Learn to use the Internet & IT effectively

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Introduction

"The Internet & IT for busy nurses and therapists" is an electronic book (eBook) that provides essential, practical guidance to getting the most out of the Internet & IT in the short amount of time available to students. Although written primarily with undergraduate students in mind it is also useful for postgraduate students and students in other health related disciplines. No prior knowledge is assumed so it is ideal for novice users or the technologically timid, or can be used as a revision tool for more experienced readers.

What's on the site?

The site is divided into four sections.

Section one – computer basics: guides the reader through the parts of a PC, different operating systems and the must know elements of Microsoft Windows, such as using the mouse, starting and closing programs, formatting a floppy, saving files and shutting down windows.

Section two – Library tools: covers CD-ROM and online literature databases, library catalogues and bibliography management tools.

In chapter 2 on literature databases, readers are helped to gain the skills they need to build a search strategy, using Boolean operators, phrasing, truncation and parentheses. Health related databases are listed.

The 3rd chapter covers library resources, outlining the two main cataloguing systems (Dewey and Library of Congress) and helps readers gain techniques to find an item within their own library by searching the online catalogue.

Bibliography management is the theme for chapter 4, which discusses the need to cite sources to avoid plagiarism and outlines the Harvard and Vancouver citation styles. The use of bibliography managers is presented with details of the main bibliographic management programs.

Section three – Internet communication and information services: looks at email, discussion forums, the Web and Internet etiquette.

The email chapter covers the different types of email account and how to get one, followed by how to send, read and reply to email as well as

filing or deleting mail. Issues such as preventing virus attacks and how to deal with spam are discussed.

Chapter 6 looks at the possibilities with discussion forums using email, news groups and chat rooms.

The Web is discussed in chapter 7 looking at techniques for navigating round the Web and searching for information, and how to judge the reliability of the information found.

The final chapter in this section looks at Internet etiquette (netiquette); the do's and don'ts of how to behave in an online environment.

Section four – Presenting your work to others: outlines the basic skills needed in word-processing, spreadsheets and presentations software.

Chapter 9 on word-processing, moves the user from simple typing to formatting with bold and italics, to being able to copy, cut and move text. Tips for layout and presentation are given, with the use of bullet points, graphics, tables and spell and grammar checking.

Spreadsheets are covered in chapter 10, helping the reader with typing in data, sizing columns and performing calculations. As in the previous chapter presentation and layout are discussed as well as creating charts from the data.

The presentations chapter guides the reader through the techniques of creating a presentation using creation wizards and templates. The reader is helped to understand the different types of slide, how to insert graphics, and how to utilise slide transitions. Finally the different print options for handouts are outlined.

What else is on the site?

Each chapter has an interactive section, with a fun quiz so that readers can either verify what they already know or see what they need to learn. There are polls on various topics, and a discussion board and online chat room where readers can ask questions and share ideas. I have just started to learn Flash so more interactive activities are starting to appear (have a look at the "Label the PC" activity in chapter one). There is also an interactive glossary, so readers can click on words they are not sure of as they read and get an explanation.

How will the site develop?

For the future I will continue to extend the interactivity of the site and hope to introduce PowerPoint for lecturers who want to take a chapter for class. All of these things take time of course; the "Label the PC" activity for example took me 3 weeks of hard slog as I got my head round the Flash software needed to create it. As with any good web resource it must also be kept up-to-date and I spend several evenings each week doing just that.

Who uses the site?

Since it's launch in July 2000, the site has received approximately 50000 hits. 2001 saw 7554 visitors from 65 countries look at 23115 pages. Lots of people kindly link to the site from their own pages and the site can be found through most of the search engines now, in fact in 2001 there were 1428 different URLs referring to the site. I get quite bowled over by the stats, but they give me one hell of a buzz and the reaction to the site is the best pat on the back I could have imagined.

Will it continue to be free?

Yes the site will continue to be free, but there is now a sister book called "Making IT Work: the Internet & IT for busy students", from UWIC Press (details on the "IT & Internet" site). Many users outside of the

health field expressed an interest in the material which lead back to a paper based edition and there is also a CDROM licensed version for organisations to host on their Intranets.

Where can you find it?
"The Internet & IT for busy nurses and therapists" can be found at http://www.carol-cooper.co.uk/book/

Libraries for Nursing Study Day Report

Olwen Revill
Sue Woodburn

LfN organised a very successful study day at the newly refurbished Royal College of Nursing in Cavendish Square, London on the 29th November 2001. After a welcome from Rebecca Davies, LfN Chair, Jackie Lord the Head of Library and Information Services at the RCN London gave an overview of new RCN e-services which are being launched as part of the RCN's information strategy. These services include free access for members to BNI plus and a link to a select number of full-text journals, subject specialist websites and databases of care pathways and clinical guidelines. The RCN will be working with Biome to launch Internet Nurse, a guide to searching for information resources, and is also one of the partners working on NMAP the gateway to Internet resources for Nurses, Midwives and Allied Health Professionals. In May 2002 a competency-based internet teaching tool will be launched as part of the lifelong learning portal along with knowledge portals for specialties.