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Library Resources on the Internet: BLC Gateway and Infosource in a Nutchell

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BYTELINE

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Computing Services Newsletter

Fall 1993

Library Resources on the Internet BLC Gateway and Infosource in a Nutshell

by Daniel Ortiz, Science Librarian



The Boston Library Consortium (BLC) recently developed a gateway. This makes all consortium catalogs accessible through one internet address, or one dial-up. The Gateway also provides access to the BLC Infosource.

The Infosource includes two features: UnCover and the Union List of Serials (ULS). UnCover is a journal index and table of contents service. It indexes close to 12,000 magazines from 1988 to the present. It includes popular titles such as Time and scholarly publications such as Biochemica et Biophysica Acta. All subjects are covered. The ULS is a list of journals held by BLC members. It offers call numbers, locations, and information on the volumes available in each consortium library. BLC members are:

Boston College
Boston University
MIT
State Library of Mass.*
UMASS-Amherst*
UMASS-Dartmouth*
Wellesley College

Boston Public Library*
Brandeis University
Northeastern U.
Tufts University
UMASS-Boston
UMASS-Lowell*
Woods Hole/MBL

*These catalogs are not yet available through the BLC Gateway.

The BLC Gateway can be reached using your VAX account. On any DEC terminal in the VAX Labs you can connect to the VAX and reach the Gateway. You can also reach your VAX account remotely by dialing-in. Call (617)287-5220 for information and help.

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You can dial-in to Gateway with your microcomputer, modem, and telecommunication software at (617)627-3897 (1200, 2400, 4800, or 9600 baud rate), no parity, 8 databits, 1 stopbit. BLC provides technical assistance; call (617)627-3376.

The internet address of the BLC Gateway and Infosource is:

tulips.lib.tufts.edu
or
library.tufts.edu

Connect through a DEC terminal or by dialing-in.

At the Server> prompt type **c taurus**.
Enter your **Username** and **Password** to log on to the VAX.
At the \$ prompt type **telnet library.tufts.edu**
At the username prompt type **umassb**.

The username code for UMASS-Boston affiliates is **UMASSB** (lower or upper case).

Each of the library catalogs accessible through the BLC Gateway retains its original searching features. The Gateway provides almost instantaneous access to any of the catalogs. This is done with a menu that automatically generates the telecommunication commands needed to reach the catalogs, once you have made a selection. Before connecting to the catalog, you will be greeted by a welcoming screen providing exit instructions and other necessary information. You can instruct the Gateway to proceed with the connection or return to the menu. The objective is to provide ease of use. The Gateway conveniently groups the BLC catalogs, ULS, and UnCover under one internet address and one "telnet" command.

The Gateway provides almost instantaneous access to any of the catalogs.

Discussion of the search commands, and contents, of each catalog is beyond the scope of this column. However, you should keep in mind that many library

catalogs exclude publications such as government documents. For information on such exclusions read the welcome screens, or call the libraries at the phone numbers listed there. For information on journals or magazines, use the ULS on the BLC Infosource.

BLC Infosource: UnCover

Up-to-date information is a common requirement for many of us. To meet this need, the BLC Infosource offers the journal index **UnCover**. Journals offer recent research findings, opinion papers, literature reviews, and other up-to-date materials.

UnCover, with no print counterpart, is created by keying in the table of contents of the journals. Editorials, columns, and other features are excluded. Articles and contributions are in the database. There is only a small time lag between publication and indexing.

As soon as you telnet, or dial-in to the BLC Gateway, select option 1, **BLC Infosource**. Type the following commands as required: **Type BLC**, press **Return**. At the terminal selection screen choose 5, a **VT100 emulation**. Press **Return**. At the welcome screen press **Return** again. If you want to disconnect type **//exit**. Select option 2, **UnCover** from the menu. Then select option 1, "**Begin a search in UnCover**". To search this database you should use any of the following commands as needed:

AUTHOR SEARCHING:

N Name This will search only for authors. Avoid this option if you are looking for articles about a person.

KEYWORD SEARCHING:

W Word This will search for any word in the record. It will exclude the author. It will search the title of the journal, the abstract (not all references will include one), and the title of the article.

This command allows you to search for any combination of terms. This is performed automatically. You can not exclude words from your search. Because the database uses what is keyed in from the table of contents of these 12,000 journals, you have to do separate searches for synonyms, for singular, and for plural.

Prefer simple phrases for searching?

continued on next page



You can limit your search later on. Once you get your initial results, press **Return**. Here you have three options: Add, Display, or Quit. If you are satisfied press **d**.

If you want to make your search more specific, type a word that you think will get your search closer to your target.

At any time, you can modify your search by quitting or using the quick search command (see below), e.g. `//w` [type word or phrase]; `//t` [type a journal title]; `//n` [type an author's name].

JOURNAL TITLE SEARCHING:

B Browse This will allow you to search by journal title. Once you select **B**, type **T**, and type the title of your choice. From the command menu you can type **T**, press **Return**, type a title.

QUICK SEARCH:

QS At any level of searching you can start a new one by typing two slashes followed by an **N**, **W**, or **T** (for title browsing) and the desired phrase, word, or title.

Examples:

```
//t environmental entomology
//w african american education
//n scowcroft
```

UnCover results are displayed in a short format. Author, title, journal title, and publication date. You can browse this, or you can start looking at the whole record by selecting the number of the entry you want to see. You can print screen, make notes, or you can transfer (download) your search to an electronic file with your telecommunications software (a feature available from Procomm, Kermit, and many others).

TABLE OF CONTENTS SEARCHING

This feature allows you to explore what was included in an issue of a specific journal. It is extremely helpful for those readers who do not have the time to browse all the journals pertaining to their field. It is a quick way for searching the contents of

issues you missed. It is great for browsing new incoming issues without visiting the library. Uncover is up-to-date and it is an alternative to ISI's Current Contents.

To use this feature you can, at any time, do a title search. For example type:

```
//t journal of psychology
```

This will display a list of journal titles close to what you just typed. Select the exact one that you want. A full record for that journal will appear on the screen including ownership information. Type **E** and press **Return**. You will have in front of you a list of issues included in the database; make a selection. A brief list of references from that issue will be displayed. Select any entry, press **Return** to see the previous display, or use a **QS** (`//t`, `w`, or `n`) command to start a new search.

Once you have searched, retrieved, and selected the articles you need from the references, you are ready to use the ULS.

ULS: BLC UNION LIST OF SERIALS

From UnCover, do the exit command (`//exit`) and reach the ULS/Uncover menu. Choose number 1. If you exit to the BLC Gateway menu select 1, follow the instructions for entering Infosource, opting for ULS (#1). Most searching commands are available in both databases. For specific titles use the `//t` command (refer to QS for examples) or the browse command. For Browse, press **B** and **Return**, type **T**, press **Return** again. Type the title of the journal. A listing will be displayed. Select your journal title by pressing the number and press **Return**. The record for that title includes complete and up-to-date information on the years and volumes owned by each of the consortium libraries, plus the call number and location information if it is in a branch library.

BLC INFOSOURCE DEMO AND WORKSHOP

The Reference Department of the Healey Library is conducting workshops on the Gateway and Infosource. Use **UMB\$NEWS** on the VAX for information on future sessions, or watch for announcements on Campus.

My thanks to Janet Stewart, who gave time to revise this column. ♦