

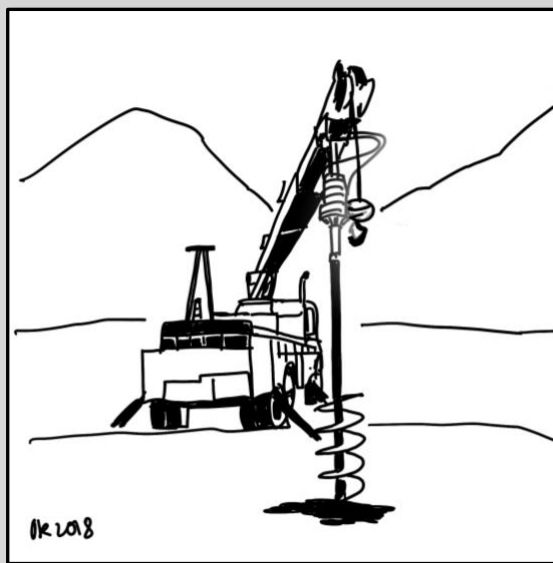
# Infozine S·2

Special Issue 2 | Fall 2018

## Surfing versus Drilling in the modern scientific world



When should you use your computer?



When should you use your brain?

### Editors:

**Philippe Hünenberger**

**Oliver Renn**

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# Call for Short Opinion Articles

## Infozine Special Issue S2

### Surfing versus Drilling in the modern scientific world

Infozine is launching the second Infozine Special Issue on information use behaviour, to be published in fall 2018. Infozine Special Issue S1 focused on [Metrics in Research](#).

There is only so much earth you can shovel in a day. If you dig deep, you dig narrow. If you dig wide, you dig shallow. The rule certainly applies to gardening, but also to the scientific world – and to life in general.

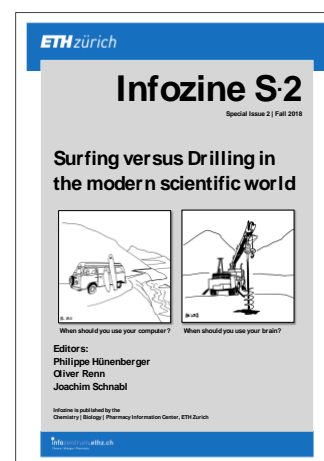
A key ability of good students, teachers, and academic or industry researchers is to find the right balance between drilling, when the nuggets are hidden deep below the ground, and surfing when the nuggets are widely spread just under the grass. Drilling is time-consuming and often lonely, but it brings depth, quality, and insight. Surfing is comparatively faster and easier, and it brings overview, throughput and interactivity.

Undoubtedly, the digital-liberal orientation of our modern society is strongly influencing our ability to switch between the two lenses of these bifocal glasses. The book, permanent and finite, is (was?) definitely an invitation to drill. The web, fluctuating and open, is certainly more of an invitation to surf. And the growing pressure on scientists and research institutions to justify their “usefulness” on a continuous and practical basis is yet another incentive to short-term surfing for immediate exposure, as opposed to long-term drilling for deeper achievements.

On the one hand, the digital-liberal era provides scientists with an unprecedented power in terms of sources (databases), processing (machine learning and artificial intelligence), reach (electronic publishing and media), and interactions (social networks). On the other hand, these amazing new extensions to the human brain might well end up working as prostheses for handicaps they create themselves (substitution of brain-learning by bookmarking, overweighting of quantity over quality, short-termism, fashion orientation and superficiality).

For this second special issue of Infozine, we would like to invite students, teachers, and academic or industry researchers to share their experiences and opinions about one or the other aspect of this broad topic: how to balance drilling (depth) versus surfing (breadth) in scientific learning, teaching and research – and how our modern digital-liberal system affects (positively or negatively) our ability to strike this balance.

The contributions are in principle invited, but spontaneous submissions may also be accepted on a case to case basis. If the theme inspires you and you feel tempted to write something, simply contact the Editorial Office (see column on the right).



**Infozine** – the Magazine for Users of Scientific Information and **Infozine Special Issues** are published by the Chemistry | Biology | Pharmacy Information Center at ETH Zürich.

[infozentrum.ethz.ch](http://infozentrum.ethz.ch)  
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#### Important Dates

##### Declaration of Interest

Contributions are on invitation. If you want to write an opinion article, propose your idea very briefly and contact Oliver Renn at [renn@chem.ethz.ch](mailto:renn@chem.ethz.ch) no later than **May 31, 2018**.

##### Short Article Submissions

Contributions should be in English, with a minimum length of 3000 characters (including spaces) and a maximum of 6000.

Submit articles (Word with minimal formatting) to Oliver Renn ([renn@chem.ethz.ch](mailto:renn@chem.ethz.ch)) and by **July 31, 2018**.

All Infozine Special Issues articles have a DOI and are additionally uploaded to ETH Zurich's repository Research Collection.

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