

Dialog founder to present award



Inaugural Roger K. Summit Award to be presented at the Information Online conference dinner

Where were you in 1972? Were you alive? Were you a student? Were you a librarian? 1972 was the year when Dialog, the major global online search service provider was launched as a commercial enterprise. 1972 was when research in libraries around the world changed dramatically and irrevocably. Yes — this occurred twenty years before the consumerisation of the internet! Yes — searching Dialog from Australia had not yet commenced.

Australian usage of Dialog started in 1975 when the librarian at CSR's research laboratory began using Dialog from Sydney using voice-quality telephone links and clunky printer terminals. A couple of years later ALIA's Information Science Section (NSW) [now the ALIA Information Specialists Group] arranged for trainers from Dialog and Orbit to come to Australia to train the first few hundred Australian librarians to use the new online systems. Shortly after, Dialog established a presence in Australia with Insearch at the University of Technology in Sydney, and began training librarians throughout Australia and New Zealand.

Two important features of the Dialog service have been the professional approach to documentation, and the totally committed support of professional librarians. To this day the Dialog *Blue Sheets* are renowned for their brief, clear navigational guidance for using every single database available from either Dialog or Datastar. To this day, Dialog continues its total commitment to and support of the library profession.

For many years, Dialog has offered Library and Information Schools around the world free access to the Dialog services for training purposes. In 2002 Dialog, now part of the Thomson group, announced a generous extension to this support with the launch of its Graduate Education Program. In Australia, all LIS schools may apply to offer free training to their students on Dialog's databases either in the classroom or remotely, and the total potential value of this offer to the Australian LIS schools is approximately \$1 million. Professor Carol Tenopir of the University of Tennessee explained in her May 2002 *Library Journal* article 'Why I still teach Dialog' that because of Dialog's database structure, when you have learned to search Dialog effectively, you have learned to search any online service effectively.

Dialog has also generously extended its awards program with the *Inaugural Roger K. Summit Award* for the best Dialog student in Australia and New Zealand in 2002. Dialog have donated A\$5000, and the Information Specialists Group of ALIA will provide free registration for the winner to attend *Information Online* in January 2003. Students in any Australian or New Zealand LIS school undertaking the Dialog Graduate Education Program are eligible to apply.

The Dialog philosophy of supporting librarians and information professionals and supporting LIS schools owes much to the founder of Dialog — Dr Roger K Summit. Roger has always recognised and supported librarians in the roles we play in the transfer of knowledge.

We are delighted to announce that Roger Summit will be attending the *Information Online* conference in January 2003 to present the Inaugural Roger K Summit Award to the winning student of the 2002 Dialog Graduate Education Program in Australia and New Zealand at the conference dinner.

**Elizabeth Swan, Information Edge,
and convenor of the Information Online 2003 conference**

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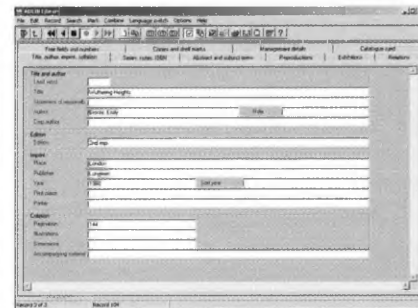
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