



CHOOSING THE RIGHT DATABASE(S)

Chapter Objectives

In this chapter, you learn how to

- ✓ Ask questions during a reference interview to clarify the topic and search objective
- ✓ Decide before going online if a database is a good candidate for a search
- ✓ Use the *Dialog Database Catalog* to help choose databases for a topic
- ✓ Display database-specific information online to help you plan a search
- ✓ Find brief instructions on Dialog commands and features while online
- ✓ Obtain Dialog user documentation via fax, the Internet, or online
- ✓ Use online features to help you choose appropriate databases for a topic
- ✓ Find out which databases index a particular journal
- ✓ Determine which databases have records for a particular company or product name
- ✓ Discover the kinds of indexing applied to a database to make it searchable

Features

- Overview of Dialog user documentation
- Checklist for a reference interview
- Checklist for evaluating the content and applications for a database
- Command-mode help information
- Dialog Bluesheets database
- Dialog Chronolog database
- DIALINDEX® (File 411)
- Dialog Finder™ Files

Background

This chapter provides an overview of the printed documentation and online user aids that can help you decide which databases are best for a given topic. Many of these user aids are also available on Dialog's Web site at <http://library.dialog.com>. Later in this chapter you learn about online tools that help you choose databases.

To get started, use this short checklist of questions about the topic and the search objective:

- What is the general subject area? (medicine, business, science, etc.)
- What is the focus of the question? (technical, consumer-oriented, latest news, etc.)
- How much information is needed? (comprehensive search or “a few good articles”)
- What general type of database is needed? (bibliographic, fulltext, directory, etc.)

The answers to these questions will help to narrow your choice from the over 600 databases listed in the *Dialog Database Catalog*.

Conducting a Reference Interview

When you are planning to perform an online search for someone else, you need to be diligent in getting answers to questions about the topic and the scope. Often during a reference interview, you are helping the requestor to determine exactly what information he/she really wants to find. You need to conduct a complete reference interview to be able to choose the best databases for the search. Before you begin searching, be sure that you understand what it is you are looking for and how you will know when you have found enough.

A summary of tips for conducting a reference interview is included in the “Search Strategy Wrap-Up” section in the appendix. Also included is a sample Search Request Form. You can use a form like this as a checklist to make sure you have all the information you need in order to plan and execute an effective search.

Evaluating a Database: 4 Cs to Consider

With hundreds of databases from which to choose, the challenge of finding your information “needle” begins with choosing the best “haystack” to search. *One of the easiest ways to waste money online is to conduct the right search in the wrong database.* In this section, you learn how to select databases that are most likely to produce the results you seek.

Databases vary in several important ways. Keep in mind these “4 Cs” to evaluate the databases you are considering for a given search objective:

- **Content**
 - **Subject** content (law, medicine, mathematics, engineering, etc.)
 - Sources: **where the data comes from** (newspapers, patents, company interviews, trade publications)
 - Record content: exactly **what data is in a record** (fields, text, abstracts, numeric data) and **how can the data be searched** (e.g., do you need a directory file that indexes SIC codes?)
 - Intended audience: what **technical level** is presented (medical research for health professionals vs. medical information for consumers)
- **Coverage**
 - **Size** of the database (number of records, years covered)
 - **Scope** of coverage (national or international, number of journals indexed, types of companies included, etc.)
- **Currency**
 - How often is the file **updated** (daily, weekly, monthly)
 - Timeliness: what is the **lag time** (newswires, published or unpublished data)
- **Cost**
 - How much can you expect to pay for what you need: DialUnit or Connect Time; per-record charges (online Types or offline Prints)

Dialog User Documentation

Print Tools

Dialog has extensive documentation on database content and search features. The most important printed user aids are listed below under the questions most often asked when preparing or conducting a search:

“What databases cover my topic or subject area?”

“What kinds of information will I find in this database?”

Answer: Dialog Database Catalog

The *Dialog Database Catalog* contains brief descriptions of all databases, including subject categories, dates of coverage, and name of the information provider. A subject index is also included.

“How does the XYZ command work?”

“Where can I get an illustration of the XYZ feature?”

Answer: Dialog Pocket Guide and Successful Searching on Dialog

These publications are the major reference manuals on all system features and commands. The *Pocket Guide* is available as a conveniently sized booklet or on the Dialog Web site. *Successful Searching* is available only on the Web at <http://librarydialog.com/success>.

“What does a typical record look like in this database?”

“What fields can I search in the database?”

“What prefix do I need to use to search the Net Sales field?”

“What formats are available for displaying records?”

Answer: Bluesheets

The most essential documentation for day-to-day searching is the database-specific Bluesheet. Each Bluesheet shows a sample record with all fields labeled and lists details about the search options and output formats. Bluesheets are available online in File 415 and through the Dialog Web site.

“How do I stay up to date on new system features?”

“Where can I read about new databases and get Bluesheets for them?”

“How do I keep my documentation current?”

Answer: *Chronolog*, the newsletter for Dialog.

The *Chronolog* newsletter is sent to all active accounts regularly during the year. It includes articles about new databases, tips on search techniques, and application ideas for system features and files. The complete text of the *Chronolog* is also available online in File 410 and on the Web in PDF and HTML format. You can sign up for a free electronic subscription to the *Chronolog* at <http://www.dialog.com/info/contacts/maillinglists>.

In addition to the printed documentation described above, you can get Dialog user aids online through Dialog Homepage, via fax, and through the Dialog Web site.



