2007

I Hear the Train A Comin' --

Greg Tananbaum
gtanbaum@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: http://docs.lib.purdue.edu/atg

Part of the Library and Information Science Commons

Recommended Citation
Tananbaum, Greg (2007) "I Hear the Train A Comin' --," Against the Grain: Vol. 19: Iss. 6, Article 39.
DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.5352

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact epubs@purdue.edu for additional information.
that is expected to be managed by ERMS is also an obstacle, and is an issue where many organizations hope standards can help to make the process of populating the systems easier. NISO and the vendor community are working together to help find standards solutions to this problem in order to help alleviate the challenges that librarians face as they work with these systems.

Key among the issues under development at NISO is the need for interoperability and common structures around which data exchange models can be built. Licensing and license expression, usage data, interlinking content, purchasing and EDI: each of these areas of management has its own challenges. During his presentation, Oliver Pesch, Chief Strategist of E-Resources, EBSCO Information Services, outlined the scope of the problem as it relates to the data elements in the Digital Library Federation ERMI data structure. This model contains 315 data elements for tracking electronic resource content. While a significant percentage of data is possible for agents and publishers to provide, the remaining elements still require significant library time, staff, and energy to track. Important questions for people engaged in developing an ERMS are: How practical is it to track all of this data? To what extent can a smaller data model — which might facilitate a less robust but more manageable system in the end — be used?

For NISO, then, the question is: What can NISO do to help further the state of the art in the information flow of management information for electronic resources? With the increased use, creation, and expenditure on e-resources, the need for standardization is becoming even more significant. There are several initiatives underway at the moment that focus on interoperability and functionality of ERMS. For instance, NISO’s License Expression Working Group (LEWG) is mapping the DLF ERMI data model to the new ONIX-PL (Publication License) format, which is part of the ONIX family of standards developed by EDItEUR. ONIX-PL is an XML structure that encodes the numerous terms of a license, including a means for the library to identify whether that use is allowed, prohibited, or open for interpretation. This format will provide a mechanism for publishers to provide information on their licenses in machine-readable format for population of an ERMS. It is important to note that expression of license information does not remove the ability of institutions to negotiate or interpret licenses; it is simply a means of computer-to-computer transfer of the agreed terms.

The second critical aspect of ERMS development, in which NISO is engaged, is the recently passed SUSHI standard for transmission of usage data between publishers and libraries (NISO Z39.93-2007). While SUSHI is focused at the moment on the packaging and transmission of usage data, the underlying model of SUSHI — that is, machines commu-

ninating data automatically to other machines — is a promising one for future development relating to other types of management data for digital content.

However, there continue to be areas where further development is needed. Greater integration with existing ILS systems, continued development of automated information exchange and data population, and error checking are issues where speakers and attendees alike expressed interest in seeing further work. The ever-changing nature of the content being managed by ERMS necessitates standardization of information related to how title transitions, URL updates, missing issues, and other critical information are communicated to libraries. Working with content providers to improve the transmission of this information will be vital to the eventual success of libraries in using ERMS and managing the data they contain. Technological systems never reside inside a vacuum, though, and beyond the structure of the ERMS there are several additional areas regarding the management of digital resources that could benefit by study and structured analysis. It was suggested that the community explore the creation of a best practice document — perhaps by NISO — that relates to organizational structures necessary to facilitate management of digital content and that addresses implementation needs relating to ERMS.

While relatively new to the community, ERMS are slowly making progress in improving the management of digital content. These systems will continue to develop over time, replacing the ad hoc structures librarians used when digital content first began to gain prominence. As the discussion of whether an ERMS should be a stand-alone product or incorporated into the traditional ILS continues, there can be no doubt that the management of digital resources needs significant support structures — both technological and cultural. Helping to smooth this process through standards is a goal that will continue well into the future.

SUSHI Formally Approved and Published

The NISO membership formally approved the SUSHI standard (NISO Z39.93-2007) in October. This important new standard will help to improve the logistical problems of collecting usage data from publishers and content providers. The standard is publicly available for download on the NISO Website, along with other useful SUSHI implementation information, at: www.niso.org/standards/SUSHI/.

