Open Access and Open J-Gate

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ABSTRACT

The paper highlights Open Access Initiative (OAI), its formal origin at the Budapest meeting was organised by the Open Society Institute, and its aims to make published scholarly content freely available on the Web with an intent that the Web would make it easy to access. Parellel to OAI, it address the issue of bibliographic aggregation. It also discusses the J-Gate and Open J-Gate open access databases and their salient features.

Keywords : Open access, open access initiative, OAI-PMH, open access content, J-Gate, open J-Gate

1. INTRODUCTION

After around fifteen years of vibrant activities causing ripples in the world of scholarly journal publishing, OAI as a term found its formal origin at the meeting organised by the Open Society Institute (OSI) in Budapest in 2001. The initiative has signed consents and passionate commitments from a growing number of individuals and organisations around the world who represent researchers, universities, laboratories, libraries, foundations, journals, publishers, learned societies, and kindred open access (OA) initiatives. The initiative also received $3 million funding support from George Soros, the founder of OSI. A well written critical history of OA movement can be found in Richard Poynder's two part articles in *Information Today*[1,2]. Over the years, OA movement has driven a large number of journals, both popular and scholarly peer-reviewed, to open access domain which can be estimated to be around 5,000 titles.

Around half of them are estimated to be from the peer-reviewed domain.

2. ACCESS TO OA JOURNALS

OA aims to make published scholarly content freely available on the Web with an intent that the Web would make it *easy to access*. However, Web is an ocean of chaos when it comes to sharp and focussed access. Effective access needs efficient bibliographic control and aggreagation. Parellel to OAI, there has been a strong drive by OAI-PMH (protocol for metadata haravesting) to address the issue of bibliographic aggregation. However, OAI-PMH initiative has largely been limited to metadata harvesting from the e-print archives and institutional repositories (IR). This model of bibliographic aggreagation has largely remained untouched by the journal publishers and the traditonal abstracting and indexing (A&I) database publishers. Though more than 16,000 journals have kept the metadata of their journal articles

in the OA domain, very few journals are OAI compliant.

Traditional A&I databases are indexing most of the OA journals without knowing that they are OA journals. Hence, it is hard to identify the OA articles from these sources. *Web of Science* and *Scopus* claim to cover more than 200 and 500 OA journals, respectively. Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) is by far the largest directory of OA journals in the scholarly and peer-reviewed domain. DOAJ indexes articles from less than one-third of the journals that it lists in its directory[3,4.] (Table 1).

3. J-GATE AND OPEN ACCESS CONTENT

Informatics started J-Gate as a database tool, and e-journal gateway for searching and accessing articles in online available journals. J-Gate currently indexes articles from more than 16,000 English language journals of which over 10,000 are in scholarly domain. It is by far the largest e-journal portal for English language journals with article-level links to full text.

When the development of J-Gate project was initiated in 2001, the project team at Informatics had not imagined that over the years they would be building the largest database for OA journals as part of J-Gate production process. By the latest count, J-Gate covers 4, 230 OA journals, drawn from both scholarly and popular domain. J-Gate provides access to the largest collection of articles published in OA journals, largely from 2001 onwards. However, J-Gate is a subscription product, which restricts access to OA journals. Realising this limitation, Informatics, as part of its contribution to OA movement, decided to create a separate subset for the OA content indexed in J-Gate. This subset was launched as Open J-Gate (OJ) in February 2006.

OJ defines "OA journals as those which are accessible free with or without registration". OJ aims to index articles from all available e-journals in the OA domain, from both scholarly and popular domain. OJ provides seamless access to millions of journal articles available online by linking to full text on publishers websites. It covers both peer reviewed as well as professional journals including industry and trade journals. OJ also distinguishes itself from other portals such as Free Journals Online, DOAJ, etc. which are primarily directory sources for OA journals. Table 1 illustrates OJ's claim of access to more OA journals in comparison to DOAJ.

4. OJ FEATURES AND BENEFITS

Salient features of OJ are given below:

Portal with the largest number of e-journals: It indexes articles from 4,350 academic, research and industry journals in English language. Around 2,200 of them are peer-reviewed scholarly journals.

Table 1. Open J-Gate and DOAJ—Comparative data

S. No.	Comparative Data	OJ[*]	DOAJ[**]
1	Journals listed	4,350	2,817
2	Peer-reviewed journals	2,200	2,817
3	Popular & trade-press journals	2,150	0
4	English language journals	4,350	NA
5	Non-English language journals	Nil	NA
6	Journals from which articles are indexed	4,350	860
7	Total number of articles indexed	12,32,000	144,514

*Sources: * Informatics, India; ** http: www.doaj.org (accessed on 31 August 2007)*

Links to more than one-million open access articles: This number is growing with more than 3,00,000 new articles added every year. Full-text links are regularly validated.

Constant updation: Open J-Gate site is updated daily.

Well-designed journal classification: All journals are classified in a three-level hierarchical system to provide for better relevancy in search results.

**Table of content (TOC) browsing:** Users can browse the TOC from archive as well as current issues.

Easy-to-use search functionalities: Database allows following search options for the user's convenience (Fig. 1):

➤ *Quick search:* In addition to facilitating quick search, the quick search box also provides for limiting the search to scholarly (peer-reviewed) or popular journals.

➤ *Advanced search:* Advanced search facilitates the options to search by peer-reviewed journals, professional and industry journals, search by title, keywords, author, abstract, address/institution, etc., and also limits by the latest updates, publication year and open J-Gate subject categories.

