



News about information systems throughout

Volume 11 • Number 10

June 1996

MITVMA/C Web Pages Keep VM Server Users Up to Date .....	2
<b>Software Spotlight</b>	
Corel's WordPerfect Suite 7 Packs a Lot of Punch .....	3
<b>Network Notes</b>	
Use Your Web Browser to Access Network News .....	4
<b>Computer Corner</b> .....	4
<b>MIT Computer Connection/ Bits and Bytes</b>	
The MCC Revamps Its Trade-Up Program .....	5
Summer Computer Courses and Quick Starts Are Set to Begin .....	5
Searching MIT Web Pages Using Harvest .....	6
MIT Electronic Catalog Reaches Prototype Phase .....	7
An Update from the Access Technology Lab .....	7
<b>Getting Help</b> .....	8
<b>Recent Publications from Information Systems</b> .....	8

### Let's Put Our Brains Together and Make an Opera

Lee Ridgway

It's called an opera, but bears little resemblance to Mozart, Verdi, or even Phillip Glass. Like grand opera, it requires a small army of creators and production staff, but the performance lasts less than an hour. It calls for three on-stage performers, yet its "cast" includes the audience, which in turn can include people connected via the Internet. It is, in short, *Brain Opera*. This new work by Tod Machover, composer and Professor in Media Arts and Sciences, is an experiment in large-scale multimedia collaboration between performers, audience, and technology.

Machover is best known for his hyperinstruments, which use sophisticated technology to merge and extend the capabilities of musical instruments and performers. *Brain Opera* takes his work with hyperinstruments to a new level. In a Media Lab Perspectives presentation on May 14, Machover gave a behind-the-scenes look at what *Brain Opera* is all about.

#### Three Components

*Brain Opera* has three components: two in the physical space of a theater setting and one in the ethereal space of the Internet. The theater audience first enters a lobby in which about 45 interactive, high-tech instruments are set up – a sort of music arcade. Here the public plays with the instruments

and experiments with creating sounds and music.

The audience then enters the theater, where what they experienced and created in the lobby is incorporated into the opera. About half of the material is composed and remains the same from one performance to the next. The rest is unique to each performance, as the performers shape and change the music contributed by the public.

The third aspect of *Brain Opera* happens courtesy of the World Wide Web. From the Brain Opera Web site, people can create and submit sounds that may become part of a performance. In turn, audio and video from a performance can be broadcast over the Web.

#### Underpinnings

While *Brain Opera* relies on random contributions for much of its aural material, it has an underlying premise. Machover was inspired by Marvin Minsky's *The Society of Mind*, with its theory that intelligence emerges from the interaction of independent mental processes in the brain, often unaware of each other, rather than from one single, central "conductor." In fact, Minsky is a player in *Brain Opera*, through recordings of his own words and voice.

*Brain Opera* explores the nature of intelligence and its connections to creativity in the realm of music. In a sense, the contributions of the audience stand as the independent processes

continued on page 2 ▶

## ▼ BRAIN OPERA

continued from page 1

which are brought together with the composer's material to create a coherent, artistic whole. Machover hopes that the audience, by taking part in creating *Brain Opera*, will be drawn into the mysteries of music and the mind, exploring the interplay of sensory perception, musical structure, language, memory, thinking, and emotion.

### Instruments in the Lobby

Because it is where the audience really gets to play, the lobby environment is of primary interest. Artfully designed by Ray Kinoshita, the lobby contains an impressive amount of futuristic-looking technology.

You first enter a forest of tree-like structures. Each tree offers a different experience. Some trees invite your responses to Minsky's recorded comments and questions about music. Other trees ask you to sing a single note, around which the tree harmonizes and generates its own music.

Further into the lobby, you encounter a variety of hyperinstruments. In his talk, Machover described several of these in detail. Harmonic driving is

a lot like a traditional video game, combining music with 3-D graphics. You sit in front of a screen and drive through music using a steering wheel, joystick, and pedals. The music is transformed by how you drive. Stay on the main road and the music continues in a pleasant, somewhat bland way. Make twists and turns or change speed, and the music changes significantly. Slam into the roadside and you get a musical crash.