To Find Out More

The complete text of the Bluesheets is also available online in File 415 and on the World Wide Web. Note that the most up-to-date Bluesheet for any databases is the PDF version found at: <http://library.dialog.com/bluesheets>. The hyperlink to the PDF is found at the top of the HTML Bluesheet for any given database.

In addition, HELP commands can be used to display database-specific information, such as prefixes and suffixes, pre-defined formats, and costs. See the “Online Help Information” section later in this chapter.

Using the Dialog Database Catalog

The best place to start looking for guidance on selecting databases is the *Dialog Database Catalog*. Each Dialog database is described in a few paragraphs, along with dates of coverage, update schedule, DIALINDEX[®] categories, and name of the information provider. The *Catalog* also has a subject index, a file number index, and a brief description of Dialog features and options. Dialog also publishes

separately a price list and a list of all the journals, magazines, and newspapers available with fulltext records in one or more Dialog databases.

Typically, start by looking in the *Catalog's* subject index, called DIALINDEX®/OneSearch® Categories:

Political Science	POLISCI
7	Social SciSearch®
35	Dissertation Abstracts Online
37	Sociological Abstracts
38	America: History and Life
39	Historical Abstracts
47	Gale Group Magazine Database®
	•
	• <i>rest of list deleted</i>
	•

For some databases, the database name provides a good indication of its subject content (e.g., Dissertation Abstracts Online), but many files have names that are unfamiliar (e.g., PAIS International). Turn to the database description in the main body of the *Catalog* to learn about its coverage and content:

Social SciSearch®**Dialog: 7; Practice File: 207****DataStar: SSCI**

Coverage: 1972 to date
Updates: Weekly; Closed (207)
Alerts: Dialog/DataStar Alerts available
Data Type: Bibliographic
ERA: Dialog ERA available
Provider: Institute for Scientific Information (ISI®);
 Philadelphia, PA, U.S.A.

International, multidisciplinary index to the literature of the social, behavioral, and related sciences, produced by the Institute for Scientific Information (ISI®). Social SciSearch contains all of the records published in the Social Sciences Citation Index. Social SciSearch offers some unique information retrieval techniques. In addition to the more conventional methods, Social SciSearch offers citation indexing, which permits searching by cited references. For records added since March 1991, author keywords and Key Words Plus™ can also be searched. ONTAP® Social SciSearch is available for Online Training And Practice. It contains over 30,000 selected records from 1984 and 1985.

DIALINDEX Categories:

CITEDREF, ECON, EDUCAT, HISTORY, NUMANIT, INFOSCI, LANGUAGE, PHILOS, POLISCI, PSYCH, REVIEWS, SOCSCI

CROS Groups: 81

Note: DataStar is not covered as part of this workbook.

Consulting the Bluesheet

After you identify a few candidate files, examine their Bluesheets to see what a typical record in the file looks like, and check on search and display features that you know you will need. The Bluesheet sample record is often your best guide to deciding if a given database is worth pursuing for your topic. You can read the Bluesheets in hardcopy (Bluesheets are available as they are added or updated in the monthly *Chronolog*), on CD-ROM, or you can download them from the Dialog Web site:

<http://library.dialog.com/bluesheets>.

Use the Bluesheet to find out if a file has the search options and coverage you need. For example,

- If you need to create a list of companies that fit certain criteria, make certain that there are fields for what you need. For example: Can the file be searched by sales figures? Are phone numbers included in the records?

- If you want to have complete text for relevant articles—not just abstracts or summaries—check to make certain that the records include full text.
- If you need to locate very recent publications, check the Sources section on the Bluesheet to verify the timeliness of updates to the database.
- If you are going to search on an author's name, look at the author name (AU=) example on the Bluesheet to see how names are formatted in the file: Are commas used after the surname? Are first names spelled out or abbreviated to initials only?

Online Tools

Dialog publishes comprehensive user documentation and complements it with extensive online information called *Help information*. Help information and user aids are available in several forms:

- Direct HELP commands for specific databases or command instructions to use while online in Dialog Classic
- Menu-driven Help information in Dialog Homebase (File HOME)
- Help information and user documentation sent to you via fax
- Dialog user aids available via the Dialog Web site
- Dialog publications you can order online via the Dialog Web site

In addition, you can see the complete text of the Dialog Bluesheets and *Chronolog* newsletter online in their respective databases—which you can search free of connect-time charges—as well as on the Web site.

Getting Help Information

You can get quick database-specific information or brief feature instructions using HELP commands or Dialog Homebase menus.

HELP Commands

The Dialog online HELP commands provide:

- explanations of commands and system features
- information about files, such as searchable fields, file size, and formats
- prices for display formats, connect-hour rates, and network costs
- system news about hours of operation, reloaded files, etc.

You can use HELP commands from any database. If you are searching in DialogClassic, choose one of the free files, such as File 200, whenever possible to avoid incurring connect-time charges while reading the HELP file.

HELP on DialogClassic

On DialogClassic, all HELP commands begin with the word HELP. A question mark or the word EXPLAIN can be used in place of the word HELP. The three commands HELP FORMAT 6, ?FORMAT6, and EXPLAIN FORMAT 6 are equivalent.

