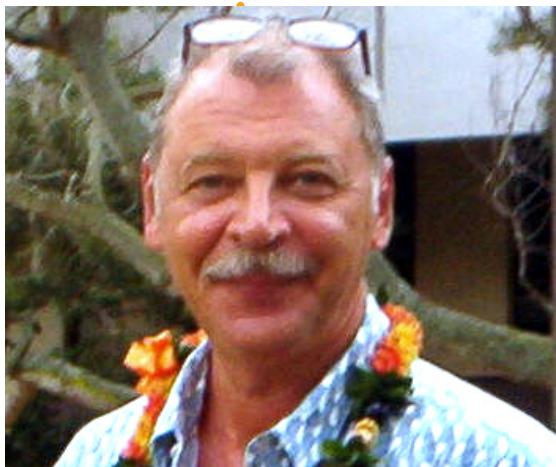




50th Anniversary Science Citation Index®



Q&A WITH PETER JACSO

Professor, Department of Information and Computer Sciences, University of Hawaii

What is your role at your organization?

I am a professor at the Library and Information Science (LIS) Program of the Department of Information and Computer Sciences at the University of Hawaii.

When did you begin using the Science Citation Index/Web of Science, and in what capacity do you use it?

I started using it in the 1970s in my native home, Hungary, where I was managing the library and information services for the International Education and Information Center. I have been using it to find highly cited articles (and lately, conference papers) for my own research, and that of the teaching faculty members for curriculum development and R&D projects related to computer hardware and software issues.

What led you toward choosing the Science Citation Index/Web of Science?

I recognized its power to find highly relevant papers very efficiently through following the chain of citing references, and identifying the hubs of specific research areas, irrespective of the terminological differences.

How have you used Science Citation Index/Web of Science through the years?

I have learned [how to use it] from several books, hundreds of papers from Gene Garfield, and from the other top bibliometrists and scientometricians. I became especially interested in using JCR data to optimize library collection developments, and research assessments – realistically, observing and reporting about the abuse of the informing metrics.

How do you think citation indexing and analysis have advanced activities such as information retrieval, scientific research and discovery?

It is becoming more and more popular in discovering pertinent information, because researchers realize that what Gene Garfield [published] 60 years ago in Science magazine about citation-based searching was the key building block in developing the Internet built on the link-ins and link-outs, which are the digital equivalents of cited and citing references, offering instant gratification in discovering and finding research papers highly related to someone's research interest. Most of the major publishers now provide clickable links, the largest commercial online information services enhanced their database records with "cited by" information, Google Scholar and Microsoft Academic Search have metrics at the author, article, and journal levels, and

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entrepreneurs have come out with various and sometimes naïve alternate metrics based on the frequency of how many times the digital articles, conference papers were looked up, opened and/or downloaded. Many of these metrics can be easily manipulated and may at best be "Hollywoodish" popularity indicators rather than real impact indicators.

Can you give us a specific example where citation index searching led you to make an important discovery you may not have otherwise found?

I made practical discoveries about databases, and through the courtesy of Tom Hogan — owner and publisher of many excellent journals, and organizer of national and international conferences — I could spend time informing librarians and other information professionals with great intensity, of large scale errors of omission and errors of commission in databases — what their mother never told them about. I am also happy to see that almost all of the producers of the six largest University Ranking services rely on data retrieved from Web of Science for determining the productivity and impact (citedness) of faculty members, which in turn is used around the world for the assessment of research activity of faculty members in making promotion, tenure and grant decisions. This is clearly a sign of the success of the idea conceived and implemented by Gene Garfield 60 years ago in his "garage" then implemented at the Institute for Scientific Information 10 years later.

Most of my papers about citation indexing are identified here:

<http://www.jacso.info/PUB-list-by-years.htm>



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