

eLucidate

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Postcard from SE1

Welcome to the first Elucidate for 2005, particularly relevant as we start the year rebranded as UKeiG – the UK electronic information Group. The December issue of Information World Review announced, somewhat ominously, that “UKOLUG is dead, Long Live UKeiG.” I can guarantee that all the best bits of old UKOLUG will survive under our new banner, and this New Year will see a new sense of direction and energy as we tackle the complex and demanding range of issues that face the electronic information community.

UKeiG will continue to be a respected and well-established professional body for all information professionals and users and developers of electronic information resources. Through our activities we will actively encourage communication and the exchange of knowledge; raise awareness of existing and new technologies that retrieve, manage and process electronic information. Our strength lies in our eclectic and established membership which extends across all key UK sectors: higher and further education, government, legal, business & commerce, science & technology, science & healthcare and the public sector.

Over 2005 you will see a significant revision of UKeiG membership benefits. *eLucidate* content will focus on hot topics and information industry developments. We will commission more fact sheets in response to member demands. (Look out for [Phil Bradley](#)'s overview of the fast, safe and efficient web browser Firefox which Forbes magazine describes as: “Better than Internet Explorer by leaps and bounds.”)

Our 2005 annual meetings and training portfolio, an invaluable resource for all organisations committed to ongoing personal and professional development, has launched with relevant and practical content. It will continue to provide affordable and practical workshops and seminars for members and non-members held at venues across the UK. There will be special emphasis on issues of current interest with a practical hands-on approach. Topics will cover the following areas: legislation, e-resource management, training, managing and promoting e-information and resources and practical “know-how” sessions on specific types of information and subject-specific resources. Have a look at the programme on the website.

We will continue to be a major force for advocacy and liaison as an independent body representing and lobbying for the interests of members; co-operating with other national and international organizations. We are, in essence, a community of

practice with a formidable knowledge base that will continue to provide a strong voice in the information world. The pool of expertise at UkeiG's fingertips is extensive, and we can advise and direct you to industry experts.

We launched UKeiG at Online late last year, and were delighted to meet so many of you at Stand 203. We've had a presence at the event since 1977, and will continue to do so. This time we offered a master class on professional development, presented by committee member Shaida Dorabjee. It was received with interest and enthusiasm and is featured in this issue for those of you who couldn't make it to the event. I'd be delighted if you suggested ideas for future *eLucidate* content or submitted a paper for inclusion in future issues. For the moment, enjoy this issue, and all my best wishes for 2005.

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Analysing the Obvious - using a SWOT analysis to develop your role as an information professional

INTRODUCTION

Approaching the delivery of information services with a business sense is one area that does not always come naturally to the information professional (IP) and requires a change in behaviour. This article is based on the premise that many library and information services need to regard themselves as a business in their own right and re-brand and re-launch themselves in order to compete in the fast-moving, competitive and sometimes fickle world in which they now operate.

An objective analysis of your service is one of the first steps to take. It may be obvious to some but unfortunately it has been ignored by others, to the detriment of the service.

Analysing the service using a SWOT analysis is appropriate. By highlighting strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, it is easier to map out and identify patterns that characterise the information service. In doing so, it becomes possible to concentrate on the important issues and also to focus on areas where changes are required. The

analysis can be done on the service as a whole, taking in to account the organisation's specific requirements. However, part of this analysis will include characteristics of the IPs themselves and this is summarised below for a generic IP, exemplifying common features and perhaps assumptions about the profession in the hopes that it will spur you into action as well as reaction.

STRENGTHS

Traditional skills

Taxonomies and metadata have now replaced classification and cataloguing. Handling enquiries is now research. Information architecture has become a discipline in its own right. These need to be repackaged and promoted.

The inquisitive IP

Being an IP is a passport to be inquisitive, and allows the IP to know all customers and potential customers and their needs.

Putting hidden skills to work

Hidden skills are often not fully exploited, for example, adapting, negotiating and project management.

WEAKNESSES

The name

A number of forces come into play to challenge the identity of the information service or the 'brand'.

- The old stereotyped negative image of a 'Library' is firmly carved into the psyche of our society, and indeed occasionally toe-curlingly reinforced. (At least there is brand awareness there and the word 'librarian' is universally understood.)
- Information Professional or Information Specialist or whatever - a misunderstood term that it just serves to cause confusion.
- The information service itself may or may not be associated with the library. More room for confusion.
- Other functions or individuals may also take on the role of providing 'information'.

A huge challenge, but the importance of adopting an identity and a brand cannot be over-emphasised and having one that reflects the culture of the organisation is vital.

The image

How IPs perceive themselves is important. They tend not to see themselves as leaders or initiators, so the potential for growth within the organisation is limited.

Image is also about how others perceive you.

Appropriate wardrobe and grooming, body language, tone of voice, content, as well as ability, success and competence all have to be congruent in order to make the right impact.

Confidence

The areas where information expertise can be most effective will be taken over by other, more energetic but perhaps less appropriate functions unless the IP is confident enough to step in at the right time.

The competitors

When running a business, taking one's eye off the ball when it comes to competitors, both internal and external, is often the downfall of a once-successful business. The same requirements apply to an information service.

Me? Sell?

Marketing, selling and promoting the information service which matches the way the organisation operates is no longer a mere option, but an essential part of the role. IPs often find it difficult to adopt an extrovert marketing role in promoting and selling themselves or their products.

Risk

Rapidly-changing market demands and the fickle nature of the customer means that products and services have to adapt and change at the same pace. In the profession there is a tendency to play it safe. Instead they should embrace challenges. For example, when the going gets tough, service functions or cost centres are the first to go. Being active and visible at this time, rather than retreating into the background is a risk that is probably worth taking.

Soft skills

There are many other soft skills that information managers have not developed sufficiently. These include leadership skills as well as management and influencing skills, managing culture change fostering sharing communities.

OPPORTUNITIES

A receptive audience

By far the biggest opportunity is the explosion of the availability of information combined with the realisation that the information has to be structured and managed efficiently. Strike whilst the iron is hot.

E-everything

Being able to identify and ascertain the quality and consistency of the data and also to facilitate access to e-content are surely now key roles for the IP.

Information disorder

Information disorder is seen in all parts of an organisation, and in well-established systems, paper-based as well as electronic. Core skills of organising and classifying content should be in demand.

Our information cousins

Knowledge management, records management, information systems, document management, content management, information architecture are all information-related activities. There is substantial overlap of competencies and skills and opportunities to collaborate or indeed lead are enormous.

New roles

Adopting the role of a consultant or an advisor in legal matters relating to information or being a facilitator or trainer for e-learning initiatives are just a few examples.

Evidence-based everything

As in normal business practice, collecting information, monitoring performance and benchmarking information activities should be done at every opportunity to support the business case.

THREATS

Unfortunately many of the opportunities already described can also be regarded as threats, depending on how the issue is approached (or ignored). The key attributes required to counteract the threats are the ability to recognise them – early, explore ways in which the threat can be turned into an opportunity, develop strategies for addressing the issues and to target new services effectively. Being proactive is more than a mere option.

The IT 'solution'

Given a problem that involves the managing of large amounts of information, the first port of call is often the IT department, thus focusing on the 'T' to provide the solution. That IT experts may not be the best group to address the 'information' part of the problem is now irrelevant. They have already filled the niche, and with time will refine their products and open up new opportunities, leaving the IP way behind or, at best, still providing the traditional support service.

Unless information staff play a major role at the start of such projects, what is essentially an information-based issue results in the information being supplemental to the IT-centric project rather than the focus of the project.

Knowledge management

Knowledge management (KM), however it is currently regarded, should have woken up the

complacent IP. KM has permeated its way into many businesses at lightning speed, often without the help of the library and information service.

Again, this is a discipline based on information management surely, so who are these usurpers to the information throne? KM professionals come from a variety of backgrounds with new ideas, energy and experience. IPs seem to have been taken by surprise and have not highlighted the considerable overlap and identified the opportunities for themselves (or indeed the threat).

DIY Information

The patron saint of information searching, Saint Google, has entered our home and work and gives the illusion that all is well at the input of a single search term. If IPs don't inform, persuade, promote and market themselves and their skills, they will be overlooked as providers of expertise and training in finding information.

Outsourcing

The call centre culture is affecting many businesses, including information services. Whilst outsourcing has been taken up with varying enthusiasm, if it increases, the IP should be ready to identify this potential threat and to change its strategies accordingly.

CONCLUSION

The strengths and opportunities identified indicate that there is, of course, a future for the information professional, and that it will be an exciting future. However, the prerequisite is the need to address the weakness and threats - the most challenging part of the journey to success.

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Firefox

What is Firefox?

Firefox is an internet browser, just as Microsoft Internet Explorer is a browser. That is to say, it's a piece of software that allows you move from web page to webpage, displaying the data on those pages. It's recently come to prominence with the release of version 1, which was downloaded over 5 million times in the first week, and it is expected to get an increasingly large percentage share of the

browser market in the coming years.

What are the main features of Firefox?

Until other browsers, it is an open source product; that is to say that programmers can get access to the source code and produce mainly additional utilities to increase its functionality. These are being added to all the time, so unlike Internet Explorer which has not changed at all for several years, Firefox is continually able to adapt and increase in flexibility.

The main difference between Firefox and Internet Explorer (as far as users are concerned) is that it is a tabbed browser. That is to say, users can have multiple windows or tabs open at the same time in a single version of the browser window, until Internet Explorer which has to be opened a second time if a user wants to be able to move quickly from window to window. In Firefox users can simply click on an open tab and bring that to the front, making the whole process of moving from page to page very much easier.