➤ *Browse by journal:* Facilitates the option to search journals by entering the journal name as well as by their alphabetical order.

4.1 Subject Coverage

OJ covers OA journals from all disciplines. The advanced search facility in OJ allows limiting the search to journals from any desired discipline. Table 2 presents the journal coverage statistics by subject categories.
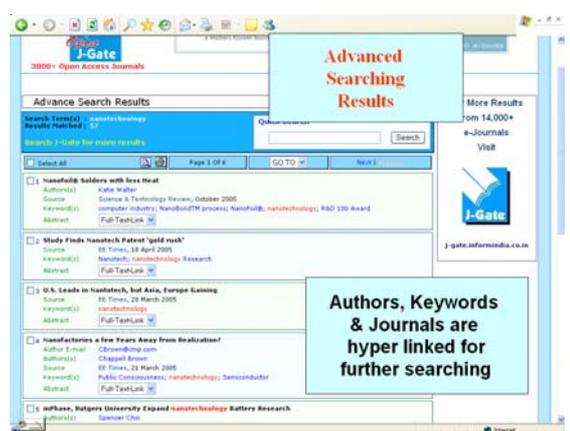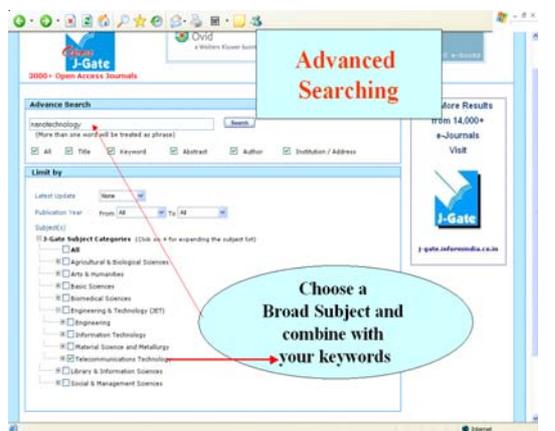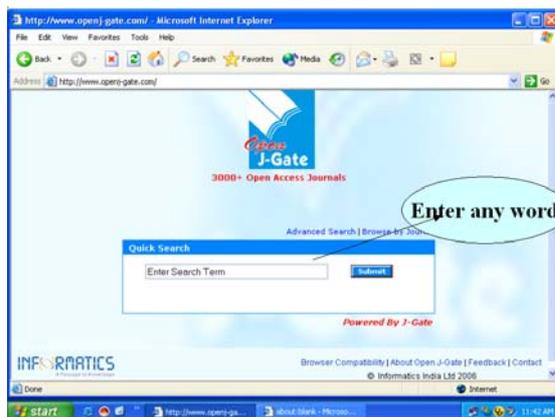

Figure 1. Screen shots of quick search and advanced search browse by journal.

S. No.	Subjects	Journals
1	Agricultural and biological sciences	618
2	Art and humanities	821
3	Basic sciences	1,151
4	Biomedical sciences	1,480
5	Engineering & technology	1,228
6	Library and information science	71
7	Social and management sciences	1,242

5. FUTURE PLANS

OJ is currently cross subsidised by revenues from J-Gate and hence offered as free service to the scholarly and academic community. Informatics hopes to continue to this model.

One of the limitations of OJ is in its depth of coverage. As J-Gate project was initiated in 2000, the coverage for a large number of OA journals is limited to 2001 onward. Informatics plans to increase the depth of coverage by capturing metadata for all years of content made available by the publishers.

Definite indications are emerging about the increase in impact factor of journals that are posted for open access. Public Library of Science (PLoS) Biology and PLoS Medicine, two of the eight OA journals published by PLoS, have registered an impressive ISI impact factor of 14.1 and 13.8 respectively[3]. These journals are the only online journals with no print edition. Informatics hopes to build a citation index to OA journal literature if the funds are forthcoming from any agency.

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About the Author

N.V. Sathyanarayana is a former librarian, information entrepreneur and information services and products developer rolled into one. He is the Founder Director of Informatics India Ltd—a leading Information Products and Services Company, established in 1980. Currently, he is the Chairman and Managing Director of Informatics. He started his career as a librarian and worked in different institutions and agencies such as Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, HMT, SKF for seven years before promoting his brainchild Informatics. Sathya is also associated with the many professional/academic activities in the information profession. He served as a member on the Working Group on Content Creation and Content Industry of The National Task Force on Information Technology and Software Development set-up by the Office of the Prime Minister of India; Member of Programme Advisory Committee of the NISSAT sponsored project entitled Establishment of the Vigyan Server and Internet School at Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore; Member of Board of Studies, Information Science, SNDT Women's University, Mumbai; Member of Governing Council for Centre for Information Science and Technology, Mysore; Honorary Visiting Professor in the Department of Studies in Library and Information Sciences, University of Mysore, Mysore; and a member of the editorial board of CD-ROMs in Print (Meckler Publishing, UK) for two years 1990 and 1991. He is the Recipient of Young Information Scientist award in 1991 by the Society for Information Science (India). Sathyanarayana organised the International Information Industry conference, *INFOTEX'93*, the first of its kind from India, for the Society for Information Science. He has worked in the editorial team of two conference proceedings—*Database Production and Distribution Technologies. Infotex '93,* published by Tata McGraw-Hill, and Digital Libraries Conference held at IISc, Bangalore published by New Age Publications.