

Overview of Web Interfaces Available to Dialog Searchers

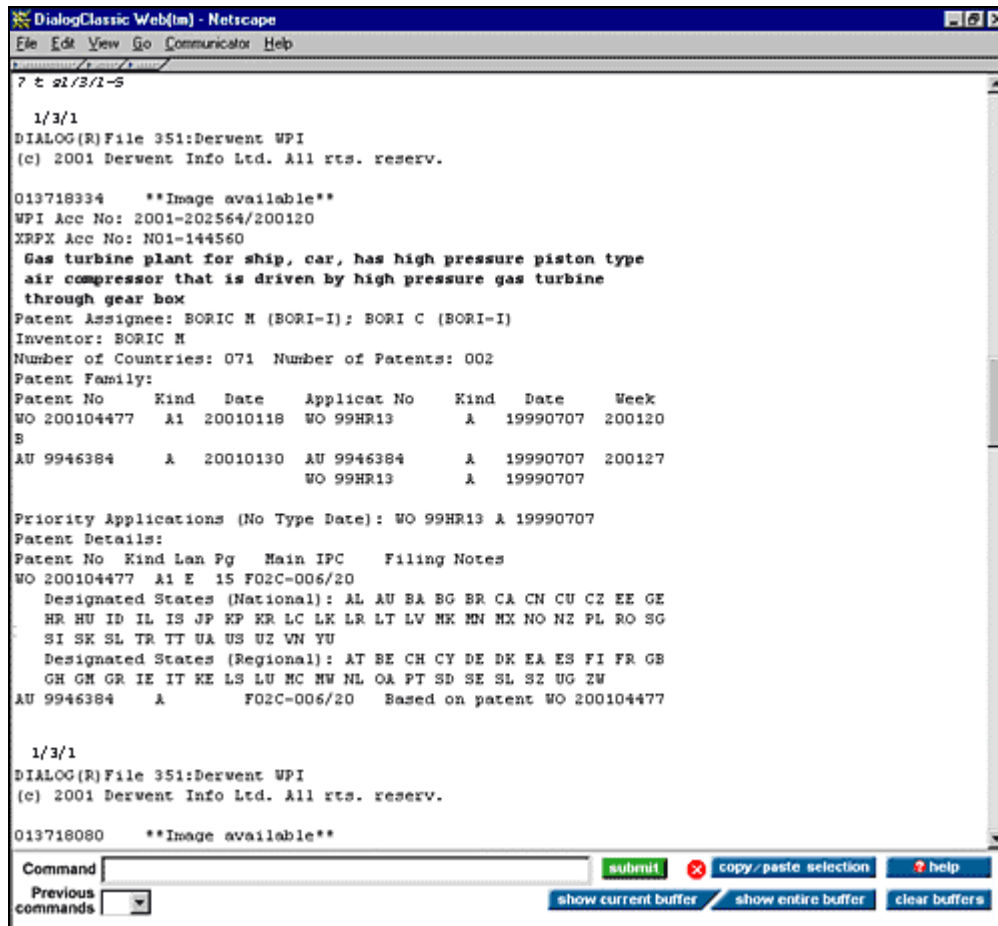
If you are an information professional using Dialog Classic, our flagship online service, you may not be aware that Dialog has created a range of web-based interfaces designed for every user in your organization, from expert to novice. The same Dialog user ID and password can be used to logon to any one of these services—no separate sign up or invoice! This article presents a rundown on what's special about each of these interfaces, who the ideal user is, and how even a Dialog expert can benefit from the unique features of each.

DialogClassic Web™ (See Figure 1)

DialogClassic Web 2.0 was created for Dialog command language searchers who want the power of the Dialog search engine, with easy access via the Web. DialogClassic Web searchers are connected directly to the Dialog mainframe, not a server as with other web interfaces, which means you get the fastest possible response times. All Dialog databases and commands are available in DialogClassic Web. Standard search costs apply. Power searchers will appreciate several features to help maximize search efficiency.

- **Capture buffer** — the entire search session, command and results, are preserved in an online log. The contents of the log remain even after you logoff from Dialog!
- **Command history** — commands can be reused by clicking on the drop-down history box and highlighting a previously-entered command.
- **Copy & paste** — the copy/paste selection feature can be used to highlight sections of search results and automatically paste them into a separate window.
- **Help** — Help is just a click away. Help text opens in a separate window so you can refer to it while conducting your search.

