On the circuit

Global access to UK research: removing the barriers

Woburn House, London
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Report by John Harrington, Information Services Manager, Cranfield University

This JISC-sponsored seminar was intended to look at changing models of scholarly communication and, in particular, to examine ways of enhancing access to academic research.

Seminar introduction
Reg Carr, University of Oxford
Reg Carr, Chair of JISC's Scholarly Communication Group, outlined his hopes for the outcomes of the seminar: heightened awareness and a clearer perception of the potential opportunities for bringing change to the scholarly communication system. He noted the importance of the topics addressed and was pleased by the 'all-star' cast of speakers.

Keynote address: The development of scholarly communication
Jean-Claude Guédon, University of Montreal
Professor Guédon provided a fascinating overview of the development of scholarly communication from the establishment of the Royal Society and the links to similar groups throughout Europe during the 17th and 18th centuries. During this canter through history, he covered the creation of scientific journals, the growth of commercial publishers during the 19th century and the phenomenal explosion of scientific research, especially during the second half of the 20th century, which ultimately precipitated the creation of new methods and tools for discovery and retrieval. He explained the roots of the myth of core science and core journals and the impact of this on library acquisition strategies. He showed how commercial publishers seized on this 'inelastic market' thereby fuelling the journal price inflation crisis of the last twenty or thirty years. In effect, the original 'republic of science' was replaced by a restrictive plutocracy dominated by a small number of large commercial publishers, and a scholarly communication system defined by copyright and licensing schemes, with librarians being cast in the role of policemen. He described how the open access movement began in the late 1990s as a response to this journal inflation crisis.

He suggested that the optimal scholarly communication system is one in which barriers to literature are minimized if scientific research is going to be able to resolve global problems facing the planet. The challenge is to find an appropriate business model which will facilitate this transition to a generalized open access scholarly communication system. Professor Guédon concluded by saying that the battle lines are now drawn between the open access movement and those, such as some commercial publishers, who want to resist this change.

Discussion – Bob Campbell of Blackwell Publishing roundly criticized and questioned the financial sustainability of a generalized open access system. Guédon responded by pointing out that the journal pricing of the present system is itself unsustainable and the elitist access environment which has resulted is both unethical and undesirable.

New models for research publication
Dr David Lipman, National Library of Medicine
Dr Lipman is the driving force behind PubMed and PubMed Central. He predicted that in the

United States open access to published research is inevitable because so much of this research is funded by the tax payer and greater use provides for a much higher return on investment.

He noted the need for greater linkages between research literature and described the huge increase in data generation as part of the move towards e-science. He illustrated the relationship between data generation with reference to the use and the curation of existing databases within the field of genomics. He demonstrated the integration between PubMed and factual data banks as the great driver behind open access. (I suspect that you would have to be a biochemist to appreciate the importance of the functionality created by mapping taxonomies within the databanks and databases.) He then described the digitization of biomedical journals within PubMed Central and the 'Bookshelf' e-book project, which provides links from individual e-books to references in PubMed Central and has become so embedded in the biomedical research community, that many scientists routinely submit their papers for publication.

Open access – a funder's perspective

Dr Mark Walport, Director, Wellcome Trust

The Wellcome Trust spends about £400 million each year funding medical research. The Trust has great interest in optimizing access to the research that it funds and this underpins the philosophy of the Human Genome Project, to which the Trust is a major contributor. Mark showed an example of a search (on PubMed) that threw up an e-journal article to which access was denied even though Wellcome had funded the research!

He pointed out that the publication costs are marginal to the costs of the research. The Trust has recently issued a supportive statement on open access publishing. The accompanying Trust report also available on http://www.wellcome.ac.uk/scipubreport provides an economic analysis of scientific research publishing. Mark summarized the reasons why researchers like to publish in the 'best journals' and explained why and how certain journals derive their reputations as being among 'the best'. He examined the peer review process and described a number of possible funder initiatives. These include engagement in the debate, funding the cost of publication, encouraging author retention of copyright, and establishing open access repositories and recognizing the intrinsic value of the content of the paper rather than the title of the journal. His keys to success are the need for author choice, the creation of new brands, the fundamental principles of selection in open access journals remaining unchanged and the research community learning to value open access journals.

This was a refreshing and essentially positive presentation.