To see a list of all HELP commands, enter HELP HELP:

```
?help help
HELP
  For search assistance from The Dialog Corporation Customer
  Services, please call:
      U.S. and Canada tollfree: 800-334-2564
      Direct dial: 650-254-7000
      Telex: 334499 (DIALOG)
      Fax: 650-254-7070
      DIALMAIL: DIALOG CUSTSERV

Use the HELP (or ?) command to view help messages that describe Dialog commands,
system features, file-specific information, and training information. For
example, to view a description of the BEGIN command, enter HELP BEGIN or ?BEGIN.

Menu-assisted access to the information retrieved with the HELP command is
available in DIALOG HOMEBASE. To access the file, enter BEGIN HOMEBASE. The
menu will guide you to the information that is appropriate to your needs.

Valid HELP options are listed below.

DIALOG Commands (e.g., HELP BEGIN):
BEGIN      FILE      ORDER      RECALL      SORT
COST       ID       PAGE      REPORT      TARGET
DISPLAY    IDO      RD        SAVEALRT    TYPE
DS         KEEP     RELEASE   SELECT
EDIT       LIMITALL PAUSE     SET
EXECUTE    LOGOFF   PRINT     SFILES
EXPAND     MAP      RANK      SHOW

Special Features (e.g., HELP HILIGHT)
ALERT      ERA       NOERA     PROXIMIT    TRUNCATE
ALERTSRV   EXPLODE  ONESEARC  SITEPRTS   XTAB
CURRENT    FAX      ORDER     SOURCE1
DIALMAIL   HILIGHT  POST      STOPWORD
DLINK      KWIC     PREFORM   SUBACCT
DUP        LABELS   PRO       TAG
EMAIL      LOGICAL  PROFILE   THESAURI

DIALOG news and system status (e.g., HELP DIALINDX):
DIALINDX   FREE     ONTAP     SUPPLRS
FILES      INSTRUCT RATES     TOLLFREE
FILESAZ    NEWS     SCHEDULE  UPDATE

For telecommunication access information (e.g., HELP ACCESS):
ACCESS     DATEX    NORPAC    TELEPAKS   WATS
BT (now    IDAS     PSS       TELEX
  MCIPDN)  INTERNET SABD      TRANSPAC
DARDO     MCIMAIL  SPRINTNT TWX
DATEPAC   MCIPDN   TELEPAC   (TYMNET now MCIPDN)

For file information (e.g., HELP FIELD114):
```

FIELDn	FILEn	FMTn	LIMITn	MAPn
RATESn	RPTn	SORTn	TERMSn	
• • <i>lines omitted</i> •				

Several of the most useful HELP commands are described below.

v Selected HELP Commands v

HELP command*	Example	Help information
HELP <feature name>	HELP ALERT	Describes the Alert service, the files in which it is available and the cost per file
	HELP EXPAND	Describes the EXPAND command.
HELP FILE n	HELP FILE 527	Describes the subject content and coverage of File 527.
HELP FIELD n	HELP FIELD 275	Lists all of the fields in File 275, including all suffixes, prefixes, and display codes.
HELP FORMAT n	HELP FORMAT 1	Describes the content of all pre-defined formats in File 1.
HELP RATES n	HELP RATES 1	Shows complete price information for File 1, including hourly connect rate, per-record rate for all pre-defined formats, and Dialog Alert costs.
HELP LIMIT n	HELP LIMIT 155	Describes the limit capabilities available in File 155.

* n = any file number

Dialog Bluesheets™ (File 415) Database

The complete text of all Dialog Bluesheets is available in File 415. Each record in the file is equivalent to one Bluesheet. The records in the file always reflect the most recent information available and, for some databases, the online record may contain more current information than the print Bluesheet.

You can retrieve a single Bluesheet by SELECTing the file name or number in the Title field. For example, SELECT FILE(W)275/TI retrieves the Bluesheet for File 275. To display the complete Bluesheet, use Format 9.

You can use File 415 to locate databases that have a particular searchable field or subject area. In the next sample search, you find out which files have a field for CAS® Registry Numbers using Dialog Classic. The /AI suffix is used to search the Additional Index field.

```
?B 415
```

```
File 415:DIALOG Bluesheets(TM) 2001/Sep 26  
(c) 2001 The Dialog Corporation
```

```
Set Items Description  
---
```

```
?S CAS/AI
```

```
S1 43 CAS/AI
```

```
?T S1/TI/1-2
```

```
1/TI/1  
DIALOG(R)File 415:(c) 2001 The Dialog Corporation. All rts. reserv.
```

```
USP DICTIONARY OF USAN AND INTERNATIONAL DRUG NAMES - File 464  
USP Dictionary of USAN and International Drug Names is a trademark of The  
United States Pharmacopeial Convention, Inc
```

```
1/TI/2  
DIALOG(R)File 415:(c) 2001 The Dialog Corporation. All rts. reserv.
```

```
PROUS SCIENCE DRUGS OF THE FUTURE - File 453
```

```
•  
•  
•
```

Chronolog[®] Newsletter[™] (File 410)

The complete text of all issues of the *Chronolog* monthly newsletter since 1981 is available online in File 410. For some news items, you can find more details in File 410 than are published in the print newsletter. Use the Dialog accession number given in the article to display the record. The online *Chronolog* can be searched at no charge. For example, if you see this reference in an article:

```
To view a search example on how to retrieve records added to File 470 in the year 2000,  
see the online version of the April Chronolog at http://library.dialog.com/chron.
```

enter a TYPE command in File 410 with the accession number and Format 9 to see the complete text of the referenced article:

TYPE 01030933/FULL

01030933/9

DIALOG(R) File 410:Chronolog(R)

(c) 2004 The Dialog Corporation. All rts. reserv.

