

Current Awareness

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This column contains summaries of articles (print and electronic) about online services, CD-ROMs, networked information, electronic publishing, multimedia etc. including, with permission, abstracts identified with an * next to the author initials, drawn from Current Cites, the monthly publication distributed electronically by the Library, University of California at Berkeley:

<http://sunsite.Berkeley.edu/CurrentCites/> .

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ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING

Crawford, Walt. "Library Access to Scholarship" Cites & Insights: Crawford at Large 4(4) (March 2004): 1-5. (<http://cites.boisestate.edu/civ4i4.pdf>) . - One of the many library and/or technology issues that commentator Walt Crawford tracks has become the "open access" movement in scholarly communication. This is all to the good, since he has a keen eye and a span of sources that surely is only achievable through lack of sleep and nothing better to do. I won't recount all of the developments he notes in this ongoing section of Cites & Insights, but suffice it to say that if you are interested in scholarly communication, and the changes it is undergoing, you could do much worse than tracking what Crawford and Suber (cited elsewhere in this issue of Current Cites) have to say about it. – [*RT]

Nature Web Focus: Access to the Literature: The Debate Continues (2004) - Nature is offering a new series of freely available commissioned papers by noted authors on open access and other innovative publishing business models. Current contributions include "Open Access and Learned Societies"; "Open Access and Not-for-Profit Publishers"; "Open Access: Yes, No, Maybe"; "Universities' Own Electronic Repositories Yet to Impact on Open Access"; "Why Electronic Publishing Means People Will Pay Different Prices"; and other papers. There are also useful links to related articles and resources. Like prior Nature debates on electronic publishing issues, this one is lively and very interesting. – [*CB]

Suber, Peter. "Open Access Builds Momentum" ARL: A Bimonthly Report on Research Library Issues and Actions from ARL, CNI, and SPARC (232) (February 2004) (<http://www.arl.org/newsltr/232/openaccess.html>) . - The Open Access movement had a big year in 2003, and, in this article, Peter Suber, author of the SPARC Open Access Newsletter, provides a concise overview of the highlights, including the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities, the Bethesda Statement on Open Access Publishing, the Declaration of Principles and Plan of Action by the U.N. World Summit on the Information Society, the Directory of Open Access Journals, PLoS Biology (published by the Public Library of Science), Scientific Publishing: A Position Statement by the Wellcome Trust in Support of Open Access Publishing, and more. Miss any of that? This is a good way to quickly catch up on major events related to this rapidly changing and increasingly important movement. – [*CB]

GENERAL

"A Dozen Primers on Standards" Computers in Libraries 24(2) (February 2004) (<http://www.infotoday.com/cilmag/feb04/primers.shtml>) . - Ever been stumped by the frequent use of information acronyms, and needed a quick reference? What's a DOI? This feature article is a handy overview of current standards applied to information management. Each standard is presented under the following subheadings: Acronym, What it stands for, What is its purpose? Groups behind it, Does it replace or update a previous standard? What stage of development is it at? Pros and Cons. Included are: ARK, DOI, METS, MODS, NCIP, OAI-PMH, ONIX, OpenURL, RDF, RSS, Shibboleth, and SRW/SRU. Each standard is well defined, with examples of usage given. Additionally each norm

description is presented by an expert on the subject. As well, the author's affiliation is included. This article is worth retaining for future reference, to be consulted when one encounters those ubiquitous standards in our professional reading. – [*MG]

Boutin, Paul. "Webmonkey, RIP: 1996 - 2004" *Wired* (Online) (17 February 2004) (<http://www.wired.com/news/infostructure/0,1377,62300,00.html>). - Chances are, if you needed to bone up on something technical during the latter half of the 1990's, you might have looked for a tutorial on Webmonkey. Things like figuring out the basics of Javascript, how to embed media or the finer points of tables and frames: if that's what you needed, Webmonkey had a tutorial for you. The quirky site, so nonchalant and earnest, inspired by the "with it" culture of its parent, *Wired Magazine*, fell victim to corporate restructuring this month courtesy of owner Terra Lycos. – [*LRK]