The melody easel offers the experience of playing a sophisticated solo instrument such as a violin, as a way of exploring how melody works. On a very touch-sensitive screen, you control the color, phrasing, and articulation of the sound, which is reflected in the trace of a watercolor-like graphic. Simple, steady movements produce a pure melodic line; add wiggles and you add ornaments; more vigorous motion leads to a more distorted, "electronic" sound.

At the gesture wall, several people gather around to form a kind of small musical ensemble. A rear-projection screen displays visual renderings of music fragments on a translucent wall. Sensitive motion-detecting technology, including doppler radar, measures each player's gestures. These trans-

form, modify, and perturb the music as it flits by on the wall.

The rhythm tree, closest to a traditional instrument in how it looks and how you play it, is a sculpture of many drums. Each drum pad is a small computer, and there are 320 in all that combine into one giant parallel computer. These computers respond to what one or more players do on the pads, creating other sounds and rhythms throughout the whole system.

Recordings made at the trees and on the hyperinstruments are filtered into the performance through a complex network.

### Upcoming Performances

*Brain Opera* premieres on July 23, at the Julliard School in New York City, as part of the Lincoln Center Festival. The New York City run, which includes several performances a day, will end on August 3. Future stops include Tokyo and Singapore.

Members of the MIT community can get a preview at dress rehearsals in the Media Lab on July 6 and 7; for reservations call x3-5300 or send mail to <tickets@brainop.media.mit.edu>.

For more information about *Brain Opera* and Web participation, go to <http://brainop.media.mit.edu> ☺

---

## MITVMA/C Web Pages Keep VM Server Users Up to Date

The IBM VM Server in MIT's Data Center runs several Institute-critical administrative applications, including Admissions, Alumni, Payroll, Pension, Investments, the CAO application, and \$SumMIT. It also acts as a gateway for e-mail and provides a backup option for campus computer users (ADSM; see the April 1996 *i/s*), among other services.

The server runs the VM/ESA operating system, and is commonly referred to by its two partitions - MITVMA and MITVMC. MITVMA offers public access via MITnet and the Internet; MITVMC has security restrictions.

If you use MITVMA/C and have a Web browser such as Netscape on your desktop computer, you may want to bookmark the MITVMA/C Web pages at <http://mitvma.mit.edu/system/htbin/system> or

<http://mitvmc.mit.edu/system/htbin/system>

The MITVMA and MITVMC Web pages contain links to

- A What's New file that documents machine configuration changes, software upgrades, and other news
- A system configuration chart
- A service schedule
- Live system information, including system status and usage and the current logon message
- Information about how to connect to MITVMA/C
- Information about the VM/ESA system at MIT, including rates, monthly statements, and help files

If you have feedback on the MITVMA/C Web pages, click on the Comments link to send e-mail to the I/T Service Webmasters. For questions about MITVMA/C services, contact the Help Desk at x3-7230 or <mithelp@mit.edu>. ☺



Managing Editor  
Robyn Fizz  
Writer/Editor  
Lee Ridgway

*i/s* is published monthly from September to June. MIT faculty and staff receive copies through campus mail; *i/s* is also available in lobbies around campus. Individuals at MIT may subscribe by contacting the managing editor.

Send comments or subscription requests to: MIT 11-309, 77 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02139-4307

Phone: (617) 253-0540  
Electronic mail: <fizz@mit.edu>

*i/s* is also published online at <http://web.mit.edu/tps/www/isnews/>  
Contact the managing editor if you would like to be notified when new issues are published online.

Articles are also posted in TechInfo. The path is Computing → Publications → Information Systems Publications → *i/s* Newsletter.

All product names are trademarks of their manufacturers.

© 1996 Massachusetts Institute of Technology



## Corel's WordPerfect Suite 7 Packs a Lot of Punch

Gail Garfield Neuman

Corel Corporation purchased the WordPerfect Suite of business applications and related software from Novell, Inc. on January 30 of this year. This makes Corel the second largest software company in the world. They brought WordPerfect into the 32-bit arena last month with the release of WordPerfect Suite 7.0 for Windows 95.

