

# About the Web: Selected Magazines and Journals for Academic Librarians

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**ABSTRACT.** This article reviews selected magazines and journals of interest to academic librarians that include information about the Web. Reviewed titles include library science titles, general educational titles, and popular titles found on newsstands. The titles reviewed are aimed towards two groups of librarians: those most involved with developing content (such as reference librarians and bibliographers), and those involved with Web design, development, and policy issues. [Article copies available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service: 1-800-342-9678. E-mail address: getinfo@haworthpressinc.com < Website: http://www.haworthpressinc.com>]

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#### **OVERVIEW**

Academic librarians have become involved with the Web development of library sites in a number of ways. While many librarians may be interested only in developing Web content, others may be involved in various technical and design aspects of development. This article provides a selective bibliography of the magazines and journals of most interest to librarians in academic settings. The titles reviewed here are aimed towards two groups of librarians: those most involved with developing content (such as reference librarians and bibliographers), and those involved with Web design, development, and policy issues.

Highly technical magazines and journals have not been included—this list is aimed at the librarian who may have aspects of Web development as part of their responsibilities, who may have some Web management responsibilities, or who may want to intelligently advise and shape their library's Web activities. While some titles within this review are also aimed at the full-time Web manager or developer, there are additional technical and more narrowly focused titles not listed here that the Web manager would also want to consult. Many of the titles included here have online counterparts, but the emphasis within this article is on reviewing the most popular print-based magazines a librarian might encounter. Where available, however, the publicly accessible full-text Web counterpart to a title (selected articles or all articles) is also cited.

Two groups of titles are included: popular magazines found on newsstands aimed at a general market, and selected library and educational titles. By using this bibliography, librarians interested in Web development and related issues can pinpoint the titles most likely to be useful, or identify new titles to add to their reading. Some of these titles are likely to be read on a regular basis—others are perhaps titles for occasional browsing that might not normally be part of the regular professional reading.

Hopefully, this article will entice you to read again with a new appreciation an old favorite library science journal. Or perhaps it will encourage you to choose a popular magazine title from the newsstand and obtain a better understanding of current ideas and trends in Web development outside the library world.

#### LIBRARY SCIENCE GENERAL PUBLICATIONS

- American Libraries (11 times/year) American Library Organization
  - http://www.ala.org/alonline/index.html
- *Library Journal* (20 times/year) Cahners http://www.bookwire.com/ljdigital/
- College & Research Libraries News (monthly) Association of College and Research Libraries http://www.ala.org/acrl/c&rlnew2.html

The mainstream library journals tend to concentrate on policy issues related to the Internet, but these three titles also provide a good ongoing review of Web development activities in libraries. Articles about Web development and content appear most prominently in recurring columns. For example, *American Libraries* has the "Internet Librarian" column of Karen Schneider, and *Library Journal* includes a "WebWatch" column. The "WebWatch" column reviews Web sites on various topics, and also includes an annual "Best Reference Web Sites." Both of these magazines tend to cover topics at a fairly broad and general level. They also provide access to some frequently updated full-text information from their issues on the Web, providing additional value as good current awareness tools.

College & Research Libraries News very early on started including articles reviewing Web resources in individual subject areas. A monthly column titled "Internet Resources" features articles written by a wide range of authors from different institutions. Recent articles have covered such topics as government information, East Asian studies, refugees, nutrition and vegetarianism, and distance learning. Topics included tend to be those most requested in academic libraries. These articles are all included in the online version of C&RL News, which is especially useful since it allows you to use the links to go directly to the sources on the Web.