JISC support for new models through the FAIR programme

Alicia Wise, JISC

Alicia gave a brief outline of the role of JISC's Scholarly Communication Group's interests and activities, before describing the FAIR programme. JISC will soon issue an invitation to tender aimed at publishers who want to engage in open access experiments.

She described the philosophy underlying the Open Archives Initiative and the FAIR programme's international and national context. She very briefly highlighted the aims, objectives and activities covered by the programme and noted the work carried out by RoMEO in making author licence agreements more visible and transparent.

Institutional repositories in practice, SHERPA project, University of Nottingham

Stephen Pinfield, University of Nottingham

Stephen took a very practical, down-to-earth perspective for his presentation. He started by making the very pertinent point that institutional repositories are straightforward to set up, but rather more difficult to populate with content. Stephen described the 'impact' barriers and 'access' barriers inherent in the existing scholarly communication process. E-print archives have the potential for lowering these barriers by facilitating wider and rapid dissemination and by enhancing access. They will have benefits for the institution and the wider research community. He showed a number of example e-print services. The keys to filling repositories include policy formulation, advocacy and the provision of practical help to researchers. Common concerns are quality control, IPR, copyright, plagiarism and workload.

Open access publishing: sustaining open access journals

Jan Velterop, BioMed Central Group

BioMed Central is a 'for-profit' company (but not yet in profit). All of its research articles are open access and it generates revenue by charging for article submission. Provided that full and correct citations are included, there are no restrictions placed on the use and re-use of BioMed Central articles. According to Jan Velterop, BioMed Central's hope is they will never have to police this policy. All articles are peer reviewed and the details of the reviewers and the comments of the reviewers and authors are available online. Jan then went on to describe the economic model. A charge of $500 per article is made to cover the editorial and production costs. This is paid by the author. Waivers are offered to authors in the developing world. There are institutional membership charges. About 4,300 articles have been published, with a publishing time of about 11 weeks. (JISC maintains institutional membership for all UK universities.)

Discussion Forum

What are we hearing?

Chaired by Fred Friend, JISC Scholarly Communication Group

A discussion of the issues in open access followed. Bob Campbell (Blackwell Publishing) asserted that the author-paying open access model is flawed and is not sustainable. Bob claimed that this would ensure the development of a system that would adapt to the needs of the author, rather than the needs of the user.

Further discussion focused on the importance of author self-archiving and the future role, if any, for commercial publishers.

Comments and conclusion

This was definitely the most interesting and encouraging seminar I have attended for a long time. It was most heartening to hear Mark Walport articulate the case for open access from the perspective of a research funder. The presentations by Jan Velterop and David Lipman suggested that new models for funding scholarly communication are a real possibility. The big unanswered question seems to be how to fund the transition from the existing system, in which the user (or rather the user's library!) pays the cost of journals, to one in which access becomes free at the point of consumption.

As the lady sitting next to me from Daresbury Laboratory commented at the end of the seminar, perhaps we can now at last see the world changing.

Report from ALA Midwinter Meeting

San Diego, USA
9–14 January 2004

Report by Helen Henderson

Illicit Love, Animal Exploitation, Masked Vigilantes and Book Burning! All at ALA in San Diego, or at least in the funniest part – the Overdue Media stand. These are some of the ads for the library cartoon book *Unshelved.* For those of you not familiar with this cartoon strip, it is syndicated in several publications and is also available through www.overduemedia.com . The hero is Dewey, the heroine Tamara and there are the stereotypes of Colleen, the cranky old-fashioned, computer-illiterate librarian and of course Mel, the manager. There is a cast of library users representing all ages and types. Although set in an American public library you will all recognize yourselves, your colleagues and your customers. You can sign up and have it sent by e-mail daily and the aficionados are now parading with their purple 'read responsibly' T-shirts. (Mine caused considerable consternation at the security checkpoint in San Diego airport.) And in addition there was offered 'An Evening of Book Lust' with Nancy Pearl. One of Nancy's claims to fame is that she is the model for the librarian action figure with 'push button shushing action'. She is at the Seattle Public Library and also Director of the Washington Center for the Book and was doing readings at the conference.