This new suite includes a host of applications, including

- WordPerfect 7
- Quattro Pro 7 (spreadsheet)
- Presentations 7
- Envoy 7 (workgroup publishing)
- AT&T World Net Services software including Netscape
- CorelFLOW 3 (business graphics)
- SideKick 95 (personal information manager and scheduler)
- Dashboard 95 (application and task launcher)
- 150 fonts and 10,000 clipart images

The Professional version, Corel Office Pro, adds

- InfoCentral (information tool)
- Paradox 5.0 (database)
- GroupWise 4.1 client (mail)
- 1000 fonts
- Corel Office Professional developer's kit
- Corel Draw 6 (may be part of the early releases as an incentive)

### System Requirements

The system requirements for the full suite are

- Windows 95 OS
- A 486/25 machine or higher (a 486/66 machine is recommended)
- 2X CD-ROM or faster
- 8MB RAM (16MB is recommended)
- VGA monitor
- A mouse or tablet
- 30-220MB of hard disk space, depending on the options installed

If you use only WordPerfect 7, your system requirements will be at the lower end.



### Suite Integration

Corel offers significant integration of the Suite's three core applications – WordPerfect, Quattro Pro, and Presentations. They have common interface tools so that you don't have to switch gears when you move from one to the other. They share the same Address Book and Dictionary. All three work with automation tools such as QuickTask, QuickFormat, and QuickArt. For example, all of the core applications can use the QuickTask that creates HTML documents for the Web.

While these programs are highly integrated, be aware that IS offers full support for WordPerfect 7 only. Since WordPerfect is in wide use at MIT, it will be the focus for the remainder of this article.

### Formatting Features

Corel has introduced several ways to simplify the formatting of WordPerfect documents. The Document window now has different colored guidelines for each document part (tables, margins, columns, header/footer). You can use these guidelines to manually adjust the margins of a page, paragraph, or document part.

HotSpots are little square buttons that appear at the start of every paragraph or in the active cell in tables. Hotspots give you easy access to context-sensitive formatting commands, such as putting a border around a paragraph. Similarly, right-clicking your mouse button almost anywhere in a document drops down a Quick-Menu of context-sensitive features.

You can use the QuickCorrect feature to create horizontal lines, indents, and bullets as you type. Spell-As-You-Go flags potential misspellings as they happen.

The Shadow Pointer shows you the position of your insertion point should you choose to click the mouse button.

### Templates

WordPerfect can do a lot of your work for you. The program offers several "Experts" that can help you fill out templates. And there are lots of templates – for resumes, letterheads,

greeting cards, and much more. Three templates for term papers are based on popular style guides (APA, MLA, and Turabian).

### Getting Help

WordPerfect Help has been improved in every way. The main point of entry is the Help menu; from there, you can choose a variety of ways to access the Help system. If you choose the Help Topics option under the Help menu, you can use a table of contents, an index, or a search mechanism to select relevant topics.

The Help Topics "Show Me" tab offers a more visual approach to Help. You can play film clips of how a task is done. (You need the CD version of the WordPerfect Suite to do this.) You can choose "Guide me though it" demos (formerly Coaches) that take you through a task step by step. You can even select "Do it for me" to see if there are QuickTasks to get the job done.

Another Help option is "Ask the PerfectExpert," a built-in consultant that answers questions phrased in everyday English ("How do I convert footnotes to endnotes?").

Upgrade Help compares the names and functions of WordPerfect's features with those in other word processors, and shows you how to step through chosen tasks in WordPerfect. This is handy if you've switched from another word processor and want to get up to speed quickly.

In addition to WordPerfect's built-in help, the Corel Web site at

<http://www.corel.com>

has a Searchable Knowledge Base in the Service and Support area.

Last but not least, Corel has re-instituted free technical support for registered users. You do have to pay for the toll call to (801) 765-4041.

### Availability and Pricing

The MIT Computer Connection in W20-021 sells WordPerfect Suite 7 for Windows 95 and Corel Office Pro at a significant educational discount. WordPerfect Suite 7 sells for \$35; Corel Office Pro costs \$115. Both programs come on CD only. If you need the program on 3.5" diskettes, you will need to buy the CD version and send Corel the request form for diskettes that's included inside the package. ☺

## Use Your Web Browser to Access Network News

John Saylor

If you like to keep up with current events, or enjoy discussing a favorite topic with other aficionados, check out Network News (NetNews). Also referred to as Usenet (for Users Network), NetNews is the umbrella term for a worldwide electronic forum. Net News provides two primary services:

- It is an information source, equivalent to an online newspaper. Information services, such as ClariNet, provide news from United Press International and other sources.
- It is a forum for posting and reading messages on topics of all kinds. Newsgroups are arranged hierarchically, from broad categories to specific subgroups, and this is reflected in their names. For example, a newsgroup on ragtime music, `rec.music.ragtime`, is in the top-level domain `rec.*` (recreation), in the music sublevel.

