February 2009

ATG Interviews Dennis Dillon

Katina Strauch

Against the Grain, kstrauch@comcast.net

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Recommended Citation

Strauch, Katina (2009) "ATG Interviews Dennis Dillon," *Against the Grain*: Vol. 21: Iss. 1, Article 16.

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7771/2380-176X.2499>

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Dennis is Associate Director for Research Services, University of Texas Libraries and Rich is Vice President and General Manager, Ingram Digital

by **Katina Strauch** (Editor, *Against the Grain*) <kstrauch@comcast.net>

ATG: *We welcome the opportunity to discuss recent development in the publishing industry with you and their implications for libraries, publishers, and patrons. I know that the MyiLibrary Advisory Council met recently and delineated trends to watch in 2009. Can you tell us about the Council and what trends they identified?*

DD: Rich can tell you about the council. The most obvious trends are the same ones that have been affecting the publishing, music and cell phone industries in recent years. Users expect different delivery and format options that suit their particular needs. This is especially true in a time when the economy is shaky and people's time and resources are limited. There is a danger if libraries drop the ball and don't respond to these challenges, and that is that we'll simply become irrelevant to increasing proportion of our customer base. In recent years the Web has increased the information expectations for all of us, but library budgets are no longer stretching as far as they used to. Meeting the expectations of time strapped HDTV/cell phone/Web using population is not as easy as it was when all we needed to do was buy the latest set of print books from the usual publishers, and in any case, we no longer have the money to do the same old thing in the same old way as we always have.

One answer to this dilemma is patron selection plans that allow users to search through a large universe of pre-approved library possibilities. When a user then finds a link to an item in the **OPAC** or a library Website and clicks on it, the library is charged a fee for the user to view or download the item, and if no one ever uses the item then there are no costs to the library. This type of model allows libraries to both stretch their funds and offer more resources to their users, and it provides vendors with a new revenue stream. Many variations of this type of model are possible, but the key is finding the one that is realistic and sustainable for both the library and vendor. Of course this is a slight shift in how libraries view their traditional role, but then again, we stopped chaining books to the shelves awhile ago, and this is essentially a continuation of that same philosophy (i.e., free the books).

RR: Our library Advisory Council was formed to discuss trends, both current and future, that will have an impact on the issues faced by libraries. The council is composed of a mix of Academic, Public and Government libraries. The agenda for discussion is determined by the council's members. At our most recent meeting, for instance, we covered purchase and usage models, pay-per-view and patron select, the current state of e-content and strategies for organizing libraries around e-content.

Some of the trends we identified included the ever growing demand for information, the challenge of increasing and maintaining content in the face of shrinking budgets and heightened expectations with regards to electronic delivery of content. Libraries can address those expectations through a number of initiatives such as offering more material in digital form, implementing a pay-per-view program, launching electronic interlibrary loans and exploring patron-driven acquisition.

ATG: *The top trend was "continued growth in the adoption and use of eBooks through innovative patron-driven business and delivery models." At the recent Charleston Conference, patron-driven was frequently discussed. What sorts of multi-format access will be available for content down the road?*

DD: As a librarian, I want every book to begin its life as a digital file that can then be output in every conceivable available format. My favorite beginning format is epub, the open eBook format. Books that begin their life as a digital file, can then be converted to print via print-on-demand for those of us who still like to read the old-fashioned way, or viewed on the Web or a mobile device for those of us in a perpetual hurry, or downloaded and perused at leisure through whatever device each of our significant others prefers to view them on. I believe books are going to have to be malleable enough to fit into busy media weary and wary consumer lives in new ways, if they are to flourish in the 21st century. What currently prevents this theoretical consumer nirvana is the uncertainty as to what is the best business model for everyone concerned. I suppose I'm stating the uncomfortably obvious, but in order to find a model that works for everyone in the current supply chain, we are going to have to experiment a bit. While we are quite comfortable with the traditional 400 year-old practices of buying a print book and putting it on a shelf, there is nothing like a recession combined with changes in technology and consumer behavior (and a few bankruptcies and layoffs) to make us revisit a few of our old assumptions. And as always, there is **Google Books** lurking in the background, which may alter consumer habits regarding books, just as quickly as it changed consumer habits in using the Web, all of which is an argument that it may be wise for libraries to have a few additional options at the ready.

