



# Smart Libraries™

Formerly Library Systems Newsletter™

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## Fingerprinting at Libraries: Yea or Nay?

Identity was a hot topic in late May. Besides hosting a plethora of stories about the “Mark Felt is Deep Throat” revelation, the Web and its younger sibling, the Blogosphere, featured many reports on Naperville Public Library’s plans to implement fingerprint ID technology for its computer-using patrons. In the wide coverage (see Contact list) of this suburban-Chicago public library system’s new technology investment choice, of course, crept the three “P” issues so pertinent in the library world today—privacy, the Patriot Act, and patrons. Since, the naysayers and yeasayers have situated their separate camps.

But before we get to the yeas and nays, here’s the lowdown on the chosen technology, which, when up and running, will make Naperville the second public library system in the US to implement fingerprint scans for authenticating users.

### Solution Search

“I started this quest back about eight months ago,” explains Naperville Public Library deputy director Mark West. “I was trying to figure out a way to keep children from swapping cards to get [unauthorized] Internet access. About the same time, Microsoft announced a product, for around \$59, which would control things like log-ins and passwords on home computers. And I thought, ‘Wow! At that kind of price, I wonder whether this technology would be available for the library.’”

West’s research brought him to the upstate New York Buffalo-Erie County Library System, a system of 52 public libraries that

serves about 400,000 people. According to James Kimberly of the *Chicago Tribune* (see “Library Card. Check. Fingerprint. Really?”), this public library system offers fingerprint scans as an alternative to presenting a library card at one of its branches.

West says he initially contacted the biometrics company that provided the Buffalo-Erie County Library System with its fingerprint-scan ID technology, but because that company didn’t seem to be “excited about working with somebody in the Midwest,” further research brought him to the Naperville-based US Biometrics. “[That company], as it turns out, has an off-the-shelf product that can be used with virtually any Windows-based log-in system,” he adds.

According to West, the Naperville Public Library system currently uses Cybrarian for authenticating patrons, and once the fingerprint-scanning technology installation is complete and a computer-using patron is registered, the authenticating technology will work (in conjunction with the library’s current Cybrarian control mechanism) in about two to four seconds.

“Basically, there’s a ‘screen scraper,’” says West, “and when the system sees the Cybrarian log-in screen come up . . . it will prompt the patron to place his or her fingertip on the scanner. Once the biometric indicator is read and matched to the database, the system simply populates the bar code and the boxes on the Cybrarian screen. The patron is then off and running just as though he or she had typed that material in manually.”

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## Fingerprinting *from page 1*

According to other news stories (see URLs under Contact), the card-swapping problem was brought to light during the library's investigation of a man who eventually was convicted of public indecency for fondling himself in front of teens who were using one of the Naperville Public Library System's computer labs.

## Yeas and Nays

But regardless of why this particular library system decided to go with the fingerprint-scan technology, the choice was made late this spring, and so came the yeas and nays.

When it comes to privacy, "yea," votes West. "No fingerprint is retained [using this] technology," he explains. "Once that two-second scan occurs, the image itself vanishes. It's not stored anywhere in the system, and a fingerprint cannot be reproduced from the biometric indicator, this numeric value created, once the scan is completed."

West continues, "Essentially, there will be no more unique information created for this system than we have already by assigning you a bar code. In fact, privacy is going to be *enhanced* to a degree; [now] someone can take your library card, and if the thief can guess your pin number (and the way we assign pin numbers, it may not be hard to do), he or she could get into your record. With this system, unless your fingertip is there, [an unauthorized individual] cannot get into a library record."

Nay, says Karen Schneider, librarian, ALA Councilor, and author of the *Free Range Librarian* blog, when considering both privacy *and* the Patriot Act. She says creating another database of information creates *more* potential for privacy-protection problems in libraries.

"Generally, in libraries, we have a practice of not doing more than what's needed. Fingerprinting, especially in a Patriot Act environment—where the government is actively trying to find new ways to get their hands on patron records—fingerprinting just gives us one more big pot of data to have to defend from investigation," she contends.

Schneider also is bothered by what she calls the "naive" response to the technical issues. "They say, 'Oh, they can't get access to this information, because it's encrypted in a database.' Well, all they have to do is seize the equipment as well as the data. Where was the policy ahead of time that addressed how this was safe from an Intellectual Freedom point of view? It doesn't take much thinking to get to the point where [you can see how] that data could get into the hands of other people."