Figure 1 - Dialog Classic Web



Key Points: Fast - All Databases - All Commands - Search Log

DialogWeb™

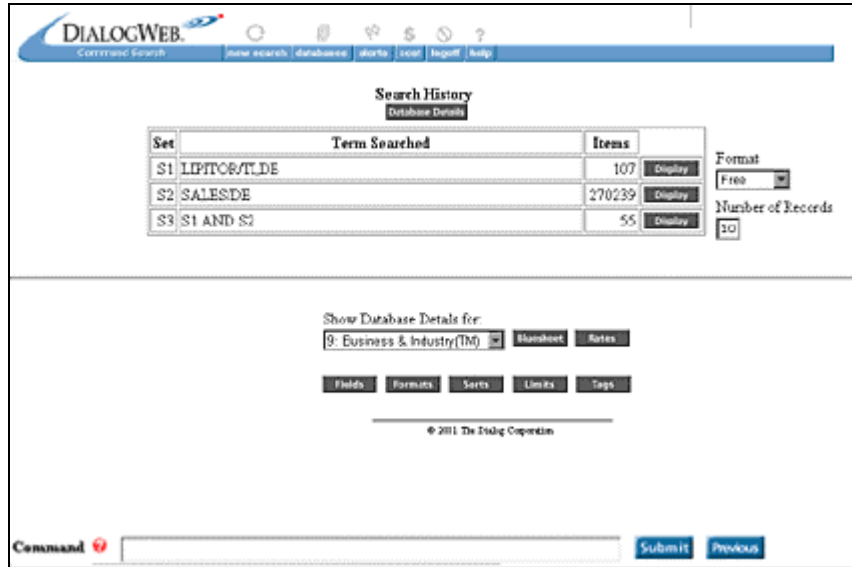
Like DialogClassic Web, the search process in DialogWeb 2.1 is to choose a database and enter commands with search terms to retrieve and display data. However, unlike DialogClassic Web, DialogWeb offers two very different modes of searching for different audiences: Command Search and Guided Search. The default interface for DialogWeb is Guided Search, but a link on the main screen enables users to switch easily from Guided Search to Command Search. The default interface can be changed using the Settings menu-bar option in Guided Search.

DialogWeb™ — Command Search (Figure 2)

Command Search, as the name implies, is targeted to those familiar with Dialog command language.

DialogWeb presents searchers with icons or "buttons" to streamline many steps in the search process, a boon to new or infrequent Dialog command users. Complete online help, as well as Bluesheets, are clearly marked hyperlinks. Users can access all Dialog databases and use all commands. Creating and

Figure 2: Dialog Web - Command Search



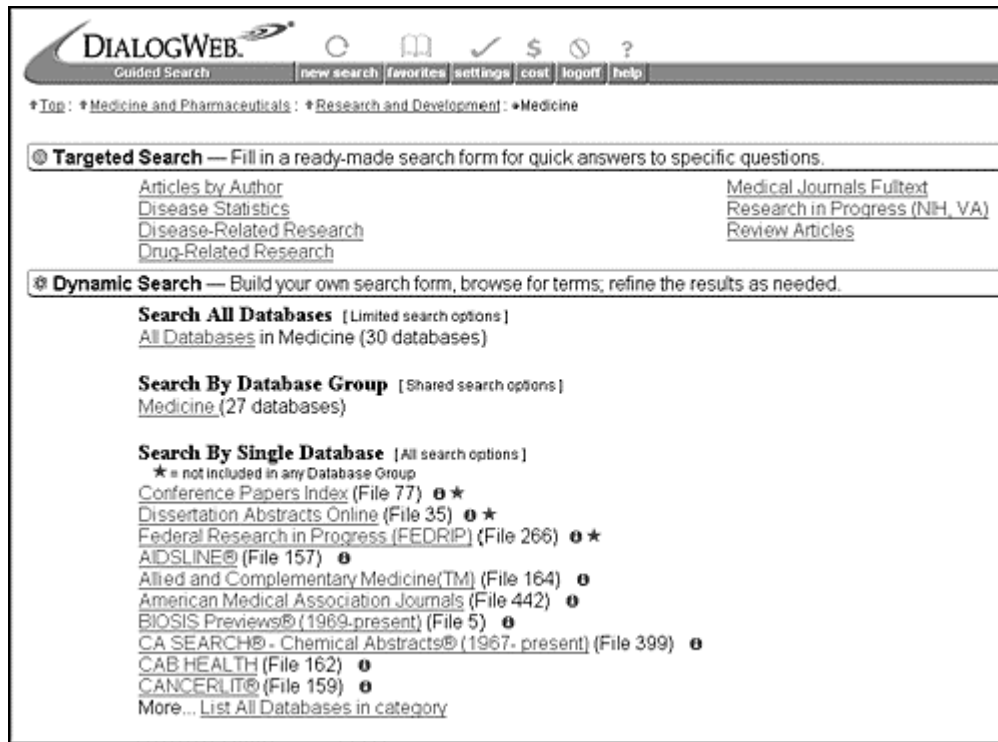
managing Alerts is very easily done with fill-in-the-blank templates. The Databases finding tool, a navigable subject hierarchy of Dialog databases, is available in addition to DIALINDEX®. Standard search costs apply.

