

## Current Awareness

**Column editor: Gina Cybulska**

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://sunsite.berkeley.edu/CurrentCites>). If you are interested in providing reviews for the column, please contact UKeIG administration for further details.

## Catalogues/cataloguing

Zuber, Peter A. "[A Study of Institutional Repository Holdings by Academic Discipline](http://www.dlib.org/dlib/november08/zuber/11zuber.html)" *D-Lib Magazine* 14(11/12) (2008) (<http://www.dlib.org/dlib/november08/zuber/11zuber.html>) – Based on a sample of forty-one four-year U.S. institutions with over 15,000 students, Zuber found that institutional repositories haven't yet attracted documents from a wide range of disciplines, that disciplines with a history of preprint/e-print use are the main repository contributors, and that most repositories are not using incentives for deposit, such as a "most popular" feature. Eighteen of the 41 institutions had institutional repositories, with nine evaluating or launching one. – CB\*

Springer, Michelle, Beth Dulabahn, and Phil Michel, et al. "[For the Common Good: The Library of Congress Flickr Pilot Project](http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/flickr_report_final.pdf)" (October 30, 2008) ([http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/flickr\\_report\\_final.pdf](http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/flickr_report_final.pdf)) – In January of 2008, the Library of Congress launched a pilot with Flickr by posting 3,000 out-of-copyright images for viewing and tagging. This pilot now has over 4,000 images, is logging 500,000 views a month, and crossed the 10 million view mark a few months ago. The larger Flickr Commons site grew out of the original pilot, with other institutions adding their images for the public. The strength of the Flickr project was the minimal amount of staff time involved, and the enormous contribution from the general public to tag and comment on the images. At the time of the report, 67,176 tags were created by 2,518 Flickr users. Even more impressive, 4,548 out of 4,615 photos had at least one tag created by the Flickr community. An unexpected bonus of the pilot was that the collections increased in their Google rankings, leading more users to the site. This report shows that a small step into the world of Web 2.0 rewarded the Library of Congress with information about images in their collection that would have been difficult to achieve otherwise. At the same time, it opened the field of digital library collections to a vast array of new users. The report lays out recommendations for moving forward from a pilot to a program, concluding that: "The benefits appear to far outweigh the costs and risks." A summary of the report can be viewed at [http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/flickr\\_report\\_final\\_summary.pdf](http://www.loc.gov/rr/print/flickr_report_final_summary.pdf). – KC \*

## Digitisation projects/preservation

Berman, Francine. "[Got Data?: a Guide to Data Preservation in the Information Age](#)" *Communications of the ACM* 51(12) (December 2008): 50-56. (<http://doi.acm.org/10.1145/1409360.1409376>) – Interesting discussion of trends and approaches concerning digital preservation. The world is "awash in digital data". In fact, we produce way more than we could ever possibly preserve. Determining what gets saved and how is comparable to strategies for dealing with infrastructure in the physical world. The approach must be "useful, usable, cost-effective, and unremarkable". Conceptually, the author discusses the 'Branscomb Pyramid' model where data is tiered off according to its value, whether personal (e.g. photos, tax records) or more widespread (e.g. government data or irreplaceable cultural artifacts). Each level requires a different solution and different body in charge. The author concludes with a helpful 'Top Ten Guidelines for Data Stewardship' which boil down to planning ahead, being organized, and being ready for change. – LRK\*

Dietrich, Dianne, Jennifer Doty, and Jen Green, et al. "[Reviving Digital Projects](#)" *The Code4Lib Journal* (5) (2008) (<http://journal.code4lib.org/articles/685>) – Building new digital applications is often exciting and fulfilling, but grinding out voluminous documentation for them is not. The only thing that is worse is trying to maintain or migrate an old system only to find that the inner workings of said system are, in the words of Churchill, "a riddle wrapped in a mystery cloaked in an enigma." Of course, this isn't new: computer specialists have been wrestling with this problem since there were computer specialists. However, each new generation rediscovers this problem afresh, and it bears repeating. In this paper, the authors describe their travails reviving the University of Michigan Library's Online Atlas of Michigan Plants and offer cogent guidelines to consider when contemplating reviving other abandoned systems. – CB\*

