

[LibrariesReporttoParliament04.pdf](#)

An enquiry into public libraries is being conducted by the Commons Select Committee on Culture, Media and Sport. Evidence was received from the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals, the Society of Chief Librarians, the Audit Commission and the Advisory Council on Libraries on 30th November. On 14th December evidence was given by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, the Local Government Association, Jacqueline Wilson, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the Department of Education and Science and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Notice of the committee was very short and the organisations who gave evidence are to be congratulated on preparing representations within the time. You can read the uncorrected transcripts of evidence on the Parliament web site at <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200405/cmselect/cmcmds/uc81-i/uc8101.htm> and <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200405/cmselect/cmcmds/uc81-ii/uc8101.htm>

Scanning through the uncorrected evidence it seems that the debate touched on a broad spectrum of issues including the importance of books, the skills needed in public libraries and the percentage of professional staff, free access to the Peoples' Network and the digital divide, the government departments with responsibility for libraries and where the lead should come from, links between school library provision and public libraries, reductions in the levels of borrowing, improvements in buildings, comparisons with bookshops, the role of CILIP and much more. Certainly worth a browse as all the topics of the day for librarians seem to have been touched upon.

Reference Management

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Beyond bibliographic references : keeping track of your ideas as well as your references

A criticism of reference software is that they often are unable to hold more than the basic bibliographic data and a few links back out to the full text. This makes it difficult to then keep track of ideas and research pathways without using lots of paper. There are, though, a number of packages around which try to help in this idea generation and brain

storming of references. Listed are a few examples but if you have one you would particularly recommend please do pass them on.....

Literary Machine

Literary Machine is a form of graphic organiser, built on the principle of index cards, that can also link with Word. This links back to particular citations which then link further ideas and notes. It has a number of indexing and display techniques that allows a networking and hierarchical organisation scheme for categorising information. The fuzzy thinking kernel allows you to work with pure or hybrid concepts. You can assign items to a project or topic as well, arranging projects or topics in a hierarchical or tree like structure.

Further details from

<http://www.sommestad.com/lm.htm>

The Brain

The brain (www.thebrain.com) gives you the capability to dynamically create a knowledge base with nodes and multiple relationships between documents. It enables you to link files, documents, and Web pages across applications and network boundaries. The Brain illustrates how information is related, provides a visual context for documents and data, and offers a framework for collaboration. By connecting all relevant data sources in a way that reflects your thinking and the underlying processes behind the information, BrainEKP collapses the time to knowledge as demonstrated in this picture below



Ibidem and Orbis

Nota bene is actually three separate, but seamlessly integrated programs: a full-featured word processor (Nota Bene), a bibliographic database manager (Ibidem) and a note-taking and text-retrieval program designed for managing a career's worth of notes (Orbis). In addition, a fourth module (IbidPlus) extends the functionality of Ibidem to provide a customizable database program you can tailor to

your own needs. Together, these modules allow you more efficiency and organization in your note keeping and research.

Further details from www.notabene.com

RefViz

Another tool is that of RefViz. RefViz is a text analysis and visualisation software application designed to analyse, organise and facilitate the comprehension of the huge amounts of literature that are available to researchers.

Documents in RefViz are organised by thematic content and presented in interactive visualisations that allow identification of major themes and areas of interest. There is direct connection with Endnote and Reference Manager which provides an extra level of analysis to your reference collection to allow you to find relevant citations.

Further details from www.refviz.com

RefDB

A slightly different approach to visualising is to display documents in a range of output methods – beyond publisher style or purely html files. RefDB is a reference database and bibliography tool for SGML, XML and LaTeX/BibTeX documents. It allows you to share databases over a network and works on most platforms with a decent C compiler. The software enables you to, not only output in html, but also in Postscript, PDF, DVI, MIF and RTF output with fully formatted citations and bibliographies according to publisher specifications. Further details can be found at

<http://refdb.sourceforge.net/index.html>

Knowledge Engine (KEN) for local government

KEN is marketed as a roadmap to further knowledge-sharing, to support effective joined-up working and to make information available as part of core service delivery improvement strategies. In this example, that is within Local Authorities in the West Midlands but the initiative is of interest to anyone wishing to making information more widely available. KEN provides a web-based knowledge management and e-working tool to identify and share good practice and takes advantage of technology to introduce new ways of web-based working to cut down on travel costs and time. Virtual office space is available for online meetings and document sharing; to make researching new projects easier KEN provides a regional search engine incorporating internal and external document databases, Word, PDF documents, and websites. Password protected access is available via the www.askken.org.uk website or via local authority intranets with no password required. For more information about

KEN, its development and rollout, contact: Pete Kendal, West Midlands LGA SMARTregion Coordinator and manager of the KEN project. p.kendal@smartregion.org.uk or 0121 245 0190. or visit <http://www.askken.org.uk/>

Procite is not dead! Long Live Procite!

A common question over the past 12 months has been the future of Procite. This software package, probably the longest suffering, has been revamped and relaunched with some nice new features.

You will find that Procite has been revamped to look more like Reference Manager in look and has the flexibility of both Endnote and reference Manager. The Subject bibliography feature (now in Endnote as well) has a lot of potential applications. Just as useful is the ability to cite from a number of different Procite databases at the same time – very useful if you are working on a number of different, collaborative projects.

Further details from AdeptScience at <http://www.adeptscience.co.uk/products/refman/procite/> or call direct on Tel: 01462 480055 or Fax: 01462 480213 e-mail: info@adeptscience.co.uk