



Media contact:
Beth Dempsey, for scitopia.org
248.349.7810 or beth@bethdempsey.com

SCITOPIA.ORG REFINES SEARCH WITH USER FEEDBACK

Sci-tech “supersearch” emerges from beta

October 16, 2007 – Scitopia.org, the free, federated search portal created by leading science and technology societies, removed its beta label today, marking the official launch of its service. The scitopia.org beta was opened in June, allowing users to test the site. During that time, libraries around the world – including the Library of Congress, Stanford University, and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and libraries in Australia, Ireland and Italy – have included links to scitopia.org from their web sites so patrons could use the service during its development.

“Engineering and telecommunications firms, patent attorneys, scientists and educators, as well as any library that supports technology curricula, will want to take advantage of linking to scitopia.org. Its interface is simple, yet flexible, its access to resources is deep, and its retrieval is reliable,” said the *CyberSkeptic’s Guide to Internet Research* in a review of scitopia.org that appeared in its September issue.

During the beta phase, scitopia.org’s cross-file searching was refined, increasing the precision and consistency of keyword and author searches. The interface was modified according to user feedback, aligning the language and layout with searchers’ expectations.

“In addition to polishing the search process, our goal for the beta phase was to get in-the-trenches feedback from researchers and librarians so we could create an intuitive and

welcoming interface,” said Eric Pepper, SPIE Director of Publications. “We’ve accomplished these goals and are confident that researchers will find scitopia.org to be the most direct route to the best science and technological research on the web. Plus, it’s a fast and efficient federated search that concentrates on the authoritative copy of the articles, without Internet distractions.”

To conquer the technological differences that inevitably surface when multiple organizations work together, each partner implemented a standardized XML gateway to handle search queries, resulting in faster, more accurate results when compared to typical federated searches.

Search efficiency and consistency are essential to accommodate the breadth of scitopia.org’s content: three million documents -- primarily peer-reviewed journal content and conference proceedings -- spanning more than 150 years of scholarship. In addition to the published works of its society partners, scitopia.org also searches a database of nearly 50 million worldwide patents from the United States Patent and Trademark Office, the Japan Patent Office and the European Patent Office. The content is searched in real time, eliminating lags from crawling content, allowing scitopia.org to deliver the Web’s most timely sci-tech search results, ahead of other search tools such as Google Scholar.

The scitopia.org interface, developed by Deep Web Technologies, includes both simple and advanced search options, which allow users to find articles by title or author name, or conduct a keyword search. For example, a simple search on the 2007 Nobel Laureate in Chemistry -- Gerhard Ertl – quickly returns results from American Physics Society, SPIE, and ECS that include each article's title, his co-authors, source, and in most cases an excerpt of text from the abstract. Scitopia.org also allows users to mark or email article records for future reference.

When users find content of interest, they’re directed to the publisher’s digital library for access. Researchers at institutions with subscriptions to the content are automatically authenticated and are able to access full text. Members of partner societies may also be

able to access full text, depending upon the association's membership policies. Pay-per-view options allow users without a subscription to purchase an article.

“It's exciting to emerge from beta, but we don't ever expect scitopia.org to be ‘finished,’” said Karen Hawkins, IEEE Director of Publication and Information Marketing. “This is a living project that will continually evolve through enhancements and new technology. Our commitment is to make scitopia.org ever more efficient in serving the needs of researchers who rely on accurate, high quality data.”

About scitopia.org

The federated vertical search portal scitopia.org is the product of the imagination and collaboration of 15 leading science and technology societies. A single search allows users to scan the entire electronic libraries of the Acoustical Society of America (www.asa.aip.org), American Geophysical Union (www.agu.org); American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (www.aiaa.org); American Institute of Physics (www.aip.org); American Physical Society (www.aps.org); American Society of Civil Engineers (www.asce.org); American Society of Mechanical Engineers (www.asme.org); AVS (www.avs.org), ECS (www.electrochem.org); IEEE (www.ieee.org); Institute of Physics Publishing (www.iop.org); Optical Society of America (www.osa.org); Society of Automotive Engineers (www.sae.org); Society for Industrial and Applied Mathematics (www.siam.org); and SPIE (www.spie.org). Scitopia.org expects to continually add new partners that can contribute significant content to the gateway. For information on becoming a partner, contact partners@scitopia.org.