABI/INFORM in one or more of its various flavors is familiar to most library business collections. **ABI/Trade & Industry Index (T&I)** is sold as an add-on to ABI/INFORM as well as a standalone product. It features indexing, abstracts, and full text to over 700 periodicals, about 30 percent of which are also in ABI/INFORM. A comparison of titles in both products shows that **T&I** offers greater industry breadth and depth, including titles from small industries and specialized titles within large industry groups not represented in ABI/INFORM. The overlap in titles is important for those considering **T&I** as a standalone product. For the most part, ProQuest has done a good job of selecting important industry titles that should go in both services; however, there may be some important general business or industry titles from ABI/INFORM (Research edition) not represented in **T&I** (e.g., *Fortune*, *Telecom World*) that could limit its appeal as a standalone.

In the ProQuest version of ABI products many of the titles are also available as PDF files preserving the look of the original publication. This is particularly useful for graphics or sidebars that have valuable information that is often missing in full-text versions.

The ProQuest search software is as powerful as most end users will want. It accommodates a number of "power searching" features such as field searching, nesting, and controlled vocabulary linkages and the ability to limit results to full-text or reviewed periodicals, yet it is



easy to understand for the first-time user. Subject searching should be used with caution, however, since many articles from industry news publications are not tagged with subject terms. An experienced professional might miss the ability to create and combine sets such as is available with Ovid or Dialog, and the lack of a facility for combining multiple documents on a single page can make downloading and editing tedious.

The Bottom Line: **ABI/Trade & Industry Index** is highly recommended as an add-on to ABI/INFORM for large business libraries or special collections. Libraries considering it as a standalone product should evaluate the title coverage versus other products for their needs.—*Andrea Schulman, Baker Lib., Harvard Business School*

WEB BVD SUITE

Bureau van Dijk Electronic Pub. (888-797-7120; office@bvdny.com).

www.bvdny.com

Date reviewed: 3/7/01

Price: Negotiated by site.

Brussels-based Bureau van Dijk (BvD) continues to repackaging its products in innovative ways. Its flagship product, **BvD Suite (Suite)**, integrates all its web-based company information databases into one suite of products. The core of the product comprises popular BvD products such as Amadeus (European companies; Database&Disc Reviews, *LJ* 9/1/00), Fame (Japanese companies), Icarus (U.S. companies), and BankScope (banks). Altogether the **Suite** covers seven million European companies, 250,000 U.S. companies, and 100,000 Japanese firms, as well as 11,000 banks and 4400 insurance companies worldwide. The availability of up to ten years of detailed financial statement data for private European and Japanese

businesses is refreshing—especially for researchers familiar with U.S. company financial disclosure requirements that apply only to publicly traded outfits. BvD has plans to add more of its databases to the **Suite** as they are converted from CD-ROM to the web.

BvD's ambitious project, including its Suite Search feature, allows users to search all the companies in the database through one seamless interface. The data available on each company are uniform, whether accessed through the Suite Search or via individual databases. Because the Suite Search interface mirrors the Easy Search of the individual products, and does not include the Advanced Search features, it limits the screening capabilities somewhat. Search criteria include company name, industry text or codes, country, operating revenue, total assets, and number of employees. Suffering from a syndrome common to company databases, BvD products include industry codes that do not cover technology well. Finding Internet or other high-tech companies using the industry text or industry codes is problematic.

Individual reports are available for each company in the Suite Search. However, peer analysis, group reports, and statistical reports are accessible only via the individual databases. Therefore, the strength of the Suite Search feature is truly on the breadth of coverage rather than on detailed screening capacity or reporting features. The Suite Search is a practical tool for quickly screening for companies or pulling up in-depth financial reports on a specific enterprise.

Although each individual database has competitors, **BvD Suite** has no real rivals for its scope and depth of coverage.

COMPANIES WITH BVD SUITE as part of their name (27 companies)
Sorted by Turnover, descending

Rank	Company Name	Country	Industry	Size
1	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
2	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
3	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
4	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
5	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
6	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
7	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
8	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
9	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
10	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
11	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
12	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
13	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
14	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
15	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
16	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
17	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
18	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
19	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
20	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
21	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
22	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
23	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
24	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
25	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
26	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large
27	NETSCAPE CORPORATION (US) PLC	USA	Wholesale & retail trade	Very large

The product allows the searcher to move easily among the **Suite** and other BvD products, streamlining the research process. The product's one limitation is

LEGEND

WEB Web-based Database CD-ROM CD-ROM

Cheryl LaGuardia is the Head of Instructional Services for the Harvard College Library, author of *Becoming a Library Teacher* (Neal-Schuman, 2000), and winner of the 1996 Louis Shores-Oryx Press Award for Excellence in Reviewing

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that it is not truly a worldwide database (nor does it claim to be), although individual products within it, such as BankScope and ISIS (insurance companies), are global in scope. As far as geographic coverage, Europe, Japan, and the United States are the most well represented overall.