### Built-in Newsreaders

In the past, you needed a stand-alone program to access NetNews. Today, most Web browsers have a built-in newsreader; this integration offers some nice advantages.

- URLs in articles are live. You can click and surf.
- Binary formats (pictures, executable files) can be handled automatically by a correctly configured browser.
- You can read a newsgroup by entering its URL (e.g., `news:alt.angst`).

### Setting up your Browser

Configuring your Web browser to read NetNews is straightforward. The steps detailed here use Netscape 2.x, which you can get from MIT's network software ftp site, `net-dist.mit.edu`. If you use another browser, you can still use the instructions here as a guide.

First, point your Web browser to the MIT Network News Transport Protocol (NNTP) server, `news.mit.edu`:

1. Open the Options menu.
2. Select the Mail and News Preferences... menu item.
3. Click on the Servers tab.

4. Enter `news.mit.edu` in the News (NNTP) Server field in the lower part of dialog box, and click OK.

### Reading News

You're now set to read news. Go to your browser's Window menu and select Netscape News. This opens a newsreader window with three panes.

The upper left pane displays your newsgroup subscriptions. You should see an icon for your NNTP server and three default newsgroups:

- `news.announce.newusers`
- `news.newusers.questions`
- `news.answers`

The first two newsgroups are good starting points for learning about Usenet culture. `news.answers` contains Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) for all the NetNews newsgroups.

**Note:** If you see newsgroup icons without names, you need to widen the News Server field. To do this, move your cursor between the News Server and Check Mark fields in the gray bar above the pane. When the cursor turns into a double-headed arrow, press your mouse button and drag to the right.

### Selecting and Reading Newsgroups

To get a listing of all newsgroups, open the Options menu, then select Show All Newsgroups. You may get a dialog box warning you that this will take time. On an MITnet Ethernet drop, the wait shouldn't be too long, but over a PPP link such as Tether, it may take several minutes.

When you click on a newsgroup, the upper right pane displays current unread articles grouped by thread (subject). You can sort articles by several criteria; click on the View menu, then select Sort. When you click on a message you want to read, it appears in the large lower pane. Since you read NetNews articles on a server, they don't take up room on your hard disk.

To subscribe to a Newsgroup, open the File menu and select Add Newsgroup. When the dialog box appears, enter the newsgroup's name.

### Suggested Stops

NetNews is a sprawling online phenomenon. If you're just starting out, you may want to browse `alt.*` (alternative), `clari.*` (ClariNet news), `rec.*` (recreation), and `mit.*` (local interest). ☺



*This column presents news and tips from the consultants who staff the Computing Help Desk, x3-0001. Check out their Web home page at <http://computing-help.mit.edu/>*

**Q** I recently installed System 7.5 Update 2.0 on my Macintosh, which updated my operating system to version 7.5.3. Now I hear that Apple Computer has released a revision to System 7.5.3. Is this an important revision and if so, where do I get it?

**A** According to Apple, the following systems will benefit from System 7.5.3 Revision 2:

- All PowerBooks using Connectix RAM Doubler
- All PowerBook 5300 and PowerBook Duo 2300 systems
- All PowerBook 200 or 500 Series systems that have been upgraded with the Macintosh PowerBook Processor Card Upgrade Kit with PowerPC (or with a similar third-party product)
- All Macintosh 7200, 7500, 7600, 8500, and 9500 systems

The most important bug fixes in System 7.5.3 Revision 2 are for PowerBooks. PowerBooks running versions of Connectix RAM Doubler (1.6.1 or earlier) now wake up properly from sleep mode. Problems associated with formatting PC disks in PowerBook 500s with PC upgrade cards have been fixed. Overall performance on PowerBooks with PowerPC upgrade cards has also been improved.