On a more serious note, the main trend in serials was the launch of several 'comparison' services. These are designed to help manage the journals in aggregator databases, which we all know change on a practically daily basis. In a remote corner of the exhibition hall was a small stand for the start-up company Library Comparison Source Inc. They provide a tailored service which will take all your aggregator databases and analyse current coverage for your library, and the levels of duplication (www.lcsource.com). They come from Seattle as do Serials Solutions, who provide a similar service amongst their wide range of offerings. (What is it about that area that promotes such innovation and interesting people?) Pete McCracken had some very flattering things to say about UKSG, *Serials,* and *Serials*-eNews in particular. EBSCO already offer their A–Z service in this area and there are others coming along.

Federated searching, which allows a single query to search multiple databases, with the answers de-duplicated and ranked, was another interesting area, showcased in San Diego. WebFeat was by far the most professional service (www.webfeat.org). They have a very impressive customer list and are working with Web of Knowledge amongst other services. TDNet are offering this service along with MuseGlobal. On the same topic, NISO have launched their Meta-Search initiative which is looking to identify, develop, and frame the standards and other common understandings that are needed to enable an efficient and robust information environment. The goal is to enable metasearch service providers to offer more effective and responsive services; content providers to deliver enhanced content and protect their intellectual property; and libraries to deliver services that distinguish their services from Google and other free web services. More about the initiative and the three task groups (Access management, Collection Description and Search/Retrieve) is available on the NISO web site (http://www.niso.org/committees/MS_initiative.html).

Those of you who have spent any time in the States will know about the national obsession with discount coupons, so it was fun to see the Exhibitor Guide and Coupon Book, an 'Easy-to-Use Guide to the Exhibits' with vendor coupons, prizes and other 'free stuff'. Who could resist the opportunity to win a subscription to Oxford Online Products or a Bernan gift certificate? Newspaper Direct were previewing their Digital Newspaper service for libraries which provides same-day editions of newspapers from around the world. Just for fun we chose *The Sunday Telegraph*, *Sydney Morning Herald* and *Le Monde*.

Of course, some regular UKSG faces were there. The ex-Everetts contingent included Tony Roche in the Prenax booth with Robbie Frazer, and Colin Harrison in the Blackwell Books suite, recovering from frost-bite after a trip to snow-bound Oregon. Keith Courtney was spotted on the Elsevier stand (he says he was only visiting …), Amy Williams and Kate Jury of OUP were fending off the eager subscribers, and Bill Russell of Emerald was seen rushing around in many directions as usual. Nancy Buckley (formerly Gerry) of Blackwell Publishing was pausing in San Diego after her honeymoon and wedding in St Lucia. Ann Whittle of Talis stopped to tell me that the pre-conference seminar on 'Taming the Tiger' was superb and alone worth the journey from Birmingham, so we are grateful to Pat Loghry for writing it up for *Serials.*

Taming the Electronic Tiger: effective management of electronic resources

Report by Patricia Ann Loghry, Resource and Collections Special Projects Librarian, University of Notre Dame, Indiana

Approximately 150 people attended the ALCTS Serials Section meeting on 9 January, a pre-conference of ALA Midwinter sponsored by Swets, Springer, Ex Libris and EBSCO.

Challenges facing the library

Richard W Boss, Senior Consultant for Information Systems Consultants, Inc., began the program by discussing the challenges that all librarians face with the management of electronic resources.

Proliferation of electronic resources With information based on his firm's research, Boss indicated they had determined – from data collected on approximately 200 libraries in 2003 – that the fewest number of separate subscription databases subscribed to was 5, the largest number was 385, with the average in excess of 45.

Manual control of electronic subscriptions is difficult and for every penny spent on selecting electronic resources, libraries will spend half that amount each year in maintaining them.

Duplication data entry as information on the databases goes into the ERM (electronic resources management system), the interface used to access electronic subscriptions, the ILS (integrated library system) and some kind of book-keeping system.

Lack of integration with portals Information may come directly from user web, or licensee of user web feed, and there is no provision for single search capability, or a linking capability. Multiple interfaces frustrate users and make collection of use data difficult.

What kind of information is needed in an ERM?

- a record for each database and each title within a package of databases
- a field containing the producer of the product and the intermediary who provides the product to you
- a link to a copy of the contract, and its history, a field for contract term, as well as the scope of coverage
- an area for cost, payment history and a renewal alert
- a field for terms of access for users and for resource links to the product itself
- a provider notes area or field is required with the subject and result of each conversation
- tiered security for access. Not all information can or should be shared information. The staff needs to look at all of the information housed in the ERM, but the users should not be able to see confidential materials, except the terms of access.
- Finally, we need usage statistics that will allow the library to determine what the cost per use of the product is.

