Current Awareness

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This column contains summaries of articles (print and electronic) about information access and retrieval, electronic publishing, preservation and virtual libraries etc. including, with permission, abstracts identified with an * next to the author initials, drawn from Current Cites, the monthly publication distributed electronically by a team of Librarians and Library Staff and edited by Roy Tennant: (http://lists.webjunction.org/currentcites/).

If you are interested in providing reviews for the column, please contact Jane Grogan for further details.

Content Management

Dye, Jessica. **Move it or lose it: content migration strategies** *EContent* 30 (2)(Mar 2007) 26-30 – Content migration strategies can range from a simple cut-and-paste to automated solutions. Smart strategies revitalise the information as well as systems. Dye outlines the steps: know your data (inventory), plot your move, and separate content from presentation to ease the migration. Upgrades are inevitable, so build in coherent and comprehensive information architecture – [CP]

Miller, Ron. **The devil is in the details: the revelation of XML content management** *EContent* 30 (3) (Apr 2007) 28-44 – Describes what XML CM is and what it is suitable for. The Darwin Information Typing Architecture (DITA) is the documentation standard of choice – [CP]

Smith, Steve. **Explosion in the content factory: fragmentation shakes the foundations of publishing** *EContent* 30 (3) (Apr 2007) 22-27 – How media fragmentation is challenging publishers and aggregators to unify silos of content into a flexible XML database. Not only could each page of a website be a landing page, but side doors are the new front doors, which challenges both editors and designers. Aggregators are important in this scenario – [CP]

Digitisation Projects

Goans, Doug, Pam Hackbart-Dean, and Lauren Kata. "**On Your Mark, Get Set, Go! Overview of a Digital Project from Start to Finish**" Computers in Libraries 27(3)(March 2007): 16-23. – There are a number of good, practical articles about library digitization projects in this month's issue. This article looks at the effort of Georgia State to digitize the full run of a labor union journal spanning a hundred years and comprising over 70k pages. The authors briefly go over various considerations common to such a project: outsourcing the actually scanning, quality control, file formats to choose, content-management systems, etc. How they went about this can then be compared with the examples from other articles in the same issue. – [*LRK]

Mugridge, Rebecca L. **Managing Digitization Activities. SPEC Kit 294** Washington, DC: Association of Research Libraries, 2006 (http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/spec294web.pdf) – With a response rate of 55% (68 libraries out of 123), this survey provides a snapshot of ARL libraries' digitization efforts, as of early 2006. Here is a summary of the survey's scope from the introduction: "This SPEC survey was designed to identify the purposes of ARL member libraries' digitization efforts, the organizational structures these libraries use to manage digital initiatives, whether and how staff have been reassigned to support digitization activities, where funding to sustain digital activities originated and how that funding is allocated, how priorities are determined, whether libraries are outsourcing any digitization work, and how the success of libraries' digital activities has been assessed. The focus of the survey was on the digitization of existing library materials, rather than the creation of born-digital objects." Overall, the survey suggests that digitization is still a fledgling activity at many ARL libraries: only 19 respondents (30%) had a dedicated budget for both start-up and ongoing operations, and only 6 (9.5%) had a dedicated start-up budget, but no dedicated ongoing budget. Only 28 of a total of 188 librarians from 48 reporting libraries who did digitization work did so full-time, with the rest dedicating "only a small portion of their time on this activity." The few reported budgets had wide ranges, resulting in means of $97,027 for start-up budgets and $303,916 for ongoing budgets. – [*CB]

E-Publishing

Caldwell, Tracey. **E-books fail to fly into users' hands** *Information World Review* 233, March 2007: 8 – Analysis column investigates the patchy provision of e-books relative to online journals. Specific efforts of publishing consortia to counter the restrictive models applied by publishers are considered, such as the relationship between SUPC and Ebrary. Usage in the higher education sector is considered with barriers to accessibility and availability of core titles being cited among the reasons for poor take-up in some circumstances. – [RH]

