

## Open Access Conference at the Home of the Web

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Open Access was the theme of the 29th ELAG (European Library Automation Group) annual seminar which was held June 1<sup>st</sup> -3<sup>rd</sup> 2005 at CERN – the European Organisation for Nuclear Research in Geneva, Switzerland. ELAG seminars aim at ‘in depth’ discussions of a particular theme, and at the promotion of informal exchange of ideas and experience.

The format for ELAG seminars generally comprises:

- papers on the specified theme
- papers from the country where the workshop is held
- workshops
- progress reports.

Papers on the specified theme included presentations from:

- Jill Cousins on The European Library (TEL) (<http://www.theeuropeanlibrary.org/portal/index.htm>) which was launched in March 2005 and aims “open up the universe of knowledge, information and culture of all Europe’s national libraries”;
- Lotte Jørgensen of Lund University Library in Sweden on the Directory of Open Access Journals ( <http://www.doaj.org>) which now provides links to some 1600 free, full text, quality controlled scientific and scholarly journals;
- David Prosser, SPARC (Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition) European Director, on Scholarly communication, open access and SPARC Europe (<http://www.sparceurope.org/>). SPARC advocates change in the scholarly communications market, supports competition, and encourages new publishing models (in particular, open access models) that better serve the international researcher community;
- Tony McSean, Director of Library Relations at Elsevier Publishing on Commercial publishers and open access;
- Jan Erik Kofoed of the BIBSYS (<http://www.bibsys.no>) a supplier of digital information services to Norwegian libraries on XML database management systems;
- Juha Hakala, Director of Information Technology at Helsinki University Library in Finland on persistent identifiers.

Since French/Swiss border goes through the CERN complex the decision was made that papers from both France and Switzerland would be included. There were presentations from:

- Magaly Bascones Dominguez, of the University of Geneva on Open Access journal business models;
- Alberto Pepe and Tibor Simko of CERN on the Open Access aspects at the CERN Document Server (<http://cdsweb.cern.ch/>);
- David Aymonin of the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne on “e-Theses and the OAI e-collection service” (<http://library.epfl.ch/theses/?pg=etheses>);
- Barbara Signori of the Swiss National Library on e-Helvetica: Electronic publications in the Swiss National Library (<http://www.e-helvetica.ch>). e-Helvetica aims to provide a digital archive of e-publications;
- Françoise Bourdon of the Bibliothèque nationale de France (BnF) on BnF Authorities (<http://catalogue.bnf.fr/>);
- Catherine Lupovici, also from the BnF on the International Internet Preservation Consortium which brings together a number (at present 12) of national libraries around the world (including The British Library) with an aim “to acquire, preserve and make

accessible knowledge and information from the Internet for future generations everywhere, promoting global exchange and international relations”

(<http://netpreserve.org>);

- Miguel Moreira of the RERO (the Library Network of Western Switzerland) on its Digital Library, known as ReroDoc (<http://doc.rero.ch/>).

Each ELAG participant is expected to sign up for one of the workshops and each workshop was allocated some seven hours in six separate parallel sessions in the 3-day programme. The chair of each workshop then reported back to the whole meeting on the relevant deliberations. The topics of the workshops this year were:

ZING (Z39.50 International: Next Generation)

ISO ILL, NISO NCIP or Open URL?

RSS (Really Simple Syndication)

E-books

E-learning and libraries

Electronic Resource Management

RFID and self-service

Metasearch systems versus Google Scholar

Low cost e-journal production

Participants are also expected to produce a ‘progress report’ from their organisations.

There were about 120 attendees, from 20 countries at this very interesting meeting. There was plenty of opportunity to discuss and learn from others about a wide range of relevant developments. On one evening we were led to the bowels of the library building to be shown the plaque indicating where “the Web was born”. We all received an annotated copy of an internal CERN document of March 1989 by Tim Berners-Lee entitled “Information management: a proposal” – his supervisor had written the comment “Vague – but exciting” !!

Full details of presentations are available from <http://cern.ch/elag2005>.

## The future of search

### Mark Sanderson, University of Sheffield

I was asked to present a talk at the UKeIG on the “future of search”. The title allows a speaker such freedom, one could present on many topics; I chose to present on the areas where none of the search engines have managed to solve even basic search problems; namely search of multimedia. Here I present a brief overview of the problems in and solutions to searching music, images, and 3D objects.

#### Music

Retrieval of music is of growing interest to researchers, with some commercial interest in limited areas. Unlike text search, which has largely focussed on topic-based information seeking tasks, music information retrieval is examining a range of retrieval modes: retrieval by humming (do people hum in tune is a key question here), retrieval by audio example (hear a snippet of a song on the radio and you want to know what it is), retrieval by genre; by timbre and texture by beat boxing or tapping, by mood (i.e. find songs that are upbeat, melancholy, romantic). User collection organization is also a key area of research at the moment. Although much research is taking place, it is clear from looking at current results (much of which is listed at <http://www.music-ir.org>) that research has some way to go in order to provide effective search