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Composite Score: ★★ ★ 7/8

Reviewed by: **Michelle Ehrenpreis**
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Abstract

Created by IOP Publishing, IOPscience is an online database which features 78 electronic journals, e-books, and conference proceedings from the Institute of Physics. Launched in 2010 on the previous Axiom platform, the database contains proprietary and Open Access content in the disciplines of physics and related sciences. Multiple pricing and packages offer a variety of options, as well as IOPscience Extra and IOPcorporate as add-ons for additional charges. As an online service for its journal content, IOPscience is a valuable service for institutions in need of access to essential physics and related subject matter research.

Pricing Options

IOPPublishing.org lists 2018 and 2017 pricing for a subscription model, including access to current journal volumes and 10-year archive based on package selection. Five package options are available with a total of 78 journals offered in print and electronic, and electronic access alone. There is no service fee for the platform. Some of the journals are Open Access, and e-books in physics and astronomy collections are listed for subscription activation. An add-on IOPscience Extra with 60 journals is available along with the entire archive back to 1874. IOPcorporate is also featured for a subscription. Libraries can order single journals through EBSCOhost's EJS, and consortium discounts are available for institutions like CUNY.

Product Overview/Description

IOPscience is the online platform by IOP Publishing for its journals. Based in the U.K., IOP Publishing is the publishing arm of the Institute of Physics, a scientific membership society. Specializing in physics and related sciences, IOPscience contains more than 70 journals and books, and three series of conference proceedings. Featuring a simple to use interface, multiple ordering options, and specialty content, IOPscience is an excellent resource for academic institutions with physics departments. IOPlatinoamerica provides the content in Spanish.

User Interface/Navigation/Searching

IOPscience contains a clean interface with options for branding (see Figure 1). A universal top header includes links to Journals, Books, Publishing Support, and Login, as well as Search and Article Lookup options. The Journals tab provides a detailed A-Z list along with publishing partners and archive titles. This is the same for the Books tab. The Search function and Article Lookup act as advanced searches of sorts, as that is not a feature available in the platform. There is a drop-down menu of subjects, as well as linked subject tags, to enable browsing of content. The carousel showing journals, latest books, and conference series is a nice visual display. IOPscience's extensive Open Access policy is prominently displayed along with a statement on supporting research in developing countries. The platform adheres to the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 and is measured based on EN 301 549, the European standard for digital accessibility. VPAT is available for download.

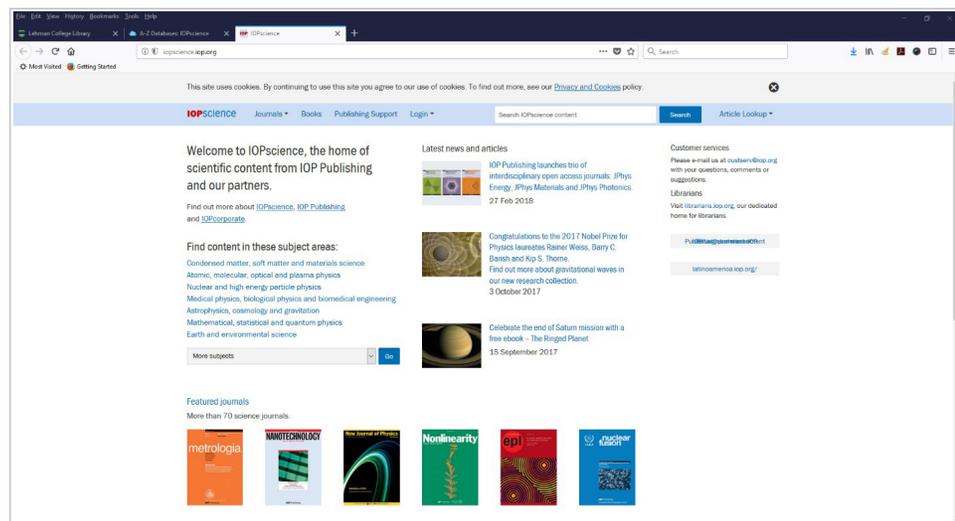


FIGURE 1 IOPscience User Interface



IOPscience Review Scores Composite: ★★★★★ 7/8

The maximum number of stars in each category is 5.

Content:

★★★★★

Content is scholarly and specialized for institutions in need of physics and related subject journals in the sciences.

User Interface/Searchability:

★★★★ 1/2

Easy to search, multiple options for saving. Lack of working tutorials and how to use guides.

Pricing:

★★★★★

Multiple pricing options for multiple journal packages.

Purchase/Contract Options:

★★★★★

Complimentary access to IOPscience is given for subscribers to its journals. Standard contracts are in place.

Search results contain filters including Date, Journals, Authors, Publication Type, and Open Access, with sorting based on date and relevance. One can create an account to save searches, create articles lists, make alerts and track downloads.

On the article level, saving options include e-mail and social media, as well as exporting to BibTex and RIS. Reading option formats are PDF or Article ePub, using Adobe Digital Editions. There is a Kindle option for e-books. Tracking features include citation alerts, journal RSS feeds, new issue notifications, and document updates. The number of downloads and tweets are alternative metrics that users can benefit from. Personalized tools, such as being able to save articles to Mendeley, are helpful for the user. Author names are also accompanied by their ORCID iDs.

Critical Evaluation

IOPscience contains important and unique scholarly content for physics research. The dedicated librarians' page shows current subscriptions, free access, and all the information needed for setup. Support materials are available for free download, and one can request pre-printed copies. A concise home page with multiple search options makes for easy browsing and targeted retrieval. The extensive information on their dedication to Open Access and the ability to search by that filter enables users to drill down for this type of content. Downloadable spreadsheets of multiple priced packages are helpful for librarians in curating content and sharing it with disciplined faculty. A section on accessibility outlining current and future steps is timely and encouraging from a specialty vendor.

IOPscience produces a series of six short videos that demonstrate how to find articles and keep up to date, which can be found under tutorials. These tutorials lack sound and are slightly pixelated. Luckily, the platform is fairly simple to navigate but revised tutorials would be helpful for novice users or to embed in a research guide. A downloadable user guide is a dead link. There is no advanced search, which is not unusual in the world of discovery tools but uncommon for databases. A partial replacement of the advanced search is the Article Lookup feature, which seems to favor page numbers in place of titles but works fairly well with the journal, volume, issue, and page number. In addition to your institution's logo, a template image can

be downloaded and customized using an image editor. This is more complicated than traditional requirements of creating one to upload.

Competitive Products

Many journals in IOPscience come from the Institute of Physics and are only available via their platform. Others are Open Access and are indexed in the Directory of Open Access Journals, Academic Search Complete, and Slovak Academy of Sciences. The other large publishers of physics-related literature include the American Institute of Physics and the American Physical Society. They do not offer large platforms for their journals as IOP Publishing does.

Purchase & Contract Provisions

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E-mail: <info@ioppubusa.com>

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About the Author

Michelle Ehrenpreis is the Electronic Resources Librarian at Lehman College. She has a Bachelor of Arts in Literature from Ramapo College and a Masters in Library and Information Science from Pratt Institute. She is currently pursuing a Masters in Organizational Management and Leadership through the CUNY School of Professional Studies. This is her second review for *The Charleston Advisor*. ■



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