## E-publishing

Kaser, Dick. "**SIIA's Global Information Industry Summit: Content Industry Considers Business Models**". *Information Today* 25 (10) (November 2008): 29-30 – Interesting summary of the some of the issues discussed at SIIA's global summit in September. Key theme is how traditional news publishers can make money when people are increasingly expecting their news to be free via the Internet. Whether there is a future for traditional print media is debatable. - MdS

## Education

Ito, Mizuko, Heather Horst, and Matteo Bittanti, et al. "[Living and learning with new media: summary of findings from the Digital Youth Project \(white paper\)](#)" *Digital Youth Research and The John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation* (November 2008) (<http://digitalyouth.ischool.berkeley.edu/files/report/digitalyouth-WhitePaper.pdf>) – Most adults seem to be aware that young people integrate digital media and online communi-

cation into their lives in ways not understood or experienced by most adults. The question of how this online life shapes young people's experience of literacy, learning and authoritative knowledge are explored in these results of a three-year study of 800 youths and young adults. The results and implications for the education profession (and libraries) are exciting and challenging. Young people are motivated by a desire to manage and strengthen existing friendships, as well as "geeking out", a highly social and engaged way of peer-based, self-directed learning. The report suggests that adults can play an important role in the online life of young people – by removing barriers that deprive teens of access to online participation, and by setting learning goals when teens are engaged in interest-driven online learning. – WC\*

## General

"Forecast 2009: What's on the Horizon". *Information Today* 25 (11) (December 2008): 1-48 – Insights on what 2009 holds for us from some of the information world's most notable observers, including Anthea Stratigos and John Blossom. Obviously, the current financial crisis informs much of their thinking, but some of the predictions include the rising importance of mobile platforms for content distribution, increased adoption of cloud computing, and the rising importance of social media as a marketing tool for content producers. – MdS

Fogel, Karl. [Producing Open Source Software : How to Run a Successful Free Software Project](http://producingoss.com/) Sebastopol, California: O'Reilly, October, 2005. (<http://producingoss.com/>) – This stupendously useful book addresses not simply the tools valuable to open source products, which are subject to change, but the human factors of these projects, which are timeless. Throughout the discussions of version control, wikis, licensing, and other "how-to" issues, Fogel repeatedly circles back to people issues, with a strong emphasis on that *bête noir*, communication. Fogel's deep experience with open-source projects shines through in chapters such as "Social and Political Infrastructure," where he frankly addresses one of the larger mysteries of open source development: who gets to decide? The chapter called "Money" should be read by any non-profit organization embarking on an open-source project, as Fogel clarifies the need to shake piggy-banks to provide quality assurance, usability testing, documentation, and even development. "Producing Open Source Software" is not only good reading for anyone involved in open-source development, but it is also an engaging and useful introduction to open source for library managers and operational staff trying to wrap their heads around this very important software development model. The book is available online free in multiple formats, but also available for purchase in a handy dead-tree edition. – KGS\*

Waller, Vivienne, and Ian McShane. "[Analysing the challenges for large public libraries in the twenty-first century: a case study of the State Library of Victoria in Australia](http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/2155/2060)" *First Monday* 13(12)(1 December 2008) (<http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/2155/2060>) – Don't let the words "large public libraries" and the specific location of the case study put you off. This paper has something of relevance to most people grappling with strategic planning while questioning of the role of libraries in the current information ecology and information

economy. The debate about the role of libraries and the use of physical library spaces is nothing new, and these debates have carried over into the role of libraries in the online world. Having a thorough knowledge of the nature of this changing online environment is one of the biggest challenges facing large public libraries. To this end, the authors identify a significant research gap in the area of understanding the changing nature of information-seeking and information-provision, and are currently engaged in research to address that. However they contend that the usefulness of that research data could be enhanced by the "development of a library policy framework that clarifies and re-evaluates institutional goals". – WC\*

## Information access

De Braal, Bernice; "You've never had it so healthy". *Information World Review* 252 December 2008: 29-30 – Leading patient information sources are reviewed in the context of the widening of public access to health information and choice in the UK. Topics covered include; Treatment Choice, Health Encyclopedias, Patient Feedback, Clinical Information and Charity Websites. Weblinks are provided for the sources cited. - RH