RR: The potential for different formats is virtually unlimited. Formats designed for access online, as well as handheld devices such as the **Sony eReader** and **Amazon's Kindle**, in addition to cell phones, will all become available. **Ingram Digital** will also be launching audiobooks for libraries in Q1 09. As library users increasingly choose to interact with digital content, certain formats will undoubtedly

emerge as the leading option. What these formats may be remains to be seen.

ATG: *Dennis, you run the University of Texas Libraries Google Books digitization project and administer the UT System Academic Library Collection Enhancement Program. What do you make of Google's settlement with the Association of American Publishers and the Author's Guild? What does your crystal ball say about the future and especially how this will impact libraries?*

DD: The **Google Books** settlement is like taking a chess game and suddenly making the board hundreds of times larger. The chessmen are still there, but there are infinitely more options and the nature of the game has changed entirely. On the plus side, the publishing industry has been somewhat slow to adapt to the needs of the digital consumer during the last decade and the **Google** settlement will help that process along. Clearly, the settlement will make books more readily available online, and it all but guarantees that books will find a new life and be used in new and different ways beyond the jaded imaginations of librarians and publishers. But like all game changing events, there is a flip side, the marketplace is now bigger, and every book now has the capability to remain a salable commodity forever. Unfortunately, one of the unintended consequences of the settlement may be an inevitable creeping diminution of the public domain and possibly some unhappy long-term implications for the concept of fair use.

The settlement also places libraries in an awkward position, since part of our raison d'être has always been our effectiveness in reducing costs for our users clients through the efficiencies realized by centralized purchasing and the sharing of content. If **Google** and other networked entities will now be able to do this more effectively than libraries, then libraries will have to rethink their mission to meet other critical institutional needs, or else wither away. Of course, in the real world one size rarely fits everyone. Libraries have always had a stubbornly persistent existence in metropolitan areas and universities around the world. And the library's parent funding institutions have always used libraries as a tool to customize their information environment to better fit local needs. So, as long as libraries don't fall asleep at the switch I'm confident they will do fine.

ATG: *Google's news accelerates the changes already transforming our industry. Rich, you delivered a paper at the recent Charleston Conference, "New Platforms for Delivering and Distributing Content." Can you tell us what you see ahead for libraries?*

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RR: Today's libraries are already adapting to the growing range of sources of content, utilizing **Google**, working directly with publishers, reframing existing library content, and turning to tools like federated search to deliver content to users. So, the recent **Google Book Search** settlement continues to accelerate these changes as the race to make digital content available and accessible grows increasingly urgent. All of these options have both advantages and shortfalls. Ultimately, consumer demand will help libraries determine how to best distribute content.

ATG: *Many of the trends that are impacting our world are problematic for libraries and especially their budgets — at least the way we have always done business. I am talking about print-on-demand, pay-per-view, search-and-discover tools that allow user access to portions of digital content. How can/will libraries and library administrations cope/adapt?*

DD: I suspect that we will all eventually realize that we can't buy our way out of this problem. The world of networked information is simply too big, and in the age of **Google**, every faculty member and every student on campus knows all too well what resources are potentially available. Networks and bad economies have a history of being ruthless efficiency generators, and both tend to squeeze out excess and middlemen. Unfortunately, both consortia and libraries are in a sense middlemen, since they both sit in the supply chain between the publisher and the reader. Part of the challenge going forward will be — how can each of us add sufficient value to networked information to prevent being bypassed.

Part of the answer will lie in the series of different business models that we can expect to see over the next few years as the economy weakens and as publishers begin to adapt to a primarily digital distribution model. In the end however, I believe that a metering model based on the way we currently use electricity will increasingly win out. If the 80% of our information needs can be met with validated information that essentially comes out of a modernized Internet wall socket just like electricity, then we'll happily pay our bills, comfortable with the knowledge that at least everything we are paying for is being used. For many libraries, selecting a few channels from the digital pay-as-you-go information wall socket (for example: "give me two STM journal aggregators and a million eBook history collection") may be sufficient for most needs, while research libraries are likely to still need separate, highly specialized, efforts to capture the more esoteric material required to support their programs.