01030933CHRONOLOG

TITLE: Roger K. Summit North America Scholarship Winner for 2003

PUBLICATION DATE: SEPTEMBER 2003

TEXT: Dialog announced that this year's North America Roger K. Summit Scholarship winner is Susan Johnson, a graduate student at the University of Hawaii. Susan's commitment to the profession through her leadership role in SLA and her 100% score on the Dialog proficiency test tipped the scales in her favor. The award will assist Johnson in her pursuit of a doctorate in Communication and Information Studies.

The Roger K. Summit Scholarships are awarded annually by Dialog in North America, Europe and the Asia Pacific region in honor of the company's founder, a pioneer in the technology behind online information retrieval.

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The complete text of the *Chronolog* is also available as a PDF file and in HTML format on the Dialog Web site; click **What's New**. *Chronolog* archives are also available.

Database Selection Tools

DIALINDEX®

Even after looking in the *Dialog Database Catalog* and reviewing appropriate Bluesheets, you can't always be certain that you've chosen the best databases until you actually conduct the search using your own keywords and search terms. An interim step for many situations is a quick search in DIALINDEX (File 411), a preview file where you can scan multiple files at a low, flat rate on DialogClassic and find out if your search terms appear. This step can save you both time and money because you use DIALINDEX *before* BEGINING in a potentially expensive database.

Other online tools to help you choose the best database are the Dialog Finder files. When your search objective is to find a specific company name, product name, or journal, one of the Finder files is often the best place to start.

You can also use the online Dialog Bluesheets (File 415) database or the Dialog Web page to search the complete text of the Bluesheets, including all of the 'Search Options' sections, to locate appropriate files for a topic. This feature is illustrated in the previous section on online help.

Scanning a Large Group of Databases: DIALINDEX (File 411)

For most topics, your search preparation and database selection planning is done before logging on. There are many topics, however, that do not fit easily into the scope of a single database or small group of

databases. For these searches, you can go online and scan a large group of files quickly and inexpensively using DIALINDEX to determine which files are most appropriate for your search.

DIALINDEX is a single database which includes the indexing from most of the other databases on Dialog. It's important to understand what DIALINDEX does and what it does *not* do. Put simply, you BEGIN in DIALINDEX, choose a group of databases to scan, and then enter a *single* SELECT command to find out how many records contain your search terms. Because DIALINDEX is an index only, you will *not* be able to display records while in DIALINDEX. You are also *not* able to enter search terms in multiple SELECT commands or to combine set numbers. In fact, no sets are formed while in DIALINDEX.

When you finish a search in DIALINDEX, you typically BEGIN in the databases that demonstrated the best retrieval, perform the search strategy (refining as needed), and display the records. Using DIALINDEX, you can avoid costly searching in databases that ultimately prove to contain very few or no records on your topic.

Searching DIALINDEX on DialogClassic

To use DIALINDEX on DialogClassic, follow these steps:

1. BEGIN 411.
2. Enter a SET FILES command followed by the databases you want to scan. SET FILES may be abbreviated as SF.

You can enter any combination of file numbers or database category acronyms. DIALINDEX categories identify subject groupings of databases so that you can easily scan a related group of files. Categories and their acronyms are listed at the back of the *Dialog Database Catalog* and on the File 411 Bluesheet.

There are two types of categories in DIALINDEX: SuperCategories and regular categories. SuperCategories encompass very large groups of subject-related files. For example, the SuperCategory acronym ALLSCIENCE groups together 149 databases covering scientific subjects; the SuperCategory acronym ALLTEXT groups together 135 databases that have fulltext bibliographic records. Regular categories are smaller and more specific, typically including 10 to 15 databases. Examples include ARCHITEC for architectural files, BIOTECH for biotechnology, and NUTRIT for nutrition and food-related topics. The fulltext newspaper files are combined in categories by state and by region – PAPERSCA for California newspapers, PAPERSSE for newspapers in the U.S. Southeast, PAPERSUK for newspapers in the U.K., and so on.

You can create your own grouping of files to be scanned by entering any combination of file numbers and category acronyms, separated by commas. You can even use the NOT operator to exclude files from a category. Here are a few sample SET FILES commands:

```
?SET FILES ALLSCIENCE
?SF BIOTECH,PATENTS NOT 636,144
?SF 2,295,8,32
?SF TRADEMKS,751
```

3. Enter your search terms in a single SELECT command.

Remember that because no sets are formed, the complete strategy must be entered in *one* SELECT statement. You may want to use only the most important search terms at this point and not try to include all the synonyms you have in mind; you will usually perform a more refined strategy when you BEGIN the files you identify as the best ones. Remember, this is simply a way of seeing what files look the most promising for your search. Be sure to use parentheses as needed so that your search logic is correct; if you want terms ORed together, enclose them in parentheses. Examples:

```
?SELECT (SMOK? OR TOBACCO) AND HEART(W)DISEASE?
?SELECT CHOLESTEROL AND (DOG OR DOGS)
```

Keep in mind that fulltext files will have higher record counts if you SELECT terms in the full Basic Index of the files selected. Avoid controlled vocabulary terms that may not apply to all files in the group.

You can EXPAND while in DIALINDEX, but no E numbers will display.

4. Enter the RANK FILES command to see the files with the most records on your topic listed first.
5. BEGIN in the databases that have the best coverage of your topic.
6. Perform the search and display records.