As for Naperville's patrons, from West's perspective, it's, again, a "yea" vote, especially when considering the library's non-adult users. "We were finding that children were, in fact, swapping cards. [It's a problem if] a child either isn't authorized for access because a parent didn't [provide it], or he or she is only authorized for filtered access."

But from Mary Minow's camp, Naperville Public Library's decision to institute fingerprinting seems to offer little, if any, advantage to patrons. Minow, an attorney and consultant, former librarian, and one author of the *Library Law* blog, says once the patron surrenders his or her unique information, the legal recourse—if a patron should be the victim of the misuse of that information—is pretty much non-existent. "I think there are a few states that make it a misdemeanor, and the patron could get a tiny amount of money—a laughable amount of money. But once it's out there, it's out there. In California, for example, there is no legal recourse (by the patron) once the library gives out their information. The privacy laws are very weak."

Though, once complete, Naperville Public Library System's fingerprint-scan technology will constitute only the second installation of such technology within US-based libraries, other parts of the world already have instituted such patron authenticating mechanisms. "Singapore has been doing it for a long time," says Minow. And, according to a comment posted by the blogger "Mr. Ikasu" to an entry on Engadget.com ("Public Library to Use Fingerprint Scanners to Verify Identity"), his school library in the United Kingdom has had fingerprint identification for four years.—*Teresa Koltzenburg*

**Contact:** "Library Card. Check. Fingerprint. Really?," [www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/chi-0505200366may20,1,5328836.story?ctrack=1&cset=true](http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/local/chi-0505200366may20,1,5328836.story?ctrack=1&cset=true)  
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 Cybrarian, [www.cybrarian.com](http://www.cybrarian.com)

## Raising a Ruckus in Higher Ed

Here's a possible new twist on a familiar interchange between roommates in a college residence hall: Turn down your textbook, I'm trying to sleep!

The huge educational publishing firm, Pearson Education, and Audible.com, a purveyor of digital audiobooks to the general consumer market, recently announced a collaborative effort to deliver downloadable audio study guides and other learning objects to college students. The content then can be transferred to a wide variety of "Audible-ready" portable playback devices, including the Apple iPod, which is wildly popular with the college set.

Audible is the exclusive distributor of spoken word audio content through iTunes, and that exclusive agreement runs through September 2007.

Because most of these devices require headphones or earbuds, noise-sensitive roommates can get some sleep the night before the big test.

The first products should be available before back-to-school in August. Over the next two years, Audible plans to produce more than 100 audio study guides in a wide variety of subjects, such as economics and literature.

Published reports about the new service in *Computer Business Review Online* and elsewhere quoted Will Ethridge, the CEO of Pearson Higher Education, as stating that research into the higher education market indicates approximately thirty percent of students prefer auditory learning as their principal means of learning. Reading may be at greater risk than the National Endowment for the Arts imagines.

Audible plans to launch a new division, Audible Education, ". . . to create and distribute educational digital audio to scholastic, professional, and general learners of all ages," according Audible's CEO Donald Katz.

Dave Joseph, also from Audible, says the company plans to distribute these audio study guides through Audible and its partner distributors, which now includes the Ruckus Network, a firm that provides digital media—music, movies, TV, original content, and a self-publishing application—to colleges and universities.—*Tom Peters*

**Contact:** [www.cbronline.com/article\\_news.asp?guid=2A9B8D9F-BF25-43A6-B2A7-01C5F5EAB860](http://www.cbronline.com/article_news.asp?guid=2A9B8D9F-BF25-43A6-B2A7-01C5F5EAB860)

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# THE ILS SCOOP BY MARSHALL BREEDING

## ILS VET PROMOTES NEW NAME, NEW SERVICE

One of the library automation industry's oldest companies has taken a new name. Previously known as GIS Information Systems and Gaylord Information Systems, the well-established vendor (see The Polaris Story below) now will be known as Polaris Library Systems.

Taking Polaris Library Systems as its name reflects the company's interest in establishing a stronger identity with its flagship automation system, the Polaris Integrated Library System. The new moniker also eliminates any possible confusion with geographic information systems, which often is associated with the abbreviation "GIS" used in the company's former name.

According to the company, its management and ownership status will remain the same. Bill Schickling continues as president and CEO, and Anita Wagner

still occupies the COO (chief operating officer) post.

A privately held business owned by the Croydon company, Polaris Library Systems also now boasts a new headquarter facility located outside of Syracuse, in Liverpool, New York, which is just around the corner from the company's previous accommodations. Phone and fax numbers for the company will not change.

### Introducing Polaris Hosted

In other news from Polaris, the company reports the availability of an ASP (application service provider) version of the Polaris ILS called, "Polaris Hosted."