Tenopir, Carol, and Donald W. King. "[Electronic Journals and Changes in Scholarly Article Seeking and Reading Patterns](http://www.dlib.org/dlib/november08/tenopir/11tenopir.html)" *D-Lib Magazine* (November/December 2008) (<http://www.dlib.org/dlib/november08/tenopir/11tenopir.html>) – 'If we build it, they will come', has been a guiding principle of most libraries putting their content online. One advantage of having done so now for several years, is studying the effect, if any, that such access has on scholarly reading habits. This the current authors have done since 1977. In this article, they offer a shortish yet interesting review of their findings, particularly in how reading habits relate to what eventually gets cited. There is a difference and the narrower scope of what makes it to the bibliography may, the authors suggest, be due "to peer pressure in the form of choosing more often to cite those [items] that are cited by others." – LRK\*

Brown-Sica, Margaret. "Playing Tag In the Dark: Diagnosing Slowness in Library Response Time" *Information Technology and Libraries* 27(4) (December 2008): 29-32 – This article summarizes the steps taken by systems librarians at the Auraria Library in Colorado to diagnose and resolve slow response time when users queried proprietary databases. As the authors point out, many factors affect the speed (or lack thereof) of library databases, and many of those factors are outside the control of the library itself. Systems librarians at Auraria set out to improve the response time, which they defined as "the time it took for a person to send a query from a computer at home or in the library to a proprietary information database and receive a response back, or how long it took to load a selected full-text article." Librarians began by testing bandwidth on library computers, and by consulting the university's IT department to determine if anything they were doing could potentially be impacting the library's traffic. Both investigations led to dead ends. The next factor up to be checked was the proxy server (Ill WAM); perhaps unsurprisingly, testing revealed that the response time was better when traffic was not routed through the proxy. As a result, the library stopped routing in-library traffic through the proxy server, leading to some gains in speed for those inside the building. Next up

was an investigation of the proxy server hardware; a switch and some cabling were replaced, leading to additional gains in response time. In addition, specifications for a new server (already scheduled to be purchased) were changed: the new server will feature additional memory and a second processor. Overall, the article offers a specific roadmap for diagnosing and resolving response time problems, and as a bonus it is written in approachable language that should be easy-to-follow for those systems-librarians-by-default among us. – AC\*

## Information management

"[Big Data](#)" *Nature* (4 September 2008) (<http://www.nature.com/news/specials/bigdata/>) – This special focus is interesting even if you aren't the proud owner of petabytes worth of data or more. In fact, as the owner of considerably less than that, it is the very contrast that I find fascinating. How can such a large pile of data be managed? What are the particular issues faced by data centers that manage such data (on this point, Cory Doctorow's piece "Welcome to the Petacentre" was particularly enlightening). Clifford Lynch also has a piece. We were uncharacteristically late to the game on this one, so the issue has long since disappeared from the newsstand. Check it out online or at your local library. – RT\*

## Information retrieval

Hane, Paula J. "More Research-Sharing Tools and Search Engine Improvements." *Information Today*, 25 (11) (December 2008): 7-14 – This article contains some useful overviews of new information handling tools including A.nnotate, Zotero, Zoho and Microsoft's SearchPerks which is an interesting development in Internet search. -MdS

Norris, Michael, Oppenheim, Charles and Rowland, Fytton. "**Finding open access articles using Google, Google Scholar, OAlster and OpenDOAR**". *Online Information Review*, 32 (6) (2008): 709-715 – Interesting review of the strengths and weaknesses of these different search engines for finding OA materials. The general Google search engine and Google Scholar prove themselves against OAlster and OpenDOAR showing there is a lot of work for these specialist search engines still to do. -MdS

Fang, Jiaming, Peiji Shao, and George Lan. "[Effects of Innovativeness and Trust on Web Survey Participation](#)" *Computers in Human Behavior* 25(1) (January 2009): 144-152) – Web surveys are increasingly used by many organizations – including libraries – to gather data from users and potential users. Given their popularity, it is important to understand how people react when they encounter a survey online. The authors of this study looked at how much two factors impact a Web surfer's decision to complete an online survey: trust in the organization behind the survey, and the surfer's own comfort level with web-based technology. The article provides an in-depth overview of the literature behind these two factors, and the results of a brief survey given to "university students in a computer practical course." The authors found that those who are more willing to try out new technologies on the Web were more willing to take a web-based

survey. They also found that trust in the organization behind the survey is important – a more reputable organization gives the surfer a measure of confidence that the answers they give will be kept anonymous. Of course, the limitations of the study are obvious – college students may not be representative enough for the results to be considered applicable in every circumstance. Overall, the article provides some good background material and points to consider before setting up an online survey. – AC\*

