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On the Street / Electronic Information Retrieval Systems

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Against the Grain

"Linking Publishers, Vendors and Librarians"

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On the Street

by **Barbara Dean** (Fairfax County Public Library) and
Anne Jennings (U. of South Carolina, School of Library Science)

For this month's issue, your intrepid investigators wanted to find out what you are saying and doing in regard to **electronic information retrieval systems**. Specifically, we asked the following questions: How many CD-ROM and online services do you make available to users? Which ones do you offer? Do you offer document delivery services? How well are they used? Are you eliminating print versions of titles in favor of the electronic counterparts and, if so, are you worried about archiving the information? So, we sent our roving reporters out "on the street," and had them talk to a variety of libraries and librarians. We talked to 28 subscribers representing college, university, special, and public libraries in various parts of the U.S. and Canada. Here is what they said:

CD-ROMs are being used in all but two libraries. A special librarian said they currently have no CD-ROMs but they will as soon as the product is created by its professional association. The other responses regarding availability of numbers of CD-ROMs ranged from three to over 100. In some cases, the librarian just gave an estimate because s/he could not remember the exact number. The largest number was reported by a university noting that at least 30 products were the result of being a U.S. depository library.

Only two libraries do not offer any online databases at this time. Many respondents said they offer four databases, but the prize again goes to a university library with 13 databases. What was really surprising, however, was the number of libraries that only allow librarians to perform online searches. The most frequent reason given for this was end-user inadequate searching capabilities.

The responses as to whether libraries are

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If Rumors Were Horses

Hold onto your hats! **Judy Davis**, owner of **The Faxon Company**, has assumed the role of President and has stated that she intends to sell the company. After six years of service to Faxon, **Dr. Peter Pyclik** will leave Faxon for a position with the **Boston Financial Group**. As we go to press, this is what we have been able to find out. Apparently, several companies are looking at buying Faxon and there is bidding going on. Faxon hopes to accept a bid by the end of May or early June. Though Pyclik has agreed to assist Faxon during purchase negotiations, he will leave Faxon because he wants to leave room for a "clean transaction." Who is buying Faxon? Is it a company from within the industry? Will Faxon be left intact? Pyclik has told us that "whoever is buying Faxon is keenly interested that there be no further erosion to the asset that they will be acquiring. I expect them to bend over backwards to serve and retain clients. Whoever buys Faxon is buying a going concern and will purchase Faxon to increase market share." Says Pyclik: "I feel confident that the purchase by a strong partner will ensure ongoing, consistent client service. Faxon's fundamental business remains very healthy. Faxon is talking with several interested buyers with substantial resources that will give the company the additional financial strength to maintain and improve service to clients. We expect a sale in the next 90 to 180 days."

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replacing their paper copies with electronic versions are more mixed. Ten respondents said they are. Of these, three people said they are worried about archiving the information, but one is betting CD-ROM will be a more or less permanent format.

Online document delivery is offered by most libraries. One university librarian said it is "pretty heavily used" while others said it was not getting the anticipated amount of use or they wish it were better used. In at least one case, the library had only been offering the service for four months, so it was too soon to tell how popular it would be.

Clearly, most of the libraries represented in the survey offer both CD-ROM and online products. Regardless of the frequent predictions that print would be replaced by electronic versions, that is happening in only some of the libraries, and at least in some cases, the transition is rather slow. One factor could be economic; one person said they would drop the paper version only if that action would not increase the price of the electronic version. Online document delivery is not always as popular as one of the investigators expected. She opined that a good project for someone would be to discover why such a wonderful service is not more widely used.

Here are some specific responses —

- **Gail Anderson** of the **Greenblatt Library** at the **Medical College of Georgia** told us they have approximately ten CD-ROM products available. Those include Medline, Health Planning and Administration, CINAHL, Entrez, MAXX, the Pediatric Advisor and Health Reference from InfoTrac. They are not eliminating any paper titles although they may cut back on pamphlets in the future. As to document delivery, Gail says that they use Docline from the National Library of Medicine.

- **John Clouston** in London, Ontario is busy making plans for the new **Kings College Library**. Although at present they do not offer CD-ROM products, when they move to their new facility, they plan to have at least five which address such subjects as Theology, Social Science, Psychology and the Arts.

They are also looking at several document delivery services, particularly UnCover. Kings College presently has a local document delivery agreement among area institutions.

