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I Hear the Train A Comin' -- pub2web and MetaStore

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T
his month, I have the pleasure of speak-
ing with Louise Tutton, Head of Client
Management for Ingenta. Louise has
ten years’ experience in the electronic pub-
lishing industry, primarily focusing on client
relations but with a résumé incorporating
project management, production and editorial
experience. She joined Ingenta in exchange for
CatchWord in 1999 and was heavily involved in transitioning
publisher customers through the merger with
Ingenta. Her current remit as Head of Client
Management includes overall responsibility for
Ingenta’s business with its publishing partners
throughout the world. In addition to membership
of the ALPSP Professional Development
Committee, Louise serves on the SSP Edu-
cation Committee, and is an Editorial Board
member for The Serials Librarian.

What are pub2web and MetaStore, and
how do they interact?

pub2web is — at its simplest — a Website
for publications. It’s a next-generation publishing
platform, a combination of technologies
designed to maximize the value
and visibility of information.

MetaStore is the data re-
pository that supports the
platform’s innovative data capabil-
ities — for example, semantic mining and
manipulation of data to reveal
new connections and research paths.

MetaStore breaks content down into its most
granular parts — freeing it from the restrictions of its article,
issue, journal, chapter and book
structures — which means that publishers can
be much more creative in how they license and distribute information.

MetaStore — and thus
pub2web — is also format-agnostic in that it
can support a multitude of data types — books,
journals, reports, statistics, raw data, audio,
video and more — so a publisher can give users
a holistic, seamless view of their information
assets, and meet their needs for a comprehen-
sive research resource. By storing data at such
a granular level MetaStore opens up a number
of opportunities in terms of content discover-
ability and the ability to re-package content
for online sale. For example a biological title
could be data mined for instances of species
names which are then stored as distinct data
objects within MetaStore. Species “home-
pages” can be automatically generated within
a pub2web site as a result, displaying a range
of related information including:

• Metadata and graphics relevant to a particular species.
• Internal pub2web links to all other content referencing the species name
  — easing navigation to related and relevant material.
• Integration of external links to authorita-
tive resources within a given subject area
  — a huge user benefit, easing navigation
to key subject specific resources within
a publisher specific site and across the
Web.
• Anything which is stored as a data object
within MetaStore can be re-packaged as
part of a virtual product for online sale —
therefore extremely tailored pack-
ages can be built including movie clips,
chapters, articles, species information
(for example!).

Species names have been used as an illus-
tration here but the possibilities across different
subject areas are fascinating.

What are some real-world examples of
how these services are changing the delivery
of scholarship?

The new OECD iLibrary is a great example of a publisher drawing together multiple infor-
mation types into a single publishing platform,
which enriches the user’s research experience
by enabling them to discover and collate a va-
riety of authoritative, and previously dispersed,
data sources. It also showcases some of pub2web’s other useful features; for example, the site’s
multilingual interface facilitates easier content discovery and access for speakers of other
languages. And let’s not forget the basics: simple, uncluttered design is one of our hallmarks
— it’s about making the user experience more intuitive, optimizing discovery, and letting the content achieve its potential.

Ingenta recently announced an advertising
partnership with Ten Alps. What is this
all about?

Ten Alps will be selling advertising on behalf of Ingenta’s publisher partners. A paradigm shift is underway in scholarly publishing and established business models are being reevaluated. Our clients are rightly concerned about how the value they add to the publishing process will be funded in the future, and many are seeking to explore alter-
native revenue streams for scholarly content. Presenting discreet advertising around their
content helps them to balance subscription
erosion. We have taken a coordinating role, representing a consortium of our publishers to enable them to break into established advertis-
ing networks and attract more interest than they would individually.

How have Ingenta services embraced Web
2.0 functionality?

Well, for the most part we try to avoid talk-
ing about “embracing Web 2.0” because it’s
becoming perceived as a fad, a bandwagon
to which all sorts of tired technologies are trying to hitch themselves. That’s not to say we don’t investigate features which are tagged with
the Web 2.0 label, and we have implemented
several that we think actually add value for
publishers, such as integration with social
networking sites (we integrated this fairly
early on in 2006 and are keeping a close eye
on usage trends in this area) and deployment
of blogs and wikis to help our publishers grow
and engage with their user communities. The
same is true for the systems and processes we use to run our business — for example, we use the collaborative tool Basecamp to man-
age our projects and client communications.

As a technology company it’s apt for there to
be this consistent smartness across both our
products and our processes. Really, though,
our focus is on the semantic Web, which is
generally accepted to be the original objective of the Web and of several of the collaborative, analytic technologies that have been popular-
ized by Web 2.0. We’re planning now for the
next revolution in scholarly publishing that will be enabled when machine-readable data
is published and shared as part of the research
process. We’ll be unveiling some of these
features at our Publisher Forum in Boston
on May 28th.

In 2007, Ingenta merged with VISTA, a
publishing systems conglomerate. How has
this impacted Ingenta’s products and strategic
vision?

Our competitive position and business
footing have both been strengthened by the
merger. We’ve been able to tap our new col-
leagues’ alternative perspective on publishing,
for example to develop better support for
different types of content (VISTA has his-
torically focused primarily on books and trade
publishing). Their complementary knowledge,
experience and connections enable us to reach
new markets, and the integration of our product
lines means we occupy a unique position as
the only end-to-end provider of publishing
software. During integration, the businesses
were complementary enough that each group
was able to focus on its own objectives and it was to proceed with the development of
pub2web and MetaStore and bring some of
the benefits of that technology to IngentaCon-
nect also. Looking ahead, with our increased
market share we are able to be bolder in our
strategic planning, and have invested in key
new staff and resources to drive further devel-
opment and growth.