Of course, one of the critical issues with pay-per-view, print-on-demand and other flexible pay as you go models, is that a library can't be confident of its eventual costs unless they have a realistic handle on campus information

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Dennis Dillon

Associate Director for Research Services
University of Texas Libraries

P. O. Box P, Austin, Texas 78713

Phone: (512) 892-5898 • Fax: (512) 495-4347

<Dillon@austin.utexas.edu>

BORN & LIVED: Born in California and grew up in the Carolinas, Minnesota, Massachusetts, and Florida.

EARLY LIFE: I lived in Minnesota where I used a hand pump to get our water from a well in the back yard, as well as in the California desert where the nearest phone was a mile down a dusty dirt road. This gave me an early appreciation for the magic power of networks (water networks, phone networks) which I have never forgotten.

FAMILY: My wife is an artist, and my two sons, like everyone else in Austin, play together in a local band (I can get you tickets).

PROFESSIONAL CAREER AND ACTIVITIES: I'm the Associate Director for Research Services at the **University of Texas Libraries**, as well as the administrator for the **University of Texas System Academic Library Collection Enhancement Program**. Pretty much everyone I work with knows things I can never hope to learn or understand, which helps keep things in perspective.

IN MY SPARE TIME I LIKE: Mexican food, baseball, repairing the boat (the local lake is 65 miles long), running, reading, worrying about the cost of tuition for the son who is still in college, local music, caring for aging parents, one car doesn't have AC and the other doesn't have heat, etc.

FAVORITE BOOKS: *The Geography of Bliss: One Grump's Search for the Happiest Places in the World.* *Casting a Spell: the Bamboo Fly Rod and the American Pursuit of Perfection.*

PET PEEVES/WHAT MAKES ME MAD: That there is no place on this form to quote the classic Austin dance hall lyric: "I bought the shoes that just walked out on me".

PHILOSOPHY: As **Sam Cooke** said in another context, "change is gonna come."

MOST MEANINGFUL CAREER ACHIEVEMENT: The most memorable moment of my career was the release of **Mosaic**, the first Web browser, which I downloaded from the **NCSA FTP** site one noon in late 1993. Once installed it was immediately obvious to everyone in the room that libraries would never be the same again. Everything since has just been editing the details.

HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: I have to confess that even after spending a dozen years as a reference librarian I still don't use the advanced search feature. I really don't know who, or what it's for. Looking ahead five years I can almost guarantee that the industry will be confused and in an uncomfortable transition as it continues to struggle with the economic realities of a much more competitive and much more fully networked world. Personally, I have no plans to be confused myself in this future, and I hope I can reduce my contribution to the confusion of library users by reducing the number of boxes, barriers, boundaries, and black holes that we librarians tend to set up to "help" our users, (the traditional four B's of librarianship) unless I am absolutely forced to by circumstances beyond my control (and save me from the extra "special" help provided by special shelving locations, rooms, rabbit holes of various kinds, interfaces, etc. — the library is confusing enough already. I just want to reduce the clutter. Finally, if you've read this far I'm sure your ideas are good ones and you may be the savior of librarianship in the 21st century. My advice? Try to be less controlling, embrace the network, and don't forget it's all about your neighbor who lives four houses down from you on the left — go ask her what we should do. 🐇

needs. At Texas we've had a wide-open patron driven pay-per-view model for over 18 months, and so far, our spending has consistently met our projections. But a slight miscalculation could result in invoices with nasty surprises and theoretically even force the library to shut off the information spigot in the middle of the semester just when wide open access is needed the most. In other words, it's probably best to take a controlled approach, such as with a portfolio-based collection and budgeting model, in which a portion of the budget is allocated to pay-per-view, a portion to print-on-demand, a portion to traditional just-in-case purchases, etc. Of course, in an ideal world the key to making this type of model work would be to base decisions on actual user information seeking behavior patterns, instead of going along with the usual messiness of campus politics and egos, but for now a portfolio approach is probably best.

Providing discovery mechanisms in a networked world in which library content changes second-by-second 24 hours a day, cannot be handled by a stand-alone OPAC even if every library had 1,000 catalogers and unlimited server capacity. It's questionable whether we even want a collection of shelved objects within four walls to be called a "library" in today's world. We may eventually decide to use a new term for such collections, something along the lines of a "disconnected" or "orphaned" library." In any case a large centralized knowledge-base containing records for hundreds of millions of items is going to be essential for a functioning networked library. Whether this knowledge base is going to be **Worldcat Local**, **Google**, or a next-generation commercial product is difficult to say, but when **Google Books** already contains the full-text of seven million volumes, and articles are produced by the tens of thousands a day, library discovery efforts are going to have to improve or we risk being left in the ditch by the side of the road.

