

CERF News – February 2007



CERF Adopts “Console” Interface

CERF changes every day. In addition to cataloguing new sites, we explore and add evolving information formats that can help students learn and support teacher instruction. CERF celebrates its eighth anniversary in 2007 with a new identity that reflects how much it has changed. The console style interface is a familiar gaming context metaphor that communicates that learning can be fun.

CERF’s new portal graphics and animation integrate services that appeal to different learning styles. Students, teachers and librarians can access Podcasts, Mp3, and streaming video... resources that did not exist, or were not available on the Internet eight years ago.

Beta testing begins in January 2007, and developers forecast a release at the end of February. All of the services that CERF users have received in the past will be retained.

The screenshot displays the CERF Info website interface. At the top left is the CERF Info logo, and at the top right is the text "CURRICULUM & EDUCATION RESOURCE FINDER". Below this is a navigation bar with tabs for "SEARCH", "TOPICS", "SUBJECTS", "STANDARDS", and "NEWS MEDIA". The main content area features a search bar with a "SEARCH" button. Below the search bar are several filter options: "All", "PK", "K-5", "6-8", "9-12", and "Professional"; "All", "Lesson Plans", "Multimedia", "Timeline", and "Video Streams"; and "Maps", "Primary Resources", "Biography", and "Pictures". There is also a "5 results per page" dropdown and "Sort by" options for "title", "author", and "date". A sidebar on the right contains a tip: "Did you know all the question mark icons in the corners lead to a quick-to-download pop up window?". Below the search bar, it shows "86 results found for ozone" and a pagination link: "<< Previous 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 Next >>". There are also links for "Target search results", "Kid's search", and "0 items in bibliography" with "View" and "Clear" options. The first search result is "1. Environment Canada: Communications Directorate" with a URL, "Grade Level: 6-8, 9-12, Professional", "Subject: Science, Environmental Science, Technology", and a "Summary" about meteorological services online brochures. It also includes an "Add to bibliography" checkbox, a date "last updated on 19/12/2002", and a link to "View this website's topics".

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The CERF Advisory Board has strongly counseled developers to maintain database comprehensiveness, rather than dividing it into smaller segments. They recognize that while maintaining a diverse audience is challenging, the possibility of using its resources for elementary, middle and high school instruction as well as professional development makes it a cost effective and convenient source of authentic information. The use of learning level and information format filters maintains database integrity but offers focus for those that need it.

Over the past eight years, CERF cataloguers have cast a wider net to glean resources from around the world. Lifelong learners want to know more about the rest of the world and CERF provides international views on politics, social issues, the economy and current events that prepare them for careers without borders.

For more information, visit CERF at www.cerinfo.com , email us at info@cerinfo.com, or telephone toll-free: 877-331-1022