The new product is consistent with the trend for library automation companies to offer a hosted version of their systems. This hosted system product/service enables libraries to access a full-

featured automation system remotely (hosted by the ILS vendor), ultimately eliminating the need for libraries to maintain local server hardware and employ a full-time system administrator. This type of product/service makes the Polaris ILS (as well as any other ILS vendor's offering) accessible to libraries with modest resources. For instance, many of the remaining GALAXY sites are small libraries, and the Polaris Hosted service may provide an attractive, lower-cost option for them.

Based on the number of staff clients licensed, Polaris Hosted is available for an annual fixed price.

**Contact:** [www.polarislibrary.com](http://www.polarislibrary.com)  
[www.polarislibrary.com/NewsEvents/PressReleases/2005/GIS%20Renamed%20Polaris%20Library%20Systems.asp](http://www.polarislibrary.com/NewsEvents/PressReleases/2005/GIS%20Renamed%20Polaris%20Library%20Systems.asp)

## 1896 to 2005: The Polaris Story

Polaris Library Systems traces its background through the venerable Gaylord Bros. company, a long-established (since 1896!) and major supplier of library furniture and supplies. One of the pioneers in commercially available circulation systems, Gaylord Library Systems was established in 1975 to develop and distribute library automation systems.

One of Gaylord's first ILS products, dubbed the Gaylord System 100, was a computerized circulation system that made use of both a computer housed in the library (for online transactions) and

a remote-site computer housed at Gaylord's computing facilities (for overnight batch processing).

In 1975, the Queens Borough Public Library in New York, with its central library and fifty-four branch libraries, was an early adopter of the Gaylord System 100. The company's successor products included the GS 300 and GS 400.

In 1984, Gaylord introduced the GS-3000 Catalog Management System. This early online catalog system operated on DataPoint computer hardware. In that same year, the vendor debuted the Gaylord School Library Management System, which included an online catalog and circulation module for personal computers running CP/M and MS-DOS.

In June 1985, the company initiated its involvement in the bibliographic services arena with its acquisition of LSS. LSS distributed a stand-alone cataloging system called MiniMARC, which was based on storing MARC records on videotapes. Gradually, this product evolved into the SuperCAT cataloging support system, which was introduced formally in July 1988. SuperCAT allowed libraries to perform copy cataloging using MARC records supplied on CD-ROM discs.

In 1989, Gaylord introduced its first fully integrated automation system, GALAXY, which ran on DEC minicomputers under the VMS operating system. The system was popular with small and medium-sized public libraries, but it was also

adopted by a number of academic and medical libraries.

Throughout the 1990s, GALAXY prospered as a library automation system. But toward the end of the decade, the VAX/VMS computing platform (on which the GALAXY system ran) lost favor, which led GALAXY to the “legacy system ranks”—those that libraries eventually must replace. (Though some libraries continue to run GALAXY, by now, most have implemented replacement systems.)

In January 1997, Gaylord Information Systems launched the Polaris Integrated Library System (still the flagship prod-

uct of the company), which is a client/server system based on Microsoft Windows and is designed for public libraries of all sizes.

In 2003, the Croydon Company (the owner of Gaylord Bros.) sold most of Gaylord’s assets—with the exception of its automation division—to its chief rival Demco. The sale, which *did* include the company’s assets related to the manufacture of furniture and supplies for libraries and archives, also included the rights to the Gaylord Bros. name.

Shortly before the 2003 sale, president Katherine Blauer stepped down, and Bill

Schickling, former VP for research and development, stepped up to the president and CEO post.

Because the “Gaylord” name was part of the sale to Demco, Croydon’s remaining stand-alone automation company had to find a new identity. Beginning in May 2003, the company operated under the name “GIS Information Systems.”

Here in 2005, the company chose “Polaris Library Systems.” Since 2003, the company has determined the “Polaris” name is more recognized than “GIS” and, thus, has adopted it as its primary corporate identity.

## FOUND! THE MISSING LINK (RESOLVERS)

In the six months since the launch of the beta version of Google Scholar, librarians have been pondering its impact and benefits for their users. Though widely perceived as a potentially helpful resource for academic research, Google Scholar still provokes questions about the scope of the content it includes and the lack of control over what version of a content item will be linked.

The latter issue, often called the “appropriate copy problem,” involves ensuring an information discovery resource leads users to the version of a resource to which they are entitled. For example, it’s *not* a good thing when a user is led to a copy of an article from Publisher A, when the user’s library subscribes to the copy from Publisher B.

