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Chaos-Acronyms in Today's Standards World

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Chaos — Acronyms In Today's Standards World

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Few readers of ***Against the Grain*** would have any difficulty dealing with acronyms such as ISBN, ISSN, and NISO — though many outside the publishing/library community might well be lost in this "old" world of standards. Today, tomorrow and the next day, however, we are seeing totally new acronyms in the extended community of information, publishing, librarianship, and intellectual property. Here are just a few I thought you might see in the very near future.

BASIC — Book And Serial Industry Communications — *The result of the merger of the Book and Serial Industry Systems Advisory Committees (BISAC and SISAC), this Committee of the Book Industry Study Group provides the technological standards for EDI, bar coding and metadata needed in the United States and provides input to EDItEUR on ONIX International and to ISO on the ISTC.*

BIC — Book Industry Communications — *The U.K. counterpart to BISG, BIC is the Secretariat to EDItEUR.*

BISAC — See BASIC

BISG — Book Industry Study Group — *Parent of BASIC, the EBX Working Group, and U.S. input source to EDItEUR.*

DOI — Digital Object Identifier — *The international method for locating the appropriate URL(s) for a given digital object on the Internet. Intended for use by publishers and others involved in electronic commerce involving intellectual property.*

DRM — Digital Rights Management — *All of the standards that protect a work of intellectual property and provide the end user with the capacity to obtain all of the "rights" purchased. Think — I bought the right to read, but not print this text until January, 20001.*

DTD — Data Type Definition — *All text tagged in XML requires a DTD to define what tags should come in what sequence. A more sophisticated vehicle is called a Schema, which also allows for checking the type of data in each XML tag.*

EBX — Electronic Book Exchange — *The EBX Working Group, an affiliate of the Book Industry Study Group, is developing DRM standards for textual works. They are coordinating efforts in this area with OEBF.*

ebXML — Electronic Business XML — *One of two SERIOUS competitors involved in the development of EDI standards tagged in XML for use by small and medium sized organizations which want to send their EDI messages over the Internet but cannot afford the overhead of the "old fashioned" EDI sent through Value Added Networks. The ebXML effort is sponsored by the United Nations section that developed EDIFACT — the international EDI standard — and CommerceNet, a consortium of major global businesses. The competitor is RosettaNet, a consortium originally of organizations in the computer hardware business, but evolving into other industries as well.*

EDI — Electronic Data Interchange — *Not a new concept, but EDI is experiencing many changes in light of the use of the Internet for electronic commerce.*

EDItEUR — Although this acronym originally stood for EDI for EURope — *Today, EDItEUR is the group concerned with ALL global e-commerce standards for intellectual property. EDItEUR will hold its first meeting outside of Europe during the Charleston Conference in November, 2000.*

EPICS — EDItEUR Product Information

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Designing Librarians — On the Web

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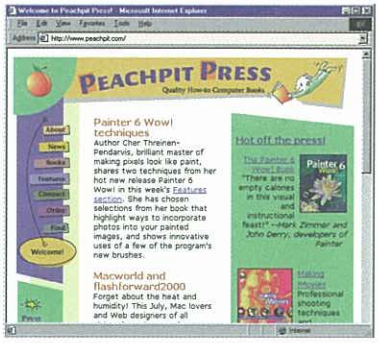

This issue it's time to talk about digital photography. "Excuse me," you say? "What could this possibly have to do with our profession?" While even I wouldn't go so far as to claim a digital camera is an essential for every librarian's toolbox, nevertheless I would argue building attractive Web sites for libraries, departments, vendors and publishers is essential — and digital photography is one of the easiest ways to achieve this end. So with no further ado over its relevance, let's dive into a crash course on the subject.

First: a digital camera. One of the wonders of these gizmos is how little they can cost. While the cameras themselves run a full-gamut of prices (from under $100 to in the thousands), there aren't film and developing expenses. You can take as many terrible pictures as you want and delete them all without a second thought.

I'm no expert on buying cameras, and even if I were there wouldn't be much point in discussing specific models, since the "best buy" changes in nano-seconds. So instead, let's talk about a few basics and the best resources for up-to-minute information. The special things to watch for in digital cameras are:

• **Resolution.** A resolution of 640x480 pixels (also called VGA) is low, but is usually fine for the Web. 1024x767 works for 3x5" prints, while 1600x1200 works for 8x10" prints. Of course the better the resolution, the more you shell out. In other words, this may be a good way to save money.

