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Here's Looking At — Rights Management at YBP

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by **Katina Strauch** (Editor, *Against the Grain*)

At ALA Midwinter, I spent some time talking to Glen Secor, who was recently named President of YBP, about Yankee's new rights management services. This summer, Yankee will be launching Copyright Direct, a new service bureau for Automated Permissions and Online Content Management. It is so innovative, intriguing and ambitious that I thought you would be interested in knowing more about it. Here goes. — KS

ATG: What is rights management and how does it fit in at Yankee?

GS: Rights management is one of the first business lines to come out of the **YBP Publishing Services Division**. At its core, Yankee is in the business of facilitating scholarly and professional communication. Traditionally, we have done this by providing value-added bookselling and bibliographic services to libraries. YBP Publishing Services exists to add further value to the publishing and distribution process, particularly in electronic publishing and digital library applications. Copyright management, for both copyright owners and users, has been identified as one of the most difficult problems facing us in the online world. So, with an eye towards solving problems and facilitating online communication, we decided to tackle the copyright issue head-on. **Copyright Direct** is an application that allows publishers to automate most of their permissions requests and allows users to get the rights they need through a real-time, online interface with publishers.

ATG: How does **Copyright Direct** work?

GS: When an item (i.e. an article, a book, a chapter, an image, etc.) is registered with **Copyright Direct**, two things happen. First, the item is linked via a **Copyright Direct** icon to a rights database and transaction server at Yankee. Second, rights information provided by the copyright owner, including prices and other terms for various sorts of usage, is added to the database. Anyone looking at this registered item online, then, whether on the Web, a campus or corporate intranet, or other online setting, can link to the **Copyright Direct** server to explore and execute permissions transactions simply by clicking on the **Copyright Direct** icon. These transactions can be accomplished via credit card payment, electronic payment, or open account billing. It is important to note, though, that we are seeking to preserve the principles of copyright law and practice, not bypass them in favor of "pay-per-use" content management. Copyright Direct encourages open access to digital content and, in addition to facilitating permissions transactions, will include tools to help users determine whether a planned use is fair use or is covered by the terms of an institutional subscription or site license. We see this as an alternative to

encryption and metering approaches which limit access and demand payment for all uses.

ATG: You mentioned "license administration." What do you mean by this?

GS: The beta version of **Copyright Direct**, which will be released to a handful of publishers this summer, and the initial rollout version, which is scheduled for this year's **Frankfurt Book Fair**, will accommodate a variety of uses (e.g. download and photocopy, coursepack, electronic reserve, etc.) and payment methods. The following release of **Copyright Direct**, which is scheduled for **ALA January 1999**, will include a number of license administration tools. These tools will enable license administrators, whether in the library or elsewhere in the institution, to communicate license terms to individuals within the institution, to track permissions transactions for licensed content, and to easily store and access the licenses themselves.

For example, assume that coursepack or electronic reserve usage is not covered by an institutional site license. Using the license administration tools of **Copyright Direct**, the license administrator can communicate this fact to individuals within the institution (or consortium) and provide an interface directly to the publisher that allows the user to negotiate these additional rights. If those transactions are frequent, perhaps coursepack or electronic reserve use should be negotiated into the site license when it comes up for renewal. In the interim, the administrator still provides the valuable service of making available content for the most widely used purposes and allowing the user to negotiate for uses beyond those needed by the majority of the institutional users. Our goals here are to facilitate communication within the institution and to provide licensors and licensees with valuable usage information for license negotiation.

ATG: Does this raise privacy or confidentiality concerns? How will you address these issues?

GS: Those are excellent questions. In addition to preserving fair use in the online context, we are committed to the preservation of individual privacy. Through the use of institutional IDs or authentication procedures for individuals, we will be able to associate individuals with their institutions. If Professor Smith is identified as a faculty member of the **College of Charleston**, for instance, Prof. Smith might be able to access summaries of uses covered by various CofC licenses. Assuming that coursepack or electronic reserve usage is not covered by a specific CofC license, Prof. Smith might enter into one or more permissions transactions on her own for this type of usage. We could track and report these transactions on a summary basis for the College, without identifying specific users. Suppose that Prof. Smith is also writing a book for which permissions are paid not by the College or the students in Prof. Smith's class, but by Prof.

Smith herself. We would not report any permissions transactions for the book project to the College, since these are not institutional uses or expenses. **Copyright Direct** will include security features to ensure that institutional information is available only to authorized institutional members and individual information is available only to the individual user. Further, authorization can be set at different levels for different institutional members. Faculty and students, for example, might have access to a summary of uses covered by a license, while the fulltext of the license might be accessible only to certain individuals within library or campus administration.

ATG: What is the target market for **Copyright Direct** and who will pay for the service?

GS: We see the service as benefiting both the publishers and users of online content. Keeping with Yankee's traditional market orientation, we are focused on the academic and research communities. Expanding upon Yankee's traditional book orientation, our earliest focus will be online journal publishers and subscribers, as journals comprise most of the valuable online content today. The permissions features of **Copyright Direct** work very much like today's copyright (i.e. print photocopy) permissions bureaus, only better. We expect to follow transactional revenue models similar to those already in place with these service bureaus. The license administration features are aimed at the licensing institutions (i.e. universities and corporations) and will likely follow some sort of subscription model. Understand that the subscription here would be for access to the service, not for the content. **Copyright Direct** does not take Yankee into the journal fulfillment business.

ATG: Tell us about your staff. Who are they and what are their responsibilities?

GS: **Kelly Frey** is Vice President of **YBP Publishing Services**, with profit center responsibility for all related lines of business. Kelly is an attorney and came to us in late 1997 from **Copyright Clearance Center**. **John Erickson** is Vice President of Systems Development at Yankee and is responsible for the **Copyright Direct** technology. John recently earned his Ph.D. in Engineering Sciences from the Thayer School of Engineering at **Dartmouth College**. **Jennifer Goodrich** is Vice President of Marketing at Yankee, providing marketing support to all YBP business units and with direct responsibility for YBP's own publications, *Trialogue* and *ESTREAMS*. Jennifer came to us from the publishing industry, with experience as a publishing consultant and with **Addison-Wesley** and **ITP**.

ATG: If we want to know more about this service, what should we do?

GS: You can visit our Website at <http://www.ybp.com/ym>. Or call, fax or write to us at YBP Publishing Services, 999 Maple Street, Contoocook, NH 03229. (603)746-3102; (800)258-3774; Fax (603)746-2747. 