Key Points: All Databases - All Commands - Command Shortcuts - Extensive Help - Databases finding tool

DialogWeb™ — Guided Search (Figure 3)

Guided Search is designed to eliminate the need to use commands and operators—a great feature for casual Dialog users. Using the Databases finding tool, users browse subject lists, for their topic area. Two search options are presented: Targeted Search is a list of common search strategies for which a user can enter a minimum of information in a fill-in-the-blank template to get excellent results. The choice of databases and Dialog commands is built-in and behind the scene. Dynamic Search is designed for users wanting more flexibility in constructing their search: such as choice of databases and more options for entering search terms in the fill-in-the-blank search template. Dynamic search also includes the ability to browse a database index (e.g., Author Name). Even if you are an expert Dialog searcher, Guided Search can be helpful by suggesting the relevant databases for a topic, and by using the expert-created Targeted Searches rather than formulating your own strategy.

Figure 3: DialogWeb - Guided Search



Key Points: Most Databases - No Commands - Pre-Formulated Expert Searches (Targeted Search) - Extensive Help - Databases finding tool

DialogSelect™ (Figure 4)

DialogSelect is "command free" Dialog. It was created to be a simple end-user tool that produces powerful search results. Users choose topics of interest, not databases. The choice of databases, as well as the most effective search strategy, is built into the search templates. Only the most relevant databases are used for any of the pre-defined search topics; hence, not all Dialog databases are available in DialogSelect. The behind-the-scenes strategies were created based on dozens of years of search expertise at Dialog. Drop-down menus appear as appropriate to aid the user in refining topics. Users may use operators and truncation for greater flexibility—but these are not required. Help and search tips appear right on the screen, no clicking necessary. Alerts can be created with a click on the Alerts icon that appears with search results. Recently, Investext reports were added in Adobe® Acrobat® PDF. Costs for DialogSelect are for output only—no DialUnit or telecommunications charges apply. For a quick search in an unfamiliar subject area, DialogSelect may be just the answer for even the most experienced Dialog command searcher.