Two DIALINDEX sample searches are included on the next pages. The first search uses a regular DIALINDEX category acronym and the second one uses a SuperCategory.

v DIALINDEX Sample Search—1 v

```

File 411:DIALINDEX(R)

DIALINDEX(R)
(c) 2001 The Dialog Corporation

*** DIALINDEX search results display in an abbreviated ***
*** format unless you enter the SET DETAIL ON command. ***
?sf foodsci

    You have 15 files in your file list.
    (To see banners, use SHOW FILES command)
?s (garlic or onion? ?) and (odorless or odourless or deodori?)

Your SELECT statement is:
    s (garlic or onion? ?) and (odorless or odourless or deodori?)

      Items   File
      -----
      12      5: BIOSIS PREVIEWS(R) 1969-2001/Sep W2
      1      10: AGRICOLA 70-2001/Sep
      7      50: CAB Abstracts 1972-2001/Aug
      32     51: Food Sci.&Tech.Abs 1969-2001/Nov W3
      33     53: FOODLINE(R): Food Science &
           Technology 1972-2001/Sep 19
      11     79: Foods Adlibra(TM) 1974-2001/Sep
      22     94: JICST-Eplus 1985-2001/Aug W3
      4      98: General SciAbs/Fulltext 1984-2001/Jul
      1     144: Pascal 1973-2001/Sep W3
      3     203: AGRIS 1974-2001/Jul
      75     399: CA SEARCH® 1967-2001/UD=13512

    11 files have one or more items; file list includes 15 files.

?rank files

Your last SELECT statement was:
    S (GARLIC OR ONION? ?) AND (ODORLESS OR ODOURLESS OR DEODORI?)

Ref      Items   File
-----
N1       75     399: CA SEARCH® 1967-2001/UD=13512
N2       33     53: FOODLINE(R): Food Science & Technology 1972-2001/S
N3       32     51: Food Sci. &Tech.Abs 1969-2001/Nov W3
N4       22     94: JICST-Eplus 1985-2001/Aug W3
N5       12      5: BIOSIS PREVIEWS(R) 1969-2001/Sep
N6       11     79: Foods Adlibra™ 1974-2001/Sep
N7        7     50: CAB Abstracts 1972-2001/Aug
N8        4     98: General Sci Abs/Fulltext 1984-2001/Jul
N9        3     203: AGRIS 1974-2001/Jul
N10      1      10: AGRICOLA 70-2001/Sep

    11 files have one or more items; file list includes 15 files.

```

v DIALINDEX Sample Search—2 v

```

File 411:DIALINDEX(R)

DIALINDEX(R)
(c) 2001 The Dialog Corporation

*** DIALINDEX search results display in an abbreviated ***
*** format unless you enter the SET DETAIL ON command. ***
?sf allscience

    You have 149 files in your file list.
    (To see banners, use SHOW FILES command)
?s buckyball? ?

Your SELECT statement is:
s buckyball? ?
      Items  File
      -----
      92      2: INSPEC 1969-2001/Sepe W3
      4       5: BIOSIS PREVIEWS(R) 1969-2001/Sep W2
      16      6: NTIS 1964-2001/Sep W5
      33      8: Ei Compendex(R) 1970-2001/Sep W3
      13      9: Business & Industry(R) Jul 1994-2001/Sep 18
      2      10: AGRICOLA 70-2001/Sep
      1      14: Mechanical Engineering Abs 1973-2001/Jul
      54      15: ABI/Inform(R) 1971-2001/Sep 19
      187     16: Gale Group PROMT (R) 1990-2001/Sep 18
      70      18: Gale Group F&S Index (R) 1988-2001/Sep 18
      33      19: Chem Industry Notes 1974-2001/ISS 2001 38
      50      20: World Reporter 1997-2001/'Sep 19
      4      32: METADEX(R) 1966-2001/Nov B1
      184     34: SciSearch (R) Cited Ref Sci 1990-2001/Sep W3
      12      35: Dissertation Abs Online 1861-2001/Jul
      3      42: Pharmaceutical News Idx 1974-2001/Sep W3
      1      44: Aquatic Sci&Fish Abs 1978-2001/Oct
      .
      .   files omitted
      .
      63     764: BCC Market Research 1989-2000/Aug
      1     766: (R) Kalorama Info Market Res. 1993-2000/Aug
      1     767: Frost & Sullivan Market Eng 2001/Sep
      1     790: Tax Notes Today 1986-2001/Sep 19
      12     890: Business Wire 1986-1999/Feb 28
      9     813 PR Newswire 1987-1999/Apr 30

    101 files have one or more items; file list includes 291 files

?RANK FILES

Your last SELECT statement was:
S BUCKTBALL? ?

Ref      Items  File
-----
N1       276    440: Current Contents Search(R) 1990-2001/Sep W4
N2       239    484: Periodical Abs Plustext 1986-2001/Aug W4
N3       202    636: Gale Group Newsletter BAC (TM) 1987-2001/Sep 18
N4       187     16: Gale Group PROMT (R) 1990-2001/Sep 18
N5       184     34: SciSearch(R) Cited Ref Sci 1990-2001/Sep W3
N6       174     47: Gale Group Magazine DB(TM) 1959-2001/Sep W3
N7       136     98: General Sci Abs/Fulltext 1984-2001/Jul
N8       130    148: Gale Group Trade & Industry DB 1976-2001/Sep 18
N9        92      2: INSPEC 19169-2001/Sep W3
N10      87     654: US PAT.FULL 1990-2001/Sep 18

    101 files have one or more items; file list includes 291 files.

-Enter P or PAGE for more -
    
```

```

?P
Your last SELECT statement was:
  S BUCKYBALL? ?

Ref          Items  File
---          -
N11          76     99: Wilson Appl. Sci & Tech Abs 1983-2001/Jul
N12          74     399: CA SEARCHH(R) 1967-2001/UD=13512
N13          70      18: Gale Group F&S Index(R ) 1977-2001/Sep 18
N14          63     349: PCT Fulltext 1983-2001/UB=2000100906, UT=20010830
N15          63     764: BCC Market Researcdh 1989-2001/Aug
N16          58     103: Energy SciTec 1974-2001/Aug B2
N17          54      15: ABI/Inform(R) 1971-2001/Sep 19
N18          53     369: New Scientist 1994-2001/Sep W1
N19          50      20: World Reporter?1997-2001/Sep 19
N20          44     144: Pascal 1973-2001/Sep W3

101 files have one or more items; file list includes 291 files

Enter P or PAGE for more