Chudnov, Dan. "Library Groupware for Bibliographic Lifecycle Management" (28 January 2004) (<http://curtis.med.yale.edu/dchud/writings/blm.html>). - Those familiar with Dan know him as charming guy with more good ideas in a good day than many of us have all year. Some of those ideas have spawned production services (e.g., Jake), while others may have been a bit too far ahead of their time (e.g., Docster). But whether his ideas ever result in running code or not, they are almost always provocative. The stated purpose of this piece is to propose "that libraries could merge the functions of weblogging, reference management, and link resolution into a new library groupware infrastructure, helping users to better manage the entire lifecycle of the bibliographic research process." Wow. Why couldn't I have thought of that? – [*RT]

Computers in Libraries 2004 Medford, NJ: Information Today, 2004. (<http://www.infotoday.com/cil2004/presentations/>). - Many of the presentations from this conference, held March 10-12, 2004 in Washington DC are available in either PowerPoint or Adobe Acrobat format, or both. Handouts are also often available, as well as the occasional Perl script. The topics range widely from strategies for keeping up to blogs to dead and emerging technologies. There is, in other words, something here for just about anyone. – [*RT]

Ebare, Sean. "Digital Music and Subculture: Sharing Files, Sharing Styles" *First Monday* 9(2) (2 February 2004) http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue9_2/ebare/index.html - The author takes a fresh look at online music sharing communities, applying theories from popular music studies and cyberethnography. He explores how identity and difference, subculture and genre lifespans, and the political economy of technology and music production combine to influence the use of music on the Internet. Identity is more fluid, and anonymity more prevalent, making the music sharing community somewhat unique. He argues that the subculture of music sharing user-driven and that the ability to forecast how this community behaves will be invaluable for both music publishers and social scientists. He offers his own forecast on the future marketplace for music sharing, arguing that it will depend upon an understanding of the diversity of the members, their need for self-determination, and the mandate to allow these communities to exercise a substantial degree of independence within their online experience. – [*TH]

Kurlantzick, Joshua. "Dictatorship.com: The Web Won't Topple Tyranny" *The New Republic* (25 March 2004) (<http://www.tnr.com/doc.mhtml?pt=oGG%2BvQEIJRNjHGIOJiX4X%3D%3D>). - As a tool to disseminate popular culture, the Internet has had spectacular success, even in "authoritarian nations" such as Laos, China, Singapore and Saudi Arabia. But, the author points out, its political impact has been negligible and, in some cases, "the Internet actually may be helping dictatorships remain in power." This in spite of the fact that pundits have been touting the political potential of the Net since it became more or less a mass medium in the mid-90s. Although "Internet usage has surged in many authoritarian nations," it has had little impact on "the political climate." Why? Because, the author says, it is not particularly useful "for expressing and organizing dissent," and -- technologically -- "it has proved surprisingly easy for authoritarian regimes to stifle, control, and co-opt." The author points out that the Internet is mainly used for individual rather than group activities. As one Laotian researcher quoted here observes, the Internet "is about people sitting in front of a terminal, barely interacting." Also, using the Net requires a relatively high level of literacy. The author provides examples of how different nations have attempted to control access to and content on the Internet, particularly China -- "Despite President Clinton's prediction, Beijing has proved that it can, in fact, nail Jell-O to the wall." And Western companies have proven only too eager "to sell the latest censorship technology" to any oppressive regime willing to ante up. Some dissidents claim the Internet actually facilitates monitoring of individuals by the government. Fascinating read; a don't-

miss. – [*SK]

Prosser, Carolyn. "Project of the month: managing electronic services". *Managing Information*, 11 (3) (April 2004): 44- 45. Tips article by an information manager in a chemical company that outlines the steps she takes in selecting and implementing electronic services in her organisation. The author suggests observing the "six Cs" in the selection process - cost, contract, currency, coverage, convenience and contacts. Tips for implementation include getting the IT department firmly on your side and taking advantage of any in-house training offered by the service provider. – [LR]

Royle, Pamela and Waugh, Norman. "Should systematic reviews include searches for published errata?" *Health Information and Libraries Journal* 21 (1) (2004): 14-20. Describes a pilot project to estimate the proportion of published errata, linked to randomized controlled trials (RCTs), that are worthwhile obtaining, when doing a systematic review. 100 RCTs, from four journals, plus their errata, were examined both by an information specialist and a public health consultant. From the information specialist perspective, 74% of the errata were worth obtaining as they concerned errors in tables or figures. The public health consultant deemed that 5% of the errata would affect a meta-analysis, and 10% would have errors that would affect interpretation of the individual RCT. Discusses the implications of these findings for the systematic review process, suggesting that checking is advisable although only around 5% are likely to change the conclusions of a systematic review. - [CJU]