Boss's firm was retained by a university to determine database cost per use. They looked at the number of hits and cost data to determine the range of cost per use of e-resource articles. The low cost was nineteen cents per use to a high of six dollars and thirty cents.

What are ILS providing?

Most of the libraries with ERMs have home-grown systems, although there are a number of vendors offering ERM systems. Using the above-needed information elements, Boss contacted twelve vendors of automated library systems. Not all twelve responded but he received the following answers:

- ***Dynix*** wrote they recognize the need for a product, have partnered with academic institutions to design a system that will allow the use of subscription vendors, but they currently do not have an ERM. They hope to release a product at the end of 2004.
- ***Endeavor*** recognizes the need and their proposal has a license manager, a package manager and a status checker. They hope to release the product sometime in 2004.
- ***Ex Libris*** will build on MetaLib and Digitool to develop an ERM. They have asked for customer input to develop an ERM that is expected sometime in 2004.
- ***GIS*** responded that license management is something that academic rather than public libraries focus on, and it is not something they are focusing on.
- ***Innovative Interfaces*** has an ERM in use at several locations. It tracks cost, access restrictions, management notices, holdings data, contact information, payment details, registered IP addresses, electronic copy of license and negotiation details. Security differentiates by patron type; user, public services and technical services staff.
- ***Sirsi*** is looking at development of a product but is not willing to say that it will be available in 2004. Sirsi envisions this product as core and likely to be integrated with their integrated library system, but not likely to be a stand alone.
- ***VTLS*** has completed a product and will show privately by appointment and publicly at ALA

annual 2004. The product can produce a record for each database, including producer and aggregator, an electronic copy of the contract, a reporting feature, and password control by user class.

What are the alternatives to ERM products we can use in 2004?

We can use a home-grown system. EBSCO has an e-resource management tool, but it is primarily for journals. Gold Rush is available but it is primarily a librarian's tool for technical services and acquisitions. The user interface is considered difficult. Many research libraries have struggled with in-house development and Appendix A in the Report of the DLF Electronic Resource Management Initiative lists a set of requirements desired in an ERM. The report is available at www.library.cornell.edu/elicensestudy/difdeliverables/fallforum2003/FunctionalSpec20031114/doc/. (A note of caution, if you look for all the items listed in this report you will not find an ERM that can supply them all.)

A Primer in Tiger Taming

Sandy Hurd, Director of Sales, Digital Solutions at Innovative Interfaces Inc., continued the program with a presentation entitled Positive Reinforcement, or, A Primer in Tiger Taming. The ERM tiger is out there in many outfits, for example in-house databases like Access, Excel and various web pages. The information environment is fast and fluid, and although we have worked hard on standards, we have had to learn new ways to manage our resources and budgets. This presentation talked about the library within the context of the entire organization and community showing that the library is part of the larger entity, so whatever we are intending to implement has an impact outside of our users. The web changed everyone's focus, and expectations must be fulfilled right now. Our users work in different new ways, faculty members collaborate with other faculty members and want to present course materials in the same space as reserve materials and student work space.

What happened when we opened the door to the cage?

Some people retired, but then librarians decided that they must turn and face the tiger. Technical services have become increasingly aware of users' needs regarding provision of service. We provide, with technology, services that empower our users beyond what we could provide just a few years ago. What do we have to do to make the user experience a good one? We need an effective user interface that is clean, crisp, and where they can get what they want in three clicks or less. Patrons need to be able to move back and forth easily among systems with an excellent search return, results that come back in a logical order and where they can connect from this resource to outside resources. Authentication is a critical issue for libraries, but users want to be able to print, download and inter-library loan from the same interface.

What do libraries need from the ERM?

Technical services need an interface that can be managed easily on site. The total cost of the ERM is the purchase price plus the cost of the in-house maintenance of the product. Everyone wants an administrator interface, but it must be customizable, easy to add to and change. Staff want to search multiple disparate databases with one search, expecting results to be fully integrated across databases and relevancy-ranked across them as well.

Some quick definitions: *broadcast searching* puts in one command and searches are across databases. *Federated searches* have multiple library catalogs, multiple databases and allow uniform taxonomies and ranking algorithms. Broadcast data is living on an aggregator server and the data is updated immediately. Federated searches display the last updated data. The broadcast search is not as standards-friendly as the federated.

