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Minnesota State University, Mankato. Library Services

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Library Resources

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FREE TRIALS OF DATABASES NOW AVAILABLE

Thanks to arrangements negotiated by MINITEX, access to a number of databases is available to MSU users on a temporary basis this fall. As they have done in the past, database providers offer these trial periods to potential subscribers while MINITEX negotiates with the vendors on behalf of libraries that may choose to participate in a joint subscription. MINITEX is a network of libraries in Minnesota, North Dakota, and South Dakota which works to expand access to information resources for its members.

Until November 30, we have access to several CQ Databases, including CQ Researcher, Electronic Encyclopedia of American Government, CQ Weekly, and Electronic Washington Information Directory. CQ Researcher probably has the widest potential audience since the database covers a broad range of social, economic, and political issues. As in its print counterpart, this database tries to present background information and multiple opinions about various topics. Forty-four different topics are explored each year. Database coverage goes back to 1991.

Until December 14, PsycARTICLES, a discipline-specific database, is offered. PsycARTICLES searches the PsychINFO database and includes access to full-text articles from 42 journals of the American Psychological Association. Full-text coverage extends from 1988 to the present. A list of all 42 titles is available via a link from the Database Trials page.

Until December 7, full access is allowed to Cambridge Scientific Abstracts (CSA), the most extensive list of databases now available. Many MSU students, faculty, and staff are already familiar with CSA because we subscribe to approximately 20 of their databases. More than 40 additional CSA resources are listed below, grouped by broad subject areas of coverage.

Arts and Humanities

--Art Bibliographies Modern
--BHI: British Humanities Index

--ATLA Religion Database

Business

--Findex
--Paperbase/PIRA (technical and business abstracts about pulp and paper industries)

--Materials Business File

Health and Life Sciences

--AGRICOLA (agricultural sciences, botany, ecology, and related areas)
--AIDS and Cancer Research
--Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts
--Biotechnology and Bioengineering Abstracts
--Environmental Sciences and Pollution Management
--International Pharmaceutical Abstracts
--Water Resources Abstracts

--Aqualine
--Aquaculture Abstracts

--Oceanic Abstracts
--Zoological Record Plus

Physical Sciences and Engineering

- ANTE: Abstracts in new Technologies and Engineering
- Aerospace & High Technology Database
- Ceramic Abstracts/World Ceramics Abstracts
- Corrosion Abstracts
- Engineered Materials Abstracts
- Environmental Sciences and Pollution Management
- Information Technology Case Studies
- NTIS (National Technical Information Service)
- Safety Science and Risk
- Solid State and Superconductivity Abstracts
- WasteInfo (management of non-nuclear wastes)
- WELDASEARCH (welding and materials joining)
- Aluminum Industry Abstracts
- Copper Data Center Database
- Electronics and Communications Abstracts
- METADEX (materials and alloys)
- Polymer Library
- Science and Technology Digest

Social Sciences

- ASSIA: Applied Social Sciences Index and Abstracts
- EconLit
- Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts
- LISA: Library and Information Science Abstracts
- e-psyche
- PAIS International

To search any of the databases for which we have free trials, go to the Library home page at www.lib.mnsu.edu. Under the photo of the Library, click on the link to "New Database Trials." If you have questions or comments about these databases or need additional information, contact Melissa Holmberg, Electronic Resources/Science Librarian, at melissa.holmberg@mnsu.edu or (507) 389-2499. You may also talk with the librarian who works with your department for collection development.

Although it seems that electronic information should be "free" because it is intangible, in reality there are substantial costs to subscribe to online resources. By arranging joint subscriptions for several institutions, MINITEX manages to lower the cost for each library. The pricing structures negotiated with vendors are usually based on the number of potential users at each library. In academic institutions, those users include faculty, staff, and current students. Consequently, we are not "duplicating" subscriptions with the University of Minnesota, St. Cloud State, or any other library when we pay access costs for a particular database. MSU funds are paying for access for MSU-affiliated users only. The costs of securing a single subscription to specialized databases for all potential users in an entire state would be prohibitive.

The situation is similar to the way libraries have provided access to print indexes and abstracts for their users. Almost every library had its own subscription to Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature, for example. Many fewer libraries subscribed to specialized and expensive indexes such as Chemical Abstracts, and people who needed to use those resources had to travel to the library that owned the indexes or abstracts they needed.

MSU must choose which electronic resources to purchase in support of the curriculum in the same way that print subscriptions are evaluated. Unfortunately, our budget cannot stretch to cover all the electronic databases that exist, just as it cannot pay for unlimited numbers of print subscriptions, videos, or books. Because of the prices of electronic resources, it is unlikely that MSU will be able to add many of those available during this trial period. However, we encourage faculty, staff, and students to use them now while free access is available.