



Smart Libraries

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Technology and Change in Academic Libraries

In March the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) released a report on technology and change in academic libraries. The report grew out of a two-day summit held in early November 2006 in Chicago, attended by approximately thirty leaders of academic libraries and higher education. The report was drafted by Gregory Wegner of the Great Lakes Colleges Association, and Robert Zemsky of The Learning Alliance, who facilitated the in-person meeting.

There's a sense of urgency about this report and this topic, because the future of academic libraries is perhaps more doubtful today than it has been in over a century. Academic libraries almost certainly will not disappear entirely, but their place and roles in higher education, research, and scholarship are uncertain.

The summiters identified three essential action items that academic libraries must take in order to achieve the "necessary transformation" that will keep academic libraries germane to higher education for at least one more decade:

- Move beyond being perceived primarily as the place for books.
- The culture of academic libraries needs to replace the dominant attitudes of ownership and control with a penchant for useful services and guidance.
- Academic libraries must descend from what many people see as "an increasingly isolated perch of presumed privilege" (in the old days we called that the Ivory Tower) and enter the rough and tumble fray to develop and deploy information services for a new age.

Not only do academic and research libraries need to climb down from—and dismantle—the Ivory Tower. They also need to encourage and facilitate faster dissemination of scholarly information. "Timeliness of communication confers a strategic advantage not just in popular media, not just in the sciences, but in all forms of scholarly communication." It was somewhat surprising that the report did not place greater emphasis on the increasing mobility with which faculty, students, and staff access information. We need to look beyond delivering content and services to classrooms, labs, offices, and residence halls and envision an entirely peripatetic academic library, not only across the campus and throughout the real world, but also venturing into virtual environments.

The report notes that fundamental changes in technology, research, teaching, and learning "... have created a very different context for the missions of academic and research libraries." Contextual and ambient environmental changes and pressures probably will be—and should be—major drivers of how academic libraries change over the next ten years.

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From Print and Place to Online Information Services

Part of the challenge is that academic libraries were defined primarily as places that held print resources. Now most scholarly information is shunted about as digital packets. The report notes, “In many respects the academic library has become transparent.” Many undergraduates, even the better students, visit the physical library infrequently, but they may frequently access digital information resources that are funded out of the library’s budget. It is both a perception problem and a branding problem.

Any report such as this will disappoint individual readers for its lacunae. I was surprised, for example, that not much emphasis was placed on the key tools and concepts of Library 2.0.

Todaro Responds

Julie Todaro, ACRL Vice-President and President-Elect, did post a long response to the essay. She also attended the summit. She saw the report as a good “state-of-the-state” address, touching on issues that have been developing for years. Most of her long response is indeed her responses to specific quotations from the report. She also noted how difficult it is to attain consensus at a summit like this, as well as capture the key points and divergent opinions. Todaro suggests that senior library faculty members and senior library administrators may not be embracing change as quickly and tightly as their junior frontline colleagues.

ACRL Research Committee’s Top Ten List

Also in late March at the ACRL National Conference in Baltimore, the ACRL Research Committee announced its top ten assumptions for the future of

To its Library 2.0 credit, ACRL has allowed readers to comment online about this report. Four weeks after this report was announced, there were only two comments attached. Get thee to a bloggery!

academic libraries. The Committee surveyed academic library leaders and conducted a literature review.

The list is solid, with few surprises. Digitization and digital archiving will receive increasing emphasis—and demand more resources. The skill sets of academic librarians will continue to evolve. I firmly believe that multi-user virtual environments such as Second Life can serve well as a proving ground for new skill sets. Debates about intellectual property will become more common and louder. I think we may experience some sort of intellectual property meltdown or uprising in the next ten years. One troubling trend is that academic institutions increasingly believe and behave like businesses, and students increasingly understand themselves as customers and consumers of what higher education has to offer. The Research Committee believes that distance education will continue to grow, but will not threaten traditional on-campus learning environments. The group also thinks that privacy will continue to be a crucial issue. Their ninth trend may have the most profound effect. As free public access to scholarly information and data sets increases and expands, perhaps there will be fundamental changes in the social contract between higher education and society as a whole, and higher education may not like some of the terms of the new contract.

