

FAQ: Referring URL and Authentication

What is a referring URL?

When you click on a link to visit a Web page, your Web browser sends information about your current page (referring URL) to the server for the new Web page. This happens so the new Web page server can keep track of the last Web page you viewed (referring URL) and grant entry to the new Web page (authentication).

Many of our database providers use this method of authentication so you do not have to enter log in credentials at the point of entry. For example, when you click on the HillSearch "Open Database" link for Dun & Bradstreet, your browser tells Dun & Bradstreet's Web server that you are currently viewing a page at hillsearch.org (referring URL) and logs you in automatically (authentication).

If you block referrer information, the server for the requested Web page cannot verify the referring URL, or the page you last visited. Some firewalls automatically block this information.

If you encounter technical issues, browse the Help topics for solutions or contact the Hill Library. Call (877) 700-4455, (651) 265-5500, or fill out a [feedback form](#).

- If you contact us, please provide as much information as possible:
 - Which database or Web page is generating the problem?
 - What kind of an error message are you receiving?
 - Which operating system are you using (Windows XP, Windows Vista, Mac OSX)?
 - Which browser are you using (Internet Explorer, Firefox, etc.)?
 - What kind of an Internet connection are you using (dial-up, Cable, DSL, etc.)?
 - Do you have any network or PC firewalls?
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