



## **An introduction to library databases**

### **What is a library database?**

A library database is an online resource for which the library pays an annual subscription. The subscription allows library users to have access to the resources contained in the database including journals, magazines, newspapers, industry reports, company reports and much more.

### **What will I use the library databases for?**

Course participants will use the library databases to perform the majority of their research. In general, databases allow users search through thousands of different publications in order to find articles on a particular topic. The majority of articles you will find are Full Text, which means you can read, print or save the article immediately. In some instances, the database will only provide you with an abstract of the article due to licence agreements. The library staff is able to order these articles in Full Text for a small fee. However with Full Text coverage of over 18,000 journals we are confident our subscriptions cover the vast majority of what you need to complete a course at the IMI.

### **Why not just use Google?**

The large majority of articles in the databases simply cannot be found by a Google or Yahoo search. Just like the books on our shelves, the library pays to use these resources and unless you want to purchase your own subscription, you must go through the library's web site to access them. All articles found in the IMI library databases have gone through a rigorous evaluation process by subject-specific experts in order to assess accuracy, authority and credibility.

### **Can I still use Google?**

There is nothing wrong with using Google or another search engine to find information on the web. However, much of the information retrieved from internet sites has not been evaluated. Therefore, it could be inaccurate, biased or both. In some cases, the authors of websites might not have the same expertise as the authors of the journal articles found in the library databases. You will always need to more carefully evaluate information retrieved on the internet and if it appears doubtful in any way, do not use it.