Seebach, Peter. "The Cranky User: Businesses Behaving Badly : Put Customers First Or Risk Losing Them" *developerWorks* (4 March 2004) (<http://www-106.ibm.com/developerworks/web/library/wa-cranky38.html>). - The "Cranky User" is an occasional column on IBM's extremely helpful DeveloperWorks site (the Ease of Use section is wonderful). In this missive, the Cranky User complains about poor customer service. Poor customer service is a kind of action on the part of a company that produces a reaction in the customer, namely, a negative reaction. While I don't particularly agree with his example near the end of the column where he complains about contact email addresses being replaced by web forms, the notion that bad institutional practices have negative consequences is important to keep in mind. – [*LRK]

Sunner, Mark. "Worms with your spam?" *Managing Information*, 11 (3) (April 2004): 10-11. Examines the threat to e-mail security posed by the convergence of virus and spam techniques. Predicts that this threat is going to get worse and may reach the point where it compromises the effectiveness of e-mail as a communications medium. This "new generation" of viruses are spread by spam use infected computers to propagate more spam and spread the viruses even further. Looks at how spammers are becoming more sophisticated in their attempts to get around spam filters and anti-virus software. Concludes that traditional reactive security arrangements are no longer enough and that a managed approach is needed that picks up on trends and proactively seeks to identify and stop dangerous e-mails. – [LR]

INFORMATION ACCESS/RETRIEVAL

Beehner, Lionel. "Lies, Damned Lies, and Google" *mediabistro.com* (15 February 2004) (<http://www.mediabistro.com/articles/cache/a1217.asp>). - Google has morphed, among other things, into a tool for lazy journalists, who have come to consider the number of results from a simple keyword search to be an indicator of popularity. Surely you've read examples of great investigative reporting like..."When I typed the word ____ into Google, I got more than 10,000 hits!" The author indicates that Los Angeles Times reporters seem to be the worse offenders, although staff writers for the upscale New Yorker have also used this cheap trick. The article is rich in actual examples. Google's data, the author reminds us, "can be faulty, fleeting, and, as any doctoral student or fact checker knows, terribly inaccurate." It has reached the point, he notes, where "plugging Google in a story has become almost a telltale sign of sloppy reporting, a hack's version of a Rolodex." – [*SK]

Dilevko, Juris, and Lisa Gottlieb. "Selection and Cataloging of Adult Pornography Web Sites for Academic Libraries" *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 30(1) (January 2004): 36-50. - The authors argue that as interest in adult porn studies proliferates on campus, librarians are challenged to provide support material. The authors delineate various criteria for selecting subject-specific Web sites, reminding us that while the sites themselves may not be scholarly, they may still "represent a type of cultural artefact worthy of (and currently the subject of) scholarly inquiry." Catalogers will

appreciate the extensive discussion on subject access in this area. The inclusion of material like this in the academic library's catalog would, we are told, "facilitate scholarly research in this area and fill a prominent gap in the library's collection." (Available through ScienceDirect.) – [*LRK]

Feldman, Susan. "The High Cost of Not Finding Information" *KMWorld Magazine* 13(3) (March 2004)

http://www.kmworld.com/publications/magazine/index.cfm?action=readarticle&Article_ID=1725&Publication_ID=108. - "There are all kinds of information disasters. Some are caused by wrong information. Some are caused by outdated information.... Missing or incomplete information plagues many projects..... Finally, there is the increasing problem of too much information." Some interesting statistics here: -- "(R)oughly 50% of most Web searches are abandoned." -- "Knowledge workers spend from 15% to 35% of their time searching for information." -- "Searchers are successful in finding what they seek 50% of the time or less...." -- "40% of corporate users reported that they can not find the information they need to do their jobs on their intranets." -- "Not locating and retrieving information has an opportunity cost of more than \$15 million annually." -- "Some studies suggest that 90% of the time that knowledge workers spend in creating new reports or other products is spent in recreating information that already exists." – [*SK]