Libraries of all types currently carry much cultural capital. People generally

like and value libraries. But libraries need to remember that they are in the information services business, not in the library business. Cultural capital can be squandered as quickly as money in Vegas. As one attendee of the summit observed, “Don’t assume that people care about libraries. People care about streamlining the processes that support research and learning.”—*Tom Peters*

More Info. @:

Press Release: <http://www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=News&template=/ContentManagement/ContentDisplay.cfm&ContentID=153440>

Report: <http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlissues/future/changingroles.htm>

Julie Todaro’s Response: <http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlissues/future/response.htm>

ACRL Research Committee’s Top Ten List: <http://www.ala.org/ala/pressreleases2007/march2007/acrlf107.htm>



THE ILS SCOOP BY MARSHALL BREEDING

OCLC Acquires TechAtlas for WebJunction

OCLC's most recent acquisition involves the purchase of TechAtlas, a Web-based software application that assists in technology planning. This software was selected for use on WebJunction as part of its initial infrastructure in 2002. TechAtlas was developed by NPower, a national network of non-profit organizations focused on providing technology planning and assistance.

On WebJunction, TechAtlas serves as an online tool to help libraries develop technology plans consistent with the requirements to receive federal E-Rate funding, though it can be used as a general purpose tool for technology planning, even when E-Rate is not a consideration.

Funded through \$1.9 million provided by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, OCLC acquires ownership of TechAtlas from NPower National, including responsibility for its future development and providing support to other organizations that use the product. Hosting of the environment will transfer to OCLC; future development of TechAtlas will focus especially on the needs of libraries.

One of the key developments for TechAtlas includes extending it for use by consortia, allowing technology plans developed by member libraries

to be reviewed and approved by the consortium before final submission. Over 26,000 non-profit organizations have established accounts on TechAtlas; libraries represent 10,759 of these accounts. The acquisition of the software by OCLC guarantees free access to this resource by public libraries.

Financial Support

This acquisition reflects the ongoing partnership between OCLC and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. WebJunction was initially founded in 2002 by a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation as a portal to provide information and technology support to public libraries, an extension of the ongoing philanthropic investment by this foundation in public libraries. The Institute for Museum and Library Services (IMLS) also has provided funding for WebJunction activities, including the eLearning Clearinghouse, which

provides a search interface for "online education programs and courses for library staff and information professionals offered by ALA-accredited graduate schools, undergraduate schools, community colleges, regional library networks, and WebJunction.

NPower itself was formed in March 1999 with funding from Seattle-area interests including Microsoft, the Medina Foundation, The Seattle Foundation, and Boeing. In September 2000, Microsoft contributed an additional \$25 million to fund the expansion of NPower nationally by establishing additional regional affiliates. ■

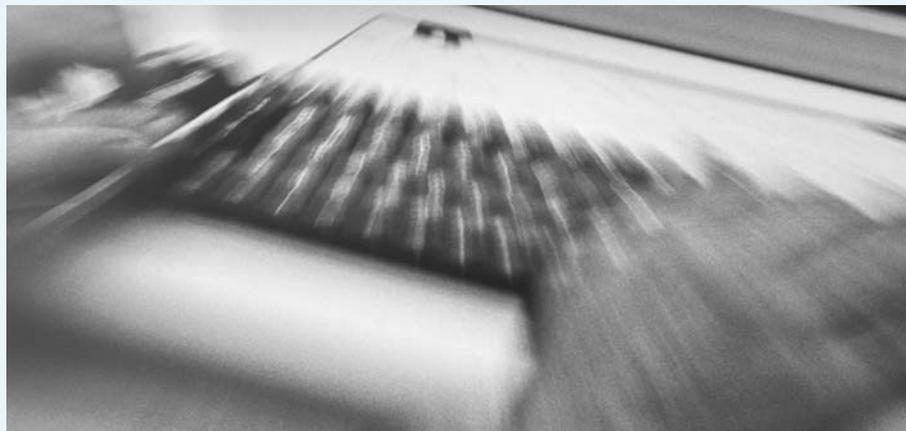
More Info. @:

OCLC Press Release: <http://www.oclc.org/news/releases/200655.htm>

TechAtlas: <http://techatlas.org>

WebJunction: <http://www.webjunction.org/>

NPower: <http://www.npower.org>



THE ILS SCOOP

SirsiDynix Consolidates Its International Operations

SirsiDynix took one step in its reorganization following its acquisition by Vista Equity Partners by establishing SirsiDynix International, consolidating all its operations outside North America. Prior to this move, there were separate and often independent sales, support, and administrative operations, including Asia-Pacific, Middle East and Africa, and Latin America. SirsiDynix has a broad international presence, providing library automation software to libraries in at least seventy countries. The international sector is of critical importance to the future of the company. About 25 percent of the company's customers lie outside the U.S. and Canada. Due to market saturation in North America, the international sector offers the greatest potential market for new sales.

SirsiDynix International will be lead by Keith Sturges, who will report directly to the yet-unnamed SirsiDynix CEO. Sturges brings over twenty years of experience in software and services companies in a variety of industries. His appointment as President of SirsiDynix International will be his first experience in the library automation arena.

Sturges was born in the UK and was educated at University of Warwick and holds a masters degree from Wensbury University in London. In the UK, Sturges worked for General Electric Telecommunications. Subsequent career moves include:

- 1987** Moves to US to accept position with Oracle, where he advanced to Vice President Advanced Services.
- Dec. 1994** Joins Superscape, a developer of virtual reality software for PC's as Vice President of Sales and Marketing
- Nov. 1995** Promoted to Vice President Sales for North and South America for Superscape.
- Sept. 2000** Appointed President of Renaissance Interactive Holding Corp., overseeing the operations of subsidiary companies Imprensa and Renaissance Interactive.

Oct. 2001 Appointed Executive Vice President for Worldwide Sales of Corechange, a developer of enterprise level portal software. Corechange was acquired by OpenText in Apr 2003.

2002 CEO of Misys Healthcare System—Homecare Division.

Dec. 2004 Appointed Chief Marketing Officer for Misys Health Care Systems.

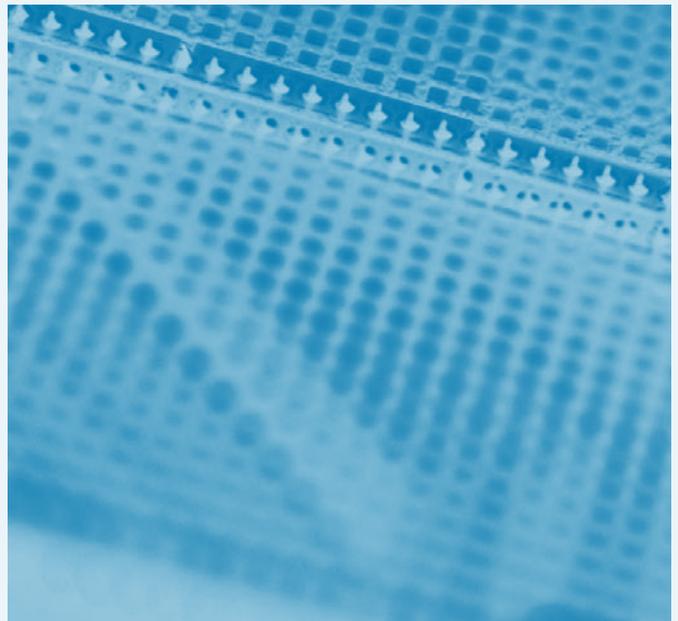
July 2005 Consulted as Chief Marketing Officer for Web-sourced, (later MarketSmart Interactive) an interactive media advertising firm.