## Knowledge management/social networking

Perry, Michelle. "The appliance of science: Web 2.0" *Information World Review* 252 December 2008: 37-38 – The manner in which research by scientists is being transformed by Web 2.0 tools is analysed with comment from practitioners. The potential of networking sites to facilitate cross-organisational collaboration and the dissemination of research findings are discussed. -RH

Hawkins, Donald T. "All Things 2.0: The Fall 2008 ASIDIC Meeting Preview" *Information Today* 25 (10) (November 2008): 32-33 – Web 2.0 was the theme of the ASIDIC meeting in September and how changes brought about by new services can be dealt with by established publishers and disseminators of information. Article contains some useful tips for dealing with change. –MdS

Cain, Thomas J., Joseph J. Branin, and W. Michael Sherman. "[Knowledge Management and the Academy](#)" *EDUCAUSE Quarterly* 31(4): 26-33. (<http://www.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/EQM0845.pdf>) – The care, organization, and distribution of institutional data appears to be a growing trend within academic librarianship. Ohio State University Libraries was one of the first to recognize this need and provide its institution with a viable solution. This article describes how authoritative data derived from university online systems, such as human resources, registrar, libraries, and sponsored research, were combined to create OSU:pro. The reports and visuals generated by this data provide university administrators with a better understanding of faculty activity, helps faculty to manage research reporting, and offers students and the greater community a way to locate specialists and scholars. While a very complex challenge, it is certainly one that many academic libraries will need to address in the coming years. – SG\*

Maron, Nancy L., and K. Kirby Smith. [Current Models of Scholarly Communication: Results of an Investigation Conducted by Ithaka for the Association of Research Libraries](#) Washington, DC: Association of Research Libraries, November 2008. (<http://www.arl.org/sc/models/model-pubs/pubstudy/>) – This study, which involved 301 librarians at 41 institutions interviewing professors about their use of digital resources, attempts to increase our understanding about new models of scholarly communication by identifying a large list of specific resources and asking questions about emerging patterns, genres, quality control practices, and other issues. The survey identifies and discusses eight types of digital resources (e-only journals, reviews, preprints, reference sources, data resources, blogs, discussion forums, and academic hubs) and provides a useful list of over 200 digital scholarly resources (also available online in a searchable

database). Among the study's main conclusions are: digital innovations are taking place in all disciplines; digital publishing is shaped powerfully by the traditions of scholarly culture; many digital resources are small, niche resources; and achieving sustainability is a universal challenge. The study also suggests there is a valuable role for libraries to play in supporting these digital initiatives, through knowledge-sharing with faculty, proactive preservation initiatives, guiding the creation of new projects, and, more generally, serving as a "nexus of communication" on campus. – BR \*

Millard, Elizabeth. "[How to Make Web 2.0 Productivity Tools Work](http://www.baselinemag.com/index2.php?option=content&task=view&id=5237&pop=1&hide_ads=1&page=2&hide_js=1)" *Baseline Magazine* (10 October 2008) ([http://www.baselinemag.com/index2.php?option=content&task=view&id=5237&pop=1&hide\\_ads=1&page=2&hide\\_js=1](http://www.baselinemag.com/index2.php?option=content&task=view&id=5237&pop=1&hide_ads=1&page=2&hide_js=1)) – Although written more with a corporate audience in mind, this short article highlights some of the more important things to keep in mind when trying to encourage the use of Web 2.0 tools in an organization. Although some of the suggestions might seem self-evident to Library 2.0 advocates, the author reminds us that if we want to encourage innovation we have to abandon some preconceived notions of how things should be managed. For example, the author stresses the point that we should abandon attempts at detailed productivity measures where Web 2.0 tools are concerned and look instead at overall productivity of workers in relationship to their projects and tasks. Another recommendation is to allow personal use but limit the amount of time people engage in personal work through common understanding rather than rigid control. Finally, the author suggests using microblogging as a recruiting and retention tool. In addition to signifying that the organization is interested in pursuing newer technologies, microblogging and other tools have an additional benefit as they help improve collaboration among workers. – FC\*

