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Librarians in Search of Science and Identity: The Elusive Profession (Review)

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separate manual for each of the components of the system. Information is presented in a clear, concise manner with examples of menu screens on almost every page. There are tutorials for each of the vendor systems and chapters on each aspect of searching, such as display/download, search modes, and queries and sets. Within each chapter, there is information about what to do if a search is unsuccessful.

Installation. Installation and configuration of *Sci-Mate* is difficult. For a system that is aimed at the nonprofessional searcher, the installation itself requires detailed, technical knowledge of computer and online systems. In fact, all IBM-compatible microcomputers will not accept *Sci-Mate*'s telecommunications configuration in the standard ways described in the manual. Some may also have display and print incompatibilities. (*Dialoglink*, however, seems to be more universally acceptable.) Fortunately, ISI does offer technical support by phone and will assist with installation and troubleshooting.

Ease of Use. Experienced online searchers will find the *Sci-Mate* menu-driven search mode tedious and slow. Limitations of the system include (1) too many menu screens to work through when developing a search profile; (2) inability to combine AND/OR logic in the same search statement; (3) a complex "list" function in order to display set history while online; (4) no indicator of time spent online (in an ironic choice of symbols, online connection is signaled with dollar signs ($$)!); and (5) limited choice of databases in the menu-driven mode.

However, *Sci-Mate* may still be of use to the experienced searcher when searching unfamiliar or little-used systems, such as Questel or ORBIT, since search statements can be developed off-line and the system offers automatic log-on and menu-driven search options.

In summary, the strength of the *Sci-Mate Software System* allows infrequent online searchers access to commonly used databases without having to master the command language and search protocol of the host system. There is a price to pay for this advantage, however, relating to the time spent in creating sets, limitations in the number of available databases, and the complexity of the installation and configuration process.

Dialoglink

Dialoglink, the communications software package from Dialog Information Services, like *Sci-Mate*, is also a series of components: *Communications Manager*, *Account Manager*, and *OnDisc Manager* (for use with Dialog's CD-ROM products). This review considers the communications and accounting components of Version 1.20 (1988).

Hardware requirements for *Dialoglink* include an IBM or IBM-compatible microcomputer, at least 384K random access memory, PC-DOS or MS-DOS version 2.0 or higher, and a modem. For graphics capabilities, a graphics adapter card, graphics monitor, and specialized printer are required (Epson, Proprinter, HP ThinkJet, or HP Laser Jet or compatibles, for example).

Major Features of Dialoglink. With *Dialoglink*'s *Communication Manager*, it is possible to log on automatically to Dialog and an additional twenty online vendors. The searcher is expected to utilize each vendor's unique command language and protocol. Online menu screens and function keys aid the search. Well-defined, logical function keys lead to menu screens for printing, uploading and downloading, and context-specific help screens. Searches can be created off-line and automatically loaded when online.

Dialoglink is filled with nice features. One of the most interesting and time-saving is its type-ahead capability. While the host system is processing a request, the searcher can formulate the next query. For easy correction of typing errors after a line has been sent, there is a "recall last line" function. Everything displayed in an online search is automatically saved in the "retrieve buffer." At any point in an online session, one can print the contents of the retrieve buffer, save it to a disk, or clear the buffer. There is also the capability to review, print, or save selected portions of the buffer after logging off. Another feature is the ability to scan records by scrolling up and down the retrieve buffer while online.

The newest version of *Dialoglink*, released in early 1988, supports viewing, printing, and saving graphic images from

the database *Trademarkscan-Federal* and other graphic image databases with the help of an added function key, F6. Other enhancements in the new version include (1) software compatibility with all IBM PS/2 series computers and 80386 computers; (2) software availability on 3$\frac{1}{2}$- and 5$\frac{1}{4}$-inch media; and (3) shortcuts for the experienced searcher, such as the capability to bypass some menu screens when selecting the first option on the print, display, and menu screens. For example, hitting the shift and F8 keys automatically turns the printer on without having to go to the menu screen.