When looking for ERMs, the architecture should suit the application, whether you want a broadcast or federated search, a relevancy ranking or some other sorting mechanism, and whether you want a standards base. But when looking at our requirements, we need to look at the larger institutional interfaces. The library needs to be involved in the institutional decisions for university repositories, and should be part of the institutional information environment that includes collaboration space, personalization tools and institutional offerings such as trustee, faculty and student information, as well as providing filters for our local data sets.

What are our challenges?

We must figure out how to deal with the realities of multiple, non-standard, fluid, data formats from hundreds of sources. We need technologies that apply uniform relevancy ranking, taxonomy and auto-classification to a results set. We will also need to deal with the political realities related to the larger organization. To get this kind of environment, the university OIT will have to help and the institution will have to provide the budget needed to accomplish the larger goal.

Keeping electronic resource management user-centered

Tim Bucknall, Assistant Director of Jackson Library at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, indicated there is no accepted definition of 'user centered' and that past measurement criteria no longer work. Here is Tim's ideal interface. His acronym is KISS, i.e. keep it simple, stupid. With minimal instruction required for use, the interface is simple and clean. On the library side we want to empower our users to become lifelong learners.

Options for users

What are the eight options that meet the user-centered needs of both the power searcher and the beginner?

1. The tiered search options, like 'reference' does, with a simple search being done at the reference desk and the advanced search being sent to the specialist, i.e. an advanced or simple search.
2. Use a display that is user friendly but can access advanced formats. Keep it simple on the first screen but give them access to the more advanced if they want it.
3. Give meta searching through multiple resources with a simplified interface and access to a more powerful searching option.
4. Categorize e-resources on the basis of something that the user understands and cares about.
5. Make the system match user behavior not the user match system behavior.
6. Don't make the user jump through extra hoops. Keep it simple.
7. Put what the user is looking for where the user is going to look for it.
8. Find popular features out there and emulate them.

User assessment

There are three ways libraries do user assessment. They are from the most used, least useful, to the least used but most helpful. We primarily use anecdotal evidence: we listen to what users want, but what customers say and what they do are rarely the same. In addition, we use web logs and other statistics to see what our users select. However, statistics are not uniformly collected or counted. Finally, we assess, with usability testing, the most helpful. Watch your users, give them tasks, observe what they do, what errors they make and how effective their results are.

Keeping the database access user-centered

Some issues to look out for:

1. There are a lot of A–Z lists and they are probably the least effective. Create links by discipline, subject list, course pages, from library catalogs to databases, from library catalogs to e-journals, from reserves to articles. Put links everywhere, but have them in some kind of centralized management system where if you have to change a link it changes all occurrences of the link. This centralized approach has a drawback because it doesn't have a lot of flexibility, but it does allow for consistent collection of statistics and allows you to create the cost per use for reallocation of resources. Remember, a piece of statistic assessment needs to be

constant, updated. Over time, user behavior changes, so we can't take a snap-shot of their behavior.
2. Be careful when you implement link resolvers as they can cause major changes in the way patrons access databases.
3. Make remote access as seamless and as context-sensitive as possible.
4. Don't divide resources into poorly defined, broad categories with terminology that is only understandable to library employees.

Bucknall finished his presentation by showing examples from his Journal Access User Center at North Carolina Greensboro.

House of Horrors: exorcizing electronic resources

Norm Medeiros, the Coordinator for Bibliographic and Digital Services at Haverford College, began with a scamper through history where e-mails delivered the early online e-journals, e-journals were free with print subscriptions, printouts were the archival copies, e-journals were nomads moving from university to university, where libraries were leaders in the web environment with their pages of e-journal resources and where universities still checked in their print copies. Library reaction to the use of e-journals was supersonic. One day these resources that were seemingly unimportant became something that had to be cataloged, had to be on our web pages. Overnight providing access to e-journals became one of the most important aspects of technical services. During this time ideological debates about the catalog raged. Should it be an inventory list or a finding aid, and the catalog became less an inventory and more of an information gateway. By the mid 1990s, many universities provided redundant access to e-resources, through their catalogs and through hand-coded web pages. In 1996, CONSER approved a single record approach to cataloging e-journals, but it didn't help with the problem of access to the same e-journal through different resources. Over the past few years libraries have automated the record creation process purchasing MARC record sets, and by the end of the 1990s, database-driven web lists replaced the hand-created lists. By using something like 'My Library' created by Eric Lease Morgan, users can create personalized web sites.