You should install System 7.5.3 Revision 2 only on computers running System 7.5.3, or on PowerBooks running System 7.5.2, with PowerBook Enabler 1.2 or later.

To get the updater, copy the Net Install folder from the CSS File Server in the IS-CSS AppleTalk zone. The path is `Public:AppleSoftware:System Software:System 7.5.3, Revision 2: Net Install`.

For more specifics, go to the Apple Tech Info Library at

<http://til.info.apple.com/til/til.html>

and search on the term "System 7.5.3 Revision 2." This should yield a FAQ and an Overview and Installation file. ☺



## The MCC Revamps Its Trade-Up Program

Ginny Williams

The MIT Computer Connection has sponsored a Trade-Up Program for several years. This program let you trade in a used Macintosh for credit toward a new one.

Starting this month, the MCC is introducing changes that should improve the trade-in process. You can now

- Deal directly with the Computer Loft, a used Macintosh vendor, at a monthly event held in the MCC.
- Sell non-Macintosh equipment and multiple computers from an office or lab (by making arrangements with the Computer Loft, which may in turn contact other vendors).
- Receive a check for your equipment, rather than a credit voucher that must be used at the MCC.

Computer Loft representative Craig Marin will process trade-ins at each event. To get the latest pricing on used computers, contact Marin directly at 738-9997 or <CompLoft@aol.com>.

### The Way It Works

The monthly trade-up events will be publicized in advance through MCC News Flashes, fliers, and ads in *The Tech* and other student newspapers.

On the day of the event, you bring in the equipment you want to sell, have it tested by Marin, and receive a check made out to you or your department, depending on ownership.

MIT-owned equipment needs to be pre-approved for sale by MIT's Property Office: you must present a valid Property Release form at the time of sale.

If you're trading in your own equipment, you must fill out a Statement of Ownership form. If you're trading in Macintosh equipment that you

bought from the MCC within the last year, you'll also need to fill out a one-year purchase exception form. (Under the MCC's purchase program with Apple, qualified students, faculty, and staff can buy only one Apple desktop computer, PowerBook, Newton, laser printer, and inkjet printer per year.)

### Equipment Prep

In addition to filling out the requisite forms, you need to prepare your equipment for trade-in:

- Remove all files and programs from your hard drive except the System. (If you have sensitive data on your hard drive, you may want to reformat it and reinstall the system.)
- Clean the outside case and remove any stickers or marks.

### Schedule and Forms

You can find the trade-in schedule and related forms on the Web at

<http://web.mit.edu/mcc/www/>

The same materials are also posted in the MCC's Trade-Up Program folder on TechInfo. ☺

## Summer Computer Courses and Quick Starts Are Set to Begin

Jeanne Cavanaugh

The IS Training Services group begins its summer quarter of hands-on computer courses and Quick Start classes on July 8 - with its usual emphasis on training for the Macintosh and Windows environments. The hands-on courses and modules, which are fee-based, can help you become proficient in selected applications that are popular on campus. Featured software includes Microsoft Word, Excel, FileMaker Pro, Microsoft Access, Microsoft Project, PageMaker, Photoshop, and PowerPoint.

Quick Start demonstration classes, which last about an hour, are free. They are intended to help you get started with a new computer and with commonly used software.

### Web-Related Offerings

Training Services also offers classes to help you learn about the world beyond your office. For those new to the World Wide Web, there is a hands-on

course on Exploring the Internet. At least one World Wide Web Quick Start class is held each month.

If you want to learn how to publish on the Web, you can take Electronic Publishing Using HTML (this course has different sections for Macintosh and Windows users). A free, monthly HTML demo lasts about three hours and is a prerequisite for the hands-on course.

### Business Modules

Training Services continues to offer modules on the CAO and \$SumMIT applications, as well as a module on Electronic Time Sheets and Journal Vouchers. These systems will remain in use at MIT while the new SAP financial package is phased in.

### Ergonomics

If you work daily with computers or manage a staff that does, consider taking the course on Preventing Repetitive Strain Injuries (RSIs). You will find out about suspected risk factors, learn how to adjust furniture and equipment, and practice prevention strategies for common physical problems.