The *Dialoglink Account Manager* stores and prints accounting reports for a single search session, multiple sessions, or searches for an entire month. Unfortunately, *Account Manager* only works for searches executed on Dialog. There are two types of accounting reports. Single session reports include an invoice with Dialog's detailed listing of connect, type, and print charges; connect time in each file; and a cover sheet that lists the subject of the search, the client's name, searcher, date, and up to ten lines of text. A second type of accounting report generates summary reports of monthly usage. These reports include client, searcher, database, Dialog services (Knowledge Index, Dial-Mail), charge code, and chronological use.

Documentation. In keeping with Dialog's reputation for excellent documentation, the *Dialoglink* manual presents information clearly and concisely, with a real understanding of the kind of information people need to have at their fingertips. The introduction provides an overview of the contents of the manual, with suggestions on when to read each chapter. There is even a "Quick Start" shortcut chapter! Within each chapter are step-by-step instructions with illustrations of online screens and suggested solutions to problems that may occur. Documentation for both *Dialoglink* and *Sci-Mate* present information in an easily understandable style for their respective audiences.

Installation. The documentation provides clear instructions for initial configuration. *Dialoglink* software has already prefigured many of the search parameters,

making it much simpler and easier than *Sci-Mate*. Adding an automatic log-on procedure for another vendor is not quite as easy, requiring specific knowledge of step-by-step log-on parameters and search particulars (such as being able to identify the vendor's prompt symbol).

Ease of Use. *Dialoglink* is easy to use. The function keys, menu screens, and special features such as the "type ahead buffer" and "recall last line" function require minimal learning on the part of the searcher. There are some shortcomings: for example, in *Account Manager* there are no online instructions for moving from one part of the screen to the next when defining a new session and no online prompts to show how to end an accounting session.

Nevertheless, *Dialoglink* is an easy software package to install and use, especially for Dialog customers. Designed with the experienced searcher in mind, it provides function key assignments and other aids that will certainly help the infrequent searcher as well. The major limitation is *Dialoglink*'s emphasis on use of Dialog services. Installing other systems, while not automatic, is relatively easy, but it is unrealistic to suppose that large reference services will only be using Dialog. One entire component, *Account Manager*, is not functional for other host systems.

In summary, the *Sci-Mate Software System* and *Dialoglink* have a lot in common: both attempt to make online searching more successful, offer more than just a communications interface, employ menu screens and windows to offer user-friendly options, and have a targeted clientele for their packages, facilitating ease of use of their respective vendor's services: ISI databases for *Sci-Mate*, and Dialog customers for *Dialoglink*. Unfortunately, this comes across as self-serving and is certainly a disadvantage to the experienced searcher who would like to experiment with such value-added products as the *Editor*, *Database Manager*, and *Account Manager* but cannot because of the limitations of the two systems.

Suggested Further Reading

Badgett, Tom. "Search Software: Directory Assistance." *PC Magazine* 6, no.9:263–73 (May 12, 1987).

Brueggeman, Peter. "Converting Search Results into Search Statements: Using Dialoglink and Pro-Search Search Aid Software." *Database End-user* 2, no.9:26–28 (Oct. 1986).

Hawker, John. "Dialoglink: A Field Report." In *Online '86 Conference Proceedings*, p.98–102. Weston, Conn.: Online, 1986.

Hedden, Judy. "Sci-Mate and Searcher's Tool Kit: A Comparative Review." *Database End-user* 2, no.11:18,20–26 (Dec. 1986).

Lundeen, Gerald, and Carol Tenopir. "Microcomputer Software for In-house Databases . . . Four Top Packages under $2,000." *Online* 9, no.5:30–38 (Sept. 1985).

Mundy, Catherine C. "The Sci-Mate Software System." In *Online '85 Conference Proceedings*, p.219–22. Weston, Conn.: Online, 1985.

Raeder, Aggi. "Dialoglink: Product Evaluation of a New Communication Software from Dialog." *Database End-user* 2, no.4:17–21 (Apr. 1986).

