

## Ex Cathedra

Those of you avid for news of *e-Diamond* (!) – are well served in this issue. Not only is there an article summarising the results of the recent user test – a test in which many of you took part – of the software, eTNA, but also this note in Ex Cathedra. I can report that the project was successful in passing the final EC Review – a definite triumph that involved an inquisition at the hands of the three reviewers.

For those of you who have never faced such a review, it begins very formally with introductions before the team is invited to leave the room so that the reviewers can swap notes. When the project team returns they have 60 minutes – no more and no less – to present the project. In our case we gave a demonstration of the software, talked about the market validation and how the consortium planned to move forward. Again the team leaves the room while the reviewers consider their case.

Invited back, we faced over 90 minutes of cross-examination. Then we left again while the reviewers made up their minds and prepare a verbal report. We were told that the news was good in the end, and the project was judged to have met its targets. One of the concerns of the review panel was value for money and we have been asked to provide some additional documentation on this aspect. Thank you all for your work in testing eTNA and sending us back the questionnaires.

What else has UKOLUG been doing? Well we have provided a formal response to the new CILIP Framework on Qualifications and an informal response, by way of a consultation exercise, to the DfES report, *Towards a unified e-learning strategy*. We raised the issue of information literacy, which had not been addressed in the document at all. In fact, the consultation document mentioned information literacy only once in passing (not linked to libraries); e-skills, ICT skills and 'new skills' are all mentioned – but none is defined (they may or may not have been intended as information skills – I argued that they are not equivalent, and that they are certainly not the same as information literacy).

Government documents over the past several years have used terms like IT skills and ICT skills undefined, and they are either read and understood to mean the ability to use a mouse and software, or something more, depending on the reader. The writers' intentions have always been unclear. Information literacy – that is, the ability to understand cultural, ethical, legal and socioeconomic issues surrounding the location, obtaining, evaluating (that's a crucial one given the global expanse of the information available), and use of information – was not considered in the consultation document. My point was that, as Baroness Greenfield said, "We are in a time when people can sit in front of the screen and get bombarded with facts and

sometimes that's confused with education" and, in a strategy document on e-learning, the stage beyond information-on-the-screen has to be addressed. JISC research in which I have been involved for a number of years clearly demonstrates the need for greater information literacy in the FE/HE sectors and there can be no doubt that this is even more so when we move outside the 'formal' education arena.

UKOLUG has also – as you will have gathered from previous Ex Cathedra – been considering its role and its position in the 'infoverse'. One suggestion is that we should change our name to something more meaningful and relevant to the 21st century. We feel that 'online' does not describe us adequately and that many CILIP members do not recognise or understand the name (particularly the acronym) when it comes to selecting groups that they may join. The name we have come up with is the **UK information Group** or **UKeIG**, and we shall be proposing this at the AGM in June. The committee sees this name as being easily understood in both its full and shortened forms as the 'e' prefix for electronic – e-commerce, e-journals, etc – is universally accepted and our core activities have always revolved around information delivered that way – online, or electronically in today's jargon. We hope that you will approve of the new name.

I also want to take this chance to remind you that all our meetings now offer a certificate of attendance for your CPD portfolio. All you have to do is ask for one when you are there.

**Chris Armstrong**  
Chair, UKOLUG

## A North American View of Electronic Resources, 2004

Those of you who were kind enough to read the article I wrote last year (*UKOLUG Newsletter* Vol 14 Issue 2) may remember I said that e-book readers and CD-Roms were two products about which I was hearing very little any more. This past year, both products have slid even further down the U.S. library radar scale. I can remember receiving only one Reference CD-Rom in the last six months and somewhere around three or four CD-Roms in the whole last year for our Government Documents Division. It certainly seems as though it's almost time to break out Baring-Gould's music for "Now the Day is Over" when it comes to CD-Roms in libraries --- at least on this side of the pond.

Videos are another format which are not doing so well, as evidenced by the \$1.19 Billion (USD) loss by the commercial Blockbuster Video chain last year. DVDs may offer a better image, but even DVDs are fast being eclipsed by the downloading of movies and music directly to a computer or to a television screen. Digital distribution is the latest phrase on everyone's lips. In