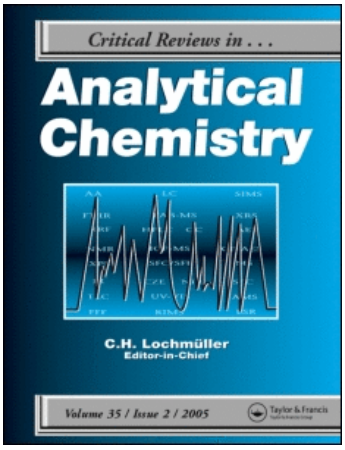

Critical Reviews in Analytical Chemistry
Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:
http://www.informaworld.com/smpp/title~content=t713400837

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Online publication date: 03 June 2010

To cite this Article Failmezger, Victor(1999) 'Finding Environmental Solutions via the Internet', Critical Reviews in Analytical Chemistry, 29: 3, 177 — 178
To link to this Article: DOI: 10.1080/10408349891199365
URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10408349891199365

Critical Reviews in Analytical Chemistry, 29(3):177–178 (1999)

Finding Environmental Solutions via the Internet

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The worldwide information revolution brought about by the explosive growth of the World Wide Web (the Internet) is changing all aspects of late 20th century life. This is particularly evident in the environmental remediation and pollution prevention sectors. This article discusses the Internet's impact in these areas.

The Global Environment & Technology Foundation (GETF) is a not-for-profit organization that, as a goal, fosters innovation by uniting environment, technology, and enterprise to encourage sustainable practices worldwide. One way that GETF accomplishes this goal is by providing information, available to all with World Wide Web access. The concept is to create an area on the Internet that brings environmental remediation and sustainable technology developers together with environmental problem holders. As part of this concept, GETF has a long tradition of working with several U.S. governmental organizations including the US Department of Energy, The Environmental Protection Agency, and is currently pursuing international projects with the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) and the UN Global Environmental Facility (GEF).

As an organization we also have extensive experience in working with scientists and engineers at U.S. National Laboratories such as the Oak Ridge National Lab, the Savannah River Site, and the Rocky Flats Site. At these labs, our activities have centered on finding solutions to environmental remediation problems. These problems resulted from cold war weapon development activities and often require innovative solutions. In addition, we have worked with several hundred small and medium companies in the transfer of both federally funded and private sector technology research to the problem holders.

GETF is therefore most interested in the introduction of new and innovative technologies, those that can reduce the amount of time and money required to cleanup the environment while doing a better job to meet ever more stringent cleanup goals. These technologies are referred to as faster, cheaper, better, and cleaner. Some specific GETF activities are devoted to reviewing technologies to ensure they possess these qualities. As these technologies must be applied on a site-specific basis, we have learned that sometimes a *high-tech* technology may not be the best match for a local problem. If personal health is not an issue, manual labor may be much cheaper internationally than in the U.S.

GETF believes that the best way to spread the word about these new technologies and the specific remediation needs of local areas is to use the power of the Internet. In effect, we created a central, international clearinghouse for environmental information. The resultant series of GETF created web sites has proven to be extremely successful and we now average over 800,000 visitors from more than 65 nations every month.

Our flagship web site is called Earth Vision™ (**www.earthvision.net**). This site was designed to consolidate huge amounts of environmental information. It is divided into five sections of interest to the environmental community: Sustainability, Environmental Technology, Education, Policy, and Recreation. Each section contains articles of interest gathered from over 700 periodicals (and on-line sources) reviewed monthly. Associated links are made to appropri-

ate sites, both government and private, to attempt to put as many resources as possible into the hands of those concerned with environmental issues.

Worthy of particular note is the Global Network for Environmental Technology called GNET® **(www.gnet.org)**. This site helps to provide useful information on starting the process of matching technology solution providers with technology problem holders. Not only does it provide information about problems, but it provides information on contracting opportunities that enable private industries to bid on environmental remediation work. The nice thing about GNET® is that it can post information about opportunities and advertise for technology solutions merely by sending us an e-mail. A major section of GNET® is the **TechKnow™** database.

The TechKnow™ database allows each technology developer to advertise its technology online. Due to the ability to use key word searches and the division of the database into two main areas of concentration, environmental remediation and ozone depleting technologies, it is easy to find technology alternatives. The site has been designed so that it is the technology holders' responsibility to enter and update this information, giving them the opportunity to tell the world about new developments. Presently, there are over 2200 different technologies on-line. TechKnow™ encourages participants to forward news and development items of interest. If the participants have their own web site, it can be easily linked to from the TechKnow™ Database. Experience has shown that web sites receive many more visits when combined with other items of similar nature; this service is provided at no cost or obligation.

In summary, any technology vendor or problem holder who uses the World Wide Web can literally advertise their problem, technology, or service to the entire world. This is a very powerful concept, and we have documented instances where international technology exchanges and transactions have occurred. Conference participants are therefore cordially invited to place their technologies, problems, and resources on line at **www.gnet.org**.