

# ARGONNE NATIONAL LABORATORY

9700 SOUTH CASS AVENUE, ARGONNE, ILLINOIS 60439

February 26, 2001

Mr. Phillip Lofaso  
Vice President, Marketing  
Nature Publishing Company  
345 Park Avenue South  
New York, NY 10010-1707

Dear Mr. Lofaso,

Let me begin with an introduction. The names and institutions listed at the end of this letter represent libraries that serve more than 50,000 scientists and engineers performing research for the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) national laboratory system. For several months we have participated in the free introductory web access to *Nature* and the *Nature* monthlies. We recently contacted *Nature* about the possibility of a consortium purchase.

We are disturbed, however, by *Nature's* decision to withhold content from institutional subscribers and ask that *Nature* reconsider its current site licensing position. The exclusion of content from *Nature* and the *Nature* monthlies is a disservice to the scientific community and their institutions.

Denying access to parts of the titles does the following:

- Arbitrarily decides what information is of greatest import or value to the readers of the magazine and in what form that information should be distributed.
- Creates and promotes an unfair playing field for researchers who depend on libraries for information and cannot afford personal subscriptions.
- Ignores the researcher's expectation and desire to have his institutional library take the lead in the selection and delivery of comprehensive, well-organized, and up-to-date resources directly to his desktop.
- Misrepresents the title, because a user accessing a *Nature* publication assumes that he/she is indeed accessing the electronic equivalent of the print version.
- Confuses and frustrates users.
- Diminishes the role for which librarians in special libraries often play of reviewing and consolidating information rather than simply providing access to all electronic journals of interest.
- Holds information captive and available only to the highest bidder (the personal subscriber).
- Continues the disadvantage that subscribers in the Midwestern and Western U. S. have always experienced when their print subscription arrives one or more days later than the subscriptions of their colleagues on the East Coast.

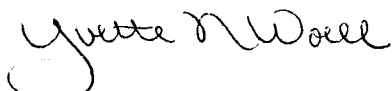
Given the information embargo, we also believe that *Nature's* current pricing model is misguided because it seems to charge libraries for a complete subscription, yet supplies only a scaled down version of that subscription.

We had earlier opened consortium pricing discussions with *Nature*. As a group, we have since decided that we are no longer interested in pursuing such a consortium purchase, given the embargo policy that *Nature* has adopted.

This is a very hard decision for us, because many of the researchers at our institutions benefited from the web access. Each site will, however, be notifying its users that as of February 28, 2001, *Nature* will no longer be available to them at their desktop unless the license is revised to be inclusive of everything in each paper issue and a fair pricing scheme is adopted.

We hope that *Nature* will reconsider the decision to provide incomplete content to institutional subscribers and will work with the institutions to ensure that all of the content of *Nature* and the *Nature* monthlies is available at a fair price, both electronically and in print.

Sincerely,



Yvette Woell  
Manager of Library Services  
Argonne National Laboratory

Isom Harrison  
Library Division Manager  
Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory

Annanaomi Sams  
Director  
Hanford Technical Library  
Pacific Northwest National Laboratory

Jacqueline Stack  
Associate Library Director  
Los Alamos National Laboratory

Denise Diggin  
DOE Librarian  
U. S. Department of Energy

Randy Hoffman  
Library Director  
Oak Ridge National Laboratory

Patricia Kreitz  
Chief Librarian  
Stanford Linear Accelerator

Bruce Style  
Library Manger  
Brookhaven National Laboratory

Mitchell C. Brown  
Plasma Physics Librarian  
Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory

Elois Morgan  
Library Manager  
Thomas Jefferson National Laboratory

Carol Backhus  
Laboratory Librarian  
Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory

Susan Stinchcomb  
Manager, Technical Library Reference  
Sandia National Laboratory

Brent Jacobsen  
Library Manager  
Idaho Nat'l Engineering. & Environmental Laboratory

c: Mr. Philip Campbell, Editor  
Nature  
Porters South  
4 Crinan Street  
London N1 9XW UK