

Read 6000 newspapers without lifting a finger

by Apurva Mehta

Did you know that DFAIT has hired a research assistant for you?

“The best part of Dow-Jones Interactive is that it does the research and you get the thanks.”

Look under the “CITRIX” icon on your SIGNET desktop for Dow-Jones Interactive. It’s a powerful on-line database of more than 6,000 publications from around the world.

Use Dow-Jones Interactive to read your favourite newspapers, magazines and journals. Or search a library of publications to find information on a company, industry or region. You can set your own research parameters and have the system prompt you with information that interests you. With a click of your mouse, you can get Dow-Jones Interactive to compile the latest news items concerning your clients, sector or region of responsibility.

The Dow-Jones Interactive site features an area called CustomClips, where users can set up a number of folders to receive published information on topics of choice. I have set up folders for each of my sectors and geographic regions.

You can use the preset folders or create custom folders. For instance, one of my custom folders is set up for information on the developments in India’s housing and building products sector. I used a combination of key words, selected Indian publications as the information source, and chose delivery in plain text e-mail.

When setting up custom folders, remember that success (in terms of relevance of information received) depends largely on the choice of key words.

Dow-Jones Interactive updates my sectoral and regional knowledge on a daily basis. More important, it sends me market intelligence and information of potential use to my clients. For example, one of my custom folders on the transportation sector picked up a news item about a toll road project being announced in India. I forwarded this news to a client who sells toll road equipment, and immediately received their thanks for referring a new lead.

Another news item detailed a regional government’s plans to contract international consultants to study the technical feasibility of several infrastructure projects. I contacted the appropriate government official, obtained a project list, added some background information and forwarded the compiled report to a select group of Canadian consulting engineering companies.

A guide on how to use Dow-Jones Interactive is currently being prepared and will be posted on the “Tools of the Trade” Intranet site.