Caldwell, Tracey. **Welsh Valleys welcomes e-books** *Information World Review* 233, March 2007: 4 – News item noting that the National Library of Wales has signed up for almost 300 Net Library e-books to make its resources more accessible to the scattered population of Wales. The acquisition strategy is set to continue, with Welsh interest and wider subject areas being covered. – [RH]

Chillingworth, Mark. **E-Books new Chapter** *Information World Review* 233, March 2007: 22-24 – Whether e-book readers will revolutionise information access and delivery in the key question posed in this feature article. The merits of the iRex iLiad are analysed, with benefits noted such as 'electronic paper display' and automatic bookmarking on powering down. Disadvantages, such as price, slow booting-up and confusing controls are also covered in this in-depth review. – [RH]

Education

Roper, Alan R. **How Students Develop Online Learning Skills** *EDUCAUSE Quarterly* 30(1) (2007) (http://www.educause.edu/apps/eq/eqm07/eqm07110.asp) – As a signification portion of instruction moves over to an online environment, articles on best practices

like this one are worth their weight in (digital) gold. This is particularly true when the perspective is from the students themselves. In this article, the author surveyed students who had done particularly well at taking an online course. Among their priorities was maintaining motivation and discipline. Also important was how the instructor managed online communication, in particular threaded discussions (e.g. forums). One student states succinctly: "Instructors who establish clear expectations as to how threaded discussions are used, or who ask specific questions in response to student postings can expect to encourage richer online dialogue." In other words, initiative, clear goals and follow-up on the part of the instructor can have positive results. – [*LRK]

General

Chillingworth, Mark. **London holds onto its information lead** *Information World Review*, 233, March 2007: 9 – The attraction of the London Stock Exchanges' information store and information system assets is looked at in the context of investment interest in the LSE in recent years. The speed of transaction processing in their information infrastructure and the reliability of technology and information are cited as major factors in attracting overseas interest in the LSE. Value-added information services and collaborative Web 2.0 developments are some of the newer opportunities that the LSE are beginning to exploit. – [RH]

Coyle, Karen. **Future of Library Systems, Seen from the Past** *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 33(1)(January 2007): 138-140 – It's always a healthy exercise when evaluating predictions of the future to see what past performance in the prediction business has been like. This is what Karen Coyle does in a relatively short article on predictions of library systems from 1949 to 1984. She goes from what most commentators got right to what most commentators either got wrong or missed. Often, what they missed was due to developments outside of librarianship (e.g. the computer industry) that they didn't pay enough attention to. It's important to take the larger context into consideration, Coyle concludes, when attempting to do long-range planning. – [*LRK]

Drake, Miriam A. **Defining the library of the 21st century: the British Library**. *Searcher* 15 (2) (2007): 30-35 – CEO Lynne Brindley is interviewed about developments that have taken place at the British Library (BL) over the past six years. It is argued that the BL is redefining the role of the library, and Brindley is praised for her leadership and vision. Key developments highlighted include the BL's partnership with Microsoft on a project to digitise 100,000 out-of-copyright books in the collection, and the new Business and Intellectual Property Centre (BIPC) set up to provide information services to small- and medium-sized companies. The BL has recently digitized its 18th-century newspaper collection, and with assistance from the Joint Information Systems Committee will now be able to digitize its 19th-century newspapers. The BL has made its English Short Title Catalogue of pre-1801 English books available online, is contributing to the European Digital Library Project and in the intellectual property realm continues to champion fair dealing/fair use. The BL has recently won the bid to manage UK PubMeD Central, and Brindley aims to widen the BL's user base and make the collections available to anyone who wants to do research. – [MT]

Follett, Jonathan. **Envisioning the Whole Digital Person** *UXmatters* (20 February 2007) (http://www.uxmatters.com/MT/archives/000171.php). – This article looks at the growing mass of digital artefacts that we accumulate from cradle to grave, and wonders how to deal with it from the user-experience or designer's point of view. The material in question

includes everything from e-mail to photos, and is likely to be around far longer than we will. The suggestions on what to do as "user experience practitioners" will sound familiar to librarians: "...we can advocate data portability, accessibility, and standardization and prepare ourselves and our customers to manage our new digital lives." – [*LRK]