Rudin, Joan, and others. "Comparison of In-search, Scimate and an Intelligent Terminal Emulator in Biomedical Literature Searching." In *National Online Meeting Proceedings*, p.403–8. Medford, N.J.: Learned Information, 1985.

Stout, Catheryne, and Thomas Marcinko. "Sci-Mate: A Menu-driven Universal Online Searcher and Personal Data Manager." *Online* 7, no.5:112–16 (Sept. 1983).

Witiak, Joanne. "Dialoglink: A Review of Dialog's Search Assistance Software." *Online* 10, no.6:39–42 (Nov. 1986).—*Jill Newby and Charlene M. Baldwin, Science-Engineering Library, University of Arizona.* ∎∎

Other Recent Receipts

Listed here are books and other publications received for review that are of potential interest to LITA members. Some of these materials may be reviewed in later issues of ITAL.

Books and Periodicals Online: A Guide to Publication Contents of Business and Legal Databases. V.1, pt.1. Ed. by Nuchine S. Nobari. Medford, N.J.: Learned Information, 1987. 376p. paper, $125 (ISSN 0951-838X).

Carter, Sylvester P. *Writing for Your Peers: The Primary Journal Paper.* New York: Praeger, 1987. 129p. $29.95 (ISBN 0-275-92630-3); paper, $9.95 (ISBN 0-275-92229-4).

Cowley, Rod. *ALS: A Guide for Librarians and Systems Managers.* Brookfield, Vt.: Gower, 1988. 146p. $49.50 (ISBN 0-566-03541-3).

Desmarais, Norman. *Acquisitions Systems for Libraries.* The Essential Guide to the Library IBM PC Series, v.11. Westport, Conn.: Meckler, 1988. 246p. spiralbound, $29.95 (ISBN 0-88736-185-4).

Economic Commission for Europe—Geneva. *Software for Industrial Automation.* New York: United Nations, 1987. 208p. paper, $35 (ISBN 92-1-11692-7).

Encyclopedia of Information Systems and Services. 8th ed. Ed. by Amy Lucas and Annette Novallo. Detroit, Mich.: Gale Research, 1988. 2,338p. 3vs. $400 (ISBN 0-8103-2532-2).

Federal Statistical Data Bases: A Comprehensive Catalog of Current Machine-Readable and Online Files. Comp. by William R. Evinger. Phoenix, Ariz. and New York: Oryx, 1988. 670p. (ISBN 0-89774-255-9).

Gill, Suzanne L. *File Management and Information Retrieval Systems: A Manual for Managers and Technicians.* 2d ed. Englewood, Colo.: Libraries Unlimited, 1988. 221p. $26.50 (ISBN 0-87287-625-X).

Handbook of Medical Library Practice. 4th ed. Ed. by Louise Darling. Health Science Librarianship and Administration Series, v.3. Chicago: Medical Library Assn., 1988. 593p. $35 (ISBN 0-912176-21-0).

Hildreth, Charles R. *Library Automation in North America: A Reassessment of the Impact of New Technologies on Networking.* Munich, New York, etc.: K. G. Saur, 1987. 196p. $35 (ISBN 3-598-10735-8).

Horowitz, Rosario Gassol de. *Librarianship: A Third World Perspective.* Contributions in Librarianship and Information Science Series, no.59. New York, London and Westport, Conn.: Greenwood, 1988. 140p. $37.95 (ISBN 0-313-25507-5).

Intellectual Property Rights in an Electronic Age: Proceedings of the Library of Congress Network Advisory Committee Meetings April 22–24, 1987. Network Planning Paper, no.16. Washington, D.C.: Network Development and MARC Standards Office, Library of Congress, 1987. 66p. paper, $7.50 (ISBN 0-8444-0592-2).

International Library Cooperation. Ed. by Ahmed H. Helal and Joachim W. Weiss. Essen Symposium Series, v.10. Essen, Germany: Essen Univ. Library, 1988. 337p. paper (ISBN 3-922602-11-8).