### Course Catalog and Registration

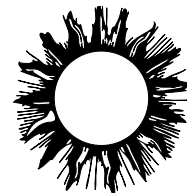
For a complete listing of course descriptions and Quick Start classes, along with dates, times, and fees, see the IS Summer '96 *Computer Training Catalog*. If you didn't receive a copy and would like one, contact Training Services at x3-7685 or <wray@mit.edu>.

You can check an updated schedule of courses and Quick Starts via the Training Services Web page at

<http://web.mit.edu/tps/www/training/>

This page also has a link to an online course registration form. It is the same as the form at the back of the paper *Catalog*, except that you fill it out online and send it in via e-mail.

From the online registration form, you can access EREQ (MIT's Electronic Requisitioning System). Authorized EREQ users can use the system to pay for courses. Whether you opt for paper or online methods, remember to submit both a registration form and requisition for each course. ☺



## Searching MIT Web Pages Using Harvest

Robyn Fizz

The Institute's official World Wide Web server, [web.mit.edu](http://web.mit.edu), hosts over 24,000 Web pages, and that number grows daily. These Web pages are a very rich source of information, but finding the information you want by "wandering" from link to link may not always be very effective.

For this reason, Information Systems has provided search capabilities from the MIT Home Page at

<http://web.mit.edu/>

These search capabilities are powered by Harvest, an "information discovery and access system" that is uniquely suited to MIT's complex network environment.

### What Is Harvest?

Harvest was designed and built by the Internet Research Task Force Research Group on Resource Discovery, based at the University of Colorado. It is an integrated set of tools to gather, organize, and replicate relevant information across the Internet.

The central parts of the Harvest system are the Gatherer and the Broker. The Gatherer provides an efficient, customizable way to collect indexing information from a set of Web pages. The Broker takes the Gatherer's information and builds a searchable index. The Broker also provides the system's user interface: you use the Broker when doing a search.

To find out more about Harvest, visit the Harvest Web page at

<http://harvest.cs.colorado.edu/>

### Harvest at MIT

At MIT, Harvest has been set up to index the [web.mit.edu](http://web.mit.edu) server once a week. The Gatherer starts from the MIT Home Page, and collects every URL that starts with <http://web.mit.edu/> and ends with `.html` or `.htm`

Users at MIT can search this index via a search field at the bottom of the MIT Home Page. Keep in mind that searching on a single word (like "html" or "computer") may take a lot of time, and return far more results than are helpful. More focused queries usually get better results in less time. At MIT, Harvest works with the Glimpse search engine, which supports several types of queries:



- Structured queries (which let you constrain matches to certain fields)
- Boolean (AND/OR) combinations of keywords
- Case-insensitive or case-sensitive queries
- Matches to parts of words, whole words, or multiple word phrases (like "resource discovery")
- Approximate matches (which allows for spelling errors)
- Matched lines or entire matching records (e.g., for citations)
- Limits on the number of matches returned
- "Wild card" expressions; for example, matches to all words ending in a particular suffix)

You can specify these options with buttons and menus in the Extended Search query form. (Follow the link at the bottom of the MIT Home Page.)

Structured queries are very useful for refining searches. For example, you can limit a search to find matches only when a specified term appears in a title or heading of an HTML document. This is more likely to return relevant matches than a full-text search. Similarly, if you are looking for images related to a certain topic, you can limit the search to HTML image references.

For help in formulating queries for effective searches, see

<http://web.mit.edu/cwis/search/queryhelp.html>

### Other MIT Web Servers

While Harvest is a powerful system, it cannot search all the Web pages at the Institute. Many Web pages at MIT are not searchable through Harvest because they reside on servers other than [web.mit.edu](http://web.mit.edu), and are not "gathered" when Harvest creates its index. In the future, other servers may be integrated into the Harvest system.