Firefox also has improved security; it keeps your computer safe from malicious spyware and popups. Users are also prompted before Firefox downloads any programs so you only download those that you mean to. It also has a very effective way of deleting items that users have already downloaded, so the hard disk doesn't get clogged up un-necessarily.

An effective search bar is also integral to the product. Several hundred search engines are supported, as well as dictionaries, access to eBay and so on. Users simply have to type their search into the appropriate box and the search engine of their choice is searched and results are delivered directly onto a tabbed page.

Firefox includes a very effective bookmark management system that makes the whole process of adding, moving and editing bookmarks quick and simple.

Firefox is only a small download, taking seconds to download and install on a fast connection. It will also import all of the settings from Internet Explorer, so users will not lose existing bookmarks or passwords. Users can still continue to run Internet Explorer side by side with Firefox, so it isn't necessary to stop using one in order to start using another.

Various extensions add to the power of the browser; most search engines have now produced search toolbars that work with the product. Other useful extensions allow you to cut and paste not only the text, but also the title of the page and the URL with one click, rather than the clumsy approach taken by

Internet Explorer. Another extension allows users to 'nuke' elements from a page, which can be useful when printing a page with a lot of adverts; they can all be removed prior to printing. Yet another allows users to click and highlight words on a page, drag them to another part of the screen and drop them, and a search is automatically run for the highlighted text in the users search engine of choice.

More information on Firefox can be obtained from their website at <http://www.mozilla.org/products/firefox/> Extensions can be viewed and downloaded from <https://update.mozilla.org/extensions/?application=firefox> and a more detailed explanation of the browser and a comparison with Internet Explorer is at <http://www.philb.com/firefox.htm>

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The challenge of creating a Virtual Information Centre

Background

The UK Trade & Investment Information Centre, based in Victoria, London, has existed for over forty years as a free self service reference library where exporters can carry out research into overseas markets. Our parent body, UK Trade & Investment, is a government organisation which supports and promotes the work of UK exporters and promotes Britain as a location for inward investment.

Our users can compile contact lists of companies in foreign markets – identify agents, distributors or possible partners. They can also research market, sector and background information using a wide range of reports and statistical tools. At present, we have a comprehensive hybrid collection of over 20 electronic databases, plus 15,000 printed directories and statistics information.

From April 2005, we are moving to an electronic only environment. The centre will still be open to visitors. From around April 2006 we plan to have launched our "Virtual Information Centre" – e-resources only, available by registering on the existing UKTI website.

Why are we changing?

In common with many public access libraries, we have suffered a decline in visitor numbers in recent years. We also need to make sure our services are consistent with those already provided by UK Trade

& Investment in terms of adding value to as wide, and as appropriate, a user community as possible. This includes companies in the regions (who find it difficult to use our services due to lack of time and funds for travel) and staff located all over the globe, to whom a reference-only centre situated in London is not the most useful of resources. The circumstances we find ourselves in means that naming a way forward - online access – is easy. But we know that actually making this happen will be more problematical.

What are we aiming for?

By mid 2006, we aim to be making available a definitive collection of resources which best serves the needs of UK exporters and UK Trade & Investment staff, whatever their location. Crucially, this will be backed by human advice, regarding sources, navigation, or any other information-related topic, at the end of a phone line.

But what form should the virtual centre take – a subject gateway, perhaps, listing resources with native search functionality only, or a library portal, with federated search functionality?

We agreed that we require a database, meta-data tagged to Dublin Core standard, with a browsable search interface and which can hold both searchable (subscription databases) and non-searchable (free web resources) elements. The portal option for delivery is by far the most suited to our needs. We will shortly be approaching software suppliers with our requirements.

Key issues

The portal route presents various challenges, which need to be addressed by ourselves, publishers and any of the software suppliers we work with.

The nature of our collection brings specific considerations. Library portals traditionally integrate with text-based databases. Our databases are a mixture of both text-based and statistical format. The databases use a number of different protocols - if the protocols used are not known to software vendors there will be significant impact on the project in time and money whilst solutions are developed.

We need to be clear about how we're going to model and present our customer base to information providers and software vendors. It's becoming clear to us that vendors are used to working within certain model types. The closer the fit to a model that publishers and vendors are familiar with the easier it should be for all parties to agree what is required and how it should be costed. We may not have an academic, closed community but there are certain parallels which can be drawn between this model

and our own.

We know that our publishers will be much keener to work with us if we can guarantee that those who access the databases fall into distinctly identifiable and verifiable groups. We have identified these groups as - UKTI staff, SMES (small to medium business enterprises employing less than 250 staff) and those researchers who support the work of SMEs.

The primary remit of our Information Centre is to work with SMEs, and we would not be adhering to this strategy if we supported access to other types of users. We need to be able to guarantee that our system will be password protected and will support access to only these user communities. This has resource implications in terms of how we check the details of those who register with us, who verifies these details, and how the system is policed.

Lastly, the security of our system must be assured. As a government organisation, we have to work within our secure IT infrastructure. Addressing this issue will bring us additional costs in time and money and must be factored into our plans.

Going forward...

As I write, there seems to be a long haul in terms of the necessary preparations to be made, and a short time in terms of months available to fit everything in. The issue of time will be critical to us. In a government environment, with shifting policy and funding emphases, it would seem that extensive time frames for project working are a luxury which are not available to many. So we must work within the time limits we have.

This lack of precedents makes the project more difficult to implement, but not impossible. We know that there are a few other institutions out there who are trying to do the same thing. If anyone has experiences or advice they'd like to share with us, we'd welcome your input.

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Online

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British Library

The British Library have developed an online learning package (http://www.bl.uk/training_package/introduction.html), aimed specifically at public library staff in the UK, demonstrating the services the Library has to offer. The package consists of an online tour, using video, images, text and web links, with a downloadable workbook, guiding you through the full range of services available. The aim of the package is to educate Public Library staff so they can help their users fully exploit the resources of the British Library. The whole package takes about three hours to follow in full but to help staff who are unlikely to be able to find a spare three hour stretch to work on it, users can logout and resume the tour later from wherever they left off. The British Library plan to develop the tour so that it can be used as a quick reference tool and so that it is relevant to library staff in other sectors including academia and business.

Literature Online (<http://lion.chadwyck.co.uk/>)

Chadwyck-Healey, in partnership with the Modern Language Association of America (MLA), have launched the MLA International Bibliography (MLAIB). This is an annual index of books and articles on modern languages and literatures, linguistics, and folklore, which has been published in print form since 1921. The electronic version covers volumes from 1963 to the present, and comprises more than 1.7 million fully searchable records, covering literature from all over the world, history and theory of linguistics, semantics, stylistics, translation, literary theory and criticism, dramatic arts (film, radio, television, and theatre), the teaching of language and literature, rhetoric and composition and the history of printing and publishing. Also included is the MLA Directory of Periodicals, which gives extensive editorial, contact and submission information on more than 7,100 titles. From early 2005 MLAIB will be available as a premium add-on module to Literature Online.

Google (<http://www.google.com>)

Google have announced plans to create a global virtual library. Michigan, Harvard, Stanford, New York Public Library and the Bodleian Library in Oxford have signed a deal with Google to digitise millions of books and make them available free of charge on the web. Michigan and Stanford will digitise their entire collections, Harvard and New York Public Library will digitise part of their collection

and the Bodleian will contribute about one million books published before 1900. The project will make available to users unique publications and out of print titles irrespective of location and will allow increased access to these works while preserving the originals. Books which are out of copyright will be available complete although newer titles will only appear with the publishers' permission.

.....and more on the google front - for anyone who hates struggling around the shops and who has any money left after Christmas – you can now shop online with Google <http://froogle.google.co.uk>. The site allows you to perform one search across multiple online stores and auction sites – including ebay – for whatever you need.

patientINFORM (<http://www.patientinform.org>)
Scientific publishers, medical societies and the US's leading voluntary health organizations are piloting an initiative to give patients and caregivers direct access to original medical research. The scheme, called patientINFORM will be launched in Spring 2005 and will be a free, online service providing accessible, up-to-date, reliable research for specific diseases. patientINFORM will initially focus on three diseases: cancer, diabetes, and heart disease and users will be able to access free full text research articles via the voluntary health organisations websites.

Internet News

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I thought that this first column of the New Year might be an opportunity to offer a few mental challenges to revive those tired and jaded brain cells after the Christmas and New Years festivities. My interest in puzzles other than crossword puzzles has been piqued over recent times by the Puzzle Panel programme on Radio 4, which incidentally is due to make a welcome return to the airwaves in January; and also by the Su Doku puzzles in The Times.

Su Doku puzzle

The aim of the Su Doku puzzles is deceptively simple, there is a grid of 9x9 small boxes, with the instructions – “Fill in the grid so that every row, every column, and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 through 9”. They have nothing to do with maths but everything to do with applying logic and deduction. The puzzles get progressively more challenging during the week. I enjoy the challenge of these puzzles as information work can be very word and text based that this seems to use another part of the brain. The puzzles are published in The Times, and

also online at www.timesonline.co.uk, click on the link to 'Games'. The Times games page also includes the Polygon puzzle, as well as the Bridge and Chess challenges. There is more information at www.sudoku.com.

The Polygon puzzle

The aim is to create as many words as possible using the letters in the Polygon, but the highlighted letter must be included in each word.

An 'Audio' Crossword

Radio 4 has an audio crossword, which is available online, and plays audible clips to supplement the text based clues. It can be filled in online and is available at www.bbc.co.uk/radio4/comedy/ select the 'Try the Radio 4 audio crossword' link under the 'Useful BBC Links'.