Clark, K., Hammer, M. "**Communities of practice: the VDOT experience**" *KM Review* 11(5), November/December 2008, 10-15 – A case study looking at the implementation of communities of practice (CoP) within the Virginia Department of Transportation. These CoPs are the primary tool used to encourage knowledge sharing and network creation. Guidance is given on how to create a CoP and what needs to happen to maintain the CoP as it matures. – GC

Archibald, D., McDermott R. "**Benchmarking the impact of communities of practice**" *KM Review* 11(5), November/December 2008, 16-21 – Determining the value of a community of practice's (CoP) contribution to an organisation has been difficult to quantify. Funded by the UK's Engineering and Physical Sciences Research Council (EPSRC), this research project surveyed a number of industry sectors. The results of the survey enabled the research team to identify nine key factors that contribute to a highly performing CoP including: training for leaders, use of IT tools and leaders with sufficient time to perform the role. A benchmarking tool has been developed. - GC

de la rue, K. "**The theory and practice of communities**" *KM Review* 11(5), November/December 2008, 22-25 – A review article discussing the fundamentals of communities of practice (CoP). The author defines key concepts, and covers the basic principles of communities and how they work. – GC

Longbottom, C., Bamforth, R. **"Social networking in the public sector"** *KM Review* 11(5), November/December 2008, 30-33 – The public sector has been seen to hold back from adopting social networking technologies for a variety of reasons. This article looks at five areas where social networking tools could help public sector bodies have better interactions with the public. It is suggested that information about the public library can be maintained on wikis. - GC

## Legal issues

Caldwell, Tracy; **"A tight embrace"** *Information World Review* 252 December 2008: 18-20 – The settlement between Google and copyright holders affected by its Book Search project is detailed with comment from the industry in a three-page analysis of the agreement. The \$125m settlement is reported to fund the creation of a Book Rights Registry to settle legal claims; though this is currently limited to the US. Commentators note the issues inherent in the process including privacy, orphan works and the future role of book publishing. Caveats about limitations on access are reported alongside worries regarding the potential domination of the information landscape by Google. - RH

Band, Jonathan. [A Guide for the Perplexed: Libraries & the Google Library Project Settlement](#) Washington, DC: Association of Research Libraries and the American Library Association, 2008. (<http://www.arl.org/bm~doc/google-settlement-13nov08.pdf>) – Few copyright cases are as important as the lawsuit brought against Google by the Authors Guild and the Association of American Publishers (The Authors Guild, Inc., et al. v. Google Inc.) over Google Book Search. There is a tentative joint settlement for this lawsuit; however the document is over 200 pages long and it is complex. Needless to say, you are unlikely to want to try to decipher the whole thing yourself. Fortunately, Band, a noted intellectual property expert, has done that for you in a svelte, comprehensible 23-page document. – CB\*

Boyle, James. [The Public Domain: Enclosing the Commons of the Mind](#) New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008. (<http://www.thepublicdomain.org/>) – [James Boyle](#), William Neal Reynolds Professor of Law and co-founder of the Center for the Study of the Public Domain at Duke University, is a well-known intellectual property expert. Like Lawrence Lessig, he has a talent for making arcane aspects of IP law clear, and he is a critic of ever more restrictive copyright and other IP laws. Here's a brief excerpt that describes *The Public Domain: Enclosing the Commons of the Mind*: "This book is an attempt to tell the story of the battles over intellectual property, the range wars of the information age ... I try to show that current intellectual property policy is overwhelmingly and tragically bad in ways that everyone, and not just lawyers or economists, should care about. We are making bad decisions that will have a negative effect on our culture, our kids' schools, and our communications networks; on free speech, medicine, and scientific research. We are wasting some of the promise of the Internet, running the risk of ruining an amazing system of scientific innovation, carving out an intellectual property exemption to the First Amendment." In addition to the print version, the book is freely available in [PDF](#) and CommentPress versions. – CB\*



