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At Brunning: People & Technology

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At the only Edge that Means Anything / How We Understand What We Do

by **Dennis Brunning** (E Humanities Development Librarian, Arizona State University) <dennis.brunning@gmail.com>

Keywords 2009 — Essential Terms and Concepts for the Forward Zeitgeist...

Dud — Robert Darnton's sonic adjective for net impact of the **Revised Google Book Settlement**. Rhymes with Scud.

Googled — *New Yorker* writer **Ken Auletta's** noun form of the popular eponymous verb. **Nora Ephron**, big fan of **Google Voice** — because it doesn't work — suggested "Googled" to describe what happens when your company is "served" by the **Google** tsunami. Use: "hear about what happened to *Business Week*? That is one **Googled** piece of old media."

Nook — **Barnes & Noble's** new eBook reader. Powered by "droid," sued by several patent owners for infringing on everything from design to operating system; looks like **Kindle** Competition but it needs to ship.

Digitize — digital millennium term for copying. Honest, professor, I didn't copy the answers, I scanned them...

Fair Use — Once meant you could quote but you couldn't do chapter and verse. Now means **scanning** everything into your search engine and applying algorithms to flow a new, less restricted notion of what isn't yours. The free range version of fair use is the research corpus.

Opt — according to the American Heritage Dictionary an intransitive verb meaning to "make a choice or decision." "Opt out" (same dictionary: to choose to engage or not engage in something. In the digital domain, "opt out" and "opt in" are two sides of a coin that may never land in the toss of fate that is Internet business. Take it or leave it probably best sums up your options. **Google** will not come calling; you'll just be de-indexed."

Slow media — sourced in the slow food movement which reprises your Mother's advice to slow down and smell the roses. Apparently, those over forty live by the nose. Kids and their new media are visual (the Camtasia generation, of **YouTube** quality video) and auditory. Slow media practices rotary telephones, writing letters and posting them, reading book books — stops short of writing longhand for more than 20 minutes, tops. No, doesn't mean reading newspapers on the dead tree medium because newspapers are beyond slow, they're dead...

Frenemy — awkward to pronounce and spell, joined in oxymoronic hell word-smithed by the same people who came up with "coopetition." Coined on the soft side of business, was probably never really honored among the hard at the core of business. The **Donald** keeps enemies close and friends at the golf course. Now, into the

permanent downturn, no one is blowing this tune except for everyone who doesn't dare compete with **Google**.

Network effects — what to blame when your files and apps are lost in the cloud. Replaces dog ate my homework for best in show underachiever. Social networking effects — how to explain who or what you met at **Match.com**.

De-index — strictly, to remove pointers to your information. Since **Rupert Murdoch** last month it means specifically to not allow **Google** to search your sites. Some speculate **Mr. Murdoch** is "mixing up" his "homes" — **Microsoft**, **Google**, and anyone else in this take no prisoners industry. Pro-**Google** pundits proclaim **Murdoch** nuts and old. Oddly, **Google** — ill at ease with old thinking, old rules, and old ways, makes concessions, limiting "free news."

Pre-index — what is done to create a Web level discovery layer which results in a single search box, which fixes federated search by getting rid of it? Has got to complicate the life of aggregators — this single index which mimes (or memes?). Promises to be a method to identify annoying collection overlap...

Re-Index — **Jim McBride**, aka **Mr. Skin**, master indexer and cataloger/classifier of nudity in the cinema toils day and night, with eight employees, reviewing **Blu-Ray** versions of movies to update the database. Apparently **Blu-Ray** reveals more than previously cataloged requiring a re-indexing of existing movies. Seems there is a lot more **Nicolas Cage** et al on the silver screen than originally viewed in lesser formats. These must be noted in **Mr. Skin. Jim**, are you hiring?

Disintermediation — supply chain term which defines what happens to intermediaries during periodic industry attempts to streamline distribution and lessen the drag of costs. It is, though, a supreme game of whack the mole. No sooner do you pocket savings then someone figures out a new third way. Advice — don't let anyone call you an intermediary, you always risk getting the "dis." Unless you are **Tony Soprano**.