Metadata for electronic resources

Management of administrative metadata for e-resources is where many libraries are focusing today. Pieces of metadata such as license terms, vendor name/contact information, purchase arrangements, URLs for use statistics often get filed away from access, sometimes lost. Providing that administrative metadata to other staff is increasingly difficult and providing terms of use to patrons is extremely difficult. More and more, descriptive terms and elements that do not easily fit, and were never intended to fit, into integrated library systems are required by technical services staff, inter-library loan and records librarians. Statistics required for reporting and administrative purposes are difficult to extract.

Elements of managing resources

The elements important to managing electronic resources, outside of providing access, generally fall into three categories: licensing, purchasing and administration.

- *Licensing elements* that dictate how the e-resource may be used include restrictions on inter-library loan, remote access, use in course management tools, concurrent users, archival access guarantees and indemnification. Staff need this information.
- *Purchasing elements* include vendor name, expiration date, pricing model and consortial arrangements. Most of this information is crammed into our acquisitions records and is not retrievable in meaningful ways.
- *Administration data* includes elements such as OpenURL compliance, availability and frequency of usage statistics, administrative passwords and documentation, and technical contact information. There are only a few libraries who have developed systems to house the administrative metadata required to provide electronic resources (MIT's Vera, Penn. State's ERLIC, and Johns Hopkins' Hermes).

These people have influenced later ERM design and development of metadata standards.

Medeiros received a charge to develop an e-journal metadata administrative system for Tri-State Colleges, and looked at the following ERMs:

- ***Vera*** runs on a FileMaker Pro database application because several in-house staff had experience. Designers felt it was better to use an application staff could manipulate rather than a more robust application that only a couple of people understood.
- ***ERLIC I*** was designed to manage administrative data. Developed in 1999 to track e-resource information, it is used to house information such as authentication, usage, license terms and contact information, as well as to provide patron access to these resources. ERLIC II has a reporting feature that allows staff to generate reports on demand. It is a system that continues to evolve to meet the needs of the Penn. State community.
- ***Hermes***, the Johns Hopkins system, has a facility that notifies staff of what resources are coming due for renewal and limits duplicate data between the e-resources management system and the OPAC (see Cyzyk, M., and Robertson, N.D.M. (2003). 'HERMES: The Hopkins Electronic Resource Management System.' *Information Technology and Libraries* 22(3): 12–17).

The Tri-State College consortium consists of Bryn Mawr, Haverford and Swarthmore, three small liberal arts colleges located within ten miles of the suburbs of Philadelphia. They developed an integrated library system in 1990 and since then collaborative efforts have grown, especially in electronic resource purchasing. The consortial Electronic Resource System (ERTS) was developed in early 2001. The ERTS team consisted of Swarthmore's Head of Technical Services, Bryn Mawr's Cataloging and Serials Librarians, the Tri-College's Special Projects and Medeiros. They decided that the data they wanted to track fitted into four categories:

(a) licensors or entities from whom they licensed products,
(b) vendors or entities from whom they bought the resources,
(c) purchases or expenditures made to maintain access to resources,
(d) individual resource titles.

Because of the consortial status, ERTS needed the ability to both re-use data and accommodate up to four instances of unique data, one for each of the libraries and one for the consortium. An example of how these files interact is 1) a record for Astrophysics is entered into the title spot, 2) licensed through Kluwer, entered into the licensor file, 3) they buy the Kluwer collection through PALINET entered into the vendor file, and 4) since each library has its own purchase arrangement with PALINET, each library creates its own purchase record. They all link to the shared title and licensor records.

ERTS has helped Tri-State organize and make available administrative metadata. It provides statistics that weren't previously available and the ability to keep in a central place all the data needed to manage their growing collection of licenses for electronic resources. Further information is available at http://www.haverford.edu/library/erts/ .

Vendor showcase

The next session was a vendor showcase featuring Kittie Henderson and Dan Tonkery from EBSCO Subscription Services, Dena Schoen from Harrassowitz, Lynne Branche-Brown from Innovative Interfaces, Inc., Peter McCracken from Serials Solutions, Jeff Aipperspach from Swets Information Services, and Michael Markwith from TDNet. Each showcased their products and services that could help with electronic resources management.