Figure 4: DialogSelect

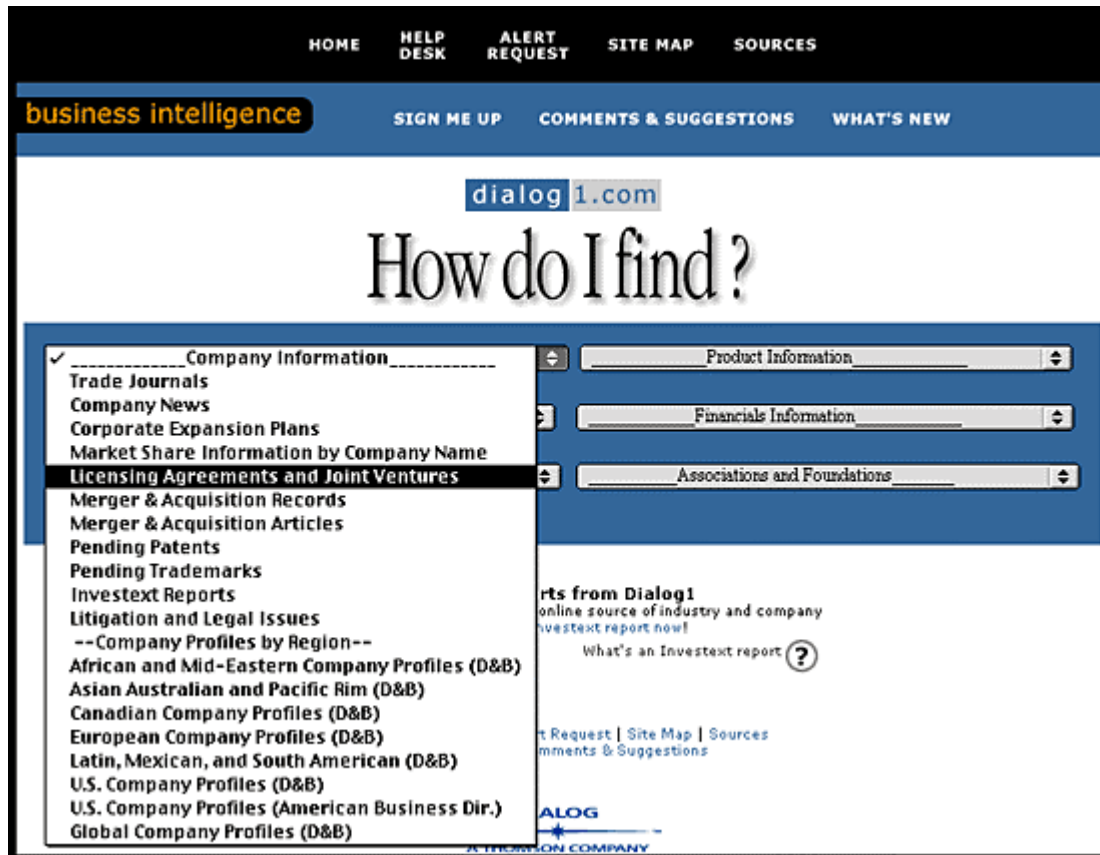
The screenshot shows the DialogSelect web interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for HOME, ABOUT, SIGNUP, COST, LOGOFF, and HELP, along with a search box containing 'more searches...'. The main content area is titled 'Investment Reports: By Industry'. On the left, there is a vertical navigation menu with categories like Business News, Business Research, Advertisers & Agencies, Imports & Exports, Investment Research (with sub-options for By Company and By Industry), Management Studies, Market Research, Mergers, Acquisitions, Public Opinion Polls, Company Financials, Company Product Lines, and Demographic Data (U.S.). The main search area includes fields for Industry (set to 'Aerospace'), Main Subject (set to 'avionics'), Geographic Area, Source, and Investext Report Number. There are radio buttons for Format: PDF, Text, and All (selected). A note states: 'Note: To view PDF reports, you will need the Adobe Acrobat Reader (available free from Adobe) installed on your computer.' Below this is an Adobe Acrobat Reader logo. At the bottom, there are Year dropdowns (set to 2000 and 2001) and Search and Clear buttons.

Key Points: Pre-Selected Databases - No Commands - Pre-Formulated Expert Searches - On-Screen Help - PDF Documents - One-Click Alerts

Dialog1 (Figure 5)

Dialog1 presents the best output for the least input possible. It is designed for users who want answers—not search results. The answers are produced by highly-focused built-in searches created in response to a typical question in a given business function or practice. It is the distillation of an expert search to require a minimum of input from the end user. No commands, no operators, no database selection. Since the topics are very specific, it is not a tool for "ad-hoc" searching, as are DialogWeb and DialogSelect. It is a fast, efficient, and extremely powerful tool for the busy professional who needs answers—now. Even a Dialog guru can use Dialog1 for fast answers to a common query. As with DialogSelect, costs are for output only—no DialUnit or telecommunications charges apply.

Figure 5: Dialog1



Key Points: No Commands - Answer-Oriented Expert Searches

Dialog Intranet Toolkit

A lot of Dialog search savvy has gone into developing the many Web-based tools described above, but the best tool for your organization may be the one you create yourself, at least for some applications. The Intranet Toolkit empowers you to do just that: automatically create search forms or links that can be incorporated into your existing intranet to transmit a search to Dialog. You control which databases are selected, what strategy is built into the search, and how much the user sees. Build a search form to enable users to choose groups of databases, enter many keywords, and choose additional limits (e.g., date or format), or, instead, create a link that launches a search automatically (e.g., "Today's News about our Company"). Domain authentication is available to eliminate the need for entering a user id and password. Other than the Dialog logo and copyright statements on the output, the interface is yours to design as fits your organization. The Intranet Toolkit is software and many already-created search forms for you to use as is or modify as you wish. Additional tools are available to help you offer Dialog content on your intranet using IntraIntelligence and IntraNews (see pgs 3 and 4). Contact your account representative for more information.

Key Points: Do-It-Yourself Interface to Dialog - Development Tools for Adding Dialog to an Intranet

To find out more about any of Dialog's products and services, contact your account representative, the Knowledge Center at: (US) 800-334-2564; (UK) 44-171-930-6900 or, online at: <http://support.dialog.com/helpdesk/>.