Puzzles to enhance skills

I've also been looking at sites which use puzzles as a way of enhancing different skill sets, such as problem solving skills or your creativity.

One site, Creativity Unleashed, which is primarily supporting a business creativity training organisation, does offer some interesting puzzles on its site at <http://www.cul.co.uk/creative/puzzles.htm>. They also have interesting links for further exploration of creativity.

Aha! Puzzles is another interesting site, found at <http://homepage.ntlworld.com/atalanta/home.html>.

There is an extensive range of puzzles at the main www.puzz.com page, which also has a large number of links to all sorts of other puzzle type websites. If you're after some really challenging logic puzzles, you might want to try out this page within the web site, <http://www.puzz.com/lloydkingpuzzles.html>.

Another large site is at www.puzzlemonster.com, with sections for logic puzzles, trivia puzzles, visual puzzles and word puzzles. Again, many puzzles to choose from to revive those flagging grey cells! Edward de Bono, regarded by many to be the leading authority in the world in the field of creative thinking and the direct teaching of thinking as a skill has his authorised website at <http://www.edwdebono.com/index.html>. Amongst the resources there are full descriptions of two of his games – the L game and the 3 spot game, described as a 'social justice' game as sometimes the winner is in fact the loser! <http://www.edwdebono.com/debono/gamesi.htm>

Maths

If you're a maths puzzle fan then this site might be one to visit, <http://www.counon.org/>. It is produced by the University of York for the DES and includes a wealth of maths based information. It also includes the wonderful 'Who wants to be a Mathonaire?', to

see just how good your maths skills are!

Many of these sites have pages with links to many other sites. Trying out a few games and puzzles from each one could provide some interesting material to add a different challenge to team building events, as well as sharpening our individual problem solving strategies.

Have fun and puzzle away!

Intranets and Content Management

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By the time this column is published we will be well into 2005, but at the time of writing I am still in 'what will happen in 2005' mode. So here are some thoughts on trends and issues that I think will occupy your attention in the year ahead.

CMS applications will offer better price/performance

One of the most encouraging aspects of the Online Information exhibition last year was the number of UK CMS vendors who were offering some really well-developed products, and were demonstrating them with flair and enthusiasm. Although a number of US-based CMS vendors are trying to enter the UK market the lack of local support has been a major consideration for many organisations. I have recently been working with a client where the absolute limit for the CMS was around £40k (including VAT!) and they received a number of excellent proposals.

As always you need to read the proposals carefully as there will always be a requirement for some professional service support for installation, training and template development, for example. But certainly if you have £60k or so in the budget you will find an increasing range of products at this price level. Among the companies that have impressed me recently have been Contentis (www.contentis.net), Goss (www.gossinteractive.com), iLevel (www.ilevelsoftware.com), Immediacy (www.immediacy.co.uk) and Terminal Four (www.terminalfour.com) though I do find the Terminal Four pricing structure somewhat difficult to understand.

Migration issues will continue to plague CMS implementations

The paradox about migration is that there is very little that can be done about migrating pages from one system (typically Front Page) to a CMS

application until the software is installed and stable. However if you leave it until this point to start thinking about the issues and planning for them you will find you have a major problem on your hands and a lot of dissatisfied users. Many vendors offer some form of automated process for migrating pages, but you do need to read the small print! It is all very well being able to migrate 80% of the pages across using a software application but invariably the really important pages need to be migrated manually. The problem becomes substantially more complex when metadata has to be added to each page, and then the process really does become very slow indeed.

Migration needs to be considered right at the outset of the relaunch or redevelopment through the means of a detailed (and we are talking page-level!) audit of the site. Apart from understanding the scale of the problem you will also be able to identify ROT (Redundant, Obsolete and Trivial) pages that have no business being on the web site at all. An important element of the planning process is deciding who is going to do the migration. It could mean a very significant workload for an individual web manager or department.

Intranet governance will be seen as an important success factor

When you start to dig into the reasons for intranets failing to meet success criteria it almost always comes down to governance. No one is really in charge, there is no mechanism to set standards and good practice and monitor conformance, it is unclear whether intranet contribution should be an element in a job description, and overall everyone assumes that the intranet is someone else's responsibility. The fault lines really start to appear when a CMS implementation is planned.

Many organisations have encouraged individual departments or subsidiaries to set up their own intranets on the basis that in that way the intranet will meet the needs of a specific user group. All that then happens is that information silos are created and overall the organisation probably has reduced access to information and knowledge. One pharmaceutical company I know has around 700 intranets, but no one is sure how many, and of even greater concern no one is sure which sites are spidered by the search engine. The result is that no one really trusts the 'intranet' to deliver, and the road to information perdition becomes a six-lane highway.

Many organisations are now starting to consolidate their intranets, and there was an excellent example of this given by Helen Day of Boots at the Online Conference. Indeed the example was so good that

Helen won the Online Information 2004 award for the best intranet project. The basic concept is one of federated intranets, where there are some common standards relating to information architecture etc and a degree of conformity at the top levels of each intranet, but without strangling the enthusiasm of individual intranet teams to provide solutions for their specific users.

Public Sector News

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Another year begins and in the public sector it brings the beginning of the Freedom of Information Act and the beginning of the year in which we should be fully e-enabled.

Freedom of Information

As I write it is still too early to know what impact the Freedom of Information Act will have. Predictions of demand assume use by journalists, campaigners and those who are not happy with the way a local authority or government department has handled an issue. In other countries huge departments have evolved to manage the workload and horror stories abound. Will it be the same here?

After some very last minute decisions the question of fees was finally settled and a Statutory Instrument laid before parliament on 9th December 2004, Statutory Instrument 3244 Freedom of Information and Data Protection (Appropriate Limit and Fees Regulations) 2004. In local government we are required to supply up to £450 worth of information retrieval before we can begin to charge and in central government the figure is £600 and is based on costs of £25 per hour. It will be interesting to see if anyone is prepared to pay this to obtain the information they want. Is it possible that there may be times when paying us to do the research at this rate may be a cheaper option than doing the research themselves for firms of consultants or similar?

Press coverage since the beginning of the year has included news of the Conservatives submitting questions to the government in areas where they would hope to cause serious embarrassment as a minimum and discredit if possible. Local elections will take place in May and will local politicians do the same?

For us and I suspect other authorities the main issue with Freedom of Information has been the need to make sure that all staff are aware that they could receive a request and to know how they will recognise one when it arrives as it doesn't have to mention the Act. The difficult message to communicate has been that the many enquiries we receive daily should as far as possible be managed as before but we need to be looking out for the Freedom of Information requests. If my experience so far is typical then people do seem to mention the Act when requesting information.

CILIP (The Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals) has provided guidance on Freedom of Information on their web site at <http://www.cilip.org.uk/professionalguidance/foi/webresources>. The Information Commissioner's web site has a set of documents called Awareness Guidance which are useful particularly for understanding the exemptions and can be found here <http://www.informationcommissioner.gov.uk/eventual.aspx?id=1024>. The Department of Constitutional Affairs has also produced guidance on its web site (www.dca.gov.uk) and the FoI material is at <http://www.foi.gov.uk/index.htm>

Environmental Information Regulations 2004
Environmental Information Regulations have been in place since 1992 (EIRs) but were re-issued as the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 to bring them into line with the Freedom of Information Act. The current regulations are managed by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) but the new EIRS will be managed by the Information Commissioner. Any request for information must be considered under the Freedom of Information Act but environmental information is exempt under Section 39 of the FoI Act and must be dealt with in line with the Environmental Information regulations 2004.

The EIRs include a duty to disseminate environmental information as well as to respond to requests for information. The Local Government Association have produced a guide called Accessing environmental information: a practical guide to the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 which may be ordered from their web site at www.lga.gov.uk

Public Sector Information
One aspect of the Freedom of Information Act and the Environmental Information Regulations is the encouragement to publish more of the information we hold both in central and local government. The FoI Publication Schemes were a move toward making more available. There is also an EU Directive on the re-use of public sector information which should become part of UK legislation by July

2005. A consultation has begun and will run until 18th March 2005 and you can find details on the HMSO web site at www.hmso.gov.uk/psi/eudpsi-consultations.htm. The legislation would encourage the sale of data to third parties who would add value and publish the information. This could provide income generation opportunities for local and central government.

E-government
According to figures commissioned by Sx3, a supplier of IT services to local government, two thirds of local authority IT managers who were surveyed recently were confident the e-government targets would be met. We are now in 2005 and by the end of this year should have everything that can be e-enabled in place. We also have Priority Service Outcomes to meet and the 'required' ones of these must be completed by December. For the 'good' targets we have until the end of March 2006. These were published in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Defining e-government outcomes for 2005 to support the delivery of priority services and national strategy transformation agenda for local authorities in England which you can find at www.odpm.gov.uk/pns/pnattach/20040112/1.doc

Metadata
Metadata describes an electronic resource just as a catalogue entry describes a book. As part of the provision of metadata a taxonomy is needed and there has been considerable confusion about what terms to use for the subject category of metadata for government and local government information. We had the Government Category List (GCL) and then the Local Government Category List (LGCL) as well as the seamlessuk thesaurus but there is now a Vocabulary Merger Project underway. The product of this work will be known as the Integrated Public Sector Vocabulary although it began its life as the Merged Public Sector Vocabulary.

You can track progress on this work on the web site of the Local e-Government Standards Body (www.legsb.gov.uk) where you can read the scoping report for the project at <http://www.legsb.gov.uk/index.asp?pgid=3672>. The Local e-Government Standards Body is a national project funded by the ODPM and aims to bring together all the standards developed to help achieve e-government delivery.