Fiehn, Barbara. "Federated Searching: A Viable Alternative to Web Surfing" *MultiMedia & Internet@Schools* 11(2) March/April 2004. - You'll be hearing lots more about federated search. Simple definition -- searching a variety of resources (databases, OPACs, the Web) from a single interface. This article focuses on school library media centers and the products available for that market. But it is worth reading by all information professionals since it presents a good overview of the topic and explains some of the pros and cons. The biggest advantage is the most obvious -- no need for the end user to hop from resource to resource in order to access all that an institution has available online. Some vendors' products will group results by source which, in essence, can show the user which resources are likely to be most useful for his/her particular information need. And the user only has to learn one search interface. But single-interface searching also has some downsides. Federated search technology is not quite "there" yet as far as relevance and de-duping are concerned. Also, the single interface may not permit the end user to take advantage of whatever sophisticated search features are offered by the individual resources. And this relatively new technology may prove challenging for librarians and IT people alike. If you don't have adequate in-house resources, hosting solutions may be available. – [*SK (amended)]

Grant, Maria. "How does your searching grow? A survey of search preferences and the use of optimal search strategies in the identification of qualitative research." *Health Information and Libraries Journal* 21 (1) (2004): 21-32. Examined the possible benefits of optimal searching strategies for qualitative research. Explored the perceptions of such strategies held by experienced qualitative researchers among the Cochrane Qualitative Methods Network (response rate to the questionnaire survey 30/40). Most respondents preferred to search independently, and searched a wide range of databases. Some had searched for specific methodologies, and had found problems in locating particular research designs, although often the actual topic is more important than a particular research design. The respondents had some reservations about the use of optimal search strategies, mainly the possibility that some important research studies might be missed. Concludes that optimal searching strategies to promote sensitivity, or specificity, would be necessary. - [CJU]

Jackson, Joab. "Taxonomy's Not Just Design, It's an Art" *Government Computer News* 23(3) (9 February 2004) (http://www.gcn.com/23_3/interview/24814-1.html). - This is an interview with Michael C. Daconta, director of Web and technology services for systems integrator APG McDonald Bradley Inc. in McLean, VA. He is "chief architect of the Defense Intelligence Agency's Virtual Knowledge Base, a project to compile a directory of Defense Department data through Extensible Markup Language ontologies." Previously, he created "a set of electronic mortgage standards for Fannie Mae" and, while in the Army, worked as a programmer on "combat and intelligence simulation software." He is a co-author of *The Semantic Web*, published last year. In the interview, Daconta explains the concept of the semantic Web and the role XML will play in nudging the Web from its current human-readable nature to a machine-readable information network. He also discusses the right way and the wrong way to create a taxonomy, mainly that it cannot be done informally. And he talks about the Defence Intelligence Agency's use of the Virtual Knowledge Base, and how it may evolve in the future. – [*SK]

Jacso, P. Savvy searching: natural language searching. *Online Information Review* Vol 28 (1) 75-79
The author claims that few users make use of the controlled vocabulary terms when formulating search queries tending to prefer natural language. Jacso provides an example of the differing approaches likely to be taken by an information professional in formulating and running a search strategy, defining and selecting terms, use of Boolean and so forth and that of the end user. Both have their inherent problems with the potentially time consuming breakdown of the query into manageable blocks by the information professional to the use of the vernacular by the end user, neither approach necessarily resulting in any relevant hits. A potential solution is that of using a natural language handling software package, KnowledgeFinder or PubMed. Through MEDLINE he illustrates the impact and potential of such software. This article is difficult to explain in an abstract and requires careful reading but it does illustrate the potential of such search software packages. – [SM]

Jenkins, Michelle and Johnson, Frances. "Awareness, use and opinions of methodological search filters used for retrieval of evidence-based medical literature – a questionnaire survey." *Health Information and Libraries Journal* 21(1) (2004): 33-43. Assessed the level of awareness of such search filters among health librarians in the NHS and Ireland, and academic health specialist librarians. A telephone questionnaire was used as the basis of the survey, and 194 health librarians, and 30 academic librarians targeted, with an overall response rate of 88%. Results indicated that awareness of search filters was greater than use, fewer than half of the respondents using them. Respondents seemed unclear about the way methodological filters are constructed and were uncertain about the benefits. - [CJU]

Nicholas, David, Huntington, Paul, Williams, Peter, and Dobrowolski, Tom. "Re-appraising information seeking behaviour in a digital environment: bouncers, checkers, returnees and the like." *Journal of Documentation* 60 (1) (2004): 24-43. Collation of data from transaction log studies and questionnaire surveys of consumer health information platforms (Web sites, digital TV) provided a categorisation of information seeking behaviours. Emphasises that for many visits, visits were brief and shallow (bouncers). Analysis of the data suggests that as the number of sites proliferate, users are being 'spoilt for choice' and trust may decline as the number of health Web sites visited increases. Web site users are checking by moving horizontally across sites, and the checkers are assessing quickly by across site comparisons. It was difficult to find evidence of repeat visit behaviour, and while there may be return visits from loyal customers attracted to the brand of a particular site, these are outnumbered by the number of first time or occasional visitors. - [CJU]

Nisonger, E., Thomas. "Citation Autobiography: An investigation of ISI Database Coverage in Determining Author Citedness". *College & Research Libraries* Vol 65 (2) March 2004: 152 – 163. This article describes a case study within the Library & Information Science subject area investigating the completeness of the Institute of Scientific Information's citation data for the author. The methodology includes the author searching for his lifetime citation record through the ISI databases and Web search engines over a period of nearly 15 years. Whilst many are aware that the ISI databases should not be relied upon exclusively for a complete record of author citations, it is interesting to see the dimensions of the problem. The ISI databases located approximately 30 percent of the author's total citations and approximately 40 percent of his print citations. The databases were at their least useful when it came to demonstrating the international impact of the author's research, finding approximately 20 percent of his citations from outside the United States, and approximately 2 percent of items in languages other than English. - [AS]

Ronan, Jana, Patrick Reakes, and Gary Cornwell. "Evaluating Online Real-Time Reference in an Academic Library: Obstacles and Recommendations" *The Reference Librarian* 78/79 (2002/2003): 225-240. - It's about time we started developing ways to assess chat reference. That's the argument the authors present here. Chat reference systems are relatively wide-spread and there is growing comfort with the technology. The authors present a broad overview of the current state of assessment, going over both problems and possible solutions. Among their recommendations is using traditional methods of measuring reference performance where possible and treating user feedback and usage statistics with a grain of salt. I'd only add, that the guidelines ought to incorporate some mechanism for assessing the technology as well as the humans involved. In other words, whether the tools and options are truly living up to expectations. This is completely appropriate (though often overlooked) given the tech-driven nature of the service. Note, this article is only one of several on chat reference in this issue. Other articles include broad overviews of the service, case

studies and even tips. – [*LRK]

Somers, M. and Nieuwenhuysen, P. Finding bibliographic information about books on the WWW: an evaluation of available sources. *Online Information Review* Vol 28 (1) 33-42 The authors take a quantitative, (what is available in various bibliographic databases), and a qualitative, (what services do these databases provide), approach to evaluating bibliographic information provided by a range of online products including online catalogues of some libraries, a fee-based online book database and some Internet based bookshops. A detailed outline of the approach taken plus a detailed set of results is provided for each product evaluated. In conclusion they provide us with a list of search criteria, for example, title search and the most effective source found. Overall National Libraries were found to be outstanding resources for local publications (as one would hope) although the Library of Congress and the British Library catalogues were acclaimed for their local and International language coverage. The author's also suggest that with access to the Internet it is hard to justify paying for bibliographic information via subscription databases and that access to a mixture of National Library catalogues and commercial online bookstores would offer the same service. – [SM]

Spink, Amanda, Yang, Yin, Janse, Jim, Nykanen, Pirrko, Lorenc, Daniel P, Ozmutlu, Seda and Ozmutlu, H. Cenk. "A study of medical and health queries to web search engines." *Health Information and Libraries Journal* 21 (1) (2004): 44-51. Examines historical trends in the proportion of general web queries devoted to health queries. Data sets from Excite (May 2001, 10,000 queries) and AlltheWeb.com (February 2001, 10, 257 queries) were analysed, together with 'should' queries from an AskJeeves query log of 20 December 1999 (1792 'advice' queries in total). In comparison to earlier analyses of Excite queries in 1997 and 1999, the proportion of health related queries appears to be declining (9.5% of Excite queries in 1997, 7.5% in 2001). Possible reasons include an increase in the proportion of e-commerce type transactions, and an increase in the provision of more specialist health sites. - [CJU]

Spink, Amanda and Sollenberger, Michelle. "Elicitation purposes and tasks during mediated information search." *Journal of Documentation* 59 (6) (2004): 77-91. Develops a characterisation of elicitation purposes for search tasks during mediated information retrieval. Examined and coded elicitations during searches done by an experienced professional searchers for 30 information seekers at an US university. Each conversation (typically 2 hours long) was taped and transcribed for later coding and analysis. Examined the frequency of particular types of elicitation purpose, and compared the patterns of purpose for both the professional and the information seeker at various stages in the search. The major tasks were: 1) information problem modelling (and consequent search subtasks; 2) search system task; 3) interactive task and 4) social task. Each task featured a set of elicitation purposes. Discusses implications for information retrieval, and notes the benefits of mediated search services. - [CJU]

INTERNET USE

Gurstein, Michael. "Effective Use: A Community Informatics Strategy Beyond the Digital Divide" *First Monday* 8(12) (1 December 2003) (http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue8_12/gurstein/). - The author assesses the huge industries, both intellectual and cultural, that have sprung up to comment on the "digital divide". He evaluates the various concepts underlying the idea of this schism and its effect on the populace, and argues that it is mostly a marketing vehicle for technology firms and Internet service providers. He presents an alternative approach, which is to focus on "effective use." This idea is based in community informatics theory, which defines the Internet as a new force in culture and society that is not easily measured by conventional means. He argues that instead subsidizing technology providers, it would be more effective to tie the debate about the digital divide to real-world issues like health care delivery, the environment and concrete economic injustices. – [*TH]

Huffaker, David. "Spinning Yarns Around the Digital Fire: Storytelling and Dialogue Among Youth On the Internet" *First Monday* 9(1) (5 January 2004) (http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue9_1/huffaker/). - Leaping into the cultural-meme business from the cusp of a decidedly McLuhan-esque metaphor, the author argues that the practice of storytelling -- a key factor in early child development -- enjoys new life with digital media. He hypothesizes that online forums and virtual communities, including message boards, Weblogs and

instant messaging software, create important spaces for youth to express ideas and feelings, discuss issues and projects, and develop their social skills. Along the way, he invokes Paolo Friere's work on the nature of student-teacher relationships. He goes on to examine the importance of dialogue and storytelling children's learning, matching standard teaching practices with scenarios that utilize digital technologies. He concludes this interesting exploration with examples of Weblogs and instant message forums that illustrate the potential of the Internet as a community builder. – [*TH]

McIver, Jr., William, William F. Birdsall, and Merrilee Rasmussen. "The Internet and the Right to Communicate" *First Monday* 8(12) (1 December 2003) (http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue8_12/mciver/). - The authors assert that the emergence of the Internet challenges traditional conceptions of information rights, because it opens new territory that does not fit easily into the parameters that govern traditional media outlets. But the debate about information rights on the new medium tends to happen in a piecemeal fashion, governed by various stakeholders or professions with an interest in the process. They see a need to craft a more holistic framework that encompasses the entire spectrum of information rights, and the right to communicate in particular. To explore this concept, they define and differentiate between 'hard' and 'soft' laws. Hard laws are statutory and legislative, while soft laws are less binding, and exist in the form of charters, declarations and guiding principles. They examine how the right to communicate can be implemented in realistic terms, arguing that a grass roots movement is necessary to push society to create a process for defining information rights. – [*TH]

PRESERVATION

Christiansen, Donald. "Ephemera for Engineers and Scientists" *Today's Engineer (IEEE)* (February 2004) (<http://www.todaysengineer.org/feb04/backscatter.asp>). - It's not news to those of us in the information profession -- the fact that when it comes to Web-based resources, it's too often a case of here today, gone tomorrow. How many times have you spotted an interesting article while out surfing and, when you wanted to go back to it later on, you could no longer find it? Even if you saved the link, the link no longer works. While this is an annoyance when it comes to our everyday web browsing, it can be a disaster for research and scholarship. "Many technical articles now include references to Internet addresses, as opposed to hard-copy resources," the author correctly points out. But when authors or readers attempt to access these URLs at a later time, they have effectively vanished into cyberspace. The author cites a study done at the University of Colorado Health Sciences Center in which researchers checked articles that appeared in *Science*, the *Journal of the American Medical Association* and the *New England Journal of Medicine*. They found "that 3.8 percent of Internet references were inactive three months after journal publication, 10 percent after 15 months and 13 percent after 27 months." While there are ways of tracking these things down after the fact -- the author gives some suggestions, most would agree that this is a tremendous waste of time and energy. A solution, he says, may come in the form of "Digital Object Identifiers (DOIs), the Uniform Resource Name (URN) syntax or the Persistent Uniform Resource Locator (PURL)." – [*SK]

Museums and the Web 2004 Toronto, ON: Archives and Museums Informatics, 2004. (<http://www.archimuse.com/mw2004/sessions/>). - A number of the presentations at this conference are online in HTML as contributed papers. Although many of the topics are perhaps of interest mostly to museums or archives, there are other topics (e.g., building accessible web sites) that cross those boundaries. – [*RT]

VIRTUAL LIBRARIES

Cullen, Rowena. "Evaluating digital libraries in the health sector. Part 2: measuring impacts and outcomes." *Health Information and Libraries Journal* 21 (1) (2004): 3-13. Examines some of the evaluation models used for digital libraries in the health sector, such as the NeLH (UK), and CIAP (Australia). Discusses the advantages and disadvantages of the randomised controlled trial model, and concludes that a mixed model, combining quantitative and qualitative methods is more valuable. Relates some of the discussions for the MLA (US) model, which is based on the balanced scorecard. Evaluation of digital health information systems needs to take into account the way the systems fit into the users' world, and this may mean that the evaluation takes into account timeliness, sufficiency, technical performance dimensions, benefits (and user effort). - [CJU]

Thinking Beyond Digital Libraries - Designing the Information Strategy for the Next Decade: Proceedings of the 7th International Bielefeld Conference Bielefeld, Germany: Bielefeld University Library, February 2004. (<http://conference.ub.uni-bielefeld.de/proceedings/>). - The presentations from this conference are available in PowerPoint format. A few also have the speakers' remarks available in Adobe Acrobat (PDF) format. Speakers include university professors, academic library directors, and high-level managers of library-related non-profits and commercial companies (e.g., Jay Jordan, President and CEO of OCLC). - [*RT]

WEB DESIGN

METS Opening Day Washington, DC: Library of Congress, October 2003. (http://www.loc.gov/standards/mets/od1_ppts.html). - A number of the PowerPoint presentations from the first "METS Opening Day" for the emerging standard Metadata Encoding and Transmission Standard (METS) are available. Topics include an introduction to METS, building METS by hand, METS profiles, METS repositories, and METS case studies. A second METS Opening Day will be occurring on April 8 and 9 at Stanford University, with those presentations likely to be available shortly thereafter at the METS web site. - [*RT]

Novljan, Silva and Žumer, Maja. "Web pages of Slovenian public libraries: evaluation and guidelines." *Journal of Documentation* 60 (1) (2004): 62-76. Evaluates the content and quality of 28 Slovenian public library Web pages. The work was done by students of the Department of Library and Information Science and Book Studies (University of Ljubljana). Results indicate that improvements could generally be made in presentation of the mission and general information (shorter and more up-to-date); information about collections (better description, particularly of the electronic resources); communication with the library (particularly online reference, reservation and feedback services). Presents guidelines on the content and organisation of public library Web pages. - [CJU]

Quinn, Laura S. "Designing for Limited Resources" *Boxes and Arrows* (12 January 2004) (http://www.boxesandarrows.com/archives/designing_for_limited_resources.php). - *Boxes and Arrows* is an online journal. The stated mission is "the definitive source for the complex task of bringing architecture and design to the digital landscape." In the January 2004 issue, Laura Quinn, a technology strategy and information architecture consultant has developed an article that brings the web developer into the real world of cost constraints. She states that web artisans should develop websites the way that IKEA builds furniture. The company "designs the price tag first." Towards the end of the article she includes the IKEA vision as stated on their website: <http://www.ikea.com> Paragraph headings include: "Understanding your limitations," "Long-term impacts," and "Guerilla requirement definition." Within each heading the author further includes key budgetary issues that have to be addressed. There is nothing revolutionary in this article. It is however, a sobering checklist of important issues to be considered by those starting out. - [*MG]

Wells, Catherine A. "Location, Location, Location: The Importance of Placement of the Chat Request Button." *Reference & User Services Quarterly* 43(2) (Winter 2003): 133-137. - Concerned that Chat Reference wasn't being used as much as expected, librarians at Case Western Reserve began experimenting with the size, shape, location and frequency of placement of the Chat Reference button on their site. They eventually found, perhaps to no one's surprise, that usage went up if the button appeared on the most heavily trafficked pages (home page, catalog page, database page). High on their wish list now is getting the button on vendor (i.e. subscription database) pages as well. - [*LRK]

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