The **Suite** can be purchased with unlimited access or with a pay-per-view (PPV) subscription in which credits are used up when reports are viewed, printed, or downloaded. The latter model will be handy for libraries requiring the breadth of coverage of the product but not needing unlimited access. Existing subscribers to one or more products may want to add on PPV for the **Suite**. The Free Directory allows any Internet surfer to perform, without charge, simple screens for companies but does not provide access to the reports. Data sources for many of the companies in **BvD Suite** originate with official government reporting agencies in each country. Other reliable data sources, such as Dun & Bradstreet for U.S. companies, are also tapped. BvD inputs the data into its standardized financial statement format. Information from some databases, such as BankScope, is more detailed and even includes news from Reuters.

The Bottom Line: **BvD Suite** is recommended for libraries supporting

serious research on banks, insurance companies, and European and Japanese firms. Academic and special libraries may want to consider using the PPV subscription for specialized research projects.—*Carol Elsen, Baker Lib., Harvard Business School*

WEB COLUMBIA GAZETTEER OF THE WORLD ONLINE

Columbia Univ. (800-944-8648;

ms1004@columbia.edu).

www.columbia.edu/cu/cup

Date reviewed: 3/10/01

Price: Starts at \$495.

This new online version of the well-known *Columbia Gazetteer of the World* is a searchable collection of names, descrip-



tions, and physical characteristics of more than 165,000 global places. Entries are of varying length and include name pronunciation, location (in longitude and latitude coordinates; no maps are provided in the current version), physical features, political boundaries, demographics, and history. Starting in July 2001, updating will occur monthly. Plans are for maps, population density, and rate of growth to be added in the next three years.

The **Gazetteer** can be searched by place name, word, or type of place. Searching by place name is intuitive, and the results list can be evaluated quickly thanks to identifying labels. Hyperlinked cross references are especially useful for countries renamed in recent decades (more cross references are needed, however, e.g., from "Mount Spurr" to "Spurr, Mount").

Because word searching can be tricky in any database, the search examples and reference to online help (which is both thorough and thoughtful) on the "Word Search" page are highly useful. Unfortunately, the "Type of Place Search" page offers no such guidance and is not intuitive. Searching by type of place can produce misleading results. In a search for a list of mountains in Japan, Mount Fuji is absent in the results. Why? Because the "Type of Place" field in the entry for Mount Fuji doesn't say "mountain," it only says "national park." Printing, downloading, and e-mailing results will be frustrating for someone using the frames version of the site (a

text-only version is offered as an alternative). A link to an "easy-print" text version of every entry would be a nice addition.

The **Encyclopedia Britannica** online offers similar information for many geographic entities. **Britannica** geographical entries generally are longer and more readable, and they often include graphics. However, the **Columbia Gazetteer** seems to index more places and offers more technical and detailed information. And I've often had difficulty accessing **britannica.com** because of the high level of use of the free site. Note that the free version of **Encyclopedia Britannica** will be withdrawn from the market later this year.

The **Omni Gazetteer** on SilverPlatter offers similar geographic, demographic, and historical information, but it only covers the United States, Puerto Rico, and U.S. territories. The **Getty Thesaurus of Geographic Names** (www.getty.edu/research/tools/vocabulary/tgn/index.html), on the other hand, is international in scope but doesn't provide demographic or historical information.

The Bottom Line: Broader in coverage than comparable sources (see above), **Columbia Gazetteer of the World Online** is recommended (with minor reservations) for public and academic libraries seeking comprehensive and reliable online geographic information of an international scope. It will also be a useful tool for librarians in both public and technical services.—*Carrie Macfarlane, Research Svcs., Widener Lib., Harvard Univ.*

WEB THE GERRITSEN COLLECTION: WOMEN'S HISTORY ONLINE

Bell & Howell Information & Learning Co. (800-521-0600; pqsales@bellhowell.infolearning.com; gerritsen.chadwyck.com

Date reviewed: 3/17/01

Price: Negotiated by site.