Public Libraries
The Department for Culture Media and Sport presented a report to Parliament on Public Library Matters in November. You can find the report at <http://www.culture.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/etnot2mq66xsa4nodarp2mkmi5ub40e7ib44djvshjnlwciwihauad7ezg753mdpy3mcrcs4zgfslk6g5ii7ii4cded/>

[LibrariesReporttoParliament04.pdf](#)

An enquiry into public libraries is being conducted by the Commons Select Committee on Culture, Media and Sport. Evidence was received from the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals, the Society of Chief Librarians, the Audit Commission and the Advisory Council on Libraries on 30th November. On 14th December evidence was given by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, the Local Government Association, Jacqueline Wilson, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, the Department of Education and Science and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Notice of the committee was very short and the organisations who gave evidence are to be congratulated on preparing representations within the time. You can read the uncorrected transcripts of evidence on the Parliament web site at <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200405/cmselect/cmcmds/uc81-i/uc8101.htm> and <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm200405/cmselect/cmcmds/uc81-ii/uc8101.htm>

Scanning through the uncorrected evidence it seems that the debate touched on a broad spectrum of issues including the importance of books, the skills needed in public libraries and the percentage of professional staff, free access to the Peoples' Network and the digital divide, the government departments with responsibility for libraries and where the lead should come from, links between school library provision and public libraries, reductions in the levels of borrowing, improvements in buildings, comparisons with bookshops, the role of CILIP and much more. Certainly worth a browse as all the topics of the day for librarians seem to have been touched upon.

Reference Management

Column Editor: Tracy Kent; e-mail: t.k.kent@bham.ac.uk

Beyond bibliographic references : keeping track of your ideas as well as your references

A criticism of reference software is that they often are unable to hold more than the basic bibliographic data and a few links back out to the full text. This makes it difficult to then keep track of ideas and research pathways without using lots of paper. There are, though, a number of packages around which try to help in this idea generation and brain

storming of references. Listed are a few examples but if you have one you would particularly recommend please do pass them on.....

Literary Machine

Literary Machine is a form of graphic organiser, built on the principle of index cards, that can also link with Word. This links back to particular citations which then link further ideas and notes. It has a number of indexing and display techniques that allows a networking and hierarchical organisation scheme for categorising information. The fuzzy thinking kernel allows you to work with pure or hybrid concepts. You can assign items to a project or topic as well, arranging projects or topics in a hierarchical or tree like structure.

Further details from

<http://www.sommestad.com/lm.htm>

The Brain

The brain (www.thebrain.com) gives you the capability to dynamically create a knowledge base with nodes and multiple relationships between documents. It enables you to link files, documents, and Web pages across applications and network boundaries. The Brain illustrates how information is related, provides a visual context for documents and data, and offers a framework for collaboration. By connecting all relevant data sources in a way that reflects your thinking and the underlying processes behind the information, BrainEKP collapses the time to knowledge as demonstrated in this picture below



Ibidem and Orbis

Nota bene is actually three separate, but seamlessly integrated programs: a full-featured word processor (Nota Bene), a bibliographic database manager (Ibidem) and a note-taking and text-retrieval program designed for managing a career's worth of notes (Orbis). In addition, a fourth module (IbidPlus) extends the functionality of Ibidem to provide a customizable database program you can tailor to

your own needs. Together, these modules allow you more efficiency and organization in your note keeping and research.

Further details from www.notabene.com

RefViz

Another tool is that of RefViz. RefViz is a text analysis and visualisation software application designed to analyse, organise and facilitate the comprehension of the huge amounts of literature that are available to researchers.

Documents in RefViz are organised by thematic content and presented in interactive visualisations that allow identification of major themes and areas of interest. There is direct connection with Endnote and Reference Manager which provides an extra level of analysis to your reference collection to allow you to find relevant citations.

Further details from www.refviz.com

RefDB

A slightly different approach to visualising is to display documents in a range of output methods – beyond publisher style or purely html files. RefDB is a reference database and bibliography tool for SGML, XML and LaTeX/BibTeX documents. It allows you to share databases over a network and works on most platforms with a decent C compiler. The software enables you to, not only output in html, but also in Postscript, PDF, DVI, MIF and RTF output with fully formatted citations and bibliographies according to publisher specifications. Further details can be found at

<http://refdb.sourceforge.net/index.html>

Knowledge Engine (KEN) for local government

KEN is marketed as a roadmap to further knowledge-sharing, to support effective joined-up working and to make information available as part of core service delivery improvement strategies. In this example, that is within Local Authorities in the West Midlands but the initiative is of interest to anyone wishing to making information more widely available. KEN provides a web-based knowledge management and e-working tool to identify and share good practice and takes advantage of technology to introduce new ways of web-based working to cut down on travel costs and time. Virtual office space is available for online meetings and document sharing; to make researching new projects easier KEN provides a regional search engine incorporating internal and external document databases, Word, PDF documents, and websites. Password protected access is available via the www.askken.org.uk website or via local authority intranets with no password required. For more information about

KEN, its development and rollout, contact: Pete Kendal, West Midlands LGA SMARTregion Coordinator and manager of the KEN project. p.kendal@smartregion.org.uk or 0121 245 0190. or visit <http://www.askken.org.uk/>

Procite is not dead! Long Live Procite!

A common question over the past 12 months has been the future of Procite. This software package, probably the longest suffering, has been revamped and relaunched with some nice new features.

You will find that Procite has been revamped to look more like Reference Manager in look and has the flexibility of both Endnote and reference Manager. The Subject bibliography feature (now in Endnote as well) has a lot of potential applications. Just as useful is the ability to cite from a number of different Procite databases at the same time – very useful if you are working on a number of different, collaborative projects.

Further details from AdeptScience at <http://www.adeptscience.co.uk/products/refman/procite/> or call direct on Tel: 01462 480055 or Fax: 01462 480213 e-mail: info@adeptscience.co.uk

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/>.

The Current Cites database of citations now numbers over 1,000 and is searchable at <http://sunsite.berkeley.edu/CurrentCites/bibondemand.cgi>. This service is called "Bibliography on Demand" because it can be easily used to create printable or linkable bibliographies on information technology topics.

EDUCATION

Ayers, Edward L.. **The Academic Culture & the IT Culture: Their Effect on Teaching and Scholarship** *Educause Review* 39(5) (November/December 2004): 48-62. - A reflective and sometime humorous assessment of the degree to which information technology has been adopted by academics: not much. The author, Dean of the College and Graduate School of Arts and Sciences at the University of Virginia and a professor of history there, bases his comments upon what he's observed personally, and he contrasts concisely the cultural differences between academe and IT. He reminds those of us fascinated by information media that most faculty regard it as extraneous to their own work, and will embrace it only to the degree that it facilitates (as effortlessly and transparently as possible) their primary research. And once their writing is ready for publication, few are interested in exploiting the possibilities of networks to disseminate their scholarship, though Ayers sees a gradual change there. He describes the development of his own web-enhanced presentation of his Civil War scholarship, and his satisfaction at being able to present digital versions of the primary source documents which would normally be inaccessible to his readers. After giving that concrete example of what could be achieved on a larger scale, Ayers concludes unsurprisingly with a call for increased dialogues between the two cultures. – [*JR]

Crib sheet: E-learning. *Information Age* October 2004: 78-79. The author provides a short sectioned guide to e-learning. Providing information on: context, overview, technology, benefits, market, test case and predictions. – [JW]

Stanley, Tracey and Sotiriou, Asmina. **The portole project: supporting e-learning.** *The New Review of Information Networking* Vol 9 (2003): 141-147. The PORTOLE (Providing Online Resources To Online Learning Environments) Project was funded by JISC as part of the DiVLE Programme (JISC 07/02) and was a consortial undertaking of the Universities of Leeds and Oxford and the RDN. Leeds was the leader of the 10 month project which was completed in August 2003. The project was run to provide a potential solution to the difficulties associated with embedding electronic information resources in VLE's (i.e. keeping links up to date and making sure interfaces are cohesive). The project was designed to let tutors access the JISC Information Environment and local digital resources from within the VLE to utilise appropriate content. The resources selected were the RDN, the library catalogues from Leeds and Oxford, COPAC and the Leeds's ROADS database. Google was also added. The intention was to let tutors cross search the resources from within the VLE, annotations and descriptions could then be added to the results list. PORTOLE utilised a java-based Z39.50 client. The objectives of the project were met although key lessons were learnt: if a subject relies on text (hard copy) based information then the project is less useful; tutors prefer Google to the RDN and the system needs to include additional search targets (e.g. journal articles). Future developments include integration with Leeds' new OpenURL resolver. – [JW]

ELECTRONIC PUBLISHING

Haank, Derk **Springer plans evolution not revolution.** *Information World Review*, Issue 208, December 2004. Page 18 Derk Haank, CEO of Springer Science and Business media has steered his company towards the accommodation of open access with its traditional publishing model. IN this article he explains why has done this. – [LR]

Rockliff, Sue **E-journals: the Queen Elizabeth Hospital Library experience** *Electronic Library* 22(5) 433-439
This article describes an Australian hospital library's experiences of moving to an e-only journal purchasing policy and of participating in an e-journal consortium purchasing scheme. They closely parallel those of NHS libraries in England who participated in local/regional schemes before the advent of the NeLH National Core Content. Challenges, lessons learned, technical problems, and costs and benefits of e-journals are clearly outlined. – [CME]