RR: First of all, libraries must acknowledge the need for change. Once they embrace this changing landscape they can begin to better understand how it affects libraries. There is more information available and in more formats than ever before. The demand for content is also higher. At the same time, librar-

against the grain people profile

Rich Rosy

GOAL I HOPE TO ACHIEVE FIVE YEARS FROM NOW AND HOW/WHERE DO I SEE THE INDUSTRY IN FIVE YEARS: One of my goals as the industry evolves over the next few years is to establish and maintain a leadership position where we are really listening and understanding what libraries want. The advisory council was established to be sure we are able to do that in the near- and long-term. Nobody knows exactly where we'll be tomorrow, but our goal is to be ahead of the curve. 🐘

Vice President and General Manager
Ingram Digital, Institutional Solutions Unit
<Rich.Rosy@ingramdigital.com> www.ingramdigital.com

ies are confronted with the reality of shrinking budgets. When evaluating new options, we must first ask the question: "How does this fit into my library?" They should also bear in mind that, over time, there will be more and more information available in various forms of e-content such as journals, books and other library material, including materials made available by **Google**.

ATG: *How about audio books and mobile devices? As was predicted at the Charleston Conference many years ago, will we be tied to our iPhones, Blackberries, and the like for all our content in the future?*

DD: I don't own a cell phone or any other mobile thought interruption device because they interfere with my ability to achieve any semblance of personal coherent mental activity. But, I realize others are more cognitively nimble and view these devices as brain extensions, kind of like having a second brain in their pockets except with different and more reliable abilities. In that sense, all of these gadgets are essentially personal mobility devices, similar to cars, except that they enable thought mobility rather than bodily mobility. Because of this, I believe we will be tied to these devices forever, just like we are tied to our cars, even though some people still use horses, bicycles, and buses to get around. In other words, these devices are brain extenders

and there are similar devices out there already (like the printed book), so having one more brain extender and thought mobility device seems harmless enough and a good idea (...but I still have no intention of buying a cell phone). Audiobooks are an unalloyed good, especially if they can be made device independent and easily downloadable.

RR: As I mentioned earlier, these are all points of access to content. We live in a traveling society, constantly in motion. In addition, as the amount of content available grows, it is only natural that the number of access points would increase as well. As for audiobooks, they are also going to become more widely available. **Ingram Digital** is one of the companies at the forefront of that trend. We will be launching a significant audiobook initiative in Q1.

ATG: *There was a panel of expert library directors (Nancy Eaton, Joyce Ogburn and Rick Luce) at the 2008 Charleston Conference predicting the library of 2020. What will academic libraries be like in 2020? That's only 11 years away!*

DD: I originally got into libraries when it dawned on me that over 95% of the books remained on the shelves at any one time, and that the vast majority of the books would be lucky to get checked out once every ten years. Any profession that was this comfortable with a failure to move its inventory, and that seemed to celebrate idiosyncratic book choices that were seldom or never checked out — seemed like a profession that valued the individual, and a place where I could find a home. I suspect that by 2020, we'll be able to take this model global. If there is a worldwide network containing most of the world's books, articles, images, etc., including those that are seldom used — then libraries are going to be a necessary part of this infrastructure. Publishers will be anxious to insure that any items used thousands of times a day remain available, but it will take library interests, resources, infrastructure, and

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Library Digitization: Top Trends to Watch

- 1) Continued growth in the adoption and use of eBooks through innovative patron-driven business and delivery models to help libraries control costs while providing revenue for publishers.
- 2) Multi-format access to enable expanded delivery of eBooks and audio books to mobile devices, Windows and Mac-based devices.
- 3) Simplified user-access to a library's digital collection with search-and-discover tools, linking cross-publisher content, archiving and integration with library systems
- 4) Alignment of digital and print-on-demand solutions. 🐘

Interview — Dillon & Rosy
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will power to insure that the more seldom used content remains available. One of our skills is knowledge about how to handle items that most people don't want.

I believe librarians in the future will not be that different than they are today — they will be guardians and guides for a content jungle that will grow more complex and nuanced with every generation. As long as we're not afraid to change, as long as we're comfortable taking a risk, as long as we surf the technological and cultural waves of our time we'll be fine. The years may change, but libraries abide.