The difficult work of gaining broad application must now begin. We encourage all content providers and libraries to familiarize themselves with the standard. A number of ERM system providers are already building SUSHI into their products. Libraries that have homegrown ERM tools or processes should look at implementing the SUSHI protocol to streamline their workflow in gathering COUNTER and related usage statistics. NISO is also working with COUNTER to have SUSHI compliance a requirement in the next revision of the COUNTER Code of Practice. Although this issue is still under consideration, incorporating the SUSHI standard will help tremendously in the usability and functionality of COUNTER reports for librarians.

If your organization would like assistance or advice on implementing SUSHI, please contact the NISO Office. We also encourage the community to speak with their vendors and information providers to ask that SUSHI be incorporated into their systems that utilize usage statistics. 🚀

Standards Column
from page 79

I Hear the Train A Comin’ —

Column Editor: Greg Tananbaum (Consulting Services at the Intersection of Technology, Content, and Academia) <gtananbaum@gmail.com>

This past November, in what has become an annual tradition at the Charleston Conference, we took the I Hear the Train A Comin’ column live. Two esteemed speakers, Ian Russell, Chief Executive of the Association of Learned and Professional Society Publishers (ALPSP), and James Mullins, Dean of Libraries and Professor of Library Science at Purdue University, provided some fascinating insights into what is coming around the bend in the land of scholarly communication. More analysis and discussion of their speeches will no doubt dot the pages of Against the Grain in upcoming issues. In my efforts to frame the Charleston discussion, I sought the help of a panel of experts who might offer some learned prognostications about a handful of “big picture” questions. The session was very much an exercise in crystal-ball, an activity that seems to me to benefit from collaboration.

The following people were generous with their time and their feedback (I should note that the views expressed are their own rather than their employers): Peter Binfield, Sage; Pamela Bluh, Association for Library Collections & Technical Services; Ron Boehm, ABC-CLIO; Jane Burke, ProQuest; Paul Courant, University of Michigan Libraries; Joe Esposito, Consultant; Rick Johnson, Former Head, SPARC; Sally Morris, Former Head, ALPSP; Jim Neal, Columbia University Libraries; Beki Simon, University of California Press; Peter Suber, Open Access Advocate; and
The Charleston ADVISOR

Critical Reviews of Web Products for Information Professionals

“The Charleston Advisor serves up timely editorial columns, standalone and comparative reviews, and press releases, among other features. Produced by folks with impeccable library and publishing credentials ... this is a title you should consider.”

Yes! Enter My Subscription For One Year. Yes, I am Interested in being a Reviewer.

Name
Organization
Address
City/State/Zip
Phone
Fax
Email
Signature

$295.00 for libraries
$495.00 for all others

I Hear the Train A Comin’ from page 80

Roy Tennant, OCLC. I asked them five straightforward questions, as follows.

What is the single biggest game changer that will alter scholarly communication in the next 3–5 years?

No single answer dominated the replies to this question. Having said that, a few themes did emerge. Several roundtable participants believed the coming years will yield the development of sustainable business models balancing revenue, accessibility, and delivery. They suggested that we will move beyond the simple Open Access/Subscription dichotomy into more nuanced models of publication and dissemination. Another possibility cited by the panelists was the rise in social networks/community. Some felt that this development will blur the lines between formal peer-reviewed publication and ad hoc dissemination. The third oft-mentioned game changer was the emergence of China and other regions as both producers and consumers of content. The specific effect of this influx on the scholarly communications ecosystem is difficult to predict, but its sheer volume virtually guarantees some kind of impact.

What is the most over-discussed scholarly communication issue, and why?