Sosteric, Michael. **The International Consortium for the Advancement of Academic Publication--An Idea Whose Time Has Come (Finally!)** *Learned Publishing* 17(4) (2004): 319-325. - In this article, Sosteric, founder of the International Consortium for the Advancement of Academic Publication (as well as of the *Electronic Journal of Sociology*), describes how this not-for-profit organization fosters the publication of scholarly e-journals with low production and operation costs. How low? How about as low as \$3,000 for a new quarterly journal that's up in less than a month? But even with this cost structure, the ICAAP faces challenges since it "targets low-circulation and niche journals that cannot survive in an environment where first-tier journals suck all the finances from general library subscriptions." Scholars who want to publish these journals may have difficulty paying the ICAAP's modest fees without external support. In Canada, social science and humanities journals can receive up to CAD\$90,000 over three years from a special funding program; however, the gotcha is that, to qualify, journals must have at least 200 paid subscribers, and, in the small Canadian market, publishers are afraid that switching from print to electronic might cause a subscription drop below this level. One can't help but wonder what could be accomplished with relatively modest subsidies from some other source, perhaps combined with the idea of open access. – [*CB]

GENERAL

2004 Information Format Trends: Content, Not Containers Dublin, OH: OCLC, October 2004. (<http://www.oclc.org/info/2004trends/>). - OCLC demonstrates once again that it is capable of spotting trends and discussing their implications for libraries. As OCLC did in the 2003 Environmental Scan: Pattern Recognition report, this longish paper pulls from sources as diverse as the Pew Internet Trust and Billboard in the quest to understand societal information trends. The top trends identified here are the: "legitimacy of open source publishing (e.g., blogs), rapidly expanding economics of microcontent, repurposing of "old" content for new media, and multimedia content as a service for an array of devices." You may not agree with everything you read, or even the issues that OCLC surfaces in this report, but if you're interested in the information environment of which libraries are a part, you should not miss this. – [*RT]

Cole, Timothy W., and Sarah L. Shreeves. **The IMLS NLG Program: Fostering Collaboration** *Library Hi Tech* 22(3) (2004): 246-248. (<http://lysander.emeraldinsight.com/vl=885645/cl=77/nw=1/rpsv/cgi-bin/linker?ini=emerald®idx=/cw/mcb/07378831/v22n3/s1/p246>). - If you are interested in the important work of the Institute of Museum and Library Services (IMLS), check out a new special issue of *Library Hi Tech* that provides descriptions of seven projects funded by IMLS' National Leadership Grant program. Issue guest editors Timothy W. Cole and Sarah Shreeves overview the contents of the special issue in this article. They have selected articles that represent three categories of grant activity: (1) "state-wide and regional collaborations between multiple types of organizations" (3 articles), (2) "communities of interest that have coalesced to spawn successful and wide-ranging collaborations between information specialists (librarians, curators, and information technologists) and subject specialist end-users (students, teachers, and scholars)" (2 articles), and (3) "ongoing research into and demonstrations of key infrastructure components that take advantage of the opportunities afforded by new technologies to facilitate and enable collaboration in digital library building at a high level between experts with diverse skills and backgrounds and widely dispersed geographically" (2 articles). The issue also includes an article by Joyce Ray, the IMLS Associate Deputy Director for Library Services, that overviews IMLS activities. Access to this issue is currently free. – [*CB]

Dore, Debbie and Middleton, Ian **Agents of change**. *Information World Review*, Issue 208, December 2004. Pages 46-47 Interview with Debbie Dore, UK MD of Swets Information Services and Ian Middleton, General Manager at EBSCO. They exchange views about the current state of the market and what the future holds – [LR]

Dudman, Jane **Driving change** *Information World Review*, Issue 208, December 2004. Pages 20-23 Interview with Karen George, Head of the Home Office Library. – [LR]

Dudman, Jane **The winning combination** *Information World Review*, Issue 208, December 2004. Pages 25-27 Interview with Peter Rigby, CEO of T&F Informa and Tony Foye, Finance Director T&F Informa. Both comment about the biggest merger of the year between Taylor and Francis and Informa and how they will grow the business. – [LR]

Fister, Barbara, and Niko Pfund. **We're Not Dead Yet!** *Library Journal* (15 November 2004) (<http://libraryjournal.com/article/CA479162>). - This is actually two pieces -- one by a librarian and another by a university press publisher. The librarian's tongue-in-cheek piece highlights the fact that libraries have been raiding their book funds to pay for increasingly expensive journals, thereby potentially harming the viability of university presses. Library purchases can be a significant percentage of the potential sales of university press books, so the recent decline in monographic purchasing can have a devastating impact on their bottom line. The publisher's piece is less playful but no less thought-provoking. – [*RT]

Jones, Phil. **Acrobatics.** *Information Age* October 2004: 37-40. The author profiles the software manufacturer Adobe and describes their efforts to further develop their 'intelligent documents' division. In 1998 Adobe was, with its products Photoshop and Illustrator, a provider of software solutions to creative specialists. After some problems in the late 1990's the company restructured and started concentrating more on its intelligent documents division which now accounts for 33% of the company's revenue. The intelligent documents division was created as an attempt to marry the worlds of paper and electronic documents, in an environment where \$16 billion was spent last year on re-keying information from paper documents to electronic systems, this is seen as crucial. Diverse organisations such as Astrazeneca, Lloyds TSB, DEFRA and the IRS are all buying Adobe products to make the most of "intelligent documents". Two key developments include: the definition of an XML Data Package (XDP) which allows data to be rendered as PDF or XML, and a document management architecture which allows common services to be applied across documents from any enterprise application or web service, before delivery to the client. Adobe hopes that the integration of XML and document management into the intelligent documents will increase the use of PDF from straight document reproduction to more varied roles such as the IRS's scheme to use the format for self-validating forms. – [JW]

Myles, Sally. **Content management at Telecom New Zealand.** *Electronic Library* 22(6) 523-526 This is an engagingly-written, readable brief article that describes the process of migrating Telecom New Zealand's intranet to a new content management system during 2002. She outlines the problems with the old intranet and describes the requirements for the new system, the process of selecting it, the technical solution, the process of engaging users, and the outcome for the organisation. It is a worthwhile and refreshing read for anyone who has intranet responsibilities, though I would have liked more detail, both about the actual process and about the "political" aspects; how, for instance, did she make the case for the new intranet and get backing for a CMS implementation? How was the project group formed? How did she and her team "design an information architecture aligned to our corporate culture"? Also, some screen shots would have been useful. – [CE]

O'Brien, D. **How to mend a broken internet.** *New Scientist* 184, 273, 47-49 (13 November 2004) The internet is said to be on the brink of collapse. There is poor security and vulnerability to cybercrime. And there is a shortage of addresses for all potential devices. The IETF solution is IPv6 but this has not been universally adopted. A rival solution is Network Address Translation (NAT) but this is controversial. An approach called TRIAD that addresses the problems with NATS is proposed. - [DJH]

OCLC Top 1000 Dublin, OH: OCLC, November 2004. (<http://www.oclc.org/research/top1000/>). - This web site isn't the usual thing you see reviewed here in Current Cites, but neither is it hard to justify highlighting it. OCLC Research staff plumbed the depths of the largest bibliographic database in the world and discovered the 1,000 most widely held books among member libraries. Be careful, though, the site is interesting enough to keep you glued to your computer screen for more time than you likely have to spare. The U.S. focus is clear, with the 2000 U.S. Census topping the list by far -- beating out the Holy Bible by a substantial margin. But close on the heels of those come such works as Mother Goose (#3), The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn (#7). and Garfield (yes, Garfield, at #18). But don't stop at surveying the list for your personal favorites, be sure to visit the About page that describes how they used the principles of FRBR to create the list, the Factoids page with a bunch of interesting facts about the list, and the Lagniappes page for a couple unexpected gifts. Rock on, OCLC! – [*RT]

Pickering, Bobby **Money moves in line with growing professional status.** *Information World Review*, Issue 208, December 2004. Page 10 IWR readers filled out a survey in September and October 2004 about industry issues and their jobs. The survey shows that salaries for information professionals are increasing as their

professional status increases. Changing your job spec and title, add strategic responsibility and things look considerably better in the salary stakes. – [LR]

Schneider, Jesper W., Borlund, Pia. **Introduction to bibliometrics for construction and maintenance of thesauri** *Journal of Documentation* 60 (5) (2004): 524-529. Discusses how it might be possible to use bibliometric approaches to help in the construction or extension of thesauri. There are various methods that could be used to identify terms, relationships between concepts and map the organisation of knowledge. Automated thesauri construction has largely been achieved from statistical co-occurrence analysis and linguistic context analysis, citation analysis has largely looked at relationships between documents. Various methods of visualisation help to identify research fronts (and possibly new terms). Explains the reasons for adopting Pathfinder Network Scaling and network scaling in trying to adapt bibliometric approaches to thesauri construction. - [CJU]

Thomas, Charles F. **Memory institutions as digital publishers: a case study on standards and interoperability** *OCLC Systems & Services* 20(3) (2004): 134-139. - Everyone loves standards. Who doesn't? Oftentimes however, they're presented as a sort of one-dimensional cure-all for all that ails us. The author of this article suggests a far more complicated picture. First there isn't only one set of standards but a proliferation, and the individual standards themselves aren't necessarily set in stone but are continually evolving. That's the reality. The author proposes a number of considerations, given this, so that we can make the "right standards choices". He even sees room, once core standards have been identified, for local innovations. – [*LRK]

