

either using their texts or providing e-audio files back into their audio books project. Some of the Project Gutenberg audio files are computer-generated, but the main effort is currently focussed on e-Books read by people. For instance, Sherlock Holmes novels have been provided by audiobooksforfree.com⁷, a British-based organisation. If you're looking for something different to listen to on your MP3 player, all these sites may be worth a visit!

And finally, Virgin Atlantic is producing podcasts of travel guides, thus combining these two themes; there are guides to New York, Cuba, Johannesburg and Shanghai, with more promised. Subscribing to the podcast feed will ensure that you get future releases.⁸

Acknowledgements:

Many thanks to Peter Hey at Richmond Libraries and to Ian Sutton at Blackburn with Darwen Library & Information Services for their help in providing background information on their e-audio services.

Available from:
<http://www.gutenberg.org/audio/>
[Accessed 30 October 2005]

⁷ *Audio Books For Free*. [Homepage] [Online] (2005) Available from: <http://www.audiobooksforfree.com> [Accessed 30 October 2005]

⁸ *Word in your ear*. [Homepage of Virgin Atlantics podcasts] [Online] (2005) Available from: <http://virginatlantic.loudish.com> [Accessed 30 October 2005]

Intranets

Martin White, Intranet Focus Ltd
(Martin.white@intranetfocus.com)

In early November, I took part in the inaugural CMF2005 <http://cmf2005.dk/> event in Aarhus, Denmark. This conference, which covered content management, web strategy and intranets, was devised and managed by Janus Boye <http://www.boyeit.dk/home>, who will be speaking at the Online Information Conference this year. The event attracted over 130 delegates from across Scandinavia and Finland, with some delegates coming from Iceland and the Faroe Islands, and even a few from the UK. The conference was a great success, and the 2006 event is already in the diary for 7–9 November 2006 <http://cmf2006.dk/>. I was running a pre-conference workshop on intranets, and let the attendees decide the subjects to cover. As a result, much of the morning was spent on what the elements should be of an intranet strategy. None of the attendees had a written intranet strategy, and this is a not uncommon occurrence in the workshops I run, no matter what the country. I find it very surprising that an organization can have policies and strategies for just about anything but not for information/intranet issues. Among the other topics that we discussed were the use of personas and scenarios to develop information architecture, and how to increase intranet use.

In the UK, the Intranet Benchmark Forum <http://www.ibforum.co.uk/> has held two very successful events. One was IBF Live, which was a two-day conference with a strong emphasis on sharing of experience, and the second was the launch of IBF Global, which (as you might gather) is specifically tailored for the needs of organizations with multinational, and often multilingual,

intranets. The meetings of the Forum that I have attended have been very well run, and if you are medium/large-sized organization then membership of the Forum is well worth considering. Paul Miller, who owns and directs the IBF, managed to persuade the Financial Times to do a short item on intranets, and this is well worth cutting out and sending to any less-than-encouraging senior manager. You will find it in the 30 August issue, p.10 of the Business Life section. It's also on the FT web site of course.

If you look at the IBF site you will see a list of Associate Consultants, and one of these is Helen Day. Until recently, Helen was the intranet manager at Boots, and won the 2004 International Information Industry Award for her excellent work in developing the intranet with very limited resources. Helen has now branched out on her own and you can find her web site at <http://www.helen-day.co.uk/index.htm>. Helen specializes in intranet governance issues, which are among the most intractable in any organization.

This indeed was another topic at Aarhus. We spend around an hour looking at the benefits and issues for various intranet "homes", including IT, corporate communications, HR and the library/information centre. The overall conclusion was that it did not matter where the operational responsibility for the intranet resided so long as there was a clear charter for the intranet that set out the corporate requirements for the intranet, and the extent to which other departments needed to provide support and resources.

This issue of Elucidate should arrive on your desktop before Christmas, so it is not too late to encourage you to purchase a copy of Peter Morville's book *Ambient Findability*, which is

published by O'Reilly Publishing and has a lemur on the front cover. (ISBN 0-596-00765-5). The subtitle of the book is "What we find changes who we become" and this sets the scene well for what is a very thoughtful and somewhat philosophical book. Reading it will certainly make you think again about the issues of navigation, search and information discovery, and I'd like to see it on the recommended list of every school of librarianship and information science in the country. Peter has been promoting the concept of findability for several years, and to gain a sense of the scope of the topic do have a look at his web site at <http://www.findability.org/>. Peter will be speaking on this topic at Online Information this year.

Two important resources for intranet managers remain <http://www.boxesandarrows.com/> and the Information Architecture Institute site at <http://iainstitute.org/>. Boxes and Arrows always comes up with thought-provoking articles and the IAI has a wealth of tools for things like wireframe design and content audits at <http://iainstitute.org/tools/>. On the Boxes and Arrows site as I write there is a review of a very good book on project management by Scott Berkin http://www.boxesandarrows.com/archive/s/the_art_of_project_management.php, but currently my favourite book on this topic is *Herding Chickens* by Dan Bradbary and David Garrett <http://eu.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0782143830.html>, which is a first-rate introduction to the topic. All too often in CMS implementation projects I find that there is actually very little expertise in project management, and the project starts to go off-course almost before it has started.

While on the subject of books Luke Tredinnick's book *Why Intranets Fail*

(and *How to Fix Them*)⁹ remains the only book published this century on intranet management, and is well worth acquiring and reading even by those who feel that their intranet is in good shape. It might be now, but next year...? (www.chandospublishing.com ISBN 1-84334-068-2).

Finally, in this round up of intranet-related resources do have a look at the Gilbane web site at <http://www.gilbane.com/articles.html> . The reports listed here are all free of charge, and are exceptionally well written.

Public Sector

E-Government

Jane Inman, Technical Librarian,
Planning, Transport and Economic
Strategy, Warwickshire County
Council
(janeinman@warwickshire.gov.uk)

As I write, we have just two months to go before we reach the golden age when all local authorities are 100% e-enabled. At this stage, it is encouraging to read the headline "E-Gov will not fail, vows minister". This is quoting Jim Murphy, e-Government minister, and appeared in *Public Servant* (21st September 2005) The confidence of the minister stems from what he learned from a tour of community-based IT projects that he believes allow the government to deliver its 'choice' agenda. The visits made were also referred to in a Parliamentary debate on e-Government held on 13th October 2005. Mr Murphy cited examples of

situations where IT is making a difference to lives and giving people access to government information and services. The main aim of e-Government is to provide customer-centred services, but it is recognised that there are savings to be made and challenges to be faced.

It is good to take stock and consider just how much has changed in the way local and central government provide information to citizens, and how they interact with them electronically. There is doubtless a long way to go and there was enough to debate for the session to last nearly three hours! The Hansard reference is 13th October 2005 Column 143WH (as the debate took place in Westminster Hall), and you can find this by going to the Parliament website <http://www.parliament.uk>.

The debate made reference to the publication of the government's IT strategy, which was issued on 2nd November. Called *Transformational Government*, you can access the strategy at <http://www.cio.gov.uk>. In it, the government sets out how it will improve delivery of public services in ways that fit with people's lifestyles. The technology and services will be designed around the needs of the public and will tackle security issues, seek greater efficiency through reducing duplication and improve the planning and delivery of IT projects. Customer Service Directors will be appointed to represent groups of users and ensure their needs are met and are joined up across government. There is also recognition of the importance of mobile phones and digital TV, especially when reaching those who could be considered as socially excluded. Linked to this the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has produced a report called *Inclusion through innovation: tackling social exclusion through new technologies*. A

⁹ This book is reviewed in the book reviews section of this issue of Elucidate.