## Security

Horrigan, John B. "[Use of Cloud Computing Applications and Services](#)" [Pew Internet & American Life Project](#) (12 September 2008) ([http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/262/report\\_display.asp](http://www.pewinternet.org/PPF/r/262/report_display.asp)) – More and more of us are getting used to cloud computing – whether we realize it or not. This was the subject of a recent study by the Pew Internet & American Life Project. The study asked if internet users had done one of six cloud computing activities (used webmail, stored photos or videos online, used a service like Google Documents, paid to store files online or backed up a hard drive to an online service) and found that 69% of internet users had done at least one of those activities; 40% had done at least two. Younger users in particular are growing more and more acclimated to cloud computing: 87% have done at least one activity, and 59% have done two. But despite our growing willingness to let someone else store this data on our behalf, we still expect to have control of the data. The study found that 90% of those surveyed said they would be "very concerned" if a company hosting their data sold it; 80% said they would be "very concerned" if their photos and video were used in an ad campaign. This paradox points to a slew of issues, running the gamut from better-educating users about password strength to pushing for more transparency from the companies providing these services. It's also worth considering whether there is a place here for libraries to step in. Can we build on our reputation for protecting our patrons' privacy when it comes to their reading choices, and offer them an alternative storage space for materials relating to their academic pursuits? – AC\*

Solove, Daniel. [The Future of Reputation: Gossip, Rumor, and Privacy on the Internet](#) New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007. (<http://futureofreputation.com>) – Daniel Solove, a lawyer and blogger, takes a look at the long term effects of the Internet on personal privacy and the legal ramifications of a loss of reputation. People often struggle with the fine line between privacy and free speech on the Web. You can share personal information about yourself or a friend on a blog, not realizing that it will be there for anyone – including future employers and dates – to see. Solove looks at a libertarian approach to leave things as they are, and an authoritarian approach that would restrict personal expression and finds neither a good fit for keeping free expression on the Web and regulating rumors and gossip. He suggests that the law take into consideration that when we expose information to others, we do expect a certain limit on accessibility. The examples in Solove's book serve as a cautionary tale to anyone who thinks their Facebook and MySpace life is limited to friends and family. Solove says: "We need to spend a lot more time educating people about the consequences of posting information online... Teenagers and children need to be taught about privacy just like they are taught rules of etiquette and civility." The book is available in print from Yale University Press and for free online at <http://futureofreputation.com>. – KC \*

## Virtual libraries

Breeding, Marshall. "[Open Source Integrated Library Systems](#)" [Library Technology Reports](#) 44(8) (December 2008) (<http://www.techsource.ala.org/ltr/open-source-integrated-library-systems.html>) – As the one person most knowledgeable about the

integrated library systems (ILS) landscape in the United States (and probably beyond), Marshall Breeding is exceptionally well-positioned to take a look at open source ILS software. Here is exactly the kind of straightforward expository look at these options you have come to expect from Breeding. Although it is not an in-depth comparison, he provides charts of specific functions (e.g., faceted browsing, book jacket display, invoice processing, etc.) and identifies which of these each of the four highlighted options supports. Systems covered in this detail include Koha, Evergreen, OPALS, and New-GenLib. Unfortunately, this also makes the shelf-life of this LTR likely to be measured in months. As Breeding himself says, "This report provides a snapshot in time of the open-source ILS products and companies. The world of ILS is evolving rapidly, even more so than previous trends in library technology." So get it now, while it's hot, or else don't bother. – RT\*

Rochkind, Jonathan. "[A Primer in Risk: Taking a Critical Look at Common Support Scenarios for Open Source Software](http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6611591.html)" *Library Journal* (15 November 2008) (<http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6611591.html>) – There continues to be much hype and debate about open source software, although we appear to be approaching a level of mature discussion and serious consideration heretofore rarely seen. This piece by Rochkind (a programmer at Johns Hopkins University and well-regarded Code4Lib regular) is an excellent contribution to the kind of level-headed discourse of which this topic deserves. As Rochkind points out, not all open-source software is created (and more importantly, maintained) equally. Any library that chooses to go with open source (and make no mistake, there are plenty of very good reasons to do so, and probably every library already uses open-source software) would do well to consider the source of support, which can range from one or a few programmers who may move on one day to being backed by the full faith and force of a large organization or commercial company. And as Rochkind also points out, even should the support go away you have the option of taking it on yourself, which is an escape hatch that is often not an option with closed source software. All in all, this is exactly the kind of informative and nuanced discussion of options that will hopefully presage a movement away from what often appears to be a religious debate into the realm of business like decision-making. Highly recommended. – RT\*

