



How to Plot Your Route on the Information Superhighway

Unless you can spend all your time on the computer, you need to focus your information search. This book is the tool you need.

BY TERRENCE FERNSLER

Where the Information Is: A Guide To Electronic Research for Nonprofit Organizations

By Helen Bergen. 257 pages. Softcover. Alexandria, VA: BioGuide Press. Available through the Society for Nonprofit Organizations' Resource Center (see the Resource Center Catalog, included in this issue, or call 800-424-7367).

Where the *Information Is* is Helen Bergen's follow-up to her previous book, *Where The Money Is: A Fund Raiser's Guide to the Rich*. While she was updating that book for its 2nd edition, Bergen discovered the myriad resources on the information superhighway and saw the need for this new publication. Here, she sorts through the vast world of electronic information and pinpoints what is most useful for nonprofit organizations. She emphasizes prospect and donor research but also describes information from periodicals, encyclopedias, and much more.

Bergen points out how much easier electronic research is than searching books, periodicals, and other documents. There is much more information to be found much more quickly. Vast amounts of data can be found on CD-ROMs, commercial on-line services, the Internet, and even e-mail.

Bergen begins by exploring the many CD-ROMs of interest to nonprofit organizations. Her recommendations include encyclopedias, dictionaries, maps, travel planners, genealogy CD-

ROMs, telephone and address directories, ZIP-code directories, and even directories of CD-ROMs. Be sure to note all the CD-ROMs you can use to find data on potential donors and grantors. These include biographical indexes, guides to grants, demographic reports, and directories of board members, organizations, and corporations.

Next, Bergen discusses information available through commercial on-line services and the Internet. She details resources from government statistics to e-mail addresses. Don't ignore the information you can get through e-mail.

After all, this is direct access to experts.

As Bergen points out, much of this electronic information is available at libraries. Perhaps the electronic age will send nonprofit personnel back to the libraries, where CD-ROMs, Internet access, and on-line services are all available at no cost. Woefully underused by nonprofits, libraries are leading the way for everyone to participate in the information revolution.

While you have more information available than ever before, you could spend all your time on the computer trying to sift through it all. Bergen provides an excellent starting point, which can save you time, money, and hours of frustration. Her book is a crucial tool to focus your research and find the information you need. ■

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save you hours
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