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Innovations Affecting Us

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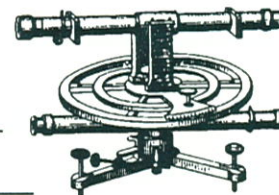
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Innovations Affecting Us

Column Editor: **Judy Luther** (The Faxon Company)



TULIP

I have been hearing rumors about TULIP and saw an article in the June 3, 1992 issue of the *Chronicle of Higher Education*. In light of the increasing interest in journals in electronic form, I decided to research this directly and called Karen Hunter, vice president and assistant to the chairman of Elsevier, for the latest update.

The University Licensing Program (TULIP) (how appropriate for a publisher headquartered in Amsterdam) is designed to make 42 journals in the materials sciences area available in electronic form. Eight institutions have signed agreements: Cornell, Carnegie Mellon, University of Tennessee, University of Washington, Virginia Polytechnic Institute, University of California system, University of Michigan, and MIT. Georgia Tech and Princeton are also expected to participate.

At most institutions, electronic files

of existing paper journals will be loaded on a file server and will be searchable with the software selected by the university. In some cases this will be the library's online catalog. These files are both ASCII text files for full text searching and bit mapped image files (which are pictures of a full page) for delivery of graphics. Each year of the 42 journals requires approximately 11 gigabytes or the equivalent of 11 CD's (with 10,000 pages on a disc) so these are very large files. Three to four years of each title will be supplied.

One of the objectives of this project is to offer the subscriber options for delivery, i.e.: paper, full articles, electronic format. To take advantage of the electronic mode, faculty will need to utilize special software on their network with a high resolution monitor and laser printer to handle the graphics. Another option is to print an article centrally at the library or computer center, and distribute locally, through campus mail.

Currently, they are testing the Internet for delivery of these files and it is hoped that they will be in production by October. In addition to the technical questions which need to be resolved, Elsevier is looking at the economic and legal issues and user behavior — what do users want and how do they use information? TULIP will assist in the development of new models of distribution and pricing. For example, one institution hopes to resell individual subscriptions to faculty users to subsidize the cost of maintaining these files. Although electronic form is not expected to offer substantial savings, it is hoped that certain efficiencies will be realized.

In a world of greater resource sharing, electronic form offers creative ways to achieve a more flexible distribution system and a different pricing structure. Within two to three years, we will see the results of TULIP and have a clearer picture of some realistic alternatives to our current methods of access and use. ☛



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