Grossman, David. **Internet Librarian 2006: 10 years old and going strong**. *Searcher* 15 (2) (2007): 45-50 – Grossman shares his experiences from the 10th Internet Librarian Conference held in Monterey, California in October 2006. Library 2.0, end-user cataloguing, social networking and library toolbars are argued to be the emerging trends to get involved with. Library 2.0 is the name for the applications /technologies that enable people to get involved and to participate/interact online. Flickr [http://.flickr.com], MySpace [http://.myspace.com] and Facebook [http://.facebook.com] are Library 2.0 applications that allow users to form online information-sharing communities. Greasemonkey (http://greasemonkey.mozdev.org) is a Library 2.0 technology that enables users to customise Web pages without the need to learn HTML. Library Thing (http://.librarything.com) is a Web service that allows users to catalogue their home collections of print and AV resources and share these lists with others. Second Life [http://secondlife.com] is a 3D virtual world where people can create a character and socialise on-line; it now contains a virtual library system. To highlight library resources, a number of libraries are now creating toolbars that users can download onto their Web browsers. Conduit (http://.conduit.com] allows libraries to create their own toolbars and Bookburro (http://bookburro.org] allows users to download a custom toolbar that processes their information requests through the holdings of libraries they use. – [MT]

Houghton-Jan, Sarah. **Technology Competencies and Training for Libraries** *Library Technology Reports* 43(2)(March/April 2007) (https://publications.techsource.ala.org/bookstore/displayItem.pl?itemID=2595) – Experienced technologist and trainer Houghton-Jan (of the "Librarian in Black" blog) has produced a thorough guide to developing and implementing a competencies-based library technology training program. Beginning by addressing the question whether you should even develop such a program, Houghton-Jan follows with chapters titled "Build a Foundation for the List of Competencies," "Staff Participation and Buy-In," "Writing the Competency Descriptions," "Formatting the Competencies List," "Implementing the Competencies," "Assessing Staff on Competencies," "Planning for Technology Training," "Creating Technology Training and Materials," "Conducting Technology Training," and "Reassessment and Revision". A bibliography and lists of helpful websites are included. This is an excellent resource for any library seeking to develop a technically competent staff. Which, come to think of it, should be all libraries. – [*RT]

Miller, Ron. **The truth is in there: sleuthing for data with digital forensics** *EContent* 30 (2) (Mar 2007) 38-47 – Digital forensics or investigation is searching a hard drive or network for evidence of wrongdoing. It involves acquisition, preservation, analysis, presentation and authentication – [CP]

Salz, Peggy Anne. **Team spirit: inspiring users to generate content** – *EContent* 30 (3) (Apr 2007) 28-44 – How can sites turn user-generated content to cash? Companies featured in the article: Electronic Arts, Helium, iStockPhoto, Jive Software, Outsell, Prospero Technologies, Reality Digital and Teachbyvideo – [CP]

Scott, David Meerman. **Publishing, corporate style** – *EContent* 30 (2) (Mar 2007) – 48 – Why the online media or press room should speak to more than other news professionals. As they are updated regularly, they are picked up and ranked higher by search engines. Advises targeting online media rooms at buyers, and journalists will also reap the benefits – [CP]

Srodin, Sharon. **Radical reinvention: Life beyond the library**. *Searcher* 15 (3) (2007): 8-11 – Librarians are argued to possess a number of key transferable skills that they can and should apply in sectors outside traditional libraries. To become more effective in interviews when seeking jobs outside a traditional library setting, librarians should be careful to avoid library jargon. By adapting their well-honed reference interview skills, librarians are well placed to listen to the needs of prospective employers and offer solutions in language they understand. Survey results indicate that information manage-ment firms are now looking for candidates who appear motivated, innovative, enthusiastic and willing to try new things. If you are considering changing sectors it is suggested that obtaining an MBA qualification can be very useful. Networking, finding a good mentor or trying an internship/secondment in an area that interests you can also help for those considering a change of direction. – [MT]