```

Shortcuts for DIALINDEX Searches

TIP *SELECT Command*

You can specify a new group of databases with the SET FILES command, and then process the same SELECT command in the new files by simply entering a single S (for SELECT). This makes it easy to run the same search in additional files without re-entering the search terms. The S always applies to the search statement most recently entered.

Saving the Strategy

Enter SAVE TEMP to save the strategy, and then BEGIN in the files you want. Enter the EXS command to execute the strategy.

Using the Strategy in Files with 'Hits'

If you want to search all of the databases that produced hits in DIALINDEX, enter SAVE TEMP, and then BEGIN HITS;EXS.

Using the N Numbers After a RANK FILES command

You can use the N numbers that display after a RANK FILES command to specify the databases you want in the next BEGIN command. For example, BEGIN N1-N2 would be equivalent to BEGIN 399,53.

Dialog Finder Files

When your topic requires that you search on a specific company name, product name, or journal name, you can take advantage of the Dialog Finder files. Using a Finder file, you can quickly determine which database(s) contain records on the company, journal, or product you are seeking. The type of information included in each database is described in the Finder record. Three Finder files are currently available:

File 413	Dialog Product Code Finder™
File 414	Dialog Journal Name Finder™
File 416	Dialog Company Name Finder™

A typical application of a Finder file follows. Assume that you are trying to track down a specific article from the journal *Natural Health* about using acupuncture to quit smoking. Before you can find the article, you need to know which databases index the journal and which ones have fulltext records.

BEGIN in File 414 and EXPAND on the journal name. You can also search journal names in the word-indexed Title (/TI) field if you prefer. This is helpful when you are unsure of the exact journal name.

```

File 414:DIALOG Journal Name Finder(TM) 2991/Sep
(c) 2001 The Dialog Corporation

Set Items Description
--- -----
?e jn=natural health

Ref Items Index-term
E1 1 JN=NATURAL HAZARDS RESEARCH WORKING PAPER
E2 1 JN=NATURAL HAZARDS RESEARCH. WORKING PAPER.
E3 3 *JN=NATURAL HEALTH
E4 1 JN=NATURAL HEALTH // EAST WEST
E5 1 JN=NATURAL HEALTH//NEW VEGETGARIAN AND
E6 1 JN=NATURAL HEALTH FOR DOGS CATS
E7 1 JN=NATURAL HEALTH FOR DOGS CATS // COMPLETE GUIDE
E8 1 JN=NATURAL HERITAGE // IOWA
E9 1 JN=NATURAL HERITAGE//SOILS SUSTAINABILITY AND T
E10 1 JN=NATURAL HERITAGE BILL A CONSU//PROPOSALS FOR
E11 1 JN=NATURAL HI // BULLETIN CONNECTICUT GEOLOGICAL
E12 1 JN=NATURAL HI // BULLETIN WISCONSIN GEOLOGICAL

Enter P or PAGE for more

?s e3;t 1/5/all
S1 2 JN="NATURAL HEALTH"

1/5/1
DIALOG(R)File 414:DIALOG Journal Name Finder(TM)
(c) 2001 The Dialog Corporation All rts. reserv.

00606890
NATURAL HEALTH (JN=)
DIALOG FILE 149: Gale Group(SM)HEALTH&WELLNESS DB(SM) 1976-2001/Sep 06
(C) 2001 Gale Group
This file contains FULLTEXT records.
Number of Records for this Journal, 06 SEPTEMBER 2001: 1228

1/5/2
DIALOG(R)File 414:DIALOG Journal Name Finder(TM)
(c) 2001 The Dialog Corporation All rts. reserv.

00382178
NATURAL HEALTH (JN=)
DIALOG FILE 420: UNCOVER
(C) 2001 Gale Group
This file contains BIBLIOGRAPHIC records.
Number of Records for this Journal, 06 SEPTEMBER 2001: 1047

```

The records above show that Files 149, 211, and 420 index the journal *Natural Health* and File 149 contains fulltext records. You can now complete your search objective and find the specific article you want. Enter the commands: BEGIN 149; SELECT SMOK? AND ACUPUNCTURE AND JN=NATURAL HEALTH.