## SPECIALIZED LIBRARY SCIENCE TITLES

• Research Strategies: A Journal of Library Concepts and Instruction (quarterly) JAI Press

- The Reference Librarian (quarterly) The Haworth Press, Inc.
- Reference Services Review (quarterly) Pierian Press
- Reference & User Services Quarterly (quarterly) American Library Association
- Internet Reference Services Quarterly (quarterly) The Haworth Press, Inc.
- Online & CD-ROM Review: The International Journal of Online, Optical, and Networked Information (bi-monthly) Learned Information
- Online (bi-monthly) Online Inc. http://www.onlineinc.com/onlinemag/
- Database (bi-monthly) Online Inc. http://www.onlineinc.com/database/
- *Information Today* (11 times/year) Information Today, Inc. http://www.infotoday.com/it/itnew.htm
- Library Hi Tech (quarterly) Pierian Press
- *Computers In Libraries* (10 times/year) Information Today, Inc. http://www.infotoday.com/cilmag/ciltop.htm
- Library Software Review (quarterly) Sage Publications
- The Electronic Library: The International Journal for the Applications of Technology in Information Environments (bimonthly) Learned Information
- Internet Research: Electronic Networking Applications and Policy (5 times/year) MCB University Press

Although Web activities and development are included in some way these days in almost all the library professional magazines and journals, these titles have been selected as particularly good sources for obtaining information about the Web.

Research Strategies, Reference Services Review, The Reference Librarian, and Reference & User Services Quarterly are four magazines aimed at librarians in reference and instructional roles that also provide guidance and insight in using the Web. Research Strategies' focus is on instruction, and the articles about the Web likewise concentrate on using the Web as an instructional tool. Reference Services Review is especially notable for including articles that help librarians further develop their own Web sites. Some articles take a subject specific bibliographic approach, while others concern themselves more with the policy and service issues surrounding the use of the

Web for reference services. For example, a recent issue included articles titled "What's New on the Internet?: A Challenge for Library Webmasters," and "The Utility of German WWW Search Services for North American Users." *The Reference Librarian* is a strong source for articles about organizing information on the Web, searching the Web, and user behavior while using the Web. *Reference & User Services Quarterly* is most useful as a reviewing source for Web sites and Web-based reference sources.

Internet Reference Services Quarterly is devoted entirely to articles about using the Internet for reference and instructional services. Articles of interest to librarians in all types of libraries are included, but many of the articles are focused on academic librarians. Some articles describe the applications of Web technology in providing library services, where others are more subject-oriented reviews of Web sites and resources for individual topics or groups of users.

Online and Database are two very practical and hands-on oriented magazines published by Online Inc. that are full of articles about the content of the Web. Online is oriented towards improving search strategies and finding ways of better taking advantage of the Web's capabilities. Database includes articles on both free and subscription-based Web databases on a wide range of topics. For example, a recent issue included an article on legal periodical indexes on the Web, a review of initial public offering Web sites, and a review of a Web language translator site.

Library Hi-Tech has a broader overall focus—covering many areas of library technology applications—but it also includes a number of good articles reviewing library Web sites and services. As an example, v. 15, #3/4, 1997 was a special theme issue on the "Best Library-Related Web Sites." Information Today is geared towards the wider information industry, and much of each issue is devoted to new product announcements and information about specific companies. It does include, however, short focused articles on more general Web topics, and reviews of specific Web sites and products. It is most useful for tracking new Web services and products and monitoring new Web applications.

Library Software Review includes review articles on many different library applications. Their coverage of Web sources tends toward more technical applications. Online & CD ROM Review includes numerous articles about the Web, Web searching, and Web search engines. It also includes articles about Web design and the effectiveness of Web interfaces.

The Electronic Library and Internet Research are two international journals that may provide librarians a slightly different perspective than the preceding titles. The Electronic Library provides good coverage of Web applications for information technology and library automation. It also includes an ongoing review column of Web sites called "News on the Net." Internet Research provides the librarian with a sample of the research regarding the application of Web and Internet technologies. While many of the articles included are oriented towards applications outside libraries, their findings can readily be extrapolated for library use.

#### SELECTED EDUCATIONAL TITLES

- *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (weekly) The Chronicle of Higher Education http://www.chronicle.com
- *Educom Review* (bimonthly) EDUCAUSE http://www.educause.edu/pub/er/erm.html
- *Syllabus: New Directions in Education Technology* (10 issues/ year) Syllabus Press Inc. http://www.syllabus.com
- Educational Technology: The Magazine for Managers of Change in Education (bi-monthly) Educational Technology Publications, Inc.