- **Natalie Seweryn** at the **New York Public Library** named over 35 CD-ROM products which they make available for users. WOW! Obviously, these cover a wide variety of subjects, but with particular interest in the areas of business and the humanities. They also offer several online services including Lexis/Nexis, Periodical Abstracts and RLIN Eureka. Natalie says that they have not really utilized document delivery since they have such a strong collection of print items. As to archiving, NYPL has not eliminated print because they are concerned about how future changes in software and/or hardware will effect the products they use.

- **Elizabeth Haworth**, a law librarian with **Sinkler & Boyd** in Columbia, South Carolina, also offers a variety of CD-ROM and online services to the attorneys in her office. Those include BNA's Tax Management Portfolio Plus, RIA's tax and pension products, and West's Bankruptcy Reporter on compact disc and Dialog, Lexis/Nexis, Westlaw and Washington Alert online. Because space can be limited in a law library environment, Elizabeth states that many of the electronic services have replaced their print counterparts in her office.

We really appreciate all of your responses to our roving reporters. We know that we got many of you at the worst possible time, but you gave us some useful information and we hope you find it as useful as we did.

*Do you like the idea of knowing what other ATG subscribers are doing? We are thinking of creating a telephone tree for this column with participants calling two other subscribers to ask them a number of questions, and reporting their responses to one of our investigators. If you are interested in participating, please call **Barbara Dean** at 703-222-3139 or FAX her 703-222-3135.*

- **Florida State University** has 12 ongoing subscriptions to CD-ROM products, according to **Jane Clarkson**. Most are in the area of general reference services, monographs and documents. FSU also has three or four online services in the areas of science and general reference. The university libraries in Florida are cooperating in an ILL document delivery experiment with UnCover to de-

termine information regarding usage. This sounds interesting and we look forward to hearing about the results in the future.

- **The Dudley Knox Library** at **The Naval Post-Graduate School** in Monterey, California offers CD-ROM access but the librarians perform the searches. Most of the information is issued by the Defense Department, is highly technical and too difficult for the average user to search. They also subscribe to Dialog, Melvyl, Ontime and RLIN but these are only available to students who are working on their theses. Dudley Knox destroys any overlapping materials.

- **Melissa Gregory** with the **Argonne National Library** in Argonne, Illinois, advises that her collection specifically addresses the science and technology fields. Argonne has a CD-ROM network with approximately 10 products including ASME (American Society of Mechanical Engineering), BIP, the Federal Register, Medline, the Thomas Register, the Science Citation Index and Entrez. Librarians will perform online searches on Orbit, OCLC, RLIN, and STN. They also use a number of document delivery services. Argonne has a committee to determine how to treat overlapping or duplicated materials.

- **Janice Keim** of **Appalachian State University** in Boone, North Carolina offers users a networked system with a menu of over 35 available items. Additionally, she estimates that there are another one hundred CD-ROM services provided by the library. Most are in the area of government records. Appalachian also has access to Dialog, FirstSearch and UnCover.

- **Ann Horan** of **General Engineering** in Charleston, South Carolina, another special librarian, provides her users with BNA Environmental Reporter and the OSHA Regulations, Documents and other Technical Information on compact disc. She also accesses Dialog, Chemical Information Service, Toxnet and National Groundwater online. They have ceased using some printed titles.

- **The North Carolina State Library** in Raleigh (not to be confused with N.C. State University) boasts 31 CD-ROM

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receive the complete text of the electronic books position paper (16K), email Philip Mattera: slope@panix.com.

More from cni-copyright@cni.org. This is about *Playboy* and an interview they published of Castro in 1967 by **Lee Lockwood**, a member of the Boston Local of the NWU. Apparently, Lockwood was notified several months ago that *Playboy* planned to include that article in a CD-ROM compilation of all the Playboy Interviews of the past 30 years. Does the contract which Lockwood signed nearly 30 years ago, entitle *Playboy* to these rights for a technology which was invented after the contract? Lockwood, who has filed a grievance with the NWU, doesn't think so. For more information, contact **Philip Mattera**: slope@panix.com.

Librarian of Congress James H. Billington announced the appointment of **Mary Berghaus Levering** to the new position of Deputy Register of Copyrights effective April 4, 1994. The Deputy Register is responsible for managing the day-to-day operations of the Copyright Office and, in the absence of the Register, fully assumes his/her responsibilities. **Barbara Ringer** continues to serve as the acting Register of Copyrights while the Library recruits for a new Register.