INFORMATION ACCESS

David, Shay. **Opening the Sources of Accountability** *First Monday* 9(11) (1 November 2004) (http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue9_11/david/). - David takes a hard look at "FLOSS" (Free/Libre Open Source Systems) from the perspective of accountability. He argues that increasing accountability improves the value of FLOSS to society -- in essence, by their works ye shall know them. He goes on to say that open source computing has already fostered a collaborative culture that has brought some results, but the journey has just begun. Accountability in a digital society has taken on a life of its own, he argues, and he analyzes the open environment of FLOSS to find hidden meanings. Electronic voting and digital medical records are two excellent tests of his thesis, as correct and reliable information is critical for success in each case, yet trust is in short supply if recent history is any guide. He argues that code "visibility" -- a self-imposed standard of care and sensible licensing arrangements -- is a potential alternative to the liability remedies that some scholars offer as the safest bet. If developers can craft "sensible licensing agreements" and accommodate collaborative activity through social versus legal mechanisms, there is a reasonable hope that the barriers to accountability will diminish. He adds that developers should begin to think of ways to build a framework for moral and ethical deliberations to guide open source design, too. – [*TH]

Poynder, Richard. **Ten Years After** *Information Today* 21(9) (2004) (<http://www.infoday.com/it/oct04/poynder.shtml>). - No, this article is not about the famous rock band that shook Woodstock with "I'm Going Home." Rather, it's about how Stevan Harnad shook-up the scholarly publishing world in the ten years after his famous "subversive proposal." Poynder says that ". . . while Harnad cannot claim to have invented the OA movement, his phenomenal energy and determination, coupled with a highly focused view of what is needed, undoubtedly earns him the title of chief architect of open access." But this article is a not just a paean to Harnad's many notable accomplishments, it is also an interesting, very concise history of the open access movement that touches on its struggles as well as its triumphs. – [*CB]

Trushina, Irina **Freedom of access: ethical dilemmas for Internet librarians.** *Electronic Library* 22(5) 416-421 This is an interesting but somewhat inconclusive article. The author begins by discussing the results of several surveys of national library association codes of ethics and their significance. According to the author, such codes provide a framework for professional values, a paradigm of library development within a country. Most proclaim the right of free access to information and confidentiality of private information as fundamental. However, this runs in parallel with improved blocking and filtering capabilities on the Internet, some of which actually permit breaches of privacy, since they allow the progress of web searches to be traced. According to the author, libraries must respect both the principles of freedom of information and of moral responsibility to their users, which can give rise to difficult ethical dilemmas. These have become more acute since September 11th 2001, particularly in the U.S. with the passage of anti-terrorist legislation such as the Patriot Act, which gives the FBI legal right of access to library records. She goes on to discuss possible justifications for Internet filtering. – [CME]

Wiki Wars Red Herring (14 October 2004) (<http://www.redherring.com/Article.aspx?a=10909>). - The Wikipedia is one of those venerable Internet resources that's always just sort of been there. A noble undertaking to create a free online encyclopedia, it is somewhat of a mixed bag, as any information professional will tell you. Some of the entries are eloquently written and contain high quality information. Other stuff...well...as this article points out, the Wikipedia has become "the latest battleground in the presidential election as users...squabble over entries related to President George W. Bush and Democratic challenger John Kerry, the junior senator from Massachusetts." Since anyone is free to edit a Wiki article, you can see the potential for problems galore. And it's not just election-related material that is under a cloud. "Some users have even deliberately inserted errors into Wikipedia entries to test how quickly users can detect and remove them." Ugh! The article points out that "Wikipedia has become a popular online reference for students, academics, and even journalists." A friend passed along a legal document just this past week in which a real live sitting judge actually cited the Wikipedia. (See page 16.) Long story short, editors may be coming to the Wikipedia. Jimmy Wales, president of the Wikimedia Foundation, "said that next year he will begin using editors to review the web site's content for accuracy and allow users to rate contributions to the encyclopedia for their quality." - [*SK]

INFORMATION RETRIEVAL

Biever, C. **Rival engines finally catch up with Google.** *New Scientist* 184, 2474, 23 (20 Nov 2004) Whereas Google is still perceived to be the best Internet search engine, rivals such as MSN and Yahoo are said to have caught up and overtaken (respectively). Other engines are using link analysis to emulate Google's PageRank algorithm. Natural language queries are also supported. - [DJH]

Hernandez, Javier C.. **Google Offers Journal Searches** *The Harvard Crimson* (23 November 2004) (<http://www.thecrimson.com/article.aspx?ref=504709>). - Big, big news in both the search engine and academic library worlds this month. Google launched a new beta called Google Scholar, which "enables you to search specifically for scholarly literature, including peer-reviewed papers, theses, books, preprints, abstracts and technical reports from all broad areas of research." The buzz among information professionals, as well as the media, has been loud and raucous. One main issue -- If the average user thinks he or she is going to get free access to a wealth of full-text articles from academic journals, he or she is in for a rude awakening. Many of the results are citations, or citations and abstracts only. The searcher will have to pay to obtain the full article. Alternately, he or she could inquire at a public, special or academic library where affiliation permits full access to a set of proprietary online databases, and obtain the information being sought for free. Cheryl M. LaGuardia, head of instructional services for Harvard College libraries, notes in this article that Google Scholar seems to do a better job with science searches than humanities-related queries. She said she is looking forward to engaging CrossRef's technology "to blend the ease of Google with existing library systems." - [*SK]

Koshman, Sherry. **Comparing usability between a visualization and text-based system for information retrieval** *Journal of Documentation* 60 (5) (2004): 565-580. Assessed how expertise affected performance and perceived usability when using a text-based system (askSam) and a prototype visualization-based system for information retrieval (VIBE). There were 31 participants in total (15 novices, 12 online searching experts and 4 VIBE experts), and performance was rated on several searching tasks. Findings indicated little difference between novices and experts, and usability ratings were similar. There was a task effect, with one task apparently much easier with the VIBE than with the text-based system. Concludes that a VIBE system is not necessarily more intuitive, but some familiarisation will be necessary for any user. - [CJU]

Loban, Bryn. **Between Rhizomes and Trees: P2P Information Systems** *First Monday* 9(10) (4 October 2004) (http://www.firstmonday.org/issues/issue9_10/loban/). - Loban offers a comprehensive overview of information retrieval that relies on "Peer-to-Peer"(P2P)information systems -- more famously known for music file sharing. He evaluates five desktop P2P information systems: Napster with its clones (OpenNap and eDonkey), and Gnutella and FastTrack (more famously known as Kazaa). What's good about this article is that it gives the reader a very detailed explanation of what P2P is all about: its "self-organizing" characteristics, the emergence of hierarchies of users, etc. We cite it here because recent regulatory events in California draw new attention to P2P file sharing, which also forms the basis for many digital preservation strategies (such as LOCKSS, or Lots of Copies Keeps Stuff Safe). While the author's goal is to compare these various systems and offer suggestions for further study, he simultaneously maps online life in the P2P environment, which comes at a good moment in time for digital librarians who are concerned with "persistent" resource building. He concludes with an evaluation of "ethics" in the P2P community, which, of course, draws upon the very public battles of music file sharing. This article is a good overview piece for anyone who wants to check in on - [*TH]

Novotny, Eric. **I Don't Think I Click: A Protocol Analysis Study of Use of a Library Online Catalog in the Internet Age.** *College and Research Libraries* 65(6) (November 2004): 525-563. - There's something magical about interface design. The research done to determine user behavior that leads to design decisions is positively fascinating. This time round we have a group at Penn State testing the proficiency of users on their brand new OPAC. The users were divided into two groups, "experienced" and "first-time". Results confirm other studies in this area, namely, that when confronting an OPAC, users both experienced and not, assume they're in front of something similar to Google. They go for keywords by default, expect results ranked by relevancy (as opposed to chronology), make no use of Boolean Operators, have no idea of what information is actually indexed, and lack the curiosity or time to "learn the system". "We can either abandon this population," the author stresses, "or design systems that do not require expert knowledge to be used effectively." – [*LRK]

Pressman-Levy, Nancy. **Searching RedLightGreen at Princeton University Library** *RLG Focus* (69) (August 2004) (http://www.rlg.org/en/page.php?Page_ID=17921#article4). - If you haven't yet used the RedLightGreen system from the Research Libraries Group, then stop reading this screed and go try it out. RLG took their Eureka system, a rather huge library catalog, and actually made it usable by normal human beings. There is, in other words, hope for the rest of us that our library catalogs do not need to be as obtuse and painful to use as they are now. This piece by the coordinator of RedLightGreen testing at Princeton discusses how the system has been used by Princeton students to great success, and in so doing she covers all the innovations that RedLightGreen has introduced. As Pressman-Levy puts it, "The staff and the students exploring RedLightGreen at Princeton gave high marks to all of these special features." Whether or not we point our users to this system, there is much to learn here that we can nonetheless apply to our own (sadly inadequate) systems. – [*RT]

Robertson, Stephen. **Understanding inverse document frequency: on theoretical arguments for IDF** *Journal of Documentation* 60 (5) (2004): 503-520. Discusses various attempts to improve on the term weighting function introduced by Karen Sparck Jones in 1972. Considers the heuristic and theoretical attempts to justify the approach, and describes the Okapi BM25 weighting function, explaining the meaning of 'eliteness'. Shannon's information theory is problematic in explaining the success of term weighting functions, but a relevance weighting theory is more successful. In this anniversary issue of the *Journal of Documentation*, the article is preceded by a reprint of the original 1972 article, and followed by a reply by Karen Sparck Jones to Stephen Robertson's paper. - [CJU]