Notice that the Journal Name field has the *rotated term* feature. The double-slash (//) in the EXPAND list shown above indicates the end of the journal name. For example, on line E4 there is a reference to the journal *East West Natural Health*. This journal name is indexed under:

JN=EAST WEST NATURAL HEALTH
 JN=HEALTH // EAST WEST NATURAL
 JN=NATURAL HEALTH // EAST WEST
 JN=WEST NATURAL HEALTH // EAST

Finder File Reports

The Finder files have a special feature that lets you create a REPORT specific to the search term you enter. An illustration is shown below. In File 414, search the journal name and create a set, then enter the REPORT command followed by the set number and the JOURNAL option. This specially formatted REPORT sorts the set by journal name, then by type, then by record count and is a convenient way of scanning files to see which ones have the journal in the format you need.

```
File 414:Dialog Journal Name Finder(TM) 2001/Sep
(c) 2001 The Dialog Corporation

Set  Items  Description
---  -
?s ieee()spectrum/ti
      6107  IEEE/TI
      477  SPECTRUM/TI
S1    83   IEEE()SPECTRUM/TI

?report s1/journal
S2      83  Sort 1/ALL/JN,TY,D,RC,D
DIALOG(R)File 414:Dialog Journal Name Finder(TM)
(c) 2001 The Dialog Corporation All rts. reserv.

80 Journals Available

Journal                               File Number  Type      Record Count
-----
1 IEEE SPECTRUM                        15  FULLTEXT  2950
2 IEEE SPECTRUM                        88  FULLTEXT  1641
3 IEEE SPECTRUM                       275  FULLTEXT  1196
4 IEEE SPECTRUM                        16  FULLTEXT   414
5 IEEE SPECTRUM                       149  FULLTEXT    9
6 IEEE SPECTRUM                       485  FULLTEXT    9
7 IEEE SPECTRUM                        99  BIBLIOGRAPHIC 3406
8 IEEE SPECTRUM                       440  BIBLIOGRAPHIC 3319
9 IEEE SPECTRUM                       434  BIBLIOGRAPHIC 3169
10 IEEE SPECTRUM                       2   BIBLIOGRAPHIC 2427
11 IEEE SPECTRUM                        8   BIBLIOGRAPHIC 1867
12 IEEE SPECTRUM                        4   BIBLIOGRAPHIC 1617

Enter item number(s), P for next page, or EXIT to end Report:
```

This REPORT sorts the records by record count (i.e., the total number of records in each file with the specified journal name), then by type of files (full text or bibliographic). From scanning the above REPORT, you would decide that your best choices for a search for fulltext articles from *IEEE Spectrum* would be in Files 15, 88 and 275.

Be aware that the journal name report identifies a database as “fulltext,” but this does not ensure that the particular journal and article you want is available in a fulltext record.

Dialog Product Code Finder (File 413) has a specially formatted REPORT, which you can use with the syntax:

REPORT S4/PRODUCT

```

File 413:Dialog Product Code Finder(TM) 2001/Sep
(c) 2001 The Dialog Corporation

Set Items Description
---
?s dog() food
    152 DOG
    2676 FOOD
S1    33 DOG() FOOD
?report s1/product
S2    33 Sort 1/ALL/PN,RC,D
      DIALOG(R)File 413:DIALOG Product Code Finder(TM)
      (c) 2001 The Dialog Corporation All rts. reserv.

          33 Products Available

Product Name                Product Code  File Number  Record Count
-----
1 CANNED DOG FOOD          2047121     570         84
2 CANNED DOG FOOD          2047121     16          75
3 CANNED DOG FOOD          2047121     18          28
4 CAT AND DOG FOOD CANNING PLANT 4288044     590         28
5 CAT AND DOG FOOD CANNING PLANT 4288044     593          7
6 CAT AND DOG FOOD CANNING PLANT 4288044     592          5
7 CAT AND DOG FOOD PROCESSING PLANT AND EQUIPM 4136030     590         17
8 DOG FOOD                 204739      593          1
9 DOG FOOD                 2047120     592          1
10 DOG FOOD                2047120     16         1139
11 DOG FOOD                20479902    570        1104

Enter item number(s), P for next page, or EXIT to end Report:
    
```

Dialog Company Name Finder (File 416) has a specially formatted REPORT, which you can use with the syntax:

REPORT S4/COMPANY

```

File 416:DIALOG COMPANY NAME FINDER(TM) 2001/SEP
(c) 2001 Dialog Info.Svcs.

Set Items Description
---
?s co=esprit de corp
S1 74 CO="ESPRIT DE CORP"

?report s1/company
S2 74 Sort 1/ALL/CO,TY,RC,D
DIALOG(R)File 416:DIALOG COMPANY NAME FINDER(TM)
(c) 2001 Dialog Info.Svcs. All rts. reserv.

83 Companies Available
Company File Number Type Record Count
-----
1 ESPRIT DE CORP 18 Bibliographic 149
2 ESPRIT DE CORP 111 Bibliographic 95
3 ESPRIT DE CORP 483 Bibliographic 63
4 ESPRIT DE CORP 603 Bibliographic 6
5 ESPRIT DE CORP 262 Bibliographic 6
6 ESPRIT DE CORP 474 Bibliographic 5
7 ESPRIT DE CORP 475 Bibliographic 3
8 ESPRIT DE CORP 485 Bibliographic 3
9 ESPRIT DE CORP 603 Bibliographic 3
10 ESPRIT DE CORP 583 Bibliographic 1
11 ESPRIT DE CORP 285 Bibliographic 1
12 ESPRIT DE CORP 120 Copyright 4

Enter item number(s), P for next page, or EXIT to end Report:
    
```



To Find Out More

To learn more about the Finder files, see the Bluesheets for Files 413, 414, and 416.