Through the standards jungle in 30 minutes

Friedemann A Weigel, Managing Partner and Director Information Systems at Harrassowitz, conducted a session on standards. Titled 'Taming the Tiger Technologically: Through the Standards Jungle in 30 Minutes', Weigel started by saying that there are hundreds of standards out there and that the standards do not work. The first e-resource management system in the late nineties had elements for content, acquisitions and access but did not mention licensing. He feels there is a shift in focus from content provision to the issues of acquisition and licensing. There are many pieces of e-resource metadata management being developed, but what is missing is how they all fit together. A system developed by a German consulting firm looked at the e-resource work flow. It contains resource identification, resource selection, license evaluation/negotiation, ordering, payment/prepayment, receiving, access management, usage tracking and renewal/cancellation. This model uses EDITX, ONIX, EDI and other standards. The standard for content provision is EDITX 79 and SGML. Publishers need to develop a common XML and DTD standard to reduce the costs. We will be using the same technology to provide the content as we will be using to communicate this content. PDF and ERMI do an amazing job of describing metadata standards for preservation and LOCKSS for archiving standards. There is a disconnect between Europe and the USA as Europe is using MPEG 21 and the US is using ERME. MPEG 21 are writing a data definition dictionary which is found in MPEG21 part six of the standard. There is the sample license commissioned and accepted by several subscription agents, which was designed by John Cox. Wouldn't it be wonderful to have a license across many publishers with a common way to size an institution?

There are many things happening in the access arena. The Open Archives Initiative is about obtaining metadata from metadata providers. The OpenURL has become a NISO standard. The COUNTER project is available but doesn't appear to be connected to any NISO standard. There are proposals for ISSN and DOI standards with the discussion focusing on the use of single or multiple ISSNs for various forms and expressions of the same content. There is a proposal that all the forms carry the same ISSN rather than one for each incarnation of the content.

Why don't we implement standards? There is an enormous disconnect between standard designer, implementor and user. The design tries to incorporate different needs for different people and this makes it very hard to process. In 2002, about 96% of the Fortune 500 companies were using EDI electronic transfer of business information, but if you look at the S & P small and medium-sized businesses, 96% of them did not use the EDI standard. While we have the SGML standard, we are missing a standard for e-content. The standard for online information exchange (ONIX) has a standard for messages:

1) serials online holdings (SOH): it is an open standard and we are free to define what we need. This message can be used to build the 856 field.

2) serials product subscription (SPS) has three options:
   a) a list of serial products available online from the sender,
   b) a price list or price catalog of these products,
   c) a list of serials holdings with prices for a particular subscriber including current prices and prices last paid.

There are standards available that can accommodate a quite wide range of functionality. What we must do now is pull the individual groups into a standard for the entire entity. Standards consist of two components: the meta language and the business model. The meta language is ready for use in XML and ONIX but the business model needs to be hammered out. They are being mapped out, but will only work if there is a broader technical support and maintenance. Many products were highlighted earlier in the day, but there was no mention of standards. Remember that the problem with standards is that while they are good from the technical perspective they are unable to support best practice. If you are going to buy an ERM you must have one that complies with standards. Ask your potential vendor if they support best practices. We need to be very clear in language and tone to define the exchanges for our purposes.

Making sense of user statistics: first the bad news

The final session was presented by Bob Molyneux, Director, Statistics and Surveys at the US National Commission of Libraries and Information Science

(NCLIS). Molyneux discussed the characteristics that make the data so complex.

1. What are usage data? In the Garden of Data we had good data. We counted the same thing and we had good pricing so we could run good reports. Then came the fall of man and we have bad data. Definitions are hard because things are moving so quickly and stability of data is crucial.
2. What is the context of the data? We have many studies but are they opinion-based, behavioral-based or outcome-based? From early use studies we learned that statistics collected were the same, so past use was a good predictor of future use. Now we collect statistics and measure something that we agree on but it takes a couple of years to get it reported and printed. By then the definitions mean nothing to the current environments. In addition, with the license agreements, there are some types of data that cannot be collected.
3. We do not have a research community with many eyes looking at the same issues, and that means that the errors we may make do not get corrected. If you build on previous statistical research the errors get corrected and research moves forward but if not the errors take longer to discover. Project COUNTER has an XML database and they promise to write reports. Molyneux feels this is our best shot at use data. The question is whether we will be able to pool data and get meaningful results. He wonders if Project COUNTER can survive with funding dependent on memberships. Consortia have efforts underway to collect data from within the consortium; this will help improve the statistic collection and the research situation. The trick will be to balance statistic collection with the current privacy concerns. Librarians are not leading research, and private companies are looking into the issues, so libraries need to decide if/how they want work in this area.