March 2007 Appointed President SirsiDynix International

Peter Gethin, who founded Sirsi, Ltd., in May 1990 as the first distributor of Unicorn outside North America, will retire from the company. Sirsi, Ltd. was originally established as a separate private company, but was integrated into SirsiDynix as part of the acquisition of the company by Vista Equity Partners. Gethin's most recent title at SirsiDynix was Managing Director Europe, Middle East, and Africa. Prior to establishing Sirsi, Ltd, Gethin served as Deputy Managing Director and co-founder of BRS Software Products. The Unicorn ILS continues to make use of the BRS full-text retrieval engine. ■

More Info. @:

Press Release (PDF file): http://www.sirsidynix.com/Newsevents/Releases/2007/20070321_sturges.pdf



The Org Shuffle: OCLC REORGANIZES

Every few years OCLC readjusts its organizational structure to reflect its current priorities and strategies and to rebalance the portfolios of its key executives. Over the last few years, the organization has grown through a number of strategic acquisitions, further augmenting its slate of top executives. In addition to these activities, OCLC has recruited outside the company for strategic executive leadership. This reorganization aims to achieve “global integration of services” to fine tune the relationships among all its business units and divisions that span the globe.

Karen Calhoun rejoins OCLC as its new Vice President, OCLC WorldCat and Metadata Services. Effective May 14, 2007, Calhoun takes responsibility for WorldCat, an asset of tremendous strategic importance to the future of OCLC. As the largest bibliographic database in the library sphere, WorldCat currently includes over 82 million records representing over a billion holdings. Calhoun will report to Robin Murray, VP Global Product Management.

Calhoun comes to OCLC from Cornell University (1997–present), most recently serving as Senior Associate Librarian. Prior to her tenure at Cornell, Calhoun was employed by OCLC in its Library Resource Management Division (1986–1996).

Calhoun has been in the center of a far-reaching debate on the future of library catalogs and cataloging practices, sparked by a report she authored, commissioned by the Library of Congress titled “The Changing Nature of the Catalog and its Integration with Other Discovery Tools.”

Reflecting its increasingly global presence, OCLC has created three geographically focused divisions for its services: Cathy DeRosa now heads OCLC Americas in addition to her role as Global VP of Marketing; Rein van Charldorp will oversee the European, Middle Eastern, and African division in addition to his role as Managing Director of OCLC PICA. Andrew H. Wang has been promoted as a Vice President of OCLC and will take responsibility for the geographical region that includes Asia, Australia, and New Zealand.

Other appointments involve integration of OCLC’s strategic acquisitions of the last few years. Lorcan Dempsey oversees OCLC Programs and Research, including many of the activities and projects of RLG which OCLC acquired in June 2006. Jim Michalko, VP RLG Programs and the former RLG employees based in Mountain View, CA fall within this part of the new OCLC organization. Robin Murray, former Managing Director of Fretwell-Down-

ing Informatics, acquired by OCLC in November 2005, has been promoted to VP, Global Product Management, with dual reporting to Jay Jordan and Rein van Charldorp. Eric Hellman, former President of Openly Informatics, acquired by OCLC in January 2006, will report to Murry, focusing on the further development of 1Cate and new electronic resource management initiatives. Greg Zick, founder of DiMeMa which OCLC acquired in August 2006 for its CONTENTdm product for managing digital collections, reports directly to Jordan as Vice President, Digital Collection Services. Rich Rosy, founder of NetLibrary acquired by OCLC in January 2002, recently left OCLC. Rick Schwieterman, OCLC’s CFO, will expand his portfolio to oversee the operations of NetLibrary.

These executive appointments and realignments represent only a portion of the restructuring announced in March 2007. The changes mentioned here primarily involve organizations and individuals involved in OCLC acquisitions previously covered by *SLN*. ■

More Info. @:

Calhoun Report (PDF file): <http://www.loc.gov/catdir/calhoun-report-final.pdf>

OCLC Press Release about Calhoun Appointment: <http://www.oclc.org/news/releases/200657.htm>

OCLC Press Release about Wang Promotion: <http://www.oclc.org/news/releases/200656.htm>

As the DRM Tide Turns

Even if you're not an audiophile, you may as a librarian want to take more than a passing interest in the evolution of downloadable digital music. We all know the ripple effect the rise, fall, and rebirth of Napster had on the confidence of the recording industry and consumers. As digital music goes, so *may* go most or all other types of digital content, including digital audio books, electronic books, and all types of digital video content.