Summary

Preparing to Choose the Right Database(s)

When conducting a reference interview to prepare for a search, ask questions about the topic, its general subject area, purpose or orientation, and how much and what kind of information is needed. Clarify the search objective fully before going online.

Evaluate potential databases on four general criteria: content, coverage, timeliness, and cost.

Use DIALINDEX to scan a large number of files to determine which ones have the best retrieval for your search topic.

Use the Dialog Finder files to locate databases that cover a particular journal, company, or product name.

Using Dialog Documentation to Choose a Database

Start with the *Dialog Database Catalog* to select potential databases for a topic. Next, refer to the Bluesheet for details about record content and search options.

CHOOSING THE DATABASE AND USING PROXIMITY OPERATORS

Objectives

- Evaluate prospective databases for a topic using the *Dialog Database Catalog*.
- Use the online Bluesheets database (File 415) to determine which databases are appropriate for a specific search objective.
- Scan a large number of databases in DIALINDEX (File 411) to determine the best potential files for a topic.
- Use the RANK FILES command in DIALINDEX.
- Use the online Chronolog[®] Newsletter[™] database (File 410) to find recent news on a database.
- Apply proximity search techniques to a variety of topics and databases.
- Search effectively in fulltext databases, using appropriate search techniques and display options.
- Use the Dialog Finder files (Files 416, 413, & 414) to locate the appropriate databases for a search on a company, product or journal name.
- Apply the search methods covered in the workbook Chapters 4 and 5.

Databases

- Dialog Bluesheets[™]
- Chronolog[®] Newsletter[™]
- GALE GROUPSM Magazine Database[™]
- DIALINDEX[®]
- Dialog Company Name Finder[™]
- Dialog Journal Name Finder[™]
- GALE GROUPSM Marketing & Advertising Reference Service[®]
- D&B-Dun's Market Identifiers[®]

Activities to Complete before Connecting to Dialog

1. Using the *Dialog Database Catalog*, choose four databases that you would recommend for creating a bibliography of articles on the pre-Socratic philosophers. Describe the steps you take to reach your recommendations.
2. Plan a search in File 415 (Bluesheets) with the following objective: Find out which philosophy-related databases have a searchable field for “named person.” Consult the Bluesheet for File 415 in hardcopy or online to determine which suffixes or prefixes to use in the strategy.
3. You’ve heard that database enhancements are explained in issues of the *Chronolog*. Plan a strategy to locate an article in File 410 that describes the enhancement of any database in the last two years.
4. Read through questions 5 to 12 below and plan a search strategy for each before going online. Write down the actual commands you will enter. Keep in mind which proximity operators are most appropriate and consult the Bluesheets for information on suffixes and prefixes, as needed.

Searches and Commands to Practice while Hands-on

5. Conduct the search strategy that you prepared for File 415 (question 2 above). Type the records in a format that shows the file name and number and the section of the Bluesheet where the search terms you used appear. Hint: Remember the KWIC format that displays the “window” of text surrounding the search terms. Use the display code TI for the Title field.
6. Use DIALINDEX to find out which databases have good coverage of information on voice-activated VCRs. Write down the search strategy you will use and check carefully for correct application of logical operators and parentheses. If fulltext files are included in the subject categories you choose, be sure to apply fulltext search techniques in the SELECT command. Try different SELECT commands until you are satisfied.
7. Enter the SAVE TEMP command to store the strategy you created for question 6. (If you wish, give it a name of your own choosing.) Next, use the RANK FILES command to see the list of files ranked by the number of records in each. Execute the SearchSave you created above, in question 6. If necessary, modify the strategy or create a new one. When you are satisfied with the strategy, use the TYPE command to display two records from each file in a brief format. Enter the RD command. Notice whether the resulting set is reduced or stays the same. Type one record from a file in a full format.
8. Use the Company Name Finder file to find out what files have trademark records on ESPRIT DE CORP. Select one of the files and execute the search. Type the first record in Format 3.
9. Locate all Dialog databases that index the magazine *Business Week* and have fulltext records. Use the REPORT command to display a list of the files ranked by record count.
10. Conduct the search you planned for question 3 in File 410. Type the most recent record in a format that includes the complete text of the article.

11. You are the corporate librarian for a soft drink company that is planning to launch a new product to compete with industry giants such as Coca-Cola and PepsiCo. You are part of a strategic planning team that is to provide background on other companies and on marketing strategies.
 - a. Someone on the planning team has an incomplete citation to an article entitled “A Mouse With a Purse Clubs the Cats: Little Seven-Up Has Shaken Up Giant Coca-Cola and PepsiCo.” Locate this article using the fewest search words possible in the Magazine Database. You should need no more than two or three words. Type the record in Format 9 to see the complete text.
 - b. Using the Miami Herald database, find information on Seven-Up’s “Uncola” advertising campaign. How long has the slogan been in use? Use the (S) operator to get precise results and the KWIC format to display the section of text with your search terms.
 - c. Use the GALE GROUP Marketing & Advertising Reference Service database to retrieve records about lawsuits that Seven-Up/Dr. Pepper filed against Coca-Cola. Which two products were cited?
12. In D&B-Dun’s Market Identifiers, find out how many soft drink companies are in Maryland, Virginia, or the District of Columbia. Hint: Search on the SIC code 2086 for soft drink manufacturers. SIC is the Standard Industrial Classification code; see the Bluesheet for the file.

Tasks to Complete after the Search

13. Follow your instructor’s guidelines for annotating and turning in your search printouts.