Askey, Dale. "[We Love Open Source Software. No, You Can't Have Our Code](http://journal.code4lib.org/articles/527)" *Code4Lib Journal* (5) (15 December 2008) (<http://journal.code4lib.org/articles/527>) – Open-source software seems to have nearly achieved the level of overall righteousness formerly reserved for Mom and apple pie. We can detect this by how often libraries that write software want to tack the "open source" label onto projects without actually releasing the code. It may happen eventually, but either it is or it isn't. In this piece, Askey skewers the motivations he perceives as contributing to this problem: "perfectionism – unless the code is perfect, we don't want anyone to see it, dependency – if we share this with you, you will never leave us alone, quirkiness – we'd gladly share, but we can't since we're so weird, redundancy – we think your project is neat, but we can do better, competitiveness – we want to be the acknowledged leader, and misunderstanding – a fundamental inability to understand how an open source community works." – RT\*

Vielmetti, Edward. "[Focus on the interface](http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6599063.html)" *netConnect* (15 October 2008) (<http://www.libraryjournal.com/article/CA6599063.html>) – Mobile phone ownership and

use is growing, and this article is a good summary of what libraries are currently doing to provide library services and resources to mobile platforms. OPACs and library webpages can be specially coded for delivery to a mobile device or take advantage of "transcoding", which reformats regular library websites on-the-fly. Library notices delivered by SMS can help to provide "high-value notification and reminder services". Did you know that at least one library can SMS the title, location, floor and call number of an item found on the OPAC to a mobile device? Customers can then move from the OPAC terminal to the correct floor and shelf location of the desired item, using the information received by SMS. The article also looks at mobile services provided by Amazon and LibraryThing, which provides good food for thought for possible library applications. – WC\*

## Web/intranet design

Schindler, Esther. "[6 Scripting Languages Your Developers Wish You'd Let Them Use](#)" *CIO Magazine* (13 October 2008)

([http://www.cio.com/article/454520/Scripting\\_Languages\\_Your\\_Developers\\_Wish\\_You\\_d\\_Let\\_Them\\_Use?source=nlc\\_ciostrategy](http://www.cio.com/article/454520/Scripting_Languages_Your_Developers_Wish_You_d_Let_Them_Use?source=nlc_ciostrategy)) – While many people are familiar with the more common scripting languages such as Perl and PHP, this article introduces us to some obscure, emerging, and specialty scripting languages. As has been true since the earliest days of programming language compilers, most of these languages are destined for obscurity as they are designed to fill specific niches that are not well-served by more traditional languages. Nonetheless, you never know where the next major language is going to come from. Who would have predicted in 1997 that PHP would become as important as it has been? The languages that are discussed in this article include Scala, Groovy, Clojure, Lua, F#, and Boo. While it is true that some of these languages are not, in fact, scripting languages that's almost irrelevant. These languages address a multitude of needs, including making it easier for people to learn how to program. The main point of this article is that there is a lot going on in the world of programming languages and it's important for us to keep up. While we may be Perl and PHP code monkeys today, that won't be true five or ten years from now. – FC\*

Souders, Steve. "[High-Performance Websites](#)" *Communications of the ACM* 51(12)(December 2008): 36-41. (<http://doi.acm.org/10.1145/1409360.1409374>) – Kind of geeky but worth looking at for those interested in making their Web pages load faster. The author makes clear from the get-go that you can have as powerful a 'back-end' as the big boys (i.e. Google, Yahoo, etc.) and still suffer from slow loading times when the web-page hits the browser. Among the tips he offers: put the CSS at the top and the scripts at the bottom. As the author puts it, "Life's Too Short, Write Fast Code", or in other words, every milisecond counts. – LRK\*

Contributors to Current Cites \* :Charles W. Bailey, Jr., Keri Cascio, Frank Cervone, Warren Cheetham, Alison Cody, Susan Gibbons, Leo Robert Klein, Brian Rosenblum, Karen G. Schneider, Roy Tennant.

Contributors: Andrew Brown, Gina Cybulska, Martin de Saulles, Virginia Havergal, Rob Hughes, Ida Kwan, Ann Smith, Matt Treadwell, Ian Walker.