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Mphidi, Hamilton and Snyman, Retha . **The utilisation of an intranet as a knowledge management tool in academic libraries.** *Electronic Library* 22(5) 393-400 The article focuses on three academic libraries in South Africa using intranets, with a view to determining the extent to which they use them as a knowledge management tool. They compared definitions of KM in the literature with those given by staff in the respective libraries, and evaluated the content of the library intranets against a checklist of content types derived from an extensive literature survey. They found that the definitions of KM given by library staff corresponded closely with those in the literature, indicating a generally high level of awareness of KM and its organisational value. However, the content of two of the intranets did not include the core information as defined in the literature, although they did include additional information unique to the activities of libraries. Staff in the three libraries used their intranets for different purposes. The levels of use of the intranets related directly to the usefulness and currency of their contents. – [CE]

Tebbutt, David **Creating the right culture.** *Information World Review*, Issue 208, December 2004. Pages 43-44 Article about how the success of knowledge management is about creating an enlightened culture in which knowledge workers interact with information and communities, building on an IT infrastructure to create value for the organisation. – [LR]

PRESERVATION

Flood, Gary **Don't let the fear factor blind you.** *Information World Review*, Issue 208, December 2004. Pages 39-41 Article focusing on the importance of records management, especially as more information becomes electronic. – [LR]

OCLC/RLG PREMIS Working Group, . **Implementing Preservation Repositories for Digital Materials: Current Practice and Emerging Trends in the Cultural Heritage Community** Dublin, OH: OCLC, 2004. (<http://www.oclc.org/research/projects/pmwg/surveyreport.pdf>). - This report by the joint OCLC/RLG Working

Group Preservation Metadata: Implementation Strategies (PREMIS) is based on a survey about existing practices in digital preservation of forty-eight organizations conducted in late 2003 and early 2004. There were a number of specific survey findings that informed the following trends and conclusions: "store metadata redundantly in an XML or relational database and with the content data objects. Use the METS format for structural metadata and as a container for descriptive and administrative metadata; use Z39.87/MIX for technical metadata for still images. Use the OAIS model as a framework and starting point for designing the preservation repository, but retain the flexibility to add functions and services that go beyond the model. Maintain multiple versions (originals and at least some normalized or migrated versions) in the repository, and store complete metadata for all versions. Choose multiple strategies for digital preservation." Highly recommended for anyone interested in digital preservation. – [*RT]

SECURITY

Carnevale, Dan. **Don't Judge a College by Its Internet Address** *Chronicle of Higher Education* 51(14) (26 November 2004): A29. (<http://chronicle.com/free/v51/i14/14a02901.htm>). - True or false: If a college or university has an Internet address that ends in .edu, it must be a bona fide, accredited institution of higher learning. Uh, not actually...and potential students could well be suckered into signing on with a diploma mill, since a startling number of unaccredited institutions have found virtual homes in the .edu domain. Educause, overseen by the U.S. Department of Education, is the administrator for the .edu domain. But at the top of the food chain is the U.S. Department of Commerce, which makes the rules as to who can get a .edu address. Part of the problem is that many of these unaccredited entities were given .edu addresses by Network Solutions, the domain registration company that assigned the addresses before Educause took over. Educause maintains it "would be too costly and difficult" to track down and revoke the .edu registrations of these unaccredited institutions. Also, accreditation itself is fluid -- an institution could easily lose its accreditation...or vice versa. At any rate, the director of policy and networking programs says Educause "does not have the authority to take away .edu addresses from institutions that were granted them before Educause took over, even if the institutions lose their accreditation or change their names." Many college officials say that since so many unaccredited institutions have .edu addresses, more effort should be made to educate the public about how to determine the accreditation status of a particular institution. The State of Oregon Office of Degree Authorization keeps a comprehensive list of unaccredited institutions, as does the State of Michigan (pdf). – [*SK]

Knight, W. **Zombie networks fuel cybercrime.** *New Scientist* 184, 272, 28 (6 November 2004) The distributed denial of service attack on Google, Yahoo and Microsoft in June used dormant "bots" planted in tens of thousands of PCs around the World. Networks of bots (netbots) are offered for hire by hacking groups. - [DJH]

Kohno, Tadayoshi, et. al. **Analysis of an Electronic Voting System** *IEEE Computer Society: Proceedings of the 2004 IEEE Symposium on Security and Privacy* (May 2004) - Not one of our usual topics, but this critique of an information technology is of obvious importance. If you're the type of person who gets asked the tech questions, "Why don't people trust e-voting?" has a more than adequate response in this paper. The authors thoroughly pick apart the Diebold AccuVote-TS DRE (direct recording electronic) system, which has a substantial share of the e-voting market. From the hackability of the voter card which the voter inserts into the reader, to the ease of access to administrator functions, to tampering with system configuration, to the ability to tell the machine to stop accepting votes, it's clear that current security in this and other e-voting systems is probably more wide open than your library's circulation files. Most of the analysis centers on elements of the source code, but each cause and effect is described in plain English which non-coders find accessible. This is a stellar example of the public service performed by exposing security flaws and the subject is treated with the serious tone which it deserves, without a trace of the mayhem glee common to the work of the 2600 crowd. The scariest thing about this long list of attacks, whether you find them likely or unlikely to ever be used, is that it only takes one to call into question the reliability of a machine or even of an entire polling place. And after the breach is discovered, the chance of getting back to an accurate count of one person - one vote is slim to none. – [*JR]

WEB DESIGN

Kennedy, Peter. **Dynamic web pages and the library catalogue.** *Electronic Library* 22(6) 480-486 This is an interesting account of the development of a home-grown dynamic web publishing application which uses the database (Sybase RDBMS) of the University of Canterbury (New Zealand) library's integrated library system (Horizon) as a means of maintaining dynamic pages on the library's web site, particularly subject portals. The

approach taken meant three things: 1) all electronic resources needed to be catalogued (they were anyway); 2) the catalogue records needed to have local tags added to cover detail not included in the MARC record; 3) additional database tables would be needed to control the manipulation and display of data by PHP. The author describes in considerable detail the MARC cataloguing issues involved. Presumably this project was initiated before library system vendors made available commercially products that would fulfil such a function. One wonders whether the system described could be developed as a library portal product. – [CE]

van der Kuil, Annemiek, and Martin Feijen. **The Dawning of the Dutch Network of Digital Academic REpositories (DARE): A Shared Experience** *Ariadne* (41) (2004) (<http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue41/vanderkuil/>). - Funded by a government grant, the SURF Programme Digital Academic Repositories (DARE) is establishing institutional repositories at Dutch universities and harvesting metadata from them using the OAI-PMH protocol to create a demonstrator portal called DAREnet. Participating universities are utilizing diverse software, including ARNO, DSpace, i-Tor, and proprietary software. The project uses Dublin Core metadata (version 1.0). The Koninklijke Bibliotheek (Royal Library) will preserve data from the participating institutional repositories. The project has dealt with a variety of issues, such as how can digital objects (vs. metadata) be harvested, what should the dc:identifier link to (e.g., the digital object or the repository record for the object), how should objects be identified (OpenURL, the CNRI handle, or DOI), and other issues. – [*CB]

WEBLOGS

Caldwell, Tracey **Hear the call of the blogosphere** *Information World Review*, Issue 208, December 2004. Pages 28-30 Article about the growth of web-logs (blogs) and how some information specialists are using the technology to pull the growing amounts information together. – [LR]

Clyde, Laurel A **Weblogs – are you serious?** *Electronic Library* 22(5) 2004 390-392 The author conducted an informal survey of librarians' opinions about blogs and blogging, and also undertook a search for library weblogs. She encountered little interest in weblogs as a potential source of information or means of communication for libraries. Her view is that "while weblogs may be a natural for some librarians...they are not yet a natural for libraries, though weblogs have found niches in the library and information science environment. Her search (conducted in late 2003) found only 54 library weblogs, created by just 50 libraries. She suggests that libraries are putting themselves at a disadvantage through not taking advantage of the medium. – [CME]

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Book Reviews

**Copyright – Interpreting the law for libraries, archives and information services 4th ed
Graham Cornish. London: Facet Publishing,
2004 ISBN 1-85604-508-0 207pp £24.95**

Copyright – Interpreting the law for libraries, archives and information services by Graham Cornish is the 4th Edition of a well-established publication. Specifically designed as a desktop reference and working tool, this reference work can be used by practicing information professionals from junior counter staff to senior managers alike. Published by FACET this is a timely update following the implementation of the EU Copyright Directive and adds to other works in this area such as *Practical Copyright for Information Professionals – The CILIP Handbook* by Sandy Norman published earlier in 2004.

The writer, Graham Cornish, is an ex-president of CILIP and has a strong practical background in this area. This includes time as a Programme Director for the IFLA Availability of Publications Programme, responsibility for copyright interpretation throughout the British Library and involvement in a number of initiatives designing and implementing Electronic Copyright Management systems.

The context of the publication is laid out at the beginning and it is made clear that this is not intended to deal with wider aspects of intellectual property such as patents. Neither is it an academic study or case law reference. Set out in 12 sections, Cornish starts with definition and law, coverage of copyright and moving on to rights and limitations in relation to the topic (Sections 1-3). He then looks at specific media and areas (Sections 4-12). Coverage of literary, dramatic and musical works (Section 4) is obviously of great interest to public libraries and as a consequence is the largest section. However sound recordings, films, broadcasts, databases, computer programmes, electronic materials and websites are also covered in subsequent chapters. Licensing schemes and other matters such as Treaties and Public Lending Right also have their own separate treatment. There are 4 appendices with useful addresses, publications, websites, examples of differentiation between commercial and non commercial use and statutory declaration forms. All of these, particularly the latter, support the practical nature of this work.

However, the key feature of this work is the format. Comprising 722 numbered paragraphs that are cross-referenced within the text itself and presented as a series of Questions and Answers in relation to

copyright; this is very much at the core of the works' usefulness as reference tool.