Information Access

Johnson, Richard K. **In Google's Broad Wake: Taking Responsibility for Shaping the Global Digital Library** *ARL: A Bimonthly Report* (250) (February 2007) (http://www.arl.org/resources/pubs/br/br250.shtml) – Johnson begins by reviewing projects to massively digitize research library collections by Google, the Open Content Alliance, and others. The bulk of this special issue, however, comprises a recounting of various mass digitization policy recommendations from ALA, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, Francophone National Libraries, the Committee on Institutional Cooperation, OCLC's Programs and Research Division, and others. Johnson then summarizes the common themes and provides a "negotiation checklist" for libraries to review when negotiating a contract for digitization. While this may be too late for a number of institu-tions, contracts announced very recently seem to indicate that there are still libraries that can benefit from this review of principles and policies. – [*RT]

Suber, Peter. **The Ides of February in Europe: The European Commission Plan for Open Access** SPARC Open Access Newsletter (107) (2007) (http://www.earlham.edu/~peters/fos/newsletter/03-02-07.htm#ec) – The Ides of February turned out much better for the open access movement in the European Union than the Ides of March did for Caesar, but, while it made significant gains, it did not get an OA mandate from the European Commission. Rather, the European Commission said that it will "issue specific guidelines on the publication of articles in open repositories after an embargo period." As you may have noticed, publishers of late have become increasingly vocal in their opposition to OA mandates, and different publisher groups have issued a spate of declarations to that effect (e.g., the "Brussels Declaration on STM Publishing"). On the OA side of the equation, a petition supporting an EU OA mandate now has over 24,000 signatures (more still welcome). Suber notes: "The two EC Directorates-General most involved in OA policy-making – Information Society and Media, headed by Vivian Reding, and Research, headed by Janez Potocnik -- are trying to find a diplomatic trail through a minefield. They are eager to show support for the concerns on each side and postpone the day when they will have to alienate one of them." Still, the European Commission made some important commitments to OA, including allocating about 50 million Euros for OA digital repository support and making contributions towards the payment of OA journal publication fees. – [*CB]

Information Retrieval

Bates, Mary Ellen. **Q & A** *EContent* 30 (2) (Mar 2007) 43 – Considers the convergence of better search engines and the expectation that search engines give answers, not just information. Google Answers has closed, but Bates has tested ChaCha – "imagine the love child of Google and a very harried reference librarian" Concludes that users want more from a search engine than just websites – [CP]

Davis, P.M. & Connolly, M.J.L. **Evaluating the Reasons for Non-use of Cornell University's Installation of DSpace**. *D-Lib Magazine* 13 (3/4) (March/April 2007) http://www.dlib.org/dlib/march07/davis/03davis.html – Like many institutional repositories, Cornell University's Repository is underused and underpopulated. In this article, the authors attempt to evaluate why this is so. Drawing on detailed interviews with Cornell staff, the authors conclude that faculty have "little knowledge of and no motivation" to use the repository due to the normative culture of academic disciplines, each defined by its own reward system and traditions. The report suggests that institutional repositories need to address this cultural diversity. While the article reports on Cornell's experiences, the issues it raises could relate to any institutional repository. – [IW]

Lanza, Sheri R. **Color your world and switch your cases.** *Searcher* 15 (3) (2007): 43-45 – This product review looks at Folder Marker and Lower Case Switcher. Folder Marker (http://.foldermarker.com) is a free product that allows you to make rapid cosmetic changes to the folders on your personal computer. Rather than see the standard yellow folders on screen, Folder Marker lets you can change the colour and icon assigned to each folder. The author states that you can also use the product to annotate folders by priority and/or type of work, and indicate the degree of completion of the contents of a folder.

