

WWW GUIDE

World Wide Web sites in biotechnology

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This month, the editors of *Nature Biotechnology* asked us to find good WWW sites for someone working in biotechnology. Obviously there were literally thousands to choose from, but we took on the challenge. It goes without saying that our list is highly subjective,

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based on our experience viewing the evolution of Internet content over the last year. Our criteria for selecting the sites we show below, in order of importance: First, quality and importance of the information presented; second, reliability of the site's accessibility; third, ease of navigation through the site.

We divided the sites in three broad categories: A



news category in which you can find pertinent news and updates in the field of biotechnology; a database category in which you can query powerful databases; and a general purpose category with sites that serve as good jump points to other sources of information.

Armed with these tools, the biotechnologist will begin to quickly see the value of Internet-based information. There is much more to look forward to ahead.

A sampler of products and service sites related to biotechnology

News sites		
Biotechnology news	http://biz.yahoo.com/news/biotechnology.html	This service is sponsored by Yahoo! where you can read daily newsfeeds.
Daily news grouped by topics	http://www.newspage.com/NEWSPAGE/cgi-bin/walk.cgi/NEWSPAGE/info/d15/d3/NewsPage	For a fee, you can also subscribe to a monthly e-mail service that is customized to your profile.
Database sites		
IBM patent server	http://patent.womplex.ibm.com/	You can access over 26 years of US Patent & Trademark Office patent descriptions. You can also access a 1.3 terabyte image repository!
National Center for Biotechnology Information	http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/	This is the gateway to many useful protein and DNA databases. We discussed this site at length in two previous columns (December 1996, January 1997).
Life science dictionary	http://biotech.chem.indiana.edu/pages/dictionary.html	No one should be expected to know all the words used in science. This is a very nice dictionary of scientific words that both the executive and the scientist will find useful.
General purpose sites		
Food and Drug Administration	http://www.fda.gov/	The homepage for the FDA. A "must visit" site for anyone in the field of biotechnology. You can easily spend several hours sifting through all the information here.
National Institutes of Health	http://www.nih.gov/	The homepage for the NIH. From there you can link to rich resources at the various institutes.
Links to other web sites	http://www.ari.net/biotech/linkshome.html	A nice compilation of links to other useful biotechnology web sites. The list is housed on the Biotechnology Institute web server.
The WWW virtual library	http://www.webpress.net/interweb/cato/biotech/	A section of this large directory of web sites is dedicated to the topic of biotechnology. A great jump point for the novice.
Biotechnology companies	http://www.informatik.uni-rostock.de/HUM-MOLGEN/biotech/companies/	This site in Germany lists 376 biotechnology companies with links to some of their web sites.
BIO home page	http://www.bio.org/	A comprehensive site from the Biotechnology Industry Organization. There is up-to-date regulation and legislation information, and links to companies.
Bio Online	http://www.bio.com/	This site presents broad information and services related to biotechnology and pharmaceutical research.