Named for Aletta Jacobs Gerritsen, a Dutch physician and feminist who had the vision to begin collecting books, pamphlets, and periodicals on feminism and the women's rights movement in the late 1800s, the Gerritsen Collection was eventually completed by her successors in 1945. It remains one of the foremost sources for the study of women's history, with over 4700 publications in 15 languages from Europe, the United States, the United Kingdom, Canada, and New Zealand covering the time period 1543-1945.

Originally released as a microform collection by Chadwyck-Healey (which also created the online version that B&H

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acquired in 1999), the online collection reproduces the same two million page images of original printed works—many of which would be hard to find in their original print in most libraries. Not simply a collection of profeminist writings, **Gerritsen** presents both sides of the issues surrounding the women's movement as well as offering a rich resource for studying the conditions of women worldwide over a significant period of history. The English-language material is being digitized first; new content is added weekly, with a completion date expected by December 2002.

Approximately 75 percent of the collection (a little over half of which is in English) contains books and pamphlets such as Carrie Chapman Catt's *Ought Women To Have Votes for Members of Parliament?* (1879) and *Anti-Suffrage Essays by Massachusetts Women* (1916) documenting suffragism and feminism in the English-speaking world. Another 20 percent is in German, which highlights women and socialism and the status of Jewish women; 16 percent is in French covering, among other things, women in the military, women's economic rights, and women's influence on literature; the remaining 12 languages comprise slightly more than ten percent of the collection. Oddly enough, however, when searching

names but also indicates the number of hits at a given name (e.g., two hits on Smith College as a publisher, 33,809 hits on Boston as a place). An additional search criteria form (separate for books and periodicals) appears at the bottom of the search screen. For books, the user is pointed to a Subject Index and a Gerritsen Index, each of which is browsable as noted for publisher. A browsable list of periodical titles is also offered, which in turn links to a listing of dates and issues covered for each title; in addition, a periodical search can be further narrowed to editorial cartoon, letter, obituary, poetry, recipe, or statistics. These browsable indexes may also be found by going to the Browse choices on the main menu. The Gerritsen and Subject Indexes will be especially helpful to students wondering how to approach this collection.

If your search is too broad and will result in an extremely large result, you are prompted to narrow it or continue. Once you have obtained a manageable set, you can view the Full Citation, which not only provides complete bibliographic information but also has a detailed table of contents with an indication of precisely where your search terms appear. It is enormously helpful to know that your search terms appeared, for example, seven times in a 700-page monograph and be able to zero in directly on those occurrences. You are taken to the page images of the items (which can be zoomed in at 200 or 400 percent) and can download the texts either a section at a time or an entire book.

Additional features include Search History, Results, and Marked List pages, all of which are explained in detail in Help, but the search and browse pages are sufficiently straightforward to allow all but the extreme novice to plunge right in. All that's needed to operate **Gerritsen Online** is Netscape 3.0 or higher, or Internet Explorer 4.0 or higher; to download images of documents in PDF format, you will need Adobe Acrobat Reader (link to download provided).

The Bottom Line: The Gerritsen Collection is a rich, invaluable resource for all aspects of women's history and an essential site for academic and large public libraries.—*Susan Szasz Palmer, Div. of Rare & Manuscript Collections, Kroch Lib., Cornell Univ., Ithaca, NY*

WEB SOCIOLOGICAL COLLECTION

EBSCO Pub. (800-653-2726;

epcust@epnet.com).

www.epnet.com

Date reviewed: 3/12/01

Price: Negotiated by site.

The **Sociological Collection** is a group of 450 full-text, primarily peer-reviewed sociology journals searchable through the



EBSCOhost interface. Sample titles include *African Studies*, *American Journal of Family Therapy*, *Journal of Urban Affairs*, and *Health Communication*. Over the next six months, the number of journals will increase to 575 titles, and the collection will contain 60 noted sociology monographs. Years of coverage vary widely by title; many are available since 1990, but for others coverage extends only a few years back or less. Indexing and abstracting information is sometimes available prior to full-text availability.

The search interface has many sophisticated features but is still easy to navigate. Search modes are keyword, natural language, advanced, and expert. The advanced search screen's template makes field searching and result limiting a cinch. A built-in thesaurus allows users to search for related words by simply checking a box. In a nod to die-hard command line users, expert search mode allows syntax-savvy power users to stack field searches with limits. Result lists are clear and easy to scan, and items can be quickly tagged for printing or e-mailing. The Print/Email/Save page is particularly well designed; clear directions offer highly customizable output of results. Another feature of note is that all contents have durable URLs, so faculty can create links to articles in course pages.