Although there is already a change case function in Microsoft Word, Lower Case Switcher (http://.lower-case-switcher.com) is argued to be a "less clunky" way of altering typed text. In situations when you have accidentally left caps lock on while typing a paragraph or capitalised too many letters in a word, Lower Case Switcher allows you to rectify this with simple keyboard shortcuts. It is available for a 30-day trail and then users can buy lifetime support for the product for $19.99. – [MT]

Rochkind, Jonathan. **(Meta)search Like Google** *Library Journal* (17 February 2007)(http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6413442.html) – The author contrasts the current flawed state of metasearch (searching more than one database through a single interface) with what could be achieved were libraries to adopt local indexing methods such as those used by Google. Instead of the user waiting for the interface to cross-search each source database at the time of request and merge the results, often resulting in a less than satisfactory 'dumbed down' set which may not be adequately relevancy-ranked, deduplicated, or custom-sorted, the user could receive a more efficient, value-added set thanks to the prior harvesting of metadata (and sometimes content elements) arranged in a local index, which is what was actually searched when the query was made. Rochkind explains the technology clearly with minimal jargon and lists the challenges that libraries face, such as asking for licensing agreements with vendors which allow for metadata and content harvesting for the purpose of index-building. Disclaimer: Current Cites editor Roy Tennant was consulted and is quoted in the article. – [*JR]

Smith, Steve. **The opiate of content – search** *EContent* 30 (2) (Mar 2007) 24 – Buying traffic for a website is easy. Search engine marketing keyword buying can also help organisations optimise their pages to get the same results for free. Smith argues that this

strategy keeps a site addicted to search. Instead, treat every page of a site as a landing page – [CP]

Stebbins, Leslie. **E-mail is evolving – are you?** *Searcher* 15 (2) (2007): 8-12 – The average worker now has a mean 2,483 items in their e-mail inbox and 858 filed items, so information overload is now a daily reality for many of us. New strategies/techniques are proposed for dealing with this increasing mountain of messages. Every time you e-mail a co-worker or work group you take up their time interrupt their day and diminish productivity. Rather than use e-mail all the time, try using the phone, instant messaging (IM), mobile phone text messaging, or social networking sites like MySpace or Facebook. Only check your e-mail two or three times a day. Use meaningful subject lines on your e-mails and be brief; use concise bullet points to summarise information in longer e-mails, and consider putting supporting documentation on shared workspaces/intranets rather than using attachments. Send less e-mail and consciously decide whether to use "cc" and "reply to all". Do not let your e-mail inbox set your daily priorities; if necessary a to-do list of ongoing projects and a post it notes for your daily tasks can allow you to prioritise more effectively. – [MT]

Tebbutt, David. **Pipes allows real users to mix and mash information**. *Information World Review*, 233, March 2007: 11 – Yahoo's "interactive feed aggregator and manipulator" (http://www.pipes.yahoo.com/pipes) is discussed in the opinion column. An example of its application is given, tracking blogs with specific tags, with favourable results reported. QEDwiki and Tegqlo are also noted as alternative applications. – [RH]

White, Martin. **Hits, but mainly misses** *EContent* 30 (2) (Mar 2007) 37 – On the importance of intranet search: "all too often search software has been implemented to provide a solution to failing information architecture." White argues that search should provide a range of parameters that enable the user to move beyond the initial results list and refine their search query: "searching is about finding" – [CP]

Knowledge Management / Social Networking

Chillingworth, Mark and Griffin, Daniel. **A Web 2.0 future for enterprise tools.** *Information World Review* 233, March 2007: 16-17 – Key information management technology suppliers are asked whether content applications and search engines must incorporate social networking features. Issues discussed include the relative merits of more open indexing and tagging processes in a Web 2.0 environment balanced against some of the legal issues that those habit and processes pose. – [RH]

Crawford, Walt. **The renascence of the writer** – *EContent* 30 (2) (Mar 2007) 44 – "Net media and conversational software allow the many to participate. From that many, some are emerging as bright new writers." Focuses on blogs as opportunities for new writers – [CP]