Hate it or loathe it, DRM (digital rights management) has been an integral part of the downloadable digital content scene from the beginning. May 2007 may be remembered as the turning of the DRM tide. In early April Apple announced that in May they would begin offering for sale DRM-free music from EMI Music. In other words, one of the biggest producers and one of the biggest distributors of downloadable digital music have decided to shoot the DRM rapids.

They do have a paddle with them—and a carrot. This sentence from Apple's press release identifies both the carrot and the stick, "DRM-free tracks from EMI will be offered at higher quality 256 kbps AAC encoding, resulting in audio quality indistinguishable from the original recording, for just \$1.29 per song." In essence, by going with the DRM-free version, listeners get a higher quality product, but they also will experience a 30 percent price increase over the usual 99 cent fee for a DRM-protected downloadable digital song from iTunes.

Steve Jobs from Apple predicted that consumers would jump at the chance to avoid the hassles and interoperability issues of DRM-protected digital music. He also predicted that half of the content in their catalog—perhaps mostly long tail stuff—would be available DRM-free by the end of 2007.

To Apple's and EMI's credit, they plan to continue offering DRM-protected tunes at 99 cents a pop. Users will vote with their pocketbooks and their tympana.

The blogosphere's discussion of this announcement also cleared up a misunderstanding I had, thinking that the AAC (Advanced Audio Coding) file format used by Apple (and others) was a proprietary file format. According to the Wikipedia article on AAC, the Fairplay DRM scheme used to protect DRMed AAC files is proprietary, as is the .m4p wrapper, but the AAC file itself is not proprietary. If AAC without all the proprietary wrappings becomes a popular file format, it may give MP3 a run for its money and relegate the WMA format to the dust bin of history faster than you can say ogg vorbis.

If this experiment proves to be popular with consumers and catches on with other digital content producers, suppliers, and distributors, users of all types of downloadable digital content may soon be awash in DRM-free content, not only older out-of-copyright content, but also recently published material. Because downloading digital content from a network is such an efficient distribution system, it may become (if it not already is) the dominant method by which consumers, libraries, and library users access information.

The era of downloadable digital content probably will last until such time that most users always are connected to digital networks, unless they intentionally choose to be offline. When that tipping point is reached, streaming content will overtake downloading content as the primary delivery mode for information and information services.—*Tom Peters*

More Info. @:

Apple's Press Release: <http://www.apple.com/pr/library/2007/04/02itunes.html>

Wikipedia Article on AAC: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Advanced_Audio_Coding



HITTING THE 10,000 MARK

Usually hitting a numerical milestone, such as the one millionth volume added to a library's collection, has decidedly local interest. In this era of mass digitization projects with seven figure promises, five figure efforts seem miniscule. However, a couple of interesting initiatives recently hit the 10,000 mark, a milestone that should have worldwide interest.

In March Distributed Proofreaders passed the 10,000 mark in completed texts. Distributed Proofreaders creates accurate electronic text transcriptions of printed materials that are in the public domain. They make their texts available both in plain text and HTML formats, primarily through Project Gutenberg. On any given day, approximately 700 volunteers contribute time and talents to this effort. During any given month, approximately 3,000 volunteers login.