The *Chronicle of Higher Education* is required reading for the librarian who wants to understand how the Web and Web technologies are changing teaching, learning, and research in colleges and universities. The *Chronicle* provides extensive coverage of new technologies and the use of the Web in the classroom. While many articles pertain to the policy issues involved (such as the impact of Web-based learning on faculty), other articles report on innovative uses of the Web in academia, or highlight Web resources in a particular discipline. If for no other reason, read this so you know what information about the Web your teaching faculty is reading.

Educom Review "explores the changing ways we will work, learn, and communicate in the digital world of the 21st century." It is an excellent source for keeping track of policy issues and new innova-

tions, and is full of thought-provoking pieces. Much of the technology discussed is Web-based, with occasional articles focusing specifically on the role of libraries and librarians.

Syllabus Magazine is also focused on the integration of technologies into the teaching and learning process. Its short and focused articles provide a great introduction to the ways that the Web is being used in course development. The numerous product and site reviews will also be of interest to the librarian reader. Some articles specifically on libraries and the use of digital resources are also included.

Educational Technology provides an interesting mix of theory, practice, policy, and philosophy in the application of the Web, particularly in course design. It is a good source for the librarian interested in the infusion of technological tools and software into teaching and learning. It is also an excellent source for reviewing examples of courses and programs that faculty are developing.

## POPULAR COMPUTING MAGAZINES FOR WEB DEVELOPMENT

The following section discusses a selective list of titles that can be found at most U.S. newsstands and bookstores, and may be included in some library collections. Librarians will find these magazines provide a quite different perspective on Web development than the library and educational titles reviewed above. Much of their information is very current in focus, a result of more frequent publishing schedules. The magazines are aimed at a wide market: the professional/small business/home/family users who may or may not have experience coding HTML or creating Web sites. The quality and quantity of relevant content among the magazines of this type varies greatly. Some have very elementary information useful to the first-time user, while others have little discussion of Web page design, coding, or content. The titles that are packed with useful information and oriented towards a more general audience are listed here in the first section of recommended titles. Start with the magazines in this section to expand your Web knowledge beyond the library world.

#### Recommended Titles

 Internet User (quarterly) Ziff-Davis www.internetuser.com

- *Microsoft Interactive Developer* (monthly) Miller Freeman, Inc. www.microsoft.com/mind
- *Desktop Publishers Journal* (irregular) Business Media www.dtpjournal.com
- .net (monthly) Future Publishing www.netmag.co.uk

Each title in this group devotes a great deal of their space to topics such as layout, using and writing applets, coding hints and shortcuts, and reviews of Web creation software packages that have just been released. Many also have articles or news bits on related topics such as buying and using scanners and digital cameras, inserting graphics, and describing the differences among Java, ActiveX, DHTML, and XML. All include charts and graphs with hardware/software review articles. The content is at or near the level of understanding of a library Web developer.

Internet User is one of the best in this group. Its articles are detailed enough for an experienced HTML programmer, but also include information a new user would need. One of the great features of this magazine is that it explains terms and directions thoroughly. Another helpful feature is the detailed review of software packages. In one article about Web authoring tools, 16 different packages are reviewed. The quick comparison charts included in this article are clear and filled with information. The majority of the magazine's content will be useful for library Web Managers.

Microsoft Interactive Developer assumes a higher level of technical comprehension than the others in this group do. It aims much of its content towards Web Managers at corporate Web sites, and includes many articles for this group of users. It is packed full of detailed information that often includes snippets of coding that one may need to execute the application or program described. At the beginning of each article there is a box showing what languages or applications the reader should be familiar with before reading on. This feature is very helpful, and an example of one of the many reasons why this magazine will appeal to librarian HTML coders with extensive experience.

Desktop Publishers Journal places emphasis on peripherals, both hardware and software, but it also includes articles about designing Web pages. At least half of the magazine covers topics of interest to librarians, such as Web editing software, digital cameras, and introductions to topics such as DHTML and XML. Lots of other related information is presented, including sections on industry news, and lists of upcoming events and conferences.