The questions can be very general such as "What is ownership of Copyright?" (Para. 30) or "What is the definition of a database?" (Para. 577). They can also drill down to some very specific points such as in Paragraph 701; " But supposing a document is put on the World Wide Web and nobody ever downloads it? Is this still an infringement?" For those of you still wondering the answer is yes- unless, of course, the person issuing the copies has the right to do so.

This question and answer format is a facility that is extremely useful in attempting to 'break-down' the topic areas into accessible points that may answer a specific question.

The overall chapter arrangement entails that topics are further subdivided into subject areas. For instance, in Literary, Dramatic and Musical Works (Section 4) this progressively subdivides into further areas including Definitions, Owners Rights, Duration etc with further topical sub-divisions as appropriate underneath these narrower terms. Headings differ relating to the topic and the headings already mentioned do not necessarily represent a controlled indexing that is applied to the work as a whole. Nonetheless this can help organise your reading. For instance if you were looking for Literary Works; defining in the index you would be directed to paragraph 56 - What is a literary work?" However, the subsequent paragraphs: - "57 - Does literary mean it has to be good quality literature?" then "58 -What about databases? Are these covered as copyright?" et al can almost be treated as mini essays on the topic. Alternatively you can simply look directly for topics on the question you are looking for such as Paragraph 59 "Are Bibliographic Records covered by Copyright?"

In many ways this is where this publication excels in its utility. Indeed this is augmented when making cross-references from topic to topic; for instance the reader is re-directed to issues relating to music (Paragraphs 63-65) when considering how a popular song should be treated in relation to a consideration of 'literary works'. This hypertext feel and design complements the general subject matter insofar as the complexity of examples in copyright issues can require such an approach. However you are dependent on the finite nature of the indexing and inevitably this will lead to some gems remaining locked in the text. This does lead one to yearn for an interactive electronic copy at times with free text search – particularly as it is such a useful work. However overall indexing and cross-referencing facilitates this process well and important topics

such as licensing schemes are indexed extensively by broad areas and specific reference to schemes from BLDSC to OUEE where required.

A disappointment for UkelG members might be the use of only 15 pages in covering "Section 11- Computer programmes, electronic materials and websites". Graham Cornish notes that many of the topics that arise in the electronic world are "exactly the same as in the more traditional paper-based world" (p161). However he also points out that this is a 'constantly changing situation' (p160). Readers may as such need to look elsewhere for an up to date and comprehensive account of the world of electronic copyright. One other area that I was surprised to see little reference to was Freedom of Information however, whilst not a copyright issue in itself it may have been worth some additional comment in terms of practical issues/dilemmas that that may arise for information profession when this comes into place. Perhaps this may be better for the 5th Edition? Though Cornish is clear in noting that freedom of information doesn't change the right of copyright owners.

The appendices are quite slim, useful addresses and further sources of information are just that – they are not intended to be definitive contact lists or bibliographies. However, whilst the real value in this publication is in the text and the indexing, the addition of copies Statutory Declaration forms are welcome, particularly for those of us who have worked in independent information services.

All in all, the 207 pages of this publication, with 722 separate paragraphs, mean that at £24.95 this is a real timesaver for the general practitioner attempting to get a quick fix on the day-to-day issues that they may be bombarded with in the context of copyright. This work would be, in the reviewer opinion, essential for public and academic libraries and definitely of interest to a variety of specialist information services. However, those who are particularly interested in electronic copyright will definitely need to augment this with other reading and perhaps training as the environment changes.

Robert Hughes

Books waiting for review

The following book from Facet Publishing is waiting a reviewer - please contact [Peter Chapman](#) if you would like to do it.

Curtis E-Journals A how-to-do-it manual for building, managing and supporting electronic journal collections

Press Releases

JISC funding gives Oxford Journals new boost for Open Access experiments

A press release

Oxford Journals today (12 January 2005) announced that two of its most prestigious titles have been granted a total of £60,000 to help fund continued experimentation with Open Access.

Nucleic Acids Research (NAR) and the *Journal of Experimental Botany* both applied for the funding from JISC (the Joint Information Systems Committee, a committee of the UK further and higher education funding bodies) in response to its Open Access Publishing Initiative Invitation to Tender. Each journal has been awarded £30,000 of funding.

This is the second round of funding awarded by JISC to publishers moving towards or already working with Open Access content delivery. The first round awarded £150,000 to four publishers. In this second round, five bids were successful, including both of those submitted by journals from the Oxford Journals portfolio.

NAR is the largest journal owned and published by Oxford University Press. It has been trialling a partial Open Access system in 2004 and moves to a full Open Access model in 2005 -- the first established journal of this stature to make such a move. The funding allocated by JISC will allow NAR to waive its £300 charge per article for eligible UK authors based at NAR member institutions, and to offer eligible UK authors at non-member institutions a discounted charge per article of £600.

Oxford Journals has been taking a proactive approach towards experimenting with Open Access and the possibilities this new business model offers. However moving such an established journal to a financially viable full Open Access model is a considerable challenge:

Presenting the bid, Claire Saxby, Biosciences Editor at Oxford Journals said, "If we were to rely solely on income from author charges to fund NAR as an Open Access journal, it is likely that the charges required would only be accessible to the best-funded researchers at present. With this in mind we have developed a model for NAR which combines a variety of funding sources to help subsidise author charges. We are learning a great deal from our experiments so far."

"We are delighted that JISC is supporting our Open

Access initiative with NAR," said Martin Richardson, Managing Director of Oxford Journals. "NAR is one of the most prestigious journals to make a complete switch to Open Access, and our status as a University Press gives us the impetus to experiment with and learn from new distribution models that might help make research more accessible. Support from JISC will really help us and our authors test the viability of this model."

The Journal of Experimental Botany, published on behalf of the Society for Experimental Biology, is already benefiting from JISC funding: during 2004, it has been offering authors the option to pay a fee of £250 in return for making their manuscripts freely available online from the time of publication. First round funding from JISC was used to waive open access fees for all UK authors in 2004 and also contributed towards keeping 2005 subscription prices at 2004 levels. The funding awarded in the second round will be used to waive Open Access fees for UK authors in 2005 and will support the introduction of free subscriptions for all UK institutions in 2006.

Mary Traynor, Managing Editor of the Journal of Experimental Botany commented: "The Journal hopes to focus the academic community on the relationship between academics, publishers and institutional libraries with the intention of forging new relationships and driving innovation in academic publishing. Although our Open Access experiment is still in its early stages, initial indications are encouraging.

"Submissions have increased by 15% and online usage statistics show that there are 33% more full text downloads of open access papers than those which remain under subscription control. The Journal of Experimental Botany is the only high ranking plant journal offering an open access option and this, combined with a steadily increasing impact factor, will contribute to future success."

For more information on both NAR and the Journal of Experimental Botany, please contact:

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NATIONAL LIBRARY FOR HEALTH'S SINGLE SEARCH ENVIRONMENT GOES LIVE

A press release from www.theansweruk.com

The National Library for Health website www.library.nhs.uk now offers a single search environment that will integrate the 'national' and 'local' information resources of 500 NHS library services across England. Going live today (10 January 2005), the single search environment is one of the first outputs of the National Library for Health; an NHS-wide initiative that is designed to deliver the goal of an integrated English health library.

The single search environment is powered by [FDI's](http://www.fdi.com) ZPORTAL solution, which integrates NHS resources alongside published data and delivers the resource search engine. Dr Muir Gray, Secretary to the National Knowledge Service and Co-Director of the NeLH commented on the importance of the new search environment in the age of prevalent electronic resources: "There are over 80,000 articles on bronchitis alone in just one source: PubMed. Doctors and librarians need to be able to power search such electronic resources alongside traditional sources to find the articles that are relevant to them... to deliver critical information to clinicians quickly."

The search engine provides an easy-to-use interface for new or experienced library users, offering them a choice of standard (keyword) or advanced searching (using Boolean terms). Behind the scenes, the software searches across a variety of resources including websites, grey literature, physical resources and full text journals, making information retrieval quicker for time-poor clinicians or librarians.

Dr Ben Toth, National Library for Health Programme Manager and Co-Director of the National electronic Library for Health (NeLH) adds, "The National Library for Health offers the powerful new single search engine but also RSS feeds from the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) and DrugInfoZone. A new clinical Question and Answer service (the Primary Care Question Answering Service) is currently being trialled. These new features will attract people who have not used the online library services previously, and will also offer additional benefits to staff who currently use other NHS library services such as the National electronic Library for Health."

The National Library for Health (NLH) will provide clinicians with access to the best current know-how and knowledge to support healthcare-related decisions through one dedicated portal.

www.library.nhs.uk integrates access to a range of high quality information components and ultimately will bring together key digital and physical information resources used across the 500 NHS libraries, including relevant websites, full text primary journals such as BMJ's Clinical Evidence, physical resource collections such as The Cochrane Library and grey literature. The new service will be a key tool in making clinical decisions easier and more accurate, as well as improving support for patient care, continuing professional development, e-learning, and research across the NHS.

The National Library for Health includes:

- A single search environment (live from 10th January 2005), a web-based search engine using FDI's ZPORTAL technology for managers, health professionals and patients that will integrate the 'national' and 'local' information resources of over 500 NHS library services across England. The NHS-wide search engine will also be used to provide more comprehensive measurement statistics on use of NHS libraries and their resources during 2004/5.
- News services from trusted high level sources via RSS (Really Simple Syndication feeds) including NICE, DrugInfoZone and Health Technology Assessments
- The mental health e-books collection, comprising over 50 mental health e-books from leading academic publishers such as the Taylor & Francis Group and Springer Group