ROI: return of investment — if you are in business this means profit — what it takes to make money. Current buzz word of library managers who need value where none perceived.

Old paradigm: we look for cost avoidance opportunity. New paradigm: avoid everything...

Content — umbrella term for all that digital stuff. All content isn't equal; a truth

discovered the hard way by **Barry Dillard** who proclaimed "content is king." Hardly any claim to kingly status except, perhaps, King of the Day — **YouTube**. You, Mr. Tube, are certainly king; the rest is just content.

Metadata — content's formal friend. They know each other from inception. Usually ingested, harvested, collected — term must date from the early agricultural period. Has yet, though, to be irrigated.

Where the Wild Things are — More on eBooks...

Summer passed. In autumn books took on a new significance as reading devices and eBook publishers hit the news. The publishing industry, experiencing flat sales even before the economic downturn, saw cash in the spike of trade books downloaded to readers and smart phones. Industry analysts and pundits pegged 2016 or 2018 as the tipping point — when electronic editions of books would exceed print versions.

This push certainly makes up for the rather slow growth of library eBooks. Until now, library eBooks were and remain digital editions of academic trade, scholarly, and university print publications. As **Charleston Conference 2009** sessions revealed, new initiatives in this eBook space revolve around patron-driven, print on demand, and flipping "E" for "P" in approval plans. All great developments...

What's happening, though, in trade publishing is wild. This is a world of fierce competition, intrigue (how about that **Google BS?**) and innovation. What will people buy in this wacky disrupted world?

Let's start with **Kindle** for **PC**. This is huge for **Kindle** users. Books can now be read and managed through a desktop interface. The **PC** editions look like real books. **Amazon** is amazingly **Amazon** — those thumbnail book covers that promise so much. Our eyes light up when told of this development. Our favorite property moves into the digital age in a smart way. **Mouse** and **PC** still rule!

More importantly **Amazon** is loosening its grip on device specific content. Customers now have more reading options.

That said, there beyond the **PC** and maybe the **iPhone**, there are few if any mobile devices supporting a decent reading experience. The **Blackberry**, for example, is a reading device waiting for the right application. **Barnes & Noble**, **Shortcovers** (an eBook service operating out of Toronto), **WattPad** (owned by **AdMob**, a mobile ad serving company just purchased by **Google** for 750 million) offer **Blackberry** applications that try to work with **Blackberry's** operating system to provide eBook access.

Put simply, it just isn't there. Sure, the

continued on page 64

Barnes & Noble Blackberry gets you going rather easily. From **B&N** eBook site you send a link to your email account on your **Blackberry**; a few steps and you have a mobile Web connection to **B&N**.

Once there, though, there isn't much to twitter about. **Blackberry's** screen real estate is dear; at most 4cm by 4cm. In such cramped visual space, it's hard to call this reading except if you are a jeweler. The business user, **Blackberry's** core customer, will love the instant access to something. **Kindle** has announced a **Blackberry** application. The **Crackberry Website** reports the free edition of the *Art of War* by **Lao Tzu** tops the download list. Go figure?

After Christmas, we can look forward to **Barnes & Noble's** android powered "Nook." Current shipping date is January 4th. Until then, no one really knows how cool it will be but if it is anything close to "Droid" smart phones, this is going to be — to overwork a word, "huge."

Like night follows day there will be more to these stories. Stay tuned.

Speaking of **Android** — catch the **@Bunning ATG Interview** with **George Machovec** (this issue p.38). **George** fills us in on a close encounter of the Android Kind...

Your links:

<http://shortcovers.com/>

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<http://www.barnesandnoble.com/ebooks/download-reader.asp?dltab=blackberry>

Envisions for 2010

2010 is the Year of the eBook as technology, sales, and readers (real people) align in a perfect tempest of the word. **Amazon** will lead trade while **Google** crafts the terms of engagement on the long tail. E-textbooks appear on campus and a student will make the news by trying to resell device at end of term.

Privacy's fraternal twin, anonymity, will size up as a significant problem. Lazier "anonyms" remain in the blogosphere and twitter land, carping away in comment. The real entrepreneurs are earning online degrees for others and have gone phishing.