Starr, Jennie. **The blogging experience: Hosts, add-on content, and monetizing.** *Searcher* 15 (3) (2007): 46-49 – In December 2006 the blog search engine http://.technorati.com claimed to be tracking over 63.2 million blogs. Blogging is fast becoming a mainstream activity and this article looks at some of the Web hosts and services one can use to enhance the blogging experience. For those wishing to self host their blogs, http://.blogsome.com is recommended over the http://.Wordpress.com service, as no charge is levied for file editing. To keep blog subscribers interested a

variety of sites are suggested: Del.icio.us [http://del.icio.us) can be used to allow users to share their favourite sites, Flickr [http://.flickr.com) can be used to share photos, Meebo [http://.meebo.com) can be used anywhere to provide instant messaging and Songspot [http://.sonific.com) allows a free music player to be inserted in Web pages/blogs. Blog adverts are argued to be intrusive and distracting, but links to useful advertising sites are provided in the article for those wishing to explore this option. – [MT]

Metadata

Elings, Mary W., and Günter Waibel. **Metadata for All: Descriptive Standards and Metadata Sharing across Libraries, Archives, and Museums** *First Monday* 12(3) (March 2007) (http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue12_3/elings/) – This informative article begins by describing a conceptual model that precisely identifies and describes the key components of any metadata standard: data fields and structure, data content and values, data format, and data exchange. Using these concepts, the authors then construct a grid for appropriate metadata standards from the museum, library, and archival communities in each of these areas. By classifying standards from these communities using their conceptual model, they hope to make the soup of acronyms more understandable. The grid also serves to demonstrate how related these different communities are in their needs for the same types of metadata standards. The piece also provides a brief history of metadata standards in each community and takes a look at recent trends. The authors end with an assertion that the three areas would be more productively depicted as "cultural materials, bibliographic, and archival" to indicate that museums, for example, may find use for bibliographic metadata standards and vice versa. – [*RT]

Preservation

Davis, Philip M, and Matthew J. L Connolly. **Institutional Repositories : Evaluating the Reasons for Non-use of Cornell University's Installation of DSpace** *D-Lib Magazine* 13 (3/4)(March/April 2007) (http://www.dlib.org/dlib/march07/davis/03davis.html) – Interesting look at faculty participation, or lack thereof, in the Institutional Repository 'DSpace' at Cornell. Basically the incentives aren't there for faculty to contribute their works. The lure of print publication or other modes of distribution based on discipline are far too strong and alternatives, such as posting a copy on one's own personal Web page seem adequate. Where there is steady growth, it's "largely supported by active policies or guidelines that dictate that items will be deposited into DSpace, such as the case of theses and dissertations". This last might indicate the benefit of a more energetic approach on the part of departments and the institution as a whole. Ease-of-use issues and better integration across systems also needs to be addressed. – [*LRK]

 - *see another citation of this article under Information Retrieval, above*

Markey, Karen, Soo Young Rieh, and Beth St. Jean, et. al. **Census of Institutional Repositories in the United States: MIRACLE Project Research Findings** Washington, DC: Council on Library and Information Resources, February 2007 (http://www.clir.org/pubs/abstract/pub140abst.html) – This report summarizes the findings of the first phase of the IMLS-funded MIRACLE Project to investigate institutional repositories in higher education. At a survey response rate of about 21% of the 2,147 academic library directors and senior library administrators contacted, only 10.8% had

implemented a repository. An additional 36.3% were planning to implement or were pilot testing an institutional repository. There is much to consider in this report, but the diversity of organizational situations, repository software options, and implementation models makes it difficult and even erroneous to make sweeping generalizations. Rather, those who are interested in this issue would do well to spend some time digesting the findings for what can inform their particular situation. – [*RT]

Web Design

Stewart, Darin. **Why taxonomies need XML** *EContent* 30 (2)(Mar 2007) 46, 48-51 – Argues the case for adding XML to a taxonomy to enable sharing across systems and applications. Zthes is a leading standard, but in the future: "ontology may the latest double-point word in buzzword Scrabble, but as the semantic Web becomes a reality, taxonomy builders will need to pay attention". The goal is to create a way to communicate information and knowledge efficiently across an organisation and beyond. Briefly describes progress towards formal ontologies for the semantic Web – [CP]

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