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 eInformation 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

early February 2004 Walt Disney and Microsoft agreed to cooperate in distributing movies digitally and as of this writing the Apple iTunes "store" has sold something over 30 million songs. Last November Pennsylvania State University agreed to underwrite a deal with the new Napster to allow their students access to over ½ million pieces of music.

Changes in the commercial marketplace are also reflected in the library marketplace. CD, video and cassette formats are still being produced, but the writing is on the wall. As these formats become less and less profitable for companies to produce, they will stop producing them. That leaves libraries who own titles in any of these formats with the problem of providing/maintaining hardware/machines that can read these formats. As digital distribution becomes more common, do libraries continue to buy these "older" formats? Do we allow patrons to purchase electronic resources via our public machines? The jury is certainly still out over here on these questions.

This past September e-book readers received, what may be a mortal blow, when Barnes & Noble, one of our largest national bookselling chains, (both online and brick-and-mortar), announced, rather abruptly, that they would no longer be selling e-books and gave their customers 90 days to download any outstanding titles. This is a company which not only collaborated with both Microsoft and Adobe re e-book technology, but in January 2001 established their own e-book publishing arm, Barnes and Noble Digital. The press release announcing the new publishing venture included the comment that "."We believe that the formation of this division represents a significant leap forward for electronic publishing" http://www.barnesandnoble.com/ir/press/archive/2001/010401.asp. Just a scant three years later, that comment looks both sadly optimistic and wildly off the mark.

The e-book reader may be going the way of the Pierce-Arrow, but free online full-text titles are continuing to flourish. In October 2003 Project Guttenberg uploaded their 10,000th free title online http://www.gutenberg.net/index.shtml, while Connecticut's Quinnipiac University has compiled several collections of online texts including their "Library of American Civilization Titles" http://www.quinnipiac.edu/x6781.xml, "Digitized Connecticut History Books" http://www.quinnipiac.edu/x6776.xml and the "Great Hunger (in Ireland) Collection http://www.quinnipiac.edu/x6779.xml.

There is also the University of North Carolina's "Library of Southern Literature" http://docsouth.unc.edu/southlit/texts.html and Indiana University's "Wright American Fiction 1851-1875" site at: http://www.letrs.indiana.edu/web/w/wright2/. The University of Michigan's "Making of America" Collection contains some 8,500 19th century books and 50,000

journal articles from the same period http://www.hti.umich.edu/m/moagrp/ and the Library at the University of Pennsylvania hosts John Mark Ockerbloom's wonderful index site, "The Online Books Page", which points to over 20,000 free online titles http://digital.library.upenn.edu/books/.

Almost all these free sites are maintained by ardent volunteers or academic institutions and feature copyright free titles. Just a few months ago in December however the landscape changed when the University of California Press posted 419 of its fairly recent titles online, free to all (!). The bulk of these titles are from the 1990s (some as recent as 2000) and are therefore still under copyright protection. But they are now available, with no restrictions, to anyone who wants them. http://texts.cdlib.org/escholarship/titles_public.html.

Last year I said that my experience has been that no matter how many full-text titles are online, patrons don't usually read these full-text items from "cover to cover", but use them to read/print out a chapter and/or use the searching facility to locate specific passages, quotations, etc. This is, for the most part, still true. There are times however when the online version is the only copy you have and that's, of course, a different story.

Having free online access to such a growing treasure trove has prompted U.S. librarians to begin to catalogue these resources by either adding electronic copies to an existing print record, or creating an online-only record for the title. Those of you who are cataloguers know you can put a URL in the 856 field of a MARC record and the URL becomes a live link in online catalogues.

This is wonderful of course, but 856 fields usually only appear in the full version of the record --- and, at least in the United States --- very few patrons look at the full record. Our patrons generally look at the brief record (title, author, publisher, call number and circulation information). Some library systems do allow you to choose the 856 field to display in the brief record, but sometimes it's quite an effort to find a work-around to make that happen. My own university system just recently got the 856s to display in the brief record --- but it took our technical folks over a year to figure out how to do it --- and the look of the display still needs some work.

Two additional hot topics of conversation over here this past year re electronic resources have been "federated searching" (a.k.a. single-source interfaces) and the price of electronic journals.