• **Storage, i.e. picture capacity.** The thing to check is how many pictures you can take before you have to transfer them to a PC. For example, I've heard of a camera that only lets you take two very high resolution photos and then tops out.

• **Battery life.** There's a good chance you'll want to get a model with rechargeable batteries and then purchase a spare battery or two.

• **Software.** Some come with image editing software, which we'll talk about more in a minute. If you don't have this kind of software, this is important to pay attention to. You're going to want decent photo software.

• **The zoom.** "Digital zoom" expands the image, not lens, and is less expensive. "Optical zoom" produces higher quality images.

Having understood these basics, plan on maybe an hour's worth of research – on the Web of course. The best starting places I know of are CNET's *Digital Photography Center* http://photo.cnet.com/ and *ShortCourses* http://www.shortcourses.com/. You might also want to search "digital cameras" in *PC Magazine* http://www.zdnet.com/pcmag/, looking for their latest "Editor's choice" models.

I said I wouldn't go into specific models. But I lied. A little. I did want to mention the wonders of the one our law school owns, because I think it's particularly well suited to libraries. It's one of the lower-end Sony Mavicas. These cost around $450 (street price). While it typically doesn't get as high ratings as some Kodak and Olympus models, the beauty of the Mavica is that it stores images on floppy disks. Thus you can "circulate" the camera and let people use their own floppies on their own computers. There are 1001 creative uses students and staff can find for the camera. Ours has been used for the student rag, a documentary of building construction, our "Face Book" and an equipment inventory – not to mention its intended purpose, which is (surprise) the Web.

Photography. Once you have the camera, you're past the biggest hurdle. Still, if you're like me, you will have no earthly idea how to take a decent photo. However, as has already been said, it doesn't matter how many photos you take. So that's my numero uno photography tip. Take lots and lots of pictures. Then axe the bad ones. Second most important – fill up the photo with your subject – cutting out unnecessary background. Also, pay attention to the light. When

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Communication Standard — *The EDItEUR standard upon which ONIX International is based. EPICS is compliant with the framework developed by indecs.*

IDF — International DOI Foundation — *The governing body for the DOI.*

indecs — INteroperability of Data in Electronic Commerce Systems — *A framework for defining the metadata for ALL works of intellectual property that may be involved in electronic commerce. They completed the "discovery" aspect of their standard as their European Community funding expired; the rights metadata is still to be defined.*

ISAN — International Standard Audio/Visual Number — *Under development as an ISO standard, this "number" identifies the basic work in an audio/visual production — i.e. a movie. It actually identifies a few "minutes" of both the audio and video that compose the full manifestation — a movie or video production.* — ALSO See ISTC and ISWC.

ISTC — International Standard Text Code — *Under development as an ISO standard, this "code" identifies a basic work of text before it rears its head in a manifestation such as a manuscript. Think MOBY DICK and all of the varieties go books, magazines, audio, video and other products based on this "textual work."* — ALSO See ISWC and ISAN.

ISWC — International Standard Work Code — *The first of the "work" codes under development as an ISO standard, this "code number" identifies a basic work of MUSIC before it rears its head in a manifestation such as a recording or in a concert. Think Chopin's First Symphony.* — ALSO See ISAN and ISTC

OEBF — Open eBook Forum — *The OEBF developed the standard methods of "tagging" manuscripts, so that they can be transferred from the publisher to ALL e-book distributors. They are working with the EBX Working Group on standards for DRM.*

ONIX — ONline Information eXchange — *The ONIX standards for book metadata was originally developed by the Association of American Publishers. Now a EDItEUR standard, ONIX International provides a standardized method of XML-tagging information about books, including the basic bibliographic data, but also enriched information such as author biographies, cover artwork, flap copy and reviews.*

SISAC — See BASIC

W3C — World Wide Web Consortium — *The standardization group for the Web. Their standards include HTML, XML and many more.*

XML — eXchange Mark-up Language — *A W3C standard that provides more "intelligence" than HTML, commonly used today to determine how text and illustrations "appear" on the World Wide Web.*