Where do your library customers and end
users sit in all of this?

We wanted the merger to be pretty much
transparent to our library customers and end
users of IngentaConnect, as it’s important that
the service should not be disrupted or unduly
changed. We were able to devote some time
last year to reviewing and streamlining our
library services in line with feedback from
this community. For example, IngentaCon-
nect now offers free tools for libraries to apply
branding to the site, while our IngentaConnect
Complete package is now a set of discrete
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<http://www.against-the-grain.com>
modules which a library can license independently to meet document delivery or current awareness needs in the most effective way. And of course, libraries and end users are the customers whom our publisher partners want to serve through the publication platforms we build, so all of the services I’ve just talked about are ultimately designed to meet their needs — whether it’s by integrating software and content with the tools used by these groups (such as bibliographic managers or RSS readers), or by adhering to industry standards such as COUNTER and OpenURL.

In a world where technology is easier to manage and increasingly inexpensive, why do publications work with companies like Ingenta?

We’re increasingly finding that the evidence does not bear out the assumption that technology is becoming easier to manage. In a world of evolving industry standards, demand for more advanced “bells and whistles”, semantic Web developments and visibility amongst the vast array of content on the Web, publishers are under pressure to conform to the latest standards, regularly roll out new features and functionality in line with technical advances as well as ensuring their technology is robust, scalable and future proof. A challenge which can be a distraction from publishers’ core area of expertise (publishing) which in turn can impact on ROI as technology choices are critical to the success of publishers’ businesses. As a result, we’re finding that demand for the support of an established technology partner remains strong.

Technology for publishers is Ingenta’s core competence, our sole focus, which is why a growing number of publishers (more than 250 now) are seeking Ingenta’s support for their technical strategy. ♦

Vendor Library Relations
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Harvard’s FAS vote are on everyone’s radar. Could be time for materials vendors to have another look at what it is their customers most care about. Getting themselves into the offices of library decisionmakers — vendors have always known the importance of doing that. Without at the least having a few thoughtful things to say about open access and its Ranaganathian cousin, fair use, and how in their accustomed in-the-middle position vendors might make a difference, vendors could lose the one kind of open access they’ve always understood. ♦

Back Talk
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I think we cannot help but feel some of each emotion. I am leaning toward sending the existing downloaders emails asking them to provide proper attribution and to also strengthen the language in the click-through instructions stating that in the future readers MAY NOT download materials for further distribution. I think this is justified since while our students may have given us permission to put things up on the Web, we didn’t ask, and I don’t think they had in mind giving permission for 15 or 1,500 libraries and other organizations to make copies of their theses for posting on their sites. Unfortunately I am also considering assigning someone to go through the 4,000 plus pre-1923 Google Book Select entries in which the words Hong Kong appear to find full text materials for our own electronic collection. Can I forbid others to do what I want to do? What do you think we should do? Please drop me a line if you have an opinion <ferguson@hkucc.hku.hk>.

Rumors
from page 71

and information on the site, though the material created by contributors and the user community, which each member will control and be credited for, will be published alongside the encyclopedia. Encyclopaedia Britannica itself will continue to be edited according to the most rigorous standards and will bear the imprimatur ‘Britannica Checked’ to distinguish it from material on the site for which Britannica editors are not responsible.” See “Encyclopaedia Britannica Goes – Gasp! – Wiki,” by Josh Fischman, Chronicle of Higher Education, June 6, 2008. www.chronicle.com britannicacon.com/?p=86

Tis the season to be collaborating ... Look at our interview with the astute Remmel Nunn about Crossroads in this issue, p.56. And, another interesting development. The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), the Association of Research Libraries (ARL) and SPARC (Scholarly Publishing and Academic Resources Coalition) have released a new series of bookmarks in the Create Change campaign, which targets scholars in different disciplines with messages about the benefits of wider research sharing. Librarians can use these freely available files to enhance their efforts to engage faculty interest in changing the way scholarly information is shared. The Create Change Website emphasizes the rapid and irreversible changes occurring in the ways faculty share and use academic research results. www.createchange.org www.acrl.org www.arl.org www.arl.org/sparc

Did you see the information that we posted on the ATG News Channel (5/13/08)? I am posting a Rumor most every day. Bad, bad, if you didn’t!! Anyway, there was a lawsuit filed against Georgia State University by three publishers – Oxford University Press, Cambridge University Press, and Sage Publications. The publishers take issue with how Georgia State is handling electronic reserves. The Chronicle of Higher

Education interviewed Lolly Gasaway, ATG’s expert on copyright, about this lawsuit which alleges that Georgia State professors infringed publishers’ copyrights by “inviting students” to download, view, and print material from thousands of copyrighted works. The outcome of this lawsuit could have implications for how colleges distribute course material online.

We told you last time about Choice’s move into new digs in late 2008 or early 2009 (ATG, V.20#2, p.12). Check out these photos of the construction project and see how Irv looks in a hard hat! www.flickr.com/photos/acrl/set/72157604368374700/

And – last but not least – wanted to let you know that the New England Journal of Medicine has selected Atypon for its new integrated content delivery platform. There is a certain symmetry to this which is why I picked it as our last Rumor. ATG has interviews in this issue with both Tom Richardson of NEJM and Chris Beckett of Atypon. Like, cool! www.atypon.com content.nejm.org/ www.massmed.org/