Many of these other MIT servers have search capabilities of their own. Some of the best-known ones include:

- Barton  
<telnet://library.mit.edu>
- Materials Science and Engineering  
<http://tantalum.mit.edu/search.html>

- Mechanical Engineering  
<http://me.mit.edu/bin/search>
- The MIT Student, Faculty, and Staff Directory  
<http://web.mit.edu/cwis/www/mitdir/index.html>
- Registrar's Office Subject Listings and Schedule  
<http://registrar.mit.edu/catalog>
- TechInfo  
<http://web.mit.edu:1962/tiserve.mit.edu/9000/0/Search>
- The Tech  
<http://the-tech.mit.edu/cgi-bin/search>

### Outside Search Engines

You can also search MIT's Web pages using any of a variety of outside search engines. Information Systems recommends the Alta Vista search engine at

<http://www.altavista.digital.com/>

You can use query syntax that limits the search to [mit.edu](http://web.mit.edu). For example, to search MIT Web pages for the word "photosynthesis," use the search string

`photosynthesis +url:mit.edu`

### Validate Those Pages!

As mentioned earlier, the current Harvest search service does not index MIT Web pages if they aren't part of [web.mit.edu](http://web.mit.edu) hierarchy. In addition, Harvest will not index Web pages with invalid HTML code (for example, an HTML reference that doesn't have a closing quotation mark).

If you are a Web publisher and want to be sure that your HTML code is valid, try one of the automatic validation services on the Web. IS recommends the Kinder, Gentler Validator at

<http://ugweb.cs.ualberta.ca/~gerald/validate/>

### More Information

For more details about searching MIT's Web pages, go to

<http://web.mit.edu/cwis/search/>

You can also post questions and comments to the browsable discussion list [<mitsearch@mit.edu>](mailto:mitsearch@mit.edu).

*Much of the material in this article is based on information posted on the Web by Bruce Lewis, the Information Systems programmer who is coordinating the Harvest search service at MIT.*

## MIT Electronic Catalog Reaches Prototype Phase

Lee Ridgway

**A** key part of the Institute's reengineering effort in the area of Supplier Consolidation has been the development and implementation of the MIT Electronic Catalog. This Web-based system will let authorized users order routine goods and services directly from suppliers with whom MIT has established special partnerships.

MIT ECAT will give members of the community access to a supplier's online catalog, customized for MIT. Authorized users will be able to place orders electronically without the need for requisitions, purchase orders, invoices, or additional approvals. The savings in time and paperwork should be significant.

### A Web Prototype

After more than a year's work, MIT ECAT has reached the prototype phase. Two vendors – Office Depot and VWR Scientific – have been active participants in the Catalog's development. MIT ECAT is now up on the Web at

<http://web.mit.edu/ecat/>

Anyone at MIT with a computer connected to MITnet and a Web browser such as Netscape can use MIT ECAT to look at these two vendors' online catalogs. **Note:** The prototype may not be accessible to computers on certain subnets at MIT, and it is not available outside of the Institute.

You find items in the online catalogs by browsing through product categories, searching on keywords, or searching for catalog numbers. Product pages in the catalogs include color photos, product descriptions, and MIT's discounted price. One advantage of the online catalogs is that they will be updated more frequently than printed versions.

You can even prepare an order using the prototype system – up to a point. (Currently, only authorized testers can complete orders.)

### Order Placement

While anyone on MITnet can browse the catalogs, to place an order you must be issued an MIT Procard, the Institute's corporate charge card from American Express. Procard authorizations will be based on MIT's current purchasing authorizations.

To answer concerns about authentication and security of information in Internet-based transactions, a concurrent development with MIT ECAT has been a Web helper application called Ksign. Related to MIT's Kerberos authentication system, Ksign will authenticate a person placing and "signing" an MIT ECAT order.

### Testing

The MIT ECAT prototype is currently being tested by a small group of people in offices and departments throughout the Institute. Results from this round of testing will be evaluated, and the developers will be given feedback about suggested changes or bugs that need to be fixed.

### Other Feedback

In May, the MIT ECAT Implementation Team presented demonstrations of MIT ECAT to members of the Administrative Advisory Council. These presentations included discussion of issues around MIT ECAT procedures and purchasing policies.

The Implementation Team also welcomes your comments, suggestions, and questions. You can contact the team via e-mail at [<ecat@mit.edu>](mailto:ecat@mit.edu). ☺

---

## An Update from the Access Technology Lab

Mary Ellen Bushnell

**T**ucked away in 11-112, beside the Athena Fishbowl, is the Access Technology for Information and Computing (ATIC) Lab. Since it opened in 1990, the Lab has provided consultation, configuration, training, and ongoing support on access solutions for MIT students and employees with disabilities. The Lab is also committed to educating the MIT community about access issues and technology.