A wonderful title included in this section of excellent buys is *.net*, a magazine that is produced in the U.K. and aimed at the twenty- and thirty-somethings of England/Europe. It has superb content in the Web development area and features splashy pictures and graphics. Also included with each issue is a CD-ROM that provides copies of the software discussed within the magazine.

Windows Magazine has reviews of both hardware and software, but they appear to be much shorter in this magazine than the others in this group. The main focus of this magazine is on enhancing PC performance and purchasing high quality peripherals such as monitors, mice, and cameras, to make life easier. The largest section in one of the issues reviewed, for example, was about upgrading to Win98. But it also has significant content about scanning techniques and a regular column called "WinTips: Web." It leans toward applications in business and has fewer how-to articles than the others.

Windows Sources is very similar to Windows Magazine. The 1998 July issue, for example, is concerned with CPU speed, and PC utilities, and includes details on how to optimize your server and perform a tune-up. It also describes, among other things, how to create and edit XML code for Web pages and how to lay out and manipulate pictures using an image editor. It includes some code within articles about applications. The language and examples used, however, are very appropriate for a library Web Manager.

#### Additional Relevant Titles

- Computer Shopper (monthly) Ziff-Davis http://www.netbuyer.com
- MacWorld (monthly) Mac Publishing www.macworld.com
- *Dr. Dobb's Journal* (monthly) Miller Freeman Inc. www.ddj.com
- *Home Office Computing* (monthly) Curtco Freedom Group www.smalloffice.com

These titles are all considered good buys at the newsstand if the reader sees relevant information contained within the issue they intend to purchase. Librarians may also want to pick at least one of these titles to review on a regular basis, depending on interests and needs. With this group of titles, the reader is cautioned to read the table of contents before buying an issue, as the amount of useful content will vary with each issue. A reader may not want to commit to a subscription to these titles until after they have reviewed a few issues and decided on the relevancy of the title for their particular situation.

Each title in this group offers hardware and software reviews and tips on site creation and management. The content is aimed at a user with HTML experience at the level of a library Web creator. Some news bits or feature articles discuss the business side of Web design. The best titles of this group (and probably the best well known) are Computer Shopper and MacWorld. Computer Shopper is a title many will recognize as presenting extensive advertising for hardware and software. Each issue, however, also includes articles relevant to librarians, especially numerous product reviews of interest. Examples of articles in a recent issue included comparisons of photo/imaging software, Web site building software, and Java applet composer software. MacWorld's relevance for library Web creators lies in its hardware and software reviews. Software that helps the Web developer with Web page creation and layout, Java programming, Web site building, and animation were included in recent issues.

*Dr. Dobb's Journal* and *Home Office Computing* both include appropriate articles on Web design, but the majority of articles are devoted to other computing topics. For example, topics might include ultralight notebook computers, project management software, and mobile computing.

#### OTHER POPULAR COMPUTING MAGAZINES

- *PC Novice Smart Computing* (monthly) Sandhills Publishing http://www.smartcomputing.com
- *PC Magazine* (biweekly) Ziff-Davis http://www.pcmag.com
- *ComputerWorld* (weekly) Computerworld Magazines Group http://www.computerworld.com
- Byte (monthly) McGraw-Hill http://www.byte.com

- PC World (monthly) PC World Communications Inc. http://www.pcworld.com
- *PC Computing* (monthly) Ziff-Davis http://www.pccomputing.com
- PC Week (weekly) Ziff-Davis http://www8.zdnet.com/pcweek/

This group of well-known titles may be less useful than the first group reviewed for the librarian seeking Web information. There is often more emphasis on business usage of the Web, and the topics covered may be too peripheral to the field of Web creation. They are most useful for the librarian who wishes to review and keep abreast of the computer technology world in general, and will obtain Web information along with the information on other computing topics.

