

# Information Today

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## INTERVIEW

With Vin Caraher

In the 9 months since the Thomson Corp. merged with Reuters Group, PLC to form Thomson Reuters, the consolidation has proved to be a good move.

“The first 6 months [were] interesting for us, but I think it’s a great marriage of two really strong businesses,” says Vin Caraher, president and CEO of the Scientific business of Thomson Reuters. “The Reuters reputation speaks for itself on the media side and the financial community.” Reuters brought a range of global bases to the table; the Thomson Corp. added health-care, legal, and tax and accounting, along with its financial and scientific arms, of course.

“As you know, more than half of Scientific’s revenues come from outside the U.S.,” says Caraher. The Scientific business provided about 6% of the Thomson Reuters total revenues in 2008, which translates to about \$600 million. “In terms of market share overall, 6% is a valuable asset to the overall portfolio,” he says. “The important thing too is that we [Scientific] gen-

erate a good amount of cash that is reinvested into the business.”

In 2004 when Caraher stepped in as president of then-Thomson Scientific, the company and the world were quite different places. Caraher speaks from a vantage point of being with the company for many years, having moved up from his role as executive vice president of academic, government, and services markets, while overseeing sales and marketing for ISI worldwide. Before that, he was senior vice president of product line development at Thomson Scientific, and he had previously spent several years in publishing and banking.

“Since that time [2004], life has changed pretty dramatically,” he says. “We’ve acquired a number of different businesses, I think about 15 different acquisitions over that time.” He says the Scientific business of Thomson Reuters has “solidified what our strategy is in terms of where we want to play in the global arena in R&D.” Caraher points to three key areas: scholarly research that includes the use of the Web of Knowledge, drug development aided by the single-platform Thomson Pharma, and intellectual property via Thomson Innovation.

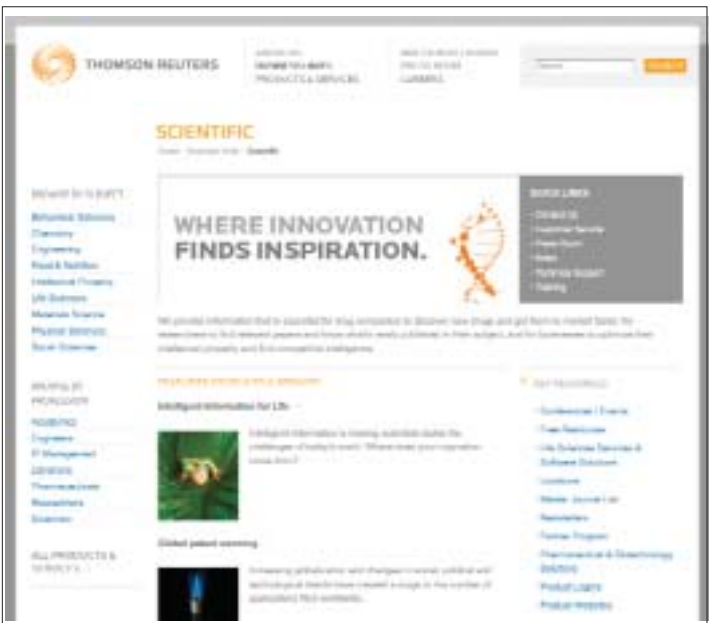
“During the past 4 years, we’ve really been pulling these pieces together,” he says. It took time and energy to unravel the infrastructures in the businesses, many of which were siloed, and the hundreds of products that each had its own culture.

### Weathering Economic Turmoil

During these times of economic unrest, companies around the world are tightening belts and trimming costs wherever they can, small and large enterprises alike. “Nobody is shielded, given what’s going on now with economic turbulence and uncertainty,” says Caraher. But the strategy of the Scientific business of Thomson Reuters hasn’t changed. “We’re still trying to partner with our customers to provide valuable information that helps them make decisions to accelerate research and discovery. None of that changes,” he says.

“But I think that despite these tough economic times, R&D is still the lifeblood of organizations,” he says. “Information is still absolutely critical to fuel that economy.” Caraher sees his company and its customers as important partners. “We work with our customers to make sure that we’re really adding value, that we’re really helping corporations, pharmas, and communities get the right information at the right time so they can make the right decisions.”

In light of these trying times, Caraher says the business continues to work closely with the company’s customer base. “Given



that we're a global company, we have a diverse customer base, and it's increasingly important to make sure that we're staying on top of what's global."

With China rising to the No. 2 spot as a revenue generator in the academic space, the Scientific business of Thomson Reuters turned its attention to this region where 26%–30% of the world's scholarly research is now emerging, according to Caraher. For Scientific, the launch of the Chinese Science Citation Database with the Chinese Academy of Sciences in early 2008 was another venture into new partnerships, and adding translations of Asian patent data in Derwent World Patents Index makes access to data that much easier. "In that part of the world, a lot of R&D has been shifting, and it's no longer just manufacturing," he says. "It's actual R&D that is valuable. The rest of the world wants to know what's happening there, so we're certainly adapting to that."

Web of Knowledge, one of the key products from the Scientific business of Thomson Reuters, continues to lead the way in the academic world, he says, noting that it is now in 3,000 universities around the world. Likewise, Thomson Pharma has become a valuable product used in most major pharmaceutical companies, and Thomson Innovation has been "a real breakthrough in bringing together all the diverse assets we have to become a world leader in intellectual property."

## Dealing With Information Overload

While content enjoyed its heyday as king, it's now just a piece of the puzzle. "Content is important and will continue to be important, but it's how we use that content and help our customers

to evaluate, analyze, and make use of the content [that] matters," he says. Weeding through the tremendous amount of information remains a challenge. "With the information explosion, we need to help our customers sift through all that, and regardless of the format—whether it's print or electronic—we need to help them get the right information at the right time."

Caraher remembers a time not long ago when most companies, including his own, launched one major product a year. That's certainly not the case anymore. "This world is moving much too fast now," he says. "We iterate all of our solutions regularly." But it's not only to keep an edge on the competition, he says. The refinements continue to add new value to the product for the customer while discovering new ways to get the information and get it to the customers faster. "Competition is not only good for us, but it's also good for the customer and the community," he says. "It's a good thing to have different choices, and in the industry, it keeps us all on our toes." When Google announced its Google Scholar product a couple of years ago, "that really lit a fire under us, and we knew we had to make some changes to our platform," he says. As a result, the Web of Knowledge was redesigned, making it easier to use and adding more value for the users.

As for the future, Caraher says he's not sure what the next 5 years will hold, but he's sure about one thing: "We'll be there, and we'll be strong," he says. "We've been around for decades, and we've continued to be pioneers in what we've done. ... We want to continue to be the leader in each of our sectors, providing global solutions for our customers, and we're well-positioned to rise to that challenge."

—Barbara Brynko