Editorial

First a *Call for Papers* for the next issue of the journal, which will be Volume 5 Number 1 - in other words we are entering our fifth year of publication - having lasted rather longer than many people imagined when we began. That issue will appear in late September/early October and papers (refereed or working) should be sent to our Regional Editors or to myself.

We have some new features on the "cover page" of this issue - first, a link to a page I've set up, which covers free electronic resources in the fields covered by the journal; and secondly, a search capability, added to the manual author and subject indexes. Needless to say, I'll be very happy to hear of any other free resources that anyone knows of, as well as to receive feedback on everything in the journal. As hoped last time, I have managed to update the list of student dissertations to cover 1997/98 instead of 1996/97.

We have one Refereed Paper in this issue - and an interesting one at that (although, of course, everything that appears here is interesting!): it is by Wallace Koehler of the University of Oklahoma, and deals with the phenomenon of *page persistence* on the World Wide Web. Page persistence deals with the life-cycles of Web pages and Koehler reports that nearly 22% of a sample of pages was unstable over a twenty-two month period. We've all experienced this phenomenon and, of course, find it very annoying when we discover that a regularly used source has disappeared, or when search engine output proves to be too full of *dead* pages.

We then have three, very different, Working Papers. Bali and colleagues present a paper on a new conceptual model for the implementation of management information systems in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). Julian Warner of the Queen's University of Belfast asks, "...whether the central principle embodied in the practice and theory of classification and indexing can yield more satisfying design and evaluative criteria for information retrieval systems than those which have been characteristically assumed in information retrieval research." Read on to discover how he answers the question. Finally, Paul Kipling and Tom Wilson present the results of a study of publishers' and booksellers' operations on the World Wide Web.

Since the 1st April 1998, we have had 21,289 'hits' on the 'cover page' of the journal - an average of more than 1,400 a month. Those hits come from 110 Internet domains: the domains from which most usage comes are:

Rank	Domain	Hits	Percentage
1.	United Kingdom	4137	19.43
2.	US Commercial	2455	11.53
3.	US Educational	2101	9.87
4.	Network	1973	9.27
5.	Australia	836	3.93
6.	Hong Kong	645	3.03

7.	Germany	502	2.36
8.	Canada	472	2.22
9.	Malaysia	298	1.4
10.	Spain	249	1.17
11.	Singapore	240	1.13
12.	United States	217	1.02
13.	Finland	210	0.99
14.	S. Korea	203	0.95

We also have 576 *registered readers* from all over the world and this, perhaps, is a better indicator of *readership* than hits, although the fact that readers do not have to register suggests that there may be many regular readers who do not bother to register. Perhaps we'll get round, one of these days, to asking everyone to register before they use the journal - any views on that?

A search on HotBot revealed that the journal is also referenced from at least 120 sites around the world - mostly resource lists in university libraries, directories of electronic journals, and Web pages for educational courses. If you are involved in any of these, perhaps you can make sure that *Information Research* is listed.

Remember that, although we now have Regional Editors, we are willing to consider papers from anywhere in the world, not simply those from the regions indicated. I act as General Editor and will accept submissions from Western Europe, the Middle and Far East, and Australasia.

I hope that by Volume 5 No. 1, I will be able to announce an international Editorial Board for the journal: good progress is being made in attracting key researchers in various parts of the world to the Board.

Remember also that you get advance notice of new issues of *Information Research* if you sign up.