Although the collection's search features are very good, the real boon in purchasing this collection is its seamless integration with **Sociological Abstracts** via EBSCOhost. Users can link from search results in **Sociological Abstracts** (or **PsycInfo** or **ERIC**) to the corresponding full text in the **Sociological Collection**. For libraries relying heavily on **Sociological Abstracts**, this group of journals would be a good acquisition.

Unlike many other aggregators, EBSCOhost provides detailed and accurate title lists that indicate ISSN, title, publisher, dates of indexing and abstracting, dates of full-text coverage, whether or not peer-reviewed, availability of PDF format; and, notably, the "embargo" period for which publishers demand that online



you can limit only by Dutch, English, or German. A positive and less puzzling feature is the inclusion of an English-language summary of each foreign-language monograph. Periodicals make up 25 percent of the collection and cover a smaller period of time (1860–1900), but these 265 titles are largely complete runs of important and difficult-to-find items including *The Suffragist* and *The Women's Protest Against Woman Suffrage*.

Not surprisingly, the online version offers more versatility and ease-of-use than the microform collection and will likely appeal to both undergraduates as well as advanced researchers. The user may search all documents (default) or choose either books or periodicals and may search by one or more of the following: Keyword, Author, Book or Article Title, Publisher, City of Publication, Year of Publication, and Language. Publisher and City each point to a browsable index, which not only helps identify proper



availability be delayed. Embargo periods vary from three to 12 months and affect about one third of the collection.

Some of EBSCOhost terminology could be tightened up a bit. For example, it seemed strange in a collection of peer-reviewed academic journals to limit by "magazine" or to "cover stories." Semantics aside, this is a nice collection of journals available through a well-designed interface.

The Bottom Line: Sociological Collection is a growing and well-documented database of full-text journals in an important liberal arts discipline. It is especially valuable for the ability users have of moving seamlessly from results in **Sociological Abstracts** to articles in the **Collection**. Recommended for academic and public libraries, especially those subscribing to **Sociological Abstracts** through EBSCOhost. —Deanna Barmakian, Harvard Law Sch. Lib., Harvard Univ.

CD-ROM WHALEY'S ENCYCLOPEDIA OF MAGIC 1584-2000

Black Bart Magic
(1416 Pine St., Key West, FL 33040;
bart.whaley@britannica.com).
Windows 95+. 2000.

Price: \$78.

Whaley's Encyclopedic Dictionary of Magic contains nearly 4000 terms and phrases used in the performance and study of magic from 1584 (the year the first English-language book by a magician was published) to the present day. The quality of the content appears to be accurate, reliable, and thorough. For comparison's sake, I consulted the printed *Encyclopedia of Magic and Magicians*, published by Facts On File in 1988, which defines the phrase "hocus-pocus" as "a synonym for illusion created by trickery or deceit." **Whaley's** entry not only states three additional uses of this phrase but also cites the etymology from the *Oxford English Dictionary* and provides a number of quotations using this phrase in context, as well. The endnotes in all entries cite the sources of the content and often provide citations for further reading. The level of detail and research provided here is quite impressive.

Less impressive are the disc's minimal navigational and database technologies. It is not possible to search the entire disc at once; instead, you must choose a

subset of the alphabet from the A-Z pull-down menu before selecting the "find" option. Another disadvantage is that if "find" doesn't locate the term being searched, nothing changes on the screen, an oversight that could confuse users who are used to systems and software that tips them off when a search is unsuccessful. I expected to see hyperlinked cross references, but they are not here. Copying text can only be accomplished by choosing "copy" from the pull-down menu (and not by the use of the right mouse button). And,

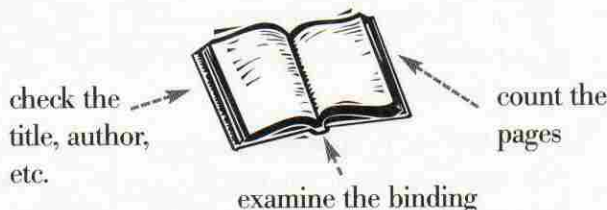
last but not least, every time I tried to print, the program ended abruptly in an "illegal operation" error.

The Bottom Line: While the content is good, **Whaley's Encyclopedic Dictionary of Magic** can't be recommended in its currently poor technical implementation; wait for the next version.—Elizabeth McKeigue, Widener Lib., Harvard Univ.

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