### A New Coordinator

The ATIC Lab's first coordinator, M. Susan Jones, left the Institute in December. Her replacement, Kathy Cahill, started at MIT in late May. A licensed social worker, Cahill worked for seven years as a rehabilitation engineer in adaptive technology for the Massachusetts Commission for the Blind.

Since starting at MIT, Cahill has been getting familiar with the Lab, its clients, and other Institute offices, in particular the Disabilities Services Office (DSO). The Lab and the DSO confer on adaptive technologies to meet a wide variety of client needs. They are planning technical and administrative ways to support disabled students needing accommodations for classes in the fall. The two offices also collaborate on needs assessment and computing solutions for clients with serious repetitive strain injuries.

### Lab Improvements

Planned purchases for the Lab include a new Pentium PC, a DECTalk synthesizer, and more alternative keyboards and mice that clients can evaluate at their worksites.

In the area of software for the visually impaired, the Lab plans to test Windows 95 screen readers; explore access to graphical environments and to scientific and mathematical materials; and research alternative formats for reading books online. The Lab

will also investigate software aids for people with learning disabilities.

More student consultants will be hired and trained over the summer. Within a few months, the Lab will be staffed and open 40 hours a week during normal business hours.

Finally, given the Lab's size (it barely meets space requirements for wheelchair access), long-term plans include seeking out a space with more room for clients and equipment.

### For More Information

The ATIC Lab has staffed hours posted on its door. At these times, you can come to the Lab to ask technical questions, schedule training sessions, or talk to an on-duty consultant. To set up an appointment with a staff member, call x3-7808 [<atic@mit.edu>](mailto:atic@mit.edu). Kathy Cahill also has an office in 11-316. She can be reached at x3-5111.

To find out more about the ATIC Lab, visit its Web page at <http://web.mit.edu/atic/www/atic.html> ☺



## Getting Help

If you don't know where to get help for your computer, network, or telephone problems, call the IS Help Line, **x3-2001** – or direct dial one of the help lines listed to the right.

If you prefer to use electronic mail, you can send your questions to the corresponding addresses on the far right. (When logged into Athena, you can also use the `olc` command to send questions to Athena's online consultants.)

For help with...	Dial...	Or send a message to...
Athena Computing Environment	3-4435	olc@mit.edu
Athena hardware repairs	3-1410	hotline@athena.mit.edu
Computer sales	3-7686	mcc@mit.edu
DEC and Sun software	3-6320	help@isis.mit.edu
Disabilities and computing	3-7808	atic@mit.edu
IS mainframes	3-7230	mithelp@mit.edu
Microcomputer and printer repairs	3-0815	pcservice@mit.edu
Microcomputer use	3-0001	micro-help@mit.edu
Networks/MITnet	3-4101	net-help@mit.edu
Telephone repairs	3-4357	5help@mit.edu
Voice mail	3-3677	vmail@mit.edu



## Recent Publications from Information Systems

These publications are free. You can pick up copies in the MIT Computer Connection, W20-021, or in the racks outside E19-630. Some of these publications are on the World Wide Web. To view them, use the URLs listed beneath the titles.

You can also request IS publications by calling x3-5150 or sending e-mail to <sendpubs@mit.edu>.

Order No.	Title
NS-47	Setting up Microsoft IP in Windows 95 for MITnet (ethernet) <a href="http://web.mit.edu/win95/e-msipg.html">http://web.mit.edu/win95/e-msipg.html</a>
NS-48	Setting up Microsoft IP in Windows 95 for Tether (dialup) <a href="http://web.mit.edu/tps/www/win95/t-msip/ppp95.html">http://web.mit.edu/tps/www/win95/t-msip/ppp95.html</a>
QG-8	Basics of Using Netscape
QG-44.3	ADSM Version 2 Backup for the Macintosh: Quick Start for Individual Users (revised) <a href="http://web.mit.edu/tps/www/QG/QG-44/ADSM_Mac.html">http://web.mit.edu/tps/www/QG/QG-44/ADSM_Mac.html</a>
RP-5.1	Brush up Your Computer Skills with IS Training Services (revised)



Nonprofit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Cambridge, MA  
Permit No. 54016



Have a good summer. *i/s* will be back in September.

*i/s* is printed with soy inks on recycled paper, and can be recycled in MIT's "white paper only" bins.