Those who feel that librarians and publishers cannot agree on anything will be heartened to learn that the roundtable achieved near-unanimous consensus on this issue. Open Access was cited as the single most beaten-down issue in the space by virtually every respondent. Digging into the reasons why people feel this way is interesting, in large part because again we find consensus. Many respondents indicated that there is too much bluster from all sides and an absence of practicality weighing down the OA discussion. OA advocates were chided for focusing too much on rote repetition of principles and declarations in lieu of concrete investigation and development of business models. Publishers were dinged for spending too much time entrenching their static positions and not enough collaborating on case studies and other methodical analyses of the OA opportunity. Governing bodies were hit for using blunt policy instruments to insert themselves awkwardly into a complex problem. And more than a few respondents reminded me that the scholars themselves have provided no real groundswell of interest on this issue. The general consensus seems to be, at least among this crowd, that OA is an issue worth discussing, but right now it is sucking too much oxygen out of the room.

Is there a scholarly communication crisis?
If so, what is it?

The panel was evenly divided in their response to this issue. One-third indicated that we are not in a state of crisis. The general feeling among this bloc was that many of the pressures facing the scholarly communication system have eased in recent years. To quote one respondent, “Communication is thriving. Barriers to participation are down. Community networking is growing. Like-minded groups can organize much more easily and less expensively.” One-third felt that a crisis does indeed exist. This group tended to focus on the pressures that the for-profit publishing economy places on the universities, libraries, and non-profit publishers. This may be exacerbated, according to some of the respondents, by the ongoing journal market consolidation and the increasing share of library budgets and article outputs that the largest publishers consume. The final third saw trends to like and trends that worried them, but could not say whether this added up in the aggregate to a full-blown crisis. One interesting issue proffered by the uncommitted group reveals a certain ambivalence toward publishing diversity. While there are more outlets than ever before for researchers to publish findings, and more informal dissemination paths on top of that, this can breed a certain chaos. Version control, copyright confusion, and long-term archiving strategies are all concerns to keep an eye on looking forward, whether they reach “crisis” proportions or not.

Does traditional scholarly publishing still matter?

To this question, the answer was a unanimous “Yes”. The roundtable felt that the deep-rootedness of the established publishing system makes fundamental change occur slowly. Traditional peer review mechanisms and the informal journal hierarchy provide a busy audience with convenient cues for prioritizing information. The same holds true with monographs and books published through...
Wandering the Web — Pop-up and Moveable Books

by Deana Groves (Education Catalog Librarian, Western Kentucky University)

Column Editor: Jack G. Montgomery (Western Kentucky University) <jack.montgomery@wku.edu>

Column Editor’s Note: Although the concept of a book with movable parts dates to the 1600s, the true flowering of this book format was the nineteenth century. Today, in addition to being widely popular and collectable, the pop-up book is now regarded as art. Professor Groves has researched this genre and has chosen several sites to help us learn more about this fascinating type of book. — JM

When one thinks of pop-up and moveable books, images of pull tabs and turn wheels immediately come to mind. While these elements are still prevalent, a new era of complex paper engineering has emerged. These books are often beautifully produced and hand-crafted sometimes resulting in the form of the book overshadowing the text, thus appealing to more of an adult audience. Traditional pop-up and moveable books geared toward a juvenile audience are still widely available, however, the movements are usually less complicated and the books are often mass produced which lessens the quality. The following Websites give a nice introduction into the world of pop-up and moveable books; they will educate, as well as fascinate, librarians, book collectors, and art lovers alike.

Catalogs

Book Exhibits Gallery — http://popupbooks.net/Book-Index.html

Searchable by title or artist/paper engineer, this Website is a great place for the pop-up novice to discover old and new publications. The compiled list is from the Website creator’s personal collection. Each title is accompanied by one or more photos, a short synopsis, and basic bibliographic information.

Groups

The Movable Book Society — http://www.rci.rutgers.edu/~montanar/mbs.html

According to the Website, this group was organized in 1993 and is dedicated to collectors, creators, book sellers, and general pop-up and moveable book enthusiasts. A membership form and sample of the paper published newsletter are available on this site. Also listed is information on the biennial conference associated with this group; membership is not required to attend.

Paper Engineers

Colette Fu — http://www.fusansan.com/

Photographer by trade, Colette Fu embarks on an artistic journey creating elaborate single page pop-ups. Her subjects deal with interpretations of actual buildings and structures. A gallery of her works can be explored by using the mouse-over navigation system on the bottom of the main Webpage. All works can be enlarged for a clearer view of the mechanisms Fu uses to create the movement component of her pieces. Adding more depth to her works, Fu also offers two viewing angles for the majority of the illustrations.