InForums

Report by Lyndsay Rees-Jones, Workplace and Solo Advisor, CILIP

> *Special Librarians lead busy lives, which rarely allow much opportunity to meet and talk to fellow professionals on issues of mutual concern and interest. If you are working in professional isolation in your organization or would benefit from meeting people in other sectors, this opportunity to participate in a meeting aimed at discussion and the exchange of ideas and experience may be valuable.*
>
> *Rediscover the human face of librarianship, refresh your knowledge, find solutions to problems, and step back for a morning to see the wood emerge from the trees.*
>
> *This <u>not</u> a lecture, <u>not</u> a workshop, <u>not</u> a training course. It is an opportunity to brainstorm topics of mutual interest with colleagues.*

So said the blurb for the first seven InForums, held between 1995 and 1998. Life has moved on, we are in a new century, but much of what was written is still very true. The InForum is first and foremost an occasion when information professionals can discuss all their concerns, ideas and lessons learnt, and has ceased to be exclusively for people working in commercial environments, as it has a much wider appeal and relevance.

The first sessions were initially entitled *A Chance to Chat*, but the name had to be changed to something that reflected the more serious nature and thinking behind them. Employers were reluctant to see value in staff attending anything so 'loose' as a discussion. The new title, coined by myself and Liz Killean, was (we thought) a clever way of expressing the informal and discursive nature of the sessions, and did seem to make it easier for participants to get approval to attend. After the last session of 1998 there was a gap for a few years (due to lack of time and other commitments on the part of the organizers!) before they re-started at the end of 2001. The aim is to run three during 2004, and Caroline Moss-Gibbons of the Royal College of Physicians will continue (as she has done since 2002) to help in ensuring the success of each session.

The range of topics discussed has been broad: from internal marketing, to image; from working in isolation to the role of a librarian in the serials continuum. Most recently discussion has centred on e-journals; licensing and associated issues; and serials agents – evolution or extinction. I thought that it might be interesting to share some of the issues discussed in recent gatherings. Please bear in mind that this is very much a 'snap-shot' intended to capture a flavour of the meetings.

Licensing and associated issues

Sample of the issues brought to the meeting:

- deciphering of the wide and diverse world of licence agreements
- role of subscription agents
- 'managing' licences – definitions and variations
- linking
- publisher understanding of membership organisations' needs.

Ensuing discussion included:

- publisher naivety (stupidity) – lack of appreciation of the range of issues that face librarians particularly in the commercial sectors, or any real understanding of how the material is actually used, e.g. remote working
- confidentiality clauses – can be very problematic especially if the librarian is not even allowed to see the contract before being required to agree
- new posts are being created to help services navigate the legal compliance minefield
- key issue = shared definitions for terms such as user, premises and archive, plus an urgent need for a shared understanding of terms such as performance, quantities, obligations, etc.
- take-overs and mergers – although the model licence allows for these eventualities, specific agreements may not.

Serials agents – evolution or extinction?

Sample of the issues brought to the meeting:

- true role of an intermediary – who do they really work for?
- common standards?
- specialized services
- will libraries survive?
- differences between corporate and academic worlds, in types of journal required.

Ensuing discussion included:

- Trust = absolutely essential to a successful working relationship. Many have lost sight of this 'simple' fact.
- There must be a real understanding within an organisation of the role of an agent and why the library uses one. Often financial matters are only dealt with by the purchasing departments.
- Agents add 'service' – although they don't provide a product, this service is generally vital to the success of an in-house service.
- There needs to be a change in behaviours and expectations on both sides – hence a mutually negotiated agreement is crucial.
- There is a need for a translator/interpreter.
- We need a clear matrix for the sector – to aid understanding in a still evolving world.

This final point – the development of a matrix – will be the focus of the next meeting (nominally May – details will be confirmed on the web site), and if we are successful (even if we are not!) it will be shared with the wider UKSG community.

If you are interested in attending the next InForum, have suggestions for topics, or would like to discuss any aspect please do contact me. I really believe that UKSG is in a perfect position to facilitate this type of exchange on the rapidly-changing serials environment.

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