PC Novice Smart Computing is very basic in coverage, and includes a glossary of terms in the back of each issue. This title could be beneficial to users who are just getting their feet wet, and the Web information included is on a similar level. PC Magazine includes many articles about Web topics, but some articles are at a higher technological level (with sections of code available at the PC Magazine Web site) than the casual librarian reader may want to pursue. Other sections of the magazine may not have much relevance for the educational world: for example, the news section deals primarily with the business implications of software releases.

ComputerWorld is one of the most substantial of all of the titles reviewed, yet is devoted almost wholly to Internet business usage. It has sections on encryption, how to handle transactions and set up profitable electronic storefronts on the Internet, with little about page design. Other titles of this type focused more on the business user include Byte, PC World, PC Computing, and PC Week. The librarian reader may want to pick at least one of these titles to read or browse on a current basis.

#### POPULAR MAGAZINES FOR DEVELOPING WEB CONTENT

- *Family PC* (monthly) Ziff-Davis http://www.familypc.com
- *Home PC* (monthly) CMP Media Inc. http://www.homepc.com

- .net (monthly) Future Publishing http://www.netmag.co.uk
- *Yahoo! Internet Life* (monthly) Ziff-Davis http://www.yil.com
- Web Guide Monthly (monthly) H&S Media Inc. http://webguidemag.com

For those librarians who create subject-oriented Web pages, there are a few general journals and magazines which are useful for reading reviews of Web sites. Each librarian should determine the target audience for any particular Web page and from that, decide which of the following would assist them the most with making decisions about content. These titles are also good titles to browse and review just to keep up with the current topics of interest on the Web.

The best of this group that can be found at bookstores and news-stands are: Family PC, Home PC, .net, Yahoo! Internet Life, and Web Guide Monthly. Family PC has a 4-page section called the "Internet Guide" that features appropriate sites about children/family/home, along with a paragraph describing each site. Sample sites are about rollerblading, home improvement, world yellow pages, Father's Day and the solar system. As an example of Home PC's coverage, the May 1998 issue included reviews of Web sites as part of a larger section devoted to girls' activities on the Internet and the usage of electronic games targeted to girls. Some sites featured were: "CyberSisters," "Girl Tech," and "G.I.R.L." See the table of contents to determine if a particular issue includes desirable topics.

.net is produced in the U.K. so some items are targeted to that audience. At least half of each issue is devoted to describing new Web sites. Topics included the World Cup, Webcams, and games. There are two regular sections that discuss Web sites briefly: "Four Weeks Online" and the "Top 100." "Four Weeks Online" displays a calendar for the current month with a different Web site for each day (many tied to current events and anniversaries, i.e., National Bike Week and Rocky Horror Picture Show anniversary). The "Top 100" are divided by topic area: resources (reference), technology, entertainment, culture, leisure/sport, news, and science. The "Top 100" is intended to assist the new user by presenting some good starting points for Web surfing. There is an abundance of information in this magazine that will be useful to librarians.

Yahoo! Internet Life is entirely devoted to reviewing Web sites. Usually a theme is presented, along with reviews of multiple sites. Each issue covers different topics, so it is best to read the table of contents to see if relevant subject areas are included in a particular issue. This magazine focuses on the most popular or ground-breaking topics, and is targeted to young people, from about age 13 and up. Regular features are "Best/Worst of the Web" and "Strange Sites." Examples of topics covered are health information, gardening, buying home electronics, soccer, and the X-Files. Librarians will find useful information in this magazine, especially if they create Web sites about current events or popular culture topics, or Web sites serving an undergraduate population.

Web Guide Monthly is similar to Yahoo! Internet Life, in that it groups its reviews of Web sites by theme. A useful feature of this magazine is the inclusion of articles that discuss major topics over multiple pages, allowing for a thorough and extensive discussion of relevant Web sites in a certain area. For the July 1998 issue, the major articles were about San Diego sites, Web sites in Spanish, and science fiction on the Web. The rest of the magazine is devoted to Web reviews that are clustered by major subject categories, such as: business and finance, education, family, history, hobbies, religion and philosophy, news, sports, and travel and transportation, to name a few. These categories make browsing this magazine a snap. Each site review includes a paragraph of description and rankings on a scale of 1-10 in the areas of "Content," "Design," "Navigability," and "Links." This title stands above the others in this section as the most useful to librarians who create subject-oriented pages. It also has a tone that is aimed a bit more toward adults than Yahoo! Internet Life.

### ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF MAGAZINES REVIEWED

- American Libraries (11 times/year) American Library Organization
  - http://www.ala.org/alonline/index.html
- *Byte* (monthly) McGraw-Hill http://www.byte.com
- *The Chronicle of Higher Education* (weekly) The Chronicle of Higher Education http://www.chronicle.com

- College & Research Libraries News (monthly) Association of College and Research Libraries http://www.ala.org/acrl/c&rlnew2.html
- *Computers In Libraries* (10 times/year) Information Today, Inc. http://www.infotoday.com/cilmag/ciltop.htm
- *Computer Shopper* (monthly) Ziff-Davis http://www.netbuyer.com
- *ComputerWorld* (weekly) Computerworld Magazines Group http://www.computerworld.com
- Database (bi-monthly) Online Inc. http://www.onlineinc.com/database/
- *Desktop Publishers Journal* (irregular) Business Media www.dtpjournal.com
- *Dr. Dobb's Journal* (monthly) Miller Freeman Inc. www.ddj.com
- Educational Technology: The Magazine for Managers of Change in Education (bi-monthly) Educational Technology Publications, Inc.
- Educom Review (bi-monthly) EDUCAUSE http://www.educause.edu/pub/er/erm.html
- The Electronic Library: The International Journal for the Applications of Technology in Information Environments (bimonthly) Learned Information
- Family PC (monthly) Ziff-Davis http://www.familypc.com
- *Home Office Computing* (monthly) Curtco Freedom Group www.smalloffice.com
- *Home PC* (monthly) CMP Media Inc. http://www.homepc.com
- The Internet and Higher Education (quarterly) JAI Press, Inc.
- *Information Today* (11 times/year) Information Today, Inc. http://www.infotoday.com/it/itnew.htm
- Internet Reference Services Quarterly (quarterly) The Haworth Press, Inc.
- Internet Research: Electronic Networking Applications and Policy (5 times/year) MCB University Press
- Internet User (quarterly) Ziff-Davis www.internetuser.com
- Library Hi Tech (quarterly) Pierian Press

- *Library Journal* (20 times/year) Cahners http://www.bookwire.com/ljdigital/
- Library Software Review (quarterly) Sage Publications
- *MacWorld* (monthly) Mac Publishing http://www.macworld.com
- *Microsoft Interactive Developer* (monthly) Miller Freeman, Inc. http://www.microsoft.com/mind
- .net (monthly) Future Publishing http://www.netmag.co.uk
- *Online* (bi-monthly) Online Inc. http://www.onlineinc.com/onlinemag/
- Online & CD-ROM Review: The International Journal of Online, Optical, and Networked Information (bi-monthly) Learned Information
- *PC Computing* (monthly) Ziff-Davis http://www.pccomputing.com
- *PC Magazine* (bi-weekly) Ziff-Davis http://www.pcmag.com
- *PC Novice Smart Computing* (monthly) Sandhills Publishing http://www.smartcomputing.com
- *PC Week* (weekly) Ziff-Davis http://www.zdnet.com/pcweek/
- PC World (monthly) PC World Communications Inc. http://www.pcworld.com
- Reference & User Services Quarterly (quarterly) American Library Association
- The Reference Librarian (quarterly) The Haworth Press, Inc.
- Reference Services Review (quarterly) Pierian Press
- Research Strategies: A Journal of Library Concepts and Instruction (quarterly) JAI Press
- Syllabus: New Directions in Education Technology (10 issues/ year) Syllabus Press Inc.
  - http://www.syllabus.com
- Web Guide Monthly (monthly) H&S Media Inc. http://webguidemag.com
- *Yahoo! Internet Life* (monthly) Ziff-Davis http://www.yil.com