RR: For the first time in centuries, libraries are being forced to re-examine their processes and understand how to stay relevant for users whose needs are changing at an ever-increasing pace. By 2020, libraries will have a better understanding of how to utilize digital content and how to make this content accessible to their users.

The library of 2020 will no longer be limited to a brick and mortar structure, but will serve as a warehouse of content that helps facilitate the sharing of ideas between increasingly connected users. Librarians will continue to serve a critical role in helping users discern reliable information from credible sources and in navigating the mass amounts of digital content at their fingertips.

ATG: Thank you so much. 🌿

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relationship, with the goal of ensuring members continue to be provided with complete **OCLC programs and services**. Members will now be able to collaborate with peers at diverse institutions throughout the Mid-Atlantic, the Southeastern US, and nationally; working together to meet constantly changing expectations of our users, wherever they may be. A new name has been created for the new organization — **Lyrasis**. The new name was inspired by the constellation of **Lyra**, host to one of the galaxy's brightest stars and guiding lights. The suffix 'sis' can designate a process, often associated with change (as in metamorphosis). Together, they position **Lyrasis** as a guide through the ever-changing world of information services. The effective date for the new organization, **Lyrasis**, is **April 1, 2009**. **Kate Nevins** (executive director, Solinet) will be CEO and **Cathy Wilt** (executive director, Palinet) will serve as president Happily, the Boards have voted to maintain current membership fees for FY 2009/10. A thorough FAQ is located at <http://www.mergerupdate.org/FAQ.aspx#recommend>.

Speaking of which **THANK YOU ALL** for renewing your **ATG** subscriptions. I can't tell you how gratified that makes me feel! I know that budget times are tough but y'all continue to stick with **ATG** which is a **fabulous dynamic publication!**

Speaking of dynamite, be sure and read our interviews in this issue with **Dennis Dillon** and **Rich Rosy** as well as **Sameer Shariff**. I have to say that **Dennis'** last comment on his profile particularly resonated with me — "Try to be less controlling . . . don't forget it's all about your neighbor who lives four houses down from you on the left — go ask her what we should do."

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"Every great dream begins with a dreamer. Always remember, you have within you the strength, the patience, and the passion to reach for the stars to change the world." — Harriet Tubman

Harriet Tubman was an African-American abolitionist, humanitarian, and Union spy during the U.S. Civil War. And she was a dreamer. She dreamed of freedom, she dreamed of helping others, and she dreamed of a time when all people in America would be equal. More importantly,

her dreams became reality. She rescued more than 70 slaves utilizing the Underground Railroad. She recruited men for John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry. She was the first woman to lead an armed expedition in the Civil War. And in the post-war era she struggled for women's suffrage.

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Learn more about Harriet Tubman, her predecessors and her contemporaries through Accessible Archives' 19th century databases. In honor of Black History Month we are offering special discounts through February

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Dennis' comment brought to mind a recent article I read in *Business Week* (February 9, 2009, p.32-36) — "How the Google Model Could Help Detroit," by **Jeff Jarvis**. The article is a book excerpt (*What Would Google Do?*) by the same author. Much of the "Detroit" and "cars" mention could be changed to "library/libraries." Here's an example — and italics are what I have substituted "I urged *libraries* to open up their design process and make it both transparent and collaborative. *Libraries* have no good way to listen to customers' ideas." Are libraries too controlling? Do we try beta versions of our website or our OPACs on our end users and ask them to help make them better? As an editor of **ATG**, I have always found that when I pitch an idea for a column (or even for a paper at the **Charleston Conference**), it just gets better when others are involved. They make the beta product or final product better. If

I were younger and had more energy I might get on a soapbox about this! See the article online as well as an interview with the author. http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/09_06/b4118032619547.htm?chan=magazine+channel_top+stories

I had never heard of the *Absinthe Literary Review* or *Exquisite Corpse*. Both are **open access at-risk journals**. See this issue, p.22.

Speaking of the **2009 Charleston Conference**, we have settled on a theme — "**There's a Whole Lot of Changin' Goin' on!**" And we had a conference call last week. Unbelievable that **Anthony Watkinson** called us from his sick bed in a hospital to give us his input! **Anthony** was suffering from some sort of viral infection but he seems to be on the mend! You talk about dedication.

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