We've all been trying to cope with the escalating prices of electronic journals for a number of years now and those of us in North America will be following the March testimony in the Commons enquiry into scientific publications with great interest. In the meantime, the

Massachusetts Institute of Technology has decided not to renew its multi-year agreements with both Wiley and Elsevier, while the entire editorial board of *Journal of Algorithms* (another Elsevier journal) recently resigned to protest the price of a subscription. In addition the faculty senate at the University of Connecticut passed a resolution asking their faculty "to support scholarly publishing practices that promote the broadest possible dissemination of scholarly communication" http://www.info-commons.org/blog/archives/000375.html. These three events all happened this February and followed recent actions against forced vendor "journal-bundling" by both Harvard and Cornell.

Federated searching, single-source interfaces, cross-database searching, portal searching or metasearching are all different names for the same concept --- one-stop shopping. The idea is that a patron types in search terms in your catalogue and retrieves not only catalogue records, but links to your online journals, results from your databases and perhaps even from publicly available databases and web search engines. Sounds great --- doesn't always work. Vendors seem to be having trouble incorporating the Z39.50 standard and have mostly adopted the OpenURL standard, but a real sticking point is authentication for subscription databases. This is particularly true when you're dealing with remote users. Another difficulty is the elimination of duplicates because databases, especially public search engines, just return too many results than can be dealt with in any reasonable length of time http://www.infotoday.com/it/oct03/hane1.shtml.

Federated searching products often need a lot of tweaking and many libraries don't have the technical expertise to do that successfully. That lack of/cost of technical expertise is a continuing problem for many libraries, especially as electronic products become more and more sophisticated. The explosion of electronic resources and their installation/ tweaking/upkeep technical requirements are proving somewhat difficult for a number of libraries.

And finally, here's some information about RFID, an electronic change that is on the horizon for a growing number of North American libraries --- The RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) chip is one electronic service that has been moving from the commercial retail marketplace to the world of libraries. RFID "chips" are placed in a book and the radio frequency allows electronic readers to read the information on the chip and provide "hands-free" check-out, better inventory control, etc. Privacy advocates are raising some concerns that patron information might be included on these chips, but as of this writing, over 100 U.S. libraries and library systems, Including such libraries as San Francisco Public, the University of Georgia, the University of Pennsylvania and Salt Lake City Public have installed (or agreed to install) RFID systems.

Some resources I hope you will find useful on the above subjects are listed below.

Federated Searching Resources:
Chandler, Sarah and Nan Hyland. "Federated Searching and Academic Libraries: One Size Fits All?" Cornell University. September 2003. http://encompass.library.cornell.edu/presentations/ACS_9_03_rev.ppt.
Luther, Judy. "Trumping Google? Metasearching's Promise." *Library Journal.* 1 October 2003. http://www.libraryjournal.com/index.asp?layout=article&articleid=CA322627&publication=libraryjournal.
Seaman, David. "Deep Sharing: A Case for the Federated Digital Library." *Educause.* July/August 2003. http://www.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/erm0348.pdf.

RFID Resources:
Dorman, David. RFID Poses No Problem for Patron Privacy. *American Libraries.* December 2003. http://www.ala.org/ala/alonline/techspeaking/2003columns2/december2003.htm.
Givens, Beth. RFID Implementation in Libraries: Some Recommendations for "Best Practices". Presentation to ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee. 10 January 2004. http://www.privacyrights.org/ar/RFID-ALA.htm.
Schneider, Karen G. RFID and Libraries : Both Sides of the Chip. Testimony presented at Committee on Energy and Utilities, California Senate. 20 November 2003, http://www.senate.ca.gov/ftp/SEN/COMMITTEE/STANDING/ENERGY/_home/11-20-03karen.pdf.

Scholarly Publications Resources:
ARL. (Association of Research Libraries) "Framing the Issue: Open Access." 10 February 2004. http://www.arl.org/scomm/open_access/framing.html.
Harvard University Gazette. "Libraries Take A Stand. " 5 February 2004. http://www.news.harvard.edu/gazette/2004/02.05/10-libraries.html.
McBride, Liz. Crisis in Scholarly Communication. *Emory University Libraries*. 13 February 2004. http://web.library.emory.edu/about/issues/scholcomm.htm.
Suber, Peter. "Scholarly Communication. Removing Barriers to Research: An Introduction to Open Access for Librarians." *College & Research Libraries News.* February 2003, Vol. 64, No. 2. http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlpubs/crlnews/backissues2003/february1/removingbarriers.htm.

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