Mark Hiner — http://www.markhinero.co.uk/

This Website is the creation of paper engineer Mark Hiner. An attractive site that cleverly uses pull tab images as the navigation, Hiner gives examples of his works along with a brief but thorough account of the history of pop-up books. He utilizes the mouse-over effect to allow some of the moveable parts of his books to pop on the screen therefore giving a full impression of a pop-up book. An overview of how a pop-up book is made from concept to completion is given including explanation of some of the more technical terms associated with moveable publications.

Mathew Reinhart — http://www.matthewreinhart.com/

Colorful and easy to navigate, Reinhart gives a short synopsis of each of his 17 books complete with color images. A short biography tells of his life and how his decision to make his career as a book maker/paper engineer, Reinhart was first inspired by Robert Sabuda who convinced Reinhart to partner with him and enter the world of paper engineering.

Robert Sabuda — http://robertssabuda.com/

The pop-up connoisseur will be educated and entertained at Robert Sabuda’s Website. An interview styled FAQ gives the visitor an inside look into Sabuda’s career. A bibliography lists major publications and most are also available for purchase, some with autographs. The most intriguing section of this site is listed under Explore Pop-up Books! where a listing of international artists can be found along with simple step-by-step instructions for making several single page pop-ups. A sneak peak section is given for those interested in finding out about Sabuda’s upcoming projects.

Virtual Exhibits


This Website is a sampling of an exhibit presented at the Willis Library of the University of North Texas, The Great Manegerie: The Wonderful World of Pop-up and Moveable Books, 1811-1996. A brief introduction to the history of the development of pop-up and moveable books accompanies the books. Appropriate to this topic, movement of these books can be seen directly from the Webpage, via links to short movies, and by moving the computer mouse over images. For those interested in learning more about this era of pop-up and moveable books, a complete exhibit catalog is also provided.

This Magical Book — http://www.tpl.toronto.on.ca/pro_2002_magical_book.jsp

Part of the Osborne Collection, This Magical Book: Movable Books for Children, 1777-2001 was on exhibit at the Canada Trust Gallery, Toronto Public Library from April 13 - June 9, 2002. The visitor to this site will be impressed by the quality of the moving parts illustrated in each of the nine books included in this virtual exhibit. Briefly discussed is gene-

I Hear the Train A Comin’

from page 81

prestigious university presses and other top-tier publishing imprints. As one respondent noted, “Although there are many interesting experiments out there on how to evolve the publication model, at the moment it is still the paper in Nature that makes CNN and gets referenced, not the blog entry on the same topic.” Having said this, many on the panel indicated that traditional scholarly publishing, what they perceived as an economy with the journal and the book and the monograph as units of currency, is by no means static. It has evolved dramatically from a generation ago, with the dawn of the electronic delivery, Web 1.0, and, now, Web 2.0. This evolution is ongoing. As one respondent notes in looking ahead, “Today, journals are a record of research, but perhaps in the near future they will be vehicles for real-time, iterative, collaborative refinement of scientists’ understanding of research.”

In one word, how would you describe the future of scholarly communication?

A quick summary of the replies: Strife-Ridden, Bright, Uncertain, Inevitable, Exciting, ChaosbreedsLife (I think that’s cheating, but we’ll allow it), Evolving, Turbulent, and, offered by three respondents, Dynamic. I realize, of course, that the answer to this question is a sort of Rorschach Test that reveals something about the true nature of the respondent. Nevertheless, it is interesting that several experts hit upon the word “dynamic”. Scholarly communication, it seems to me, is and will remain dynamic, a term defined as vigorously active, forceful, and energetic. Whether this is exciting, turbulent, chaotic, or something else is really in the eye of the beholder. My friend Roy Tennant perhaps sums it up best in saying, “The future of scholarly communication in one word? Uncertain. Troubled. Bright. It will be all those and more. Take your pick.”

continued on page 83