According to the DP website, they use "...a web-based method to ease the conversion of Public Domain books into e-books. By dividing the

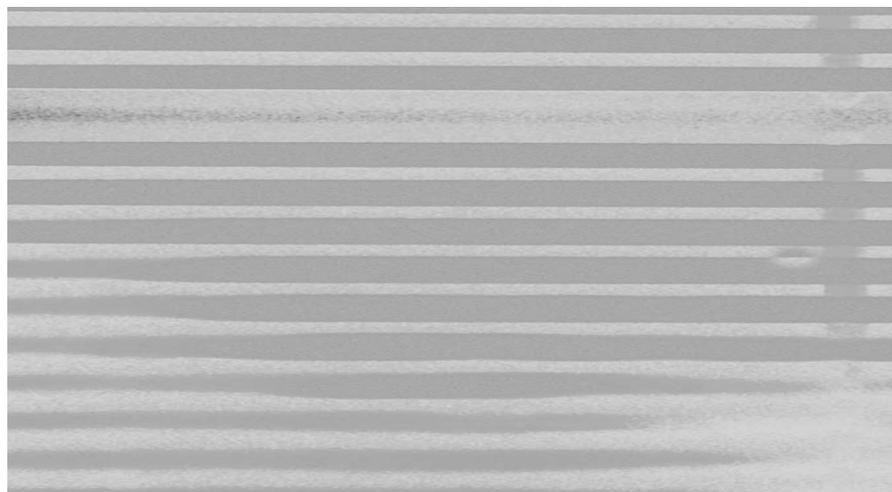
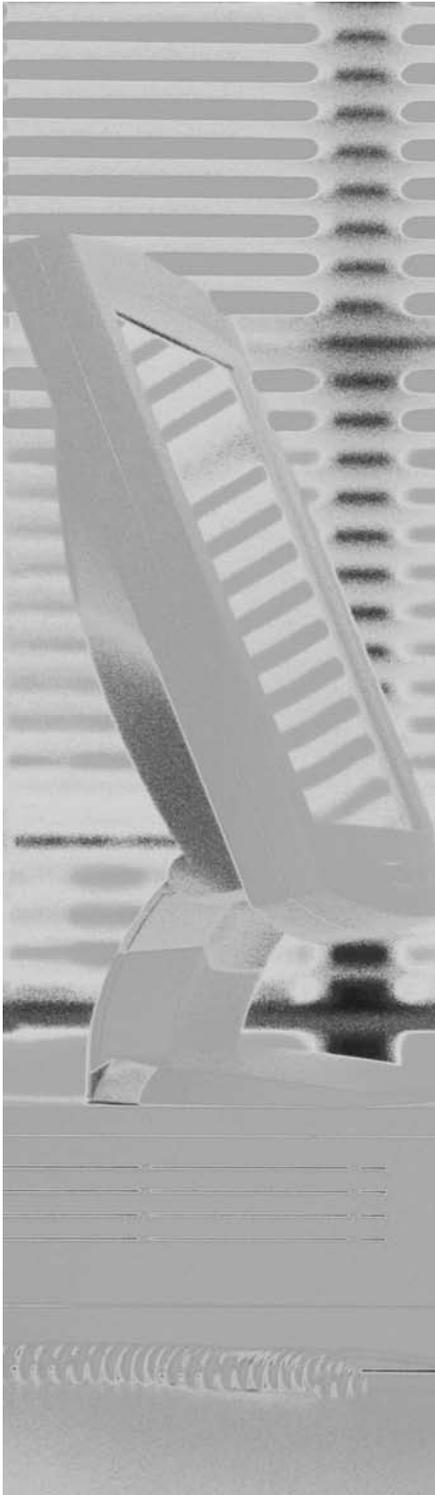
workload into individual pages, many volunteers can work on a book at the same time, which significantly speeds up the creation process."

Also in March OverDrive surpassed the 10,000 title mark in its downloadable digital audio book collection. Their service started back in November 2004. Although Audible.com passed the 10,000 mark some time ago, they continue to send mixed signals about whether they want to sell their content to libraries and other institutional customers. Most of the other companies providing digital audio book services to libraries are nowhere near having 10,000 titles in their master collections. Audio book services for libraries are still in their infancy, but the early levels of patron interest and use have been very encouraging.—*Tom Peters*

More Info. @:

Distributed Proofreaders: <http://www.pgdp.net/>

OverDrive: <http://www.overdrive.com>





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