But there may be solution: An OpenURL-based framework—through the use of a link resolver programmed with data on a library’s subscriptions—works to direct a library’s users to proper versions.

### Resolving It

The initial version of Google Scholar provided links to scholarly content without regard to this important version question. Subsequent improvements have been implemented; the upgrades take advantage of a local link resolver to improve the likelihood users will be directed to the appropriate copy of each resource. In the last month, both Ex Libris and Innovative Interfaces have announced capabilities to interface their link resolvers with Google Scholar.

Ex Libris now offers a tool that allows a library with an SFX link server to register with Google Scholar, so its users will see links customized to its subscriptions. Once registered, a list of the library’s holdings can be exported so its users will see links to view full text when it’s available.

Ex Libris also offers a free service, ScholarSFX, for libraries that are not SFX customers; it provides much of the some functionality without the use of a local link resolver.

Innovative Interfaces is also developing the capability for users of its Millennium automation system and WebBridge linking tool to view the appropriate copy of the full text of articles in Google Scholar. Through the combination of WebBridge linking and the export of holdings data out of the library’s Millennium system into Google Scholar, library users will see the WebBridge button that will take them to the full text when it’s available. Innovative has partnered with Michigan State University to develop this capability.

And as early as January 2005, Openly Informatics, the developer of the 1Cate link resolver, released a plug-in to the Firefox Web browser that adds OpenURL linking capability as users access resources through Google Scholar. Called the “OpenURL Referer,” this Open Source Firefox extension is freely available and works with any OpenURL compliant link resolver.

**Contact:** [www.exlibrisgropu.com/scholar\\_sfx.htm](http://www.exlibrisgropu.com/scholar_sfx.htm)  
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## GOOGLE'S BOOK SCAN PLAN FOMENTS FOES

A worldwide “pulp-free” war may be brewing. Developed nations and major research libraries are checking their treaties and reaffirming their alliances as the era of truly massive digitization projects dawns.

Late last year when Google announced a collaborative effort involving Stanford, the University of Michigan, and several other research libraries to digitize millions of the books in their collections, many discussions and no small amount of anxiety and anger commenced throughout librarianship, publishing, higher education, the research community, and Europe. Of course, the French expressed their concerns early and often.

In May, concerted responses and counter-offensives were unleashed. First, the American Association of University Presses (AAUP) issued a stern letter of inquiry and warning. The AAUP has 125 member organizations, primarily North American university presses, for whom college and university libraries are their core customers. The May 20, 2005, letter from Peter Givler, the Executive Director of AAUP to Alexander Macgillivray, Senior Intellectual Property and Product Counsel at Google, stated the Google Print for Libraries program “. . . appears to involve systematic infringement of copyright on a massive scale.”

AAUP's concern is focused not on the out-of-copyright works in the collections at Stanford, Michigan, Harvard, Oxford, and the New York Public Library but on Google's plans to digitize the portions of those collections for which copyright is still in effect.

Revenue is another component of AAUP's concern. Most AAUP members rely on subsidies from their parent institutions, often grudgingly given, to break even. The AAUP cautions Google's program may force many of AAUP's members out of business. Google's program also and puts increased strain on the legal principle of fair use.

The letter contains sixteen questions to Google's counselor, with a request for detailed answers by June 20. Question 14, for example, questions the legality of Google's intent to give copies

of the digitized books back to the research libraries whose collections Google scanned. Question 15 states, in part, “AAUP is very concerned about many libraries' extremely permissive use of digitized materials in their e-reserves systems.”

Second, in response to a late April call to action signed by the presidents and prime ministers of France, Italy, Germany, Spain, Poland, and Hungary in May, the European Commission pledged 96 million euros (approximately \$110 million) toward a digitization project involving nineteen major European research libraries. Jean-Noël Jeanneney, President of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, was one of the first to sound a clarion call warning Frenchmen and all of Europe of the threat to knowledge and culture posed by Google's blitz-digitization. Evidently, the project will be called the European Digital Library, at least in English-speaking nations.

Third, a group of German publishers announced a massive digitization effort. The Borsenverein—a conglomeration of 6,500 publishers, bookstores, used-book sellers, wholesalers, and agents—plans to build and launch “Volltextsuche Online,” which will contain the full text of books written in the German language. A task force will create a detailed technical plan for this new platform and present it to the group over this summer.

So, to summarize the earlier skirmishes and saber rattling: We have an Internet search company, awash in money to invest in R&D (after Google's stock went public), working with several major public and private universities (as well as the New York Public Library), an international governmental body, and a national organization devoted to the German book industry vying to create useful, huge digital library collections, while other efforts, such as Project Gutenberg and the Million Book Project, toil away with less fanfare and less funding.