Google juggernaut slows — from Mach 4 speed at least. There will be no taking back of astronomical ad revenues, that's more than a train that's left the station, it's a world view. **Mark Cuban** thinks social media like **Twitter** is the **Google** killer app. **Rupert Murdoch** acts as if **Google's** revenue stream can be diverted (see de-index above).

The most likely probable cause: **Google** is aging. Lawsuits, acquisition driven growth, employees cashing in without re-investing in the employer — **Google** looks like **Microsoft** in its heyday. Anecdote: cut the heavy-handed IT approach (IT way or the highway). Take customer calls on those android phones.

Stephan Colbert will return to the library crime beat. **Colbert Nation** members recall **Stephan** nailed young **Dominic Philip**, Tandy, PA, for using the near-by local library in Nazareth, PA. Actually, officials of **Nazareth Public Library** came down hard on the young reader when they viewed a local

video in which **Dominic** is leading kids in a parade celebrating reading — at the library. Seems the kid's parents do not pay fees for the young man to check out books, so his library card was cancelled.

Apparently, librarians aren't that mean and wrong. Someone commented at **Colbert Nation** that Mom had given a bogus address and could have paid \$9.00 to get **Dominic** a library card. In any case, the **Nazareth Public Library** Director gave the little story hour guy his card back and **Colbert** mailed a box full of books — like a carton of cigarettes — to cure **Dominic** of his reading habit. The box included a complete set of **Harry Potter** books signed by **Colbert**.

These will be worth something to **Dominic**. The whole story, played over less than eight minutes of television, channeled that curious energy that the **Colbert Report** bestows upon its heroes and villains.

So — this is more of wish than a prediction. We'd love to have **Stephan Colbert's** attention as we figure our way through the next decade of the library. Hey, **Stephan**, you are a book person even though you don't read. Your show introduces us to all those great authors and you challenge them to make sense to you. We'd love to have you meet us at the **Charleston Conference** and help us keep kids like **Dominic Philip** leading the book parade. That's the Word.

Your link:

<http://www.colbertnation.com/the-colbert-report-videos/239944/july-27-2009/nailed--em--library-crime> 🐼

590: Local Notes — Underfunded Archives and Frayed External Relations: May be the Signs of a Rare and Serious Budgetary Side Effect.

by **Steve McKinzie** (Library Director, Corriher-Linn-Black Library, Catawba College, Salisbury, NC 28144; Phone: 704-637-4449) <smckinzi@catawba.edu>

Are there things that an academic library and its staff can do in a financial crisis, in a season of budget tightening? Of course, you can do all sorts of things — none of them painless, few of them enjoyable. You can trim office supplies, charge more for copy paper, eliminate public service inefficiencies, and streamline technical service work flow. You can even fire off angry letters to your institution's chief financial officer — although I wouldn't recommend it.

But more importantly (and here is where the real test of leadership comes) are there things that you shouldn't do — measures that you must avoid (shall we say) at all costs? You are likely thinking of two, for many of us have been down the road of budget trimming before. Don't slash the monographic budgets and don't torpedo your journal subscriptions.

Those are, at least, the two that are apt to come most readily to our minds. Both are key, and important things not to do.

Nevertheless, I suggest there is a third directive or maxim that may be equally as important — maybe even more important than withstanding material budget downsizing. Never cut archives and special collections, underfund its services or weaken its place in the institution. Archives are, in short, vital to the institution's internal functioning, but more importantly they are extremely valuable to your college or university's external relations. Maintaining archives and special collections are a priority. Too often we take them for granted, and we do so to our collective peril.¹

Of course, maintaining, organizing, staffing, and preserving a college or university archives can and will be costly. I am not about to

suggest otherwise, but the expense of neglecting an institution's history and continuing to underfund archives may be in the long run the far more costly option. Lamentable side effects may follow. Consider two examples of what can happen (the first is factual and the second fictional) — of what can go seriously awry at an institution of higher learning — if you neglect keeping your archives well organized and adequately funded.

Just last year at a college of which I am familiar — an institution that sadly had ignored and underfunded its archives for decades — the descendants of one of the institution's distinguished physics professor contacted the library archives about a telescope, probably of 19th

continued on page 66