The Baltimore County Public Library came live on **CARL** in April. **Becky Lenzini**, **Ward Shaw**, and **Trish Caulkin** were there to celebrate! We hear that they all got their picture in the local paper in Baltimore when there was a big feature on **CARL Corp.** Also, **CARL** is one of 4 companies in the running for Small Business of the Year by the Denver Chamber of Commerce!

The San Antonio Public Library has also selected the **CARL** system as its new automation vendor. The system should be operational by late fall and will connect 500 terminals to the Central Library, 17 branches, two bookmobiles and the Hertzberg Circus Museum.

Margie Towery, Journals Editor, **University of Illinois Press** announces a new journal, *Social Politics: International Studies in Gender, State, and Society*. Also accompanying the new journal will be an online discussion group, **SOCPOL-L**. For further information, contact Margie at margiet@ux1.cso.uiuc.edu.

Senator Fritz Hollings (D-S.C.) has launched S. 1822 (the Communications Act of 1994). The National Information Infrastructure is the subject of this bill.

Heard from **Mary McLaren** the other day. Both her kids were on Spring Break and they were both going away on separate trips without "Mom." Mary said she was rather looking forward to some time to herself. See **Doc Aquis**, this issue, page 16. Mary and **Barbara Hale** continue to do a great job! Thanks to both of them!

ALCTS Network News (volume 7, number 4, April 5, 1994) announced the development of guidelines for professional ethics as well as the development of a **Standard of Acquisitions Practice**, developed by the Acquisitions Section. Also covered in the same issue of **AN2**, is information from **Adrian Alexander** and the **ALA LMPIC** (Library Materials Price Index Committee) which was published in the May, 1994 *American Libraries*. More journal price information was published recently in *Library Journal* and *LAPT, Library Acquisitions: Practice and Theory*.

The Association of Research Libraries (ARL)'s new 4th edition of the *Directory of Electronic Journals and Newsletters* will hopefully be available in May. What a mammoth and awesome task!

Joyce Ogburn (Yale) writes that her back is much better. As always, her **Acquiring Minds**, this issue, is intriguing. Sounds like **Candide** and the best of all possible worlds (read: acquisitions systems).

Did you see **Shadowlands**, the movie with Anthony Hopkins about C.S. Lewis' later life? **Jack Walsdorf** reminded us that the bookshop in which a scene was filmed was **Blackwells Bookshop**. A fitting remembrance for the author of our new "In Praise of Bookshops," this issue, page 44.

Look, y'all, if you EVER get a defective issue of *ATG*, send it back to **Katina** (you know, missing pages, upside down pages, whatever). We pay **FOR EACH ISSUE** so when we get a defective one, we get **CREDIT** from the printer. So — don't be shy — sent it back! You will get another one, okay? Speaking of de-

fective books and stuff, see **Rosann** the magnificent **Bazirjian's Group Therapy**, this issue, page 32.

Heard from **Joe Cupito** in Cincinnati, Ohio, the other day. He works for **Baker and Taylor** and was a friend of **Zelma Palestrant's**. He called to say that he appreciated the offering in *ATG* [April, 1994]. Have also heard from many, many other people about both **Diana Seymour** and **Zelma**. Our colleagues live on in our memory and we will never forget them. This is how it should be.

An interesting article appeared in *The New York Times* on Tuesday, April 19, 1994, on page C1. Entitled "An Ad (Gasp!) in Cyberspace" by **Peter H. Lewis** it talks about a lawyer who has angered many people and networks by posting a commercial message on the Net.

As we go to press, we have learned that **Tina E. Chrzastowski** and **Karen A. Schmidt** (both at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign) have won the 1994 **LAPT Research Award** for their proposal, "The Serials Cancellation Crisis: Determining Recent National Trends in Academic Library Collections Through the Use of Commercial Vendor Subscription Records." Wow! Congrats to both of them! ☺

CORRECTION! We goofed! **Mary's** name in **Library Bestsellers** [April 1994] is **McClure!** Apologies!

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products, most in the business field. However, some other titles include North Carolina Law on disc, **BIP**, Library Literature, Library Reference and the Phone Directory. They also have access to **DIALOG**. **Irene Kan** advises that her facility has eliminated some paper titles as a result of the above-cited programs.

We hope you find the above facts and figures as interesting as we did. It is truly amazing how much information is available out there at the touch of your fingertips. It adds new meaning to an old phrase> "Let your fingers do the walking." ☺