Library users are the civilian population in this brewing battle of the books. Whether the civilian population will be liberated or suffer miserably remains to be seen.—*Tom Peters*

**Contact:** <http://wired-vig.wired.com/news/print/0,1294,67482,00.html>  
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## THE ONCE AND FUTURE PALM

There's some comfort in being reminded occasionally that librarians are not alone in sometimes fumbling the process of building and maintaining brand recognition. Years ago, the Palm brand name was so strong it was in the highhanded

position of becoming synonymous with the PDA in general as a device (just as in earlier eras the Kleenex became known for facial tissue in general and Xerox became known for photocopiers in general).

See **Palm** on next page

**Palm** *from previous page*

Then the mergers, spin offs, and other corporate gyrations began. Almost two years ago, PalmOne was spun off to concentrate on the device side of the industry, and PalmSource was formed to focus on the operating system and software side.

In late May, PalmOne announced plans to pay PalmSource \$30 million over the next three years (that's \$7.5 million per letter for that four-letter word, "Palm") to acquire PalmSource's 55 percent share in the Palm Trademark Holding Company. Perhaps only coincidentally, PalmSource CEO David Nagel resigned about the same time. Perhaps, too, the PalmSource Board of Directors saw the sale of its share of the Palm brand as, well, a slap in the face.

The renewed, exfoliated Palm will continue to sell both PDAs and cell phones. The PDA side of the hardware business, however, needs some attention. Worldwide sales of all types of PDAs (excluding smartphones) rebounded well during the first quarter of the 2005 calendar year, posting a 25 percent gain in shipments compared to the first quarter of 2004.

The rising tide roiled the PDA competitors, however, knocking PalmOne off its crest. Research in Motion, the makers of the Blackberry device, posted an increase in shipments of 76 percent, while PalmOne's shipments fell 26 percent.—*Tom Peters*

## MOLECULAR STRUCTURES ON A BLACKBERRY NEAR YOU

The adoption and diffusion of portable handheld network-connected devices as research tools in graduate education varies from discipline to discipline. Medical students and other healthcare professionals in training use them extensively, and law students chase after online information on the go as if it were ambulances. Soon chemists will join the ranks of mobile professionals.

Chemical Abstracts Service (CAS), from the American Chemical Society, has announced it has tested successfully the real-time delivery of chemical information, including chemical structures, to Blackberry handheld devices (from Research in Motion Limited), other vendors' PDAs, cell phones, and other portable handheld devices. There's no word yet, though, on how much vertical and horizontal scrolling is necessary to comprehend these elaborate structures on such small screens

The CAS Registry database contains records for more than 25 million organic and inorganic substances and 56 million-plus sequences. The CAPLUS database contains more than 23 million articles, patent references, reports and other chemistry-related literature reaching back to the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

When the new CAS mobile offering—to be called, mmm, CAS Mobile—officially debuts before the end of this calendar year, all this information will be available to anyone with an Internet-connected portable handheld device who is affiliated with an institution with a subscription to the CAS databases.

One report about the forthcoming service indicated that institutions with a fixed-fee subscription to CAS's STN and SciFinder services will get access to CAS Mobile for no additional charge.—*Tom Peters*

**Contact:** <http://www.cas.org/New1/handhelds.html>  
<http://www.cas.org>

## Loquendo Making More Human-Sounding Sounds

One long-time theoretical boon of digital text is—by using software technology known as text-to-speech (TTS)—it can be turned into a synthetically narrated "recording" easily. The problem with TTS to date is the resulting narration sounds "too synthetic." Nevertheless, the promise of being able to turn virtually every digital text into a spoken narration has profound implications for the accessibility and usability of digital library materials.

Companies like Loquendo, headquartered in Turin, Italy, have been working to improve the naturalness and usability of TTS software. The company's recent software improvements include

its capability to generate, synthetically, more human-sounding sounds—laughing, crying, yawning, and other meaningful sounds. The "meaningfulness" of more "lowbrow" noises (burps, belches, and hiccups) is being debated zealously.

Loquendo also announced in May it had developed a version of its TTS software that will work in the Symbian operating system environment, the operating system used by most cell phones.—*Tom Peters*

**Contact:** [www.loquendo.com](http://www.loquendo.com)



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## July 2005 The Trigger Finger(print): Library Land Responds to Authenticating Technology

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Smart Libraries Newsletter delivers hard data and innovative insights about the world of library technology, every month.

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