

increasingly popular, and the Kuali Open Library Environment is highlighted as a useful alternative. ILL is not normally allowed by e-book licences and our experience matches that of the author who notes that this is “an issue of concern for libraries.” Of interest here is a recent article by Michael Levine-Clark (2011) that suggests short-term lease as an alternative.

In the final chapters the author looks at the ways in which e-books can help libraries “align closely with the priorities of their universities” and discusses future considerations such as barriers to adoption (lack of standards, lack of seamless access, etc.) and lack of relevant content, especially where textbooks are concerned. Chapter 6 looks at the new opportunities for teaching and learning offered by e-books and mentions the NeBO research as showing the e-books are most often used to locate specific information rather than for linear reading, stating that this “indicates that e-books are well suited for research purposes.” While this is generally true, NeBO also noted shortcomings in the various interfaces that in some cases inhibited browsing and easy research. At the same time, academics were often uneasy with the students’ lack of contiguous reading.

All things considered this is a very accessible book written in an easy style, and its coverage of the essential issues surrounding the use and management of e-books in libraries is excellent. It will - or at least, should - become necessary reading for any librarian contemplating or engaged in adding e-books to their collection.

The only mild criticism is that some of the graphics that include up to nine data series are very difficult to interpret without the benefit of

colour! It is also unfortunate from the point of view of the text that one of the aggregators used as an example, NetLibrary, became ‘e-books on EBSCOhost’ during the publication stages of the book, and an addendum slip from the publisher would have been useful, as there is a new interface and purchase model.

## References

Levine-Clark, Michael (2011) Whither ILL? The Changing Nature of Resource Sharing for E-Books. *Collaborative Librarianship* 3 (2): 71-72. Available at (PDF) <http://www.collaborativelibrarianship.org/index.php/jocl/article/view/146/92> (29/08/2011)

Price, Kate and Virginia Havergal (eds) (2011) *e-Books in Libraries: a practical guide*. London: Facet.

## Merchants of Culture: The Publishing Business in the Twenty-First Century: John B Thompson

*Reviewed by Tracy Kent*

As Information Professionals we all have an interest in the world of book publishing. There has been an enormous amount written, both online and in print, about the publishing industry in recent years - not all of which has been as well researched as what is presented here by Thompson. Clearly Thompson has had unprecedented access to some of the major movers and players throughout the publishing process, making

this volume on the history of publishing quite unique in its rigorous study of the industry in both the UK and the US over the last forty years. With so much going on, I am surprised the book is only 440 pages long.

The book is both an account of the dynamics and pressures faced by the modern trade publishing industry, alongside a summary of the industry's history. The book looks at all of the key industry players - authors, agents, editors, promoters and booksellers - and attempts to explain how their roles have changed.

The first few chapters deal in depth, more entertainingly than you might think, with the shifts in bookselling in recent years, the rise of the literary agent and the now 40-50 year shift towards publishing houses merging, being acquired, etc, and the rise of the major retail chains. It looks at how the publishing industry itself has had to continuously restructure, regroup and reinvent itself to account for ever more new channels and styles of publication. It looks at the dangers of dominant publishers, and revels in the almost seditious activities of the small players.

The work concentrates on general-interest publishing of fiction and non-fiction which is sold through the mainstream distribution network, with only passing reference to academic, professional and scholarly publishing, and none at all to specific market sectors such as children's, young adult, science fiction, illustrated art books or self-help works, for example. He does include independent presses in his scope, along with print-on-demand and the e-book phenomenon. He includes Amazon (of course) and other online retailers, but excludes channels such as Lulu and

Smashwords.

The second half of the volume provides an analysis of the digital revolution. It is this analysis, quickly out of date due to the nature of book publishing, which by the very length of the authoring and production process prevents the book from becoming the definitive work. The chapter on e-books, for example, will need revising in the light of the Kindle launch in the UK and the rapid increase in the number and variety of e-books available. Further, there is little analysis beyond discussion of the potential for new content and technology solutions. This is understandable given that the market itself is still trying to get to grips with it, but it remains a weakness within a thoroughly researched volume. There are some intriguing statistics about how publicity, such as inclusion in Richard and Judy book lists, affects sales, and how supermarkets have affected the sale of books which would be of particular interest to colleagues who work within the public library sector.

It seems publishing is at a crossroads. There is a cataclysmic change just round the corner, which will affect how we think about books. Thompson opens up all sorts of ideas about where the industry may be heading, and leaves a gigantic question mark over the whole industry, one that has survived 500 years but may have seen its day, perhaps? You will find material of interest in this book - though which sections you will read in detail will probably depend on your area of interest and the information sector you are from. Overall it is of interest to anyone in the profession who wish to know more about the world of book publishing.

There is a comprehensive bibliography, details of how the author's research was carried out, an index and a table of contents as well as many tables and graphs included in the text.

## **The Intranet Management Handbook: Martin White**

London, Facet Publishing, 2011

*Editor's note: perhaps unsurprisingly, given the interests of the UKeiG membership, there has been considerable interest in this book; here is a further review to the one that appeared in the last edition of eLucidate. Martin White is, of course, the UKeiG chair.*

*Reviewed by Jayne Dunlop*

As someone who is trying to reinvigorate a disorganised and, in places, out-of-date library intranet, I was interested to see what Martin White had to offer to those of us who find managing an intranet a less than straightforward task. I wish I had read the book a long time ago, and also wish that those who have been involved in creating the library intranet had seen the book during the development of this part of this internal website. Having this volume at the start of an intranet project would be very useful and managers of intranets should find it a good reference source.

White points out that intranet managers often do not set out to assume their role and may have had very little support or guidance in creating or maintaining an intranet. This is something I have

noticed in my institution, and having support in the form of White's book is to be welcomed.

The author has been involved in over 100 intranet projects worldwide, and uses his experience when delivering training. In his book he distils his knowledge into a readable and well structured format. Much of the success of intranets depends on good planning and this book gives sound guidance on how to develop an intranet from conception to implementation.

The first part of the book deals with the foundations that are required, including a general chapter on managing intranets, defining user requirements, building a business case, developing a content strategy and enhancing collaboration. All of these are very necessary to ensure the sustainability of the project, and the delivery of current, relevant and required information to stakeholders. If these elements are not included, then it is probable that the intranet could become disorganised, people will not update it regularly, it will lose its focus and people would inevitably stop using it as a source of information.

The second section of the book deals with technology and software considerations, and content management systems, with a chapter devoted to the use of Microsoft Sharepoint. Design is not dealt with in this volume, as this is the subject of other recent publications. This section of the book is not so technical that it is inaccessible to the general reader, but is helpful to those selecting software and looking at expanding